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Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE  
In English Literature (4ET1)  
Paper 02: Modern Drama and Literary  
Heritage Texts

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## Paper Overview

This International GCSE 4ET1 02 English Literature examination consists of two sections (Modern Drama and Literary Heritage) and lasts for 1 hour and 30 minutes. This is an open book examination. The questions on this paper have been designed to enable candidates to show what they can achieve in relation to the detailed study of texts.

### Section A - Modern Drama

Candidates answer one of the two questions based on the text they have studied. The text choices are:

*A View from the Bridge* – Arthur Miller

*An Inspector Calls* – J B Priestley

*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* – Mark Haddon (adapted by Simon Stephens)

*Kindertransport* – Diane Samuels

*Death and the King's Horseman* – Wole Soyinka

The questions require candidates to draw on their knowledge of the play, to consider the writer's use of language, form and structure and to provide supporting examples. The Assessment Objectives assessed in Section A are:

AO1	Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.

### Section B - Literary Heritage

Candidates are required to answer one of the two questions based on the text they have studied. The text choices for Section B are:

*Romeo and Juliet* – William Shakespeare

*Macbeth* – William Shakespeare

*The Merchant of Venice* – William Shakespeare

*Pride and Prejudice* – Jane Austen

*Great Expectations* – Charles Dickens

*The Scarlet Letter* – Nathaniel Hawthorne

The questions in Section B, like in Section A, require candidates to draw on their knowledge of their chosen text, to consider the writer's use of language, form and structure and to provide relevant examples. In addition, candidates are asked to refer to context in this section. The Assessment Objectives assessed in Section B are:

AO1	Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.
AO4	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Candidates are advised to spend 45 minutes on each section. The total number of marks available for this paper is 60. Both sections carry 30 marks per question.

## Introduction

The January 2022 series was successful. There were no errors in the paper and no erratum notices. It was pleasing to see the full range of achievement on this single tier paper covering the 9-1 grades and, once again, centres should be congratulated on preparing their candidates so well.

In Section A, the best answers used full and deep knowledge from across the chosen text to form relevant arguments fully focused on the question. In these answers, a broad balance between AO1 and AO2 demands was achieved, with candidates exploring well-selected techniques and their impact. Less successful responses tended to perform better on AO1, often giving just a light touch to AO2, or not considering AO2 at all.

Candidates at all levels of achievement performed best when they identified with the texts as drama rather than merely texts. This awareness and insight led to some effective and apposite comment on detail. Less successful answers tended to lack a valid structure, which led some to drift away from the focus of the question. Some also tended to lapse into narration of the plot, thereby limiting themselves to the lower reaches of the mark scheme. It is worth noting that narrative detail is a key descriptor of Level 2.

In Section B, the best answers used the question to build well-developed and focused answers that incorporated a balance of AO1, AO2 and AO4. Some insightful responses were seen that engaged fully with the question and provided detail from the text, chosen with discrimination to support arguments. As with Section A, the less successful answers tended to narrate events or describe characters, sometimes interspersing this with relevant argument.

In Section B, it is imperative candidates remember that marks for context, AO4, are awarded in this section. AO1, AO2 and AO4 are of equal value. The most effective answers integrated points on context throughout, often to develop points for AO1 and AO2. Candidates should try to avoid writing absolutely everything they know about the context of the text into their answers, but instead select appropriate, relevant detail.

In many cases, further consideration of AO2 would have helped candidates to have achieved the higher marks. The mark schemes for the question papers, available on the Pearson Edexcel website, provide comprehensive suggestions as to what candidates may choose to write about. These can be particularly helpful for candidates to use in preparation for the examination to think about the types of comments they might choose to make on language, form and structure, as well as context.

Finally, although there is no formal requirement for candidates to start their answers with an introduction and a conclusion, this can often help candidates to maintain a focus on the question. It can also help to spend a few minutes at the start of the examination to produce a plan. Not only can this help to ensure a focus on the question, but it can also help candidates to think of the range of ideas they would like to include in their answers, ensuring full coverage of all the assessment objectives assessed.

## **4ET1 02 Questions**

In this section, a summary of candidate performance is provided for each question.

### **SECTION A - MODERN DRAMA**

#### ***A View from the Bridge***

##### **Question 1: Explore the importance of family in *A View from the Bridge*.**

There were just a few responses to this question. The question performed in a similar way to questions in previous series.

Responses tended to focus on the Carbone family and the impact of the arrival of Marco and Rodolpho on the relationships within the family. There was also some consideration of the importance of family to Marco.

As set out in the indicative content in the mark scheme, there were lots of opportunities for candidates to show their understanding for AO1, as well as there being much for candidates to consider in relation to language, form and structure for AO2.

The more successful responses had an equal balance in focus of AO1 and AO2. However, as seen in previous series, in some of the responses there was more evidence of understanding for AO1. Candidates should be reminded that AO1 and AO2 have equal weighting in the mark scheme.

##### **Question 2: Discuss the presentation of one character you sympathise with in the play.**

There were just four responses to this question. Nevertheless, from the responses seen, the question appears to have been as accessible as questions in previous series.

Candidates chose to focus on Beatrice, Catherine and Rodolpho. The responses were all deemed to be sound. Candidates were able to provide valid reasons for their choices but would have benefited from closer analysis of AO2 and the effects created. Nevertheless, as with Question 1, there were sufficient opportunities for candidates to be able to address the assessment objectives, as illustrated in the indicative content in the mark scheme.

#### ***An Inspector Calls***

##### **Question 3: How does Priestley present the relationship between Sheila and Gerald in the play?**

*An Inspector Calls* was the most popular text in this section of the paper. Candidates showed enthusiasm when answering this question and it appeared to perform in a similar way to questions in previous series.

There were a number of responses to this question that showed a detailed understanding of the relationship between Sheila and Gerald. The stronger responses saw their relationship as one of convenience and sympathised with Sheila as she learns the truth about her fiancé.

However, there were also a number of narrative responses that discussed the characters of Sheila and Gerald separately, rather than explore their relationship. Nevertheless, these responses tended to be knowledgeable and well-supported.

For AO1, responses tended to consider the initial presentation of both Sheila and Gerald and how they interact, Sheila's response to Gerald presenting her with the engagement ring and how Mr Birling appears to be more excited about the business opportunities resulting from their relationship rather than being happy for his daughter.

Stronger responses tended to pick up on the early signs of tension in the relationship between Sheila and Gerald. There was also some discussion centring on Gerald's affair and the effect on the relationship between Sheila and Gerald, their differing attitudes towards taking responsibility and the state of their relationship at the end of the play.

For AO2, there was some thoughtful consideration of how Gerald tries to 'protect' Sheila from the details of what happened to Eva/Daisy. Many candidates were also able to consider the structure of the play, tracking the changing nature of their relationship as the play progresses. As with AO1, there was much for candidates to be able to explore for AO2.

As seen in previous series, and in responses to other questions on this paper, AO1 tended to be stronger, with many of the responses needing more focus on AO2 to achieve a higher mark. There were also some narrative responses, providing a plot summary, instead of drawing out appropriate points linked to the focus of the question.

#### **Question 4: Discuss the significance of wealth in *An Inspector Calls*.**

This was the more popular question on this text and the most popular question in this section of the paper.

From the responses seen, candidates engaged well with this question. It was generally well-answered and a wide range of examples of wealth were seen, including references to the Birlings' large house, their maid, their extravagant furniture and the attitudes of the Birlings and Gerald Croft to people who do not have a similar level of wealth as them. Many candidates also drew parallels between wealth and class. Other points included Mrs Birling refusing to give money to Eva/Daisy as part of her work for Brumley Women's Charity Organisation, how Eric stole money from his father and how Eva/Daisy refused to take money from Eric. There was also consideration of how Gerald used his wealth in his affair with Eva/Daisy.

There were a few particularly perceptive responses seen, which explored how the play is set in the Birlings' luxurious dining room but how it is really 'a shell', where the Birlings are keeping up appearances, and, below the surface, there is no love in the relationships within the family.

For AO2, as with Question 3, there was lots for candidates to be able to explore. The stronger responses tended to refer to dramatic techniques and stage directions to show the differences in status between the characters because of

their wealth, such as the tone used towards the maid and the change of lighting for the Inspector's arrival.

Many candidates considered the influence of a character's wealth on how they are presented in the play, such as the '*hard-headed businessman*' Mr Birling and how Sheila is '*very pleased with life and excited*'. A number of candidates also linked the Birlings' wealth to their capitalist views and contrasted these with Priestley's socialist views, as voiced by the Inspector. Many candidates provided analysis of the Inspector's speech, warning of the need to provide for everyone in society, contrasting this with Mr Birling's view that '*If you don't come down sharply on some of these people, they'd soon be asking for the earth*'.

However, sometimes the comments on language could have been more developed and used more securely to enhance the argument being presented. In order to achieve a mark in the higher levels, candidates should be reminded of the need to select appropriate references from the text and provide a close analysis of the language used.

Similar to responses to other questions in Section A, there was some imbalance in addressing the two assessment objectives and there were some Level 2 responses which provided narrative detail without comment on language, form or structure for AO2.

A few candidates unnecessarily explored context. Whilst some candidates used points on context to build arguments relating to wealth for AO1 and AO2, candidates should be reminded that AO4 is not assessed in this section of the paper.

### ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time***

#### **Question 5: How is Siobhan shown to be a caring character in the play?**

There were just two responses to this question. The question performed in a similar way to questions in previous series.

Evidence for AO1 centred on Siobhan's relationship with Christopher, particularly as someone he turns to when he is facing difficulties at home. Comments for AO2 focussed on Siobhan's role as the narrator and Christopher's voice.

There were sufficient opportunities for candidates to consider both AO1 and AO2, as set out in the indicative content in the mark scheme.

#### **Question 6: Explore the theme of death in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*.**

There were no responses to this question.

## ***Kindertransport***

### **Question 7: In what ways is the Ratcatcher important in *Kindertransport*?**

There was just one response to this question. The question appears to have been accessible, with opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their understanding of both AO1 and AO2, particularly as the Ratcatcher appears throughout the play.

The sole response showed some perceptive insight, considering the Ratcatcher's appearance when Helga is preparing to send Eva on the Kindertransport and how the actor who plays the Ratcatcher also plays all of the other male characters in the play.

### **Question 8: Explore the significance of the title in the play.**

There were no responses to this question.

## ***Death and the King's Horseman***

### **Question 9: Discuss the theme of loyalty in *Death and the King's Horseman*.**

There were no responses to this question.

### **Question 10: Simon Pilkings: 'Well, I did my duty as I saw fit. I have no regrets.' How is Simon Pilkings presented in the play?**

There was just one response to this question. The question appears to have been accessible, with many opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their understanding of both AO1 and AO2, as set out in the indicative content in the mark scheme. The response considered Simon's role as the British District Officer, his views on the Yoruba traditions and his intervention in the death ritual.

## **SECTION B - MODERN DRAMA**

### ***Romeo and Juliet***

### **Question 11: 'Romeo is never really in love in the play.' How far do you agree with this statement?**

There were nine responses to this question. There was evidence of real engagement with this question, with some perceptive knowledge and understanding demonstrated. For example, one response maintained a convincing critical style and considered how, initially, Romeo speaks poetically of Rosaline's beauty, how his emotions change quickly when he first sees Juliet, how Friar Lawrence is sceptical of Romeo's change of affections from Rosaline to Juliet but, ultimately, how Romeo sacrifices his life in order to be with Juliet.

For AO2, there was some discussion of Romeo's description of both Rosaline and Juliet, his poetic language and also how the Prologue describes Romeo and Juliet as 'star-crossed lovers'.



AO4 points, where seen, included the attitudes to suicide at the time the play was first staged and the male stereotype at the time.

As seen with responses to other questions, there were some rather narrative responses, lacking comment on AO2 and AO4. Nevertheless, some responses were well developed and supported, with evidence of effective personal engagement. Candidates working at Levels 4 and 5 tended to engage confidently with the AO2 demands of the question and successfully integrated points relating to context throughout their answers.

**Question 12: Explore the different settings in *Romeo and Juliet*.**

There were no responses to this question.

***Macbeth***

**Question 13: Discuss the presentation of one admirable character in the play.**

*Macbeth* was the most popular text in this section of the paper.

The most popular choice of admirable character was Banquo. A number of candidates chose Macduff and a few chose King Duncan.

When discussing the presentation of Banquo, candidates tended to consider Banquo's response to the Witches' prophecies compared to Macbeth's, how Banquo protects his son, Fleance, and the appearance of Banquo's ghost.

Those who chose to discuss the presentation of Macduff tended to focus on Macduff's suspicion of Macbeth, how he does not attend Macbeth's coronation, how he helps Malcolm establish an army and, ultimately, how he kills Macbeth.

The responses that focussed on King Duncan as an admirable character tended to consider his portrayal as a morally good ruler.

Some candidates did choose to consider characters such as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Although sound knowledge and understanding was often demonstrated in these cases, candidates tended to find it difficult to sustain their arguments.

A full range of points was seen for AO2. Many candidates considered the description of their chosen character, such as Macbeth's description of King Duncan's dead body: '*His silver skin laced with his golden blood*'. A number of candidates considered the five-act structure of the play, which follows the typical pattern for a tragedy, ending with good conquering evil. However, some of the comments on structure were not developed sufficiently to ensure that they were fully relevant to the focus of the question.

For AO4, many candidates explored the significance of the Divine Right of Kings and, when discussing Banquo as an admirable character, considered how Shakespeare presented Banquo as admirable to please James I. However, a number of context comments were not made relevant to the task, such as how James I wrote a book, *Daemonologie*, when discussing Macduff's bravery.

As with responses to other questions this series (and as seen in previous series), there was some imbalance in focus on the different assessment objectives, with the focus on AO1 tending to be stronger. There were some good examples of references to context being intertwined throughout responses but there were also some responses which did not refer to context at all, or did so in a general way, not specifically linked to the focus of the question. Those responses awarded marks in the higher levels were able to successfully integrate points related to context throughout, as support and development for AO1 and AO2.

**Question 14: Explore the theme of violence in *Macbeth*.**

This was the more popular question on this text and the most popular question in this section of the paper. Candidates showed much enthusiasm when responding to this question and there were some particularly impressive responses.

There was much for candidates to be able to consider in relation to AO1. Candidates tended to explore the Captain's description of Macbeth in battle against the Norwegian army, the Witches' violent intent, particularly when they discuss the savage punishment they will inflict on the sailor, the gruesome murder of King Duncan, the murder of Macduff's family and Macbeth's death at the end of the play. A few candidates attempted to consider Lady Macbeth's violence but sometimes this was not sufficiently developed or appropriately linked to the focus of the question. Nevertheless, there was some effective consideration of how Lady Macbeth uses vivid, violent imagery to describe how she would smash the skull of her own baby rather than break a promise (as Macbeth has done).

Much of the exploration for AO2 centred on the description of the violent acts in the play, such as the Captain's description of Macbeth in battle against the Norwegians and Macduff killing Macbeth. There were also some perceptive points relating to how King Duncan's murder takes place off-stage, and the reasons for this, and how Macbeth's murderous tyranny is only brought to an end by his own bloody defeat in battle at the hands of Macduff.

Comments relating to context were often linked to Shakespeare writing the play to please James I, demonstrating the consequences of murdering a king. There were also comments relating to the Divine Right of Kings and the belief in witches at the time the play was first staged.

The most successful responses linked the analysis of AO2 with context, such as *'Lady Macbeth uses imperative language: 'Come you spirits!' to summon and command the supernatural with words from the semantic field of violence: 'blood, gall, fatal'. This would surprise the audience as Lady Macbeth is not acting as a conventional lady of the time- she is talking darkly and committing violent acts of evil.'* Where candidates did balance the assessment objectives successfully in this way, it tended to make it easier for them to maintain a convincing critical style.

There were a few instances of candidates providing a general overview of the life and times of Shakespeare, which should be avoided. Points on context should be relevant to the question and not given as an introductory or concluding paragraph but integrated throughout the response.

## ***The Merchant of Venice***

### **Question 15: How does Shakespeare present Nerissa and Gratiano in the play?**

There were no responses to this question.

### **Question 16: Explore the significance of the law in *The Merchant of Venice*.**

There was just one response to this question. There were no discernible issues, with much for candidates to be able to consider.

The sole response seen was well sustained and knowledgeable, providing perceptive insight into Venetian laws and systems of justice, combined with the role of women, which addressed AO4 very thoroughly.

## ***Pride and Prejudice***

### **Question 17: 'Mr Darcy and Mr Bingley are presented as being very different in the novel.' How far do you agree with this statement?**

There were just nine responses to this question. There were some thoughtful responses, which were effectively argued. However, some responses were a little brief, showing little knowledge and understanding of Mr Darcy and Mr Bingley. There were also a few narrative responses, which re-told the plot, with little coverage of AO4 or AO2.

It was pleasing to see some particularly perceptive responses, which effectively argued the case for Mr Darcy, explaining how his shyness is mistaken for rudeness. These responses also argued how Mr Bingley's popularity is based on misconceptions and his weaknesses are soon exposed.

### **Question 18: Discuss the use of humour in *Pride and Prejudice*.**

There was just one response to this question. As with Question 17, this question appears to have been accessible with no discernible issues.

The sole response identified a number of examples of humour in the novel, including the presentation of Mrs Bennet, Mr Collins and Lady Catherine de Bourgh, the irony of Elizabeth's initial opinion of Mr Darcy and the interactions between Mr Bennet and his wife.

For AO2, there was some analysis of the description of characters as well as the irony in the novel. Further consideration of AO4 would have benefitted the response, although there was some brief consideration of how Austen uses humour to mock the society of the time.

## ***Great Expectations***

### **Question 19: Discuss the importance of education in *Great Expectations*.**

There was just one response to this question. Nevertheless, the question did not appear to present any discernible difficulties, with there being much to consider in relation to this question, as set out in the mark scheme. A central part of the

novel is Pip's perception of education as a means of rising socially and he pursues an education in his quest to become a gentleman.

**Question 20: 'Different female characters in the novel are seen to have a positive or negative influence on Pip.' Explore the presentation of one female character who influences Pip in the novel.**

There were no responses to this question.

**Question 21: In what ways does Pearl grow up in *The Scarlet Letter*?**

There were just two responses to this question. Nevertheless, the question appears to have performed in a similar way to questions in previous series.

As exemplified by the indicative content in the mark scheme, there was much for candidates to be able to explore in relation to AO1, AO2 and AO4, from how Pearl is presented as a child, up until the point she leaves the town to become '*married, and happy, and mindful of her mother*'.

**Question 22: Explore the theme of punishment in the novel.**

There were no responses to this question.

### Top Tips

As a summary, here are some top tips for this paper:

- There is a choice of two questions for each text. Candidates are able to play to their strengths by selecting the question they feel most confident with.
- Candidates are advised to spend 45 minutes on each section.
- The indicative content in the mark scheme shows possible points candidates might make in their answer. However, these are just suggested points; any relevant ideas are rewarded.
- A brief introduction and conclusion can help to ensure that responses remain focused on the question.
- A brief plan at the start can help candidates to think of the range of points they would like to include in their essay.
- If there is a quotation given in the question, candidates can use this as stimulus for their answer (perhaps as a starting point).
- In Section A, both AO1 and AO2 are assessed.
- Remember, AO1 and AO2 are of equal value in Section A.
- Context (AO4) is not assessed in section A.
- There are three parts to AO1:
  - o demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the text
  - o maintain a critical style
  - o present an informed critical style
- For AO1, candidates should show their knowledge and understanding of the text through the scope and depth of examples selected from across the text.
- As part of AO1, candidates are required to provide examples to support points. As an open book exam, this is likely to be quotations from the text. However, depending on the point being made, this could still be a paraphrase or a reference to a specific part of the play.

- Candidates are able to show personal engagement for AO1 by offering their own individual thoughts on relevant ideas.
- Quotations should be selected carefully, which fully support the points being made; precise quotations, such as a word or a phrase, are more likely to show the necessary discrimination in the selection of evidence.
- Responses which re-tell the story are typical of Level 2, where the key descriptor is 'largely narrative'.
- For AO2, candidates should not just consider language but also form and structure.
- Although the mark scheme does not specify the need to use literary terminology, this could well help candidates to focus on the need to explore language, form and structure for AO2.
- Form, for AO2, could include:
  - o the type of text
  - o the physical organisation of the text, including stage directions
  - o the genre
  - o use of prose / verse.
- More successful responses will intertwine the assessment objectives to fully develop ideas.
- Finding examples from across the text to support a point can help to develop ideas.
- The Point, Evidence, Explanation (PEE) approach can help candidates to achieve a mark at least in Level 3.
- Remember, in addition to AO1 and AO2, context (AO4) is assessed in Section B.
- For context (AO4), candidates could comment on a number of aspects, including:
  - o the author's life
  - o the historical setting, time and location
  - o social and cultural context
  - o the literary context
  - o how the text is received at different times
- Candidates should try to avoid providing a summary of what they know about the writer and try to select appropriate points for context which support the ideas in the main part of their essay.
- The most successful responses integrate references to context throughout, often using context to support and develop points for AO1 and AO2.