

GCE



CCEA GCE A2
Exemplifying Examination
Performance (New Grid)
English Literature

This is an exemplification of candidates' performance in GCE A2 examinations (Summer 2018) to support the teaching and learning of the English Literature specification.



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EXEMPLIFYING EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE

GCE English Literature

Introduction

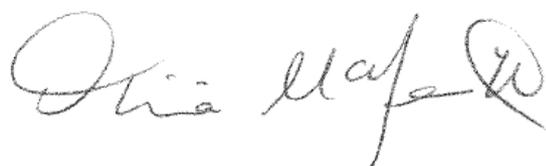
These materials illustrate aspects of performance from the 2018 summer A2 examination series of CCEA's revised GCE Specification in 2016.

Students' grade A responses are reproduced verbatim and accompanied by commentaries written by senior examiners. The commentaries draw attention to the strengths of the students' responses and indicate, where appropriate, deficiencies and how improvements could be made.

It is intended that the materials should provide a benchmark of candidate performance and help teachers and students to raise standards.

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Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olivia McNeill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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GCE: A2 English Literature

AEL11: Shakespearean Genres

Grade: A Exemplar

Answer the question on your chosen Shakespeare text.

Q1 *Othello*

The tragic hero Othello is entirely responsible for his own downfall.

By referring closely to extract 1 printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Tragedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

Student's response

To call Othello a 'tragic hero' in itself suggests that he is not entirely responsible for his own downfall, as, such in the case of Hamlet and King Lear, there appears to be other variables and circumstances that contributed to his fall from grace. However, I do not believe that Othello is deserving of the title tragic hero, and that he is in fact, entirely responsible for his own downfall. Though it is arguable that Iago was the driving force and catalyst that provoked Othello and all his shortcomings, but as AC Bradley observes, one does not leave a performance of Othello searching for the Iago in their lives, but instead recognises how such an embodiment of evil serves not to turn us into monsters but merely brings out the very worst in ourselves. And so, Iago did not create the cruel, and wrathful vengeance that eventually led Othello to brutally murder his wife, but instead, brought it to the surface.

Perhaps we could be more sympathetic towards Othello, and award him some degree of victim status, had he, in some form, recognised his own part in his downfall. Instead, he shelves the blame that he should so rightly adorn to the side, instead asking 'Who can control his fate?' By positing such a question to Gratiano and to the audience, Othello totally omits blame and instead offers up fate as the sole cause that drove his actions. It is true, that fate always has a certain element in Shakespearean tragedy, but I believe that Othello is unique in this case that fate was not the looming master of events, but rather, choice had a huge part to play. Othello attempts to strengthen this argument by employing the sea imagery that is so often associated with the naval General, citing that 'Here is my journey's end, here is my butt, And very sea-mark of my utmost sail'. Othello suggests that like a ship, he was on a predetermined course which was always going to lead him to this point, and by his own reasoning cannot be entirely responsible for his downfall, and instead is a victim dealt a cruel hand by fate.

Othello, in his dialogue with Lodovico in Act 5 undermines his own argument of fate being the cause of his downfall by also placing the blame of his actions onto Iago. Now, there is no disputing the outright and blatant sociopathic nature of Iago, and his part in the murder of Desdemona and the attempted murder of Cassio. As Coleridge describes him, he is the 'motiveless malignity' who sought only to hurt Othello. For it was he who first planted the idea that Cassio was 'too familiar with his wife', and nurtured it with his poison until Othello finally came to the conclusion that murdering Desdemona and Cassio as the only way to remedy the situation. But, can Iago truly be blamed for Othello's choices, did he force him to place a pillow over Desdemona's head and smother her? Othello too easily labels Iago 'a devil', the same tactic he employed to justify killing his wife. The religious imagery evoked by questioning 'why he hath thus ensar'd my soul and body?' rebrands Iago as the archfiend who has manipulated Othello and forced him to sin – thus elevating Othello of any blame for his downfall. How can you blame a man for his actions when he was under the influence of the devil himself? To those assessing the extent to which Othello is responsible for his own downfall, this tactic only helps affirm how he is entirely responsible. Iago may be cruel, cunning, and evil, but he is still a man, no more able to force Othello to commit murder than you or I. Iago merely nurtured and fed Othello's jealousy and inner nature, and from that we can accept that he is therefore partly to blame for Othello's downfall, but Othello clearly also shares in that blame.

We have to question Othello's actions throughout the duration of the play as a means to determine his responsibility in his own downfall. In Act 4, in which he is finally convinced of Desdemona's so-called guilt, his first reaction is to 'tear her to pieces'. Othello declares that his heart is now 'stone', and demands 'blood blood blood', though before these declarations he could have been forgiven by an Elizabethan audience, not any longer, as his violent ruthless resolve sees him echo a Machivellian archetype (just as Iago does), and so sympathy for him is hard to muster. Even as Iago agrees that Cassio must die, he attempts to argue 'but let her live', to which Othello ardently refuses. Here we can see clearly that Othello is entirely to blame for his own downfall as he takes the situation a step further than even Iago would have imagined (although he does rather quickly go along with it).

Even the fact that he never brings the matter to Desdemona begs us to consider how blameless Othello can claim to be. Rather than bring it to the attention of his wife, Othello chooses to rely solely on the observations of Iago and the 'so-called' 'ocular proof' of the handkerchief. His actions speak louder than his words. He chooses to lie to Desdemona about the origin of the handkerchief, claiming there to be 'magic in the stitching' so as to inspire fear in her. He chooses to ignore the testimony of Emilia, who affirms to him that 'never' did Cassio be alone with Desdemona. It appears that Othello elects to disregard any evidence that would point in favour of Desdemona's innocence. Taking this into consideration, it is hard not to view Othello as responsible for his own downfall, as he was gifted with many the opportunity to reveal that Desdemona was innocent.

We also have to call into question Othello's behaviour before the final actions of Act 5. When Lodovico first comes to Cyprus, Othello in a rage publically humiliates Desdemona when 'he strikes her'. Though the stage directions are brief, it is clear from many productions that this act was intended to be extremely violent and shocking. It is surprising however, that this instance might indicate Othello not being entirely responsible for his downfall, as Lodovico explains in horror that 'this would not be believed in Venice'. This indicates to the audience that such an act of brutality is completely out of character for Othello, and so here we find ourselves wondering if perhaps Iago's influence has had a far more profound effect on Othello and his state of mind than first anticipated. Maybe it is a fair examination to place more of the responsibility of Othello's downfall onto Iago's shoulders. It is plausible, but I do not find such an argument convincing. Othello is a seasoned state-sponsored murderer who has fought in many wars on behalf of Venice. I do not believe it is entirely outside of Othello's character to act violently, if seemingly provoked. And in Othello's mind certainly, Desdemona had given him just cause to lash out at her. Given this act of violence, it is not hard to see Othello making the choice to kill Desdemona out of his own conviction and morals, if she had given him 'just cause'. As Othello argues himself, that he was 'an honourable murderer', the oxymoron is almost laughable in this instance, as it echoes back to Othello declaring Desdemona 'the protectress of her honour', it begs the question, who's honour is it that Desdemona was meant to protect, and whose honour was it that Othello was defending? As Atwood observes, a man's greatest fear is a woman to laugh at him, a woman's greatest fear is a man to kill her. Clearly, Othello's own justification of his actions that lead to his downfall are superfluous, and indicate his responsibility. Othello is responsible for his downfall because he cared more for defending his honour than he did the life of the woman he was supposed to love. Iago did not instill this principle within Othello, it already existed.

Once more addressing Othello's responsibility in regards to him being a tragic hero. Unlike most Shakespearan conventions, Othello breaks away – he is not a man of noble birth, in fact he was once a slave, he is also a member of what was thought to be 'an inferior race', but still he does have one defining feature of a tragic hero – a fatal flaw. Just as Hamlet's was indecisiveness, Othello's was jealousy. And although that does evoke some degree of sympathy from a Shakespearan audience, it cannot and does not remove responsibility from Othello of his downfall, instead it just makes it easier to comprehend.

Taking all points made into consideration, I agree that Othello is responsible for his downfall, perhaps not entirely, as one cannot deny the schemings of Iago having a profound impact on the course of events. However, I believe that Iago only magnified the violence and brutality that already existed within Othello, and more than likely merely sped up the course of events that was more probable than not to transpire in the marriage of Othello and Desdemona. As Emilia so poignantly addressed it, 'A year or two of marriage shows us a man', affirming why I believe that Othello is mostly responsible for his own downfall, as, given his nature, he would have most likely given into his fatal flaw at one stage, and his wrath and insecurity was always going to be directed at Desdemona, and would be his downfall nonetheless.

AO5: coherent and consistent attempts at reasoning with clear sense of relevance to the key terms

AO2: limited attempt to relate comments on dramatic methods to key terms

AO3: secure comments on context

AO4: makes secure connections

AO1: secure textual knowledge; secure sense of order

Band 4

Examiner's comments

For this unit the driving Assessment Objective is AO5 (argument). AO2, AO3, AO4 and as always AO1 (which includes QWC) are also under assessment, but the main determinant of the final mark should be understood to be AO5.

The response demonstrated an analytical understanding of the text, conveying analytical ideas in a logical, orderly and relevant manner. It was written accurately and clearly, with a developed literary style (AO1).

The response makes relevant reference to the text and most certainly demonstrates a good understanding of it. Care is taken to afford the extract and the wider text acceptably equal attention. Quality of written communication is very good – precise and fluent, adopting a mature persuasive style. Material is organized clearly and rationally.

There was an analytical exploration of dramatic methods (AO2).

This area of the response is limited, and might have been developed. Imagery, stage direction and oxymoron are valid dramatic methods and are offered in a meaningful manner, but the argument might have been propelled more vigorously with some larger-scale dramatic methods. It would also have been useful to remind the reader more often of Shakespeare's agency, for example with regard to the handkerchief.

A discriminating use was made of relevant external contextual information (AO3).

There is clear awareness of the nature of Shakespearean tragedy, with references to the role of fate in the genre, to other Shakespearean tragic heroes, to a little literary criticism, and even finding time for a cameo from Margaret Atwood. This provides a satisfactory basis for conducting a lively argument. The contextual ideas surrounding the tragic hero, of which the candidate is obviously aware, could have been developed more systematically.

The response commented incisively on connections between the extract and the wider text (AO4).

There is a balanced, focused consideration given to extract and wider text, maintaining the continuity of the argument.

The response offered sound, considered reasoning in support of opinions and reached well-grounded personal conclusions (AO5).

In this response, the candidate decides early on that Othello is not, in fact a tragic hero. Despite a brief, belated return to this important part of the stimulus statement, this approach is not to be recommended. However, there is a clear and vigorous balancing of fate and “choice” as factors in Othello’s downfall, rejecting the first and arguing that Othello is responsible for his own downfall. In the final stages of the argument, alternative interpretations are properly considered. This part of the case is helpfully presented -- for example: “It is plausible, but I do not find such an argument convincing”. There is a clear personal conclusion, nicely qualified – but in which one was prompted to wish for an admission that fate may have been more significant in shaping outcomes than had been previously argued.

Q2 *King Lear*

In *King Lear*, the suffering experienced by Lear and Gloucester evokes more terror than pity in the audience.

By referring closely to extract 2 printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Tragedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

Student's response

In Shakespeare's tragedy King Lear, which witnesses the character of Lear's downfall due to his hamartia of hubris; and Gloucester's demise instigated by his naïve and 'blind' love for his illegitimate son Edmund, the audience suffers terror by the vile acts of the malevolent Goneril and Regan, and betrayal of the Machiavelian villain Edmund. Lear and Gloucester experience great suffering – prolonged pain and turmoil – at the hands of their children, of which ignites terror within the audience. However, Shakespeare's use of the Tragedy genre and tragic Hero also evokes great pity from the audience, who sympathise for Lear, a man who claims to be 'more sinned against than sinning', and Gloucester, who was 'blind' when he 'could see'.

Firstly, Shakespeare's characterisation of Regan as brutal and violent evokes a sense of terror within an audience for a plethora of reasons. Regan demands that Cornwall pluck 'th'other too' of Gloucester's eyes immediately after mocking the man; 'One side will mock another'. Such an act of outright brutality emphasises Regan's role as an evil, antagonising and apathetic villain within the play; her advocacy of such mutilation most certainly evokes terror from not only a Jacobean audience (who furthermore would be shocked and horrified that she is a woman committing foul deeds) but also a modern audience who would find watching this gruesome act on stage terrifying. This characterisation also creates terror to the audience as it hints towards further acts of violence to come.

Shakespeare introduces the theme of gods via Gloucester in this scene which exacerbates the terror implemented by the violence. Gloucester cries for help: 'Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods!' Gloucester's plea for help from the gods is extremely ironic, as Edmund previously declared it the 'greatest foppery of the world' that man rely on 'fate' and other gods instead of taking responsibility for their own human error. The irony creates terror as the audience realises that Gloucester's

plea is futile, and that no divine intervention is going to save the man from his suffering.

Furthermore, the staging of Gloucester's mutilation - [Cornwall puts out one of Gloucester's eyes] – harbours even more terror as it is a gruesome deed witnessed by the audience onstage rather than off, amplifying the terror evoked in the audience.

However, after the established feeling of terror by the cruel acts of Regan and Cornwall, Shakespeare uses the interaction between the now blind Gloucester and Regan to evoke pity in the audience instead. Gloucester asks 'where is my son Edmund?', and Regan replies 'thou call'st on him that hates thee'. It is in this moment ironically, that the blind Gloucester can finally see Edmund for his deceptive nature. Gloucester's anagnorisis and realisation that 'Edgar who abused' evokes pity within the audience as Gloucester's suffering was arguably greater than he deserved, and the irony that he had to physically lose his sight in order to realise and 'see' the truth is both harrowing and pitiful. Instead of implementing terror; this psychological suffering of Gloucester evokes pity as the audience feels sorry for the tragic character, who's hamartia of being 'blinded' by love, has resulted in his genuine, physical blinding.

Lear's peripeteia and suffering is displayed when Goneril and Regan stand together in opposition to him and force him to reduce his train. They consecutively tease and reduce the number – 'what need one?' – united as they stand side by side on stage, and reduce their father to tears. This moment evokes great pity in the audience as they finally witness Lear's mistreatment by Goneril and Regan first hand.

Furthermore, Lear's rage against nature, set [on the heath], amongst a blistering storm to symbolise his deteriorating mind set evokes pity from the audience as the realisation that Lear is a 'infirm, poor, weak and despised old man' cannot be wholly his own fault as minds fail naturally with age – 'Every old man is a king Lear'.

Furthermore, the Fool, who acts as a carnivalesque figure to paradoxically help Lear deal with his pain by confronting the idea that he initiated it himself, ambiguously states that a 'wise man and a fool' are present on the heath. This ambiguity creates pity rather than terror in the audience as Lear's pain and suffering is, like his parallel Gloucester, much greater and more severe than he actually deserves as he is a poor, 'mad' old man.

Shakespeare also evokes pity in the audience by having the stage direction of [Lear enters fantastically dressed in flowers]. Costume is a key consideration in King Lear as often in depicts the status of Lear in terms of majesty. In this scene, which see's Lear naked and raving nonsense, his lack of clothes symbolises his fall from majesty and descent into madness which evokes pity and sympathy for the old man as the suffering he has endured has stripped away his sense and left him naked, vulnerable and mad. This can be seen furthermore as the symbol of his pre-emminence as he has finally fell to a beggar's level from that of a King.

Shakespeare's tragic end, which oversees the death of our tragic hero (Lear) and Cordelia perhaps evokes the greatest pity, but, also terror in the play. Aristotelian tragedy which sees the hamartia, peripeteia, anagnorisis and finally, catharsis can arguably be broken by Shakespeare's tragic end. In Aristotelian Tragedy, the tragic hero meets his end in a cathartic (purge of emotions) coda; whilst this is present with the death of Lear and the ending of his suffering, many circumstances actually evoke pity rather than purge them. Firstly, Lear's agony over the unjust death of Cordelia, seen by his repetition of 'howl, howl, howl', and [carrying Cordelia in his arms], is a harrowing and melancholic sight to bear. Furthermore, Lear's confusion and ambiguity of 'and my poor Fool is hanged!' creates pity as the audience believes his suffering of Cordelia's death has broken his mind. This is amplified by his ambiguity of understanding that Cordelia is actually dead, as he tells the other characters that 'she lives yet' and to watch her lips, before Lear himself joins her in death. Kent's analysis that he 'died of a broken heart' further evokes pity as his suffering plagued him until his death. However, there is an element of terror to the end of King Lear as Edgar, the new leader, [exits with a dead march]. This creates an uneasiness amongst the audience as the sense of equilibrium and balance Tragedy often returns to seems to have been lost. Whilst Edmund claimed that the 'wheel has come full circle', instead, a foreboding and uncertain future is established rather than hope, which creates terror in the audience as Lear and Gloucester's suffering has ended yet, the effects continue.

To conclude, whilst the suffering of both Lear and Gloucester do evoke both terror and pity in the audience, I believe that pity is more prevalent and indeed intended as opposed to terror. Lear is a psychologically complex character who is punished severely for no more than human flaws, which indeed evokes pity rather than terror.

AO5: consistent, coherent and integrated attempts at reasoning with clear sense of relevance to the question

AO2: coherent and secure comments on methods linked clearly to key terms

AO3: comments on external context are mostly secure and consistent in maintaining focus on all aspects of the task

AO4: connections are secure and focused

AO1: secure knowledge and understanding; coherent and orderly in expression

Band 4

Examiner's comments

For this unit the driving Assessment Objective is AO5 (argument). AO2, AO3, AO4 and as always AO1 (which includes QWC) are also under assessment, but the main determinant of the final mark should be understood to be AO5.

The response demonstrated an analytical understanding of the text, conveying analytical ideas in a logical, orderly and relevant manner. It was written accurately and clearly, with a developed literary style (AO1).

The response ranges quite widely in the play, as the question requires. Brief, relevant quotation and reference are to hand and there is good knowledge and understanding of the text. The candidate has a good working vocabulary of literary terms. Quality of written communication is not fluent throughout, but is perfectly serviceable. Paragraphing is clear and careful, and helpful to the reader.

There was an analytical exploration of dramatic methods (AO2).

Several significant dramatic methods are utilized in the development of the argument, for example, a particular use of on-stage action, the symbolic value of the storm, the importance of costume. Foregrounding the agency of the dramatist would benefit the response.

A discriminating use of was made of relevant external contextual information. (AO3). The contextual requirements of the question are attended to in a rather limited fashion. The Aristotelian framework is utilized a little clumsily, without being seamlessly integrated into the argument. There is, however, a thoughtful observation about the restorative function of tragedy at the conclusion of the response which certainly enriches the argument. (See also the comments under AO5 about the essay's conclusion.)

The response commented incisively on connections between the extract and the wider text (AO4)

The theme of suffering of the two named characters is tracked across the extract and the wider text in good detail, as are the effects.

The response offered sound, considered reasoning in support of opinions and reached well-grounded conclusions (AO5).

The strength of this response lies in the almost unbroken persistence of its argumentation, which is based on a well sustained engagement with the key terms of the question. Three arguments are deduced and developed from the extract, which receives an extended consideration: for terror over pity firstly because of the brutality of the proceeding and its being effected by a woman, then because Gloucester's appeal to the gods is futile; for pity over terror at the excessiveness of Gloucester's suffering. The focus on the key term "suffering" could have been stronger, but it is established and maintained with the perception that Gloucester's anagnorisis is part of his suffering. This vigour of argument is continued when the candidate turns to the

wider text. Pity for Lear's humiliation at the hands of his daughters, for his age and frailty when he has to endure the storm, for the excessiveness of his suffering, and for his losses of status and sanity. Again, the key term "suffering" could have been more prominent ("pain" sometimes being used as substitute). Finally, there is a reasoned conclusion in which the candidate bravely challenges the very idea that the audience experiences catharsis at the end of the play, and attempts to characterize what the audience experience might really be.

Q3 *The Taming of the Shrew*

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Petruccio breaks Kate's spirit.

By referring closely to extract **3** printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Comedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q4 *As You Like It*

In *As You Like It*, good order and happiness are restored at the end of the play.

By referring closely to extract **4** printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespearean Comedy.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q5 *Measure for Measure*

In *Measure for Measure*, the Duke is presented as an irresponsible ruler.

By referring closely to extract **5** printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespeare's Problem Plays.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q6 *The Winter's Tale*

In *The Winter's Tale*, the forgiveness and reconciliation are unconvincing.

By referring closely to extract **6** printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and to other appropriately selected parts of the text, **show to what extent** you would agree with the view expressed above.

Your **argument** should include relevant comments on Shakespeare's dramatic methods, and relevant external contextual information on the nature of Shakespeare's Last Plays.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

The above question could not be exemplified as the candidate's permission could not be obtained.

GCE: A2 English Literature

**AEL21: The Study of Poetry Pre 1900 and
Unseen Poetry**

Grade: A Exemplar

Section A: The Study of Poetry Pre 1900

Answer **one** question from Section A based on your chosen poet.

Q1 Chaucer: *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*

Answer either (a) or (b)

Q1a By referring closely to Extract 1(a) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and other appropriately selected parts of the text, and making use of relevant external contextual information on medieval attitudes to sex, examine the **poetic methods** which Chaucer uses to write about sexual desire.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

The above question could not be exemplified as the candidate's permission could not be obtained.

Q1b By referring closely to Extract 1(b) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and other appropriately selected parts of the text, and making use of relevant external contextual information on medieval attitudes to marriage, examine the poetic methods which Chaucer uses to write about the theme of sovereignty in marriage.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q2 Donne

Answer either (a) or (b)

Q2a By referring closely to "A Jet Ring Sent" (Poem 2(a)) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on Metaphysical poetry, examine the poetic methods which Donne uses to write about attitudes to love.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q2b By referring closely to “Batter my heart” (Poem 2(b)) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the poetic methods which Donne uses to write about feelings of religious anxiety.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

Student's response

In both ‘Batter my heart’ and ‘I am a little world’ the speaker conveys his desperate and urgent plea for salvation as a result of his religious anxiety.

Firstly, in ‘Batter my heart’ the speaker conveys his religious anxiety for forgiveness because he fears he will not get to heaven. The speaker uses violent imagery with plosive ‘b’ sounds: ‘Break, blow, burn and make me knew’. The speaker’s violent imagery here reflects the extent he is willing to go through to be saved, highlighting his religious anxiety. Furthermore the plosive ‘b’ expresses the speaker’s desperate urgency with which he desires this salvation from God because he fears that his sins will damn him in reaching heaven. The speaker’s religious anxiety is strongly evident in his violent imagery and through the imperative ‘make me knew’ as the speaker is aware of God’s power in forgiving his sins and making him pure again.

In addition to this the speaker emphasises the strong control which sin has over him, thus heightening his religious anxiety. The speaker claims he is ‘betroth’d unto your enemy’. This hyperbole of the speaker being engaged to sin stresses the extent of religious anxiety which the speaker feels as he feels he cannot escape from his sinful nature but he also recognises that God can set him free as he uses the imperative ‘Divorce me, untie me or break that knot again’. The imperative here ‘Divorce me’ is powerful and stresses the religious anxiety of the speaker as the notion of religion and divorce are contrary to each other. The imperatives ‘Divorce’ and ‘break’ are forceful and powerful and the force of ‘break’ takes us back to the title of ‘batter’ where the speaker sets a desperate and anxious tone of forgiveness from his sins, because his religious anxiety is overwhelming. The strong religious anxiety evident through the violent imagery and imperatives can be linked to Donne’s early life in London where his sinful nature of philandering has made him recognise how much he needs God’s forgiveness but perhaps also now undeserving he is of it. This is why the strong imperatives are necessary to emphasise the extent he is willing to go to as his religious anxiety is increasing his desperate desire for forgiveness.

Furthermore, the speaker also stresses his religious anxiety through the power of sin over him. The speaker uses an extended metaphor of being ‘captiv’d’ ‘weak’ and ‘untrue’ and claiming that God as his ‘viceroys’ and leader needs to set him free from his captivity of sin and the devil. The speaker uses this extended metaphor thinking of his own religion growing up where a family member was a victim of religious

persecution. Donne perhaps felt 'captiv'd' in his own religion of Catholicism and perhaps this is why he converted to Anglicanism, to ease his religious anxiety and set him free from the captivity of the catholic religion at this time.

Similarly, in 'I am a little world' the speaker uses a desperate tone convey his religious anxiety. The speaker uses violent imagery to convey the strength of his religious anxiety 'Burn me O Lord with a fiery zeal'. The speaker uses this fire imagery to convey the extent to which he is willing to go to to be saved. The ferocity of the request 'burn me' strongly emphasises the extent to which he is willing to go to. A tone of panic is also conveyed here as there is an increase in passion from the previous imagery the speaker uses; thus reinforcing the extremity of his religious anxiety.

Moreover, the speaker's religious anxiety is expressed through an increase in passion to which he wants his sins to be saved. The speaker uses flood imagery, 'drown my world', 'weeping earnestly', 'wash'. The increase in passion from wash to his later use of fire imagery, successfully depicts an increase in his religious anxiety thus having a strong impact of conveying his desperate and panic in tone. The imagery of 'drown my world' is an allusion to Noah and the ark which can be compared to the 'captiv'd' feeling of the speaker in 'Batter my heart' where he feels 'captiv'd' by sin which God can set him free from. This is evident in 'I am a little world' as the allusion to Noah and the ark expresses the complete eradication of sin which he desires. Additionally, the speaker in 'Batter my heart' also expresses this sense of eradication of sin in the imagery and imperative of 'break, blow, burn and make me know'. Furthermore both speakers express their religious anxiety as powerful through the use of violent and destructive imagery. Either way both speaker express their desire for religious anxiety regardless of the process.

Subsequently, the speaker in 'I am a little world' expresses an emotional and sincere side to his religious anxiety. The flood imagery of 'weeping earnestly' depicts the speaker as sincerely sorry and repentful for his sins because he is desperate for forgiveness. Therefore the religious anxiety of the speaker is evident as he expresses his sincere desire for sin to be destroyed within him through the cleansing of his sins in the flood imagery.

Conclusively, the speakers in 'Batter my heart' and 'I am a little world' express their religious anxiety in a desperate way both through violent imagery and through extreme ferocity in their imperatives. This enables the conclusion that religious anxiety is overwhelming for both speakers and that both speakers are willing to go to great lengths in order to ease their religious anxieties.

AO2: coherent and largely secure analysis of poetic methods linked clearly to key terms

AO3: competent and increasingly purposeful comments on external context

AO4: makes secure connections between the two poems

AO1: competent knowledge and understanding; secure sense of order and clarity of expression

Band 4

Examiner's comments

For this unit the driving Assessment Objective is AO2 (poetic methods). AO3, AO4 and as always AO1 (which includes QWC) are also under assessment, but the main determinant of the final mark should be understood to be AO2.

The response demonstrated an analytical understanding of the texts, conveying analytical ideas in a logical, orderly and relevant manner. It was written accurately and clearly, with a developed literary style (AO1).

This response adopts a simple strategy of dealing with the named poem at length before moving on to an appropriate selection "I am a little world", from which position some retrospective comments on connections could be made. This worked quite well. The two poems receive roughly equal treatment. The key term "feelings of religious anxiety" is engaged from the outset, and there is some development of ideas associated with these feelings. The candidate is at pains to make explicit the linkage between such feelings and the language choices made by the poet. The response is carefully paragraphed. The expression of ideas, apart from a few isolated mis-formulations, is clear and logical.

There was an analytical exploration of poetic methods (AO2).

Some methods (e.g. the use of imperatives and the allusion to the Flood) receive a developed discussion. Elsewhere, there is some unevenness. The identification of violent images in "Batter my heart" is regarded as complete far too soon, and the opportunity of analyzing exactly what ideas or entities were being compared in the words "break, blow, burn, and make me new" was not taken up. Likewise, the explication of the "usurpt town" simile, while receiving more analytical attention, is not entirely error-free. However, the discussion of every method leads the reader to the key term. One strength of this response is its continuous relevance.

A discriminating use of was made of relevant external contextual information (AO3).

Effective use is made of biographical information and there is a successful integration of this and the methods Donne uses, for example, in what the candidate says about how a sinful early life means that "strong imperatives are necessary to emphasise the extent he is willing to go to as his religious anxiety is increasing his desperate desire for forgiveness". Discrimination is also evident in the absence of "free-standing" contextual information.

The response commented incisively on connections between the extract and the wider text, or between the given poem and the self-selected poem (AO4).

There is a strongly developed connection regarding the idea of the “eradication of sin” in both poems. This connection is pursued in an integrated fashion, embracing theme and methods.

Q3 Blake

Answer either (a) or (b)

Q3a By referring closely to “The Garden of Love” (Poem **3(a)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Blake uses to write about his views of religion.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

Student’s response

In the ‘Garden of Love’ and ‘The Little Vagabond’ Blake uses various poetic methods, such as repetition, contrast and rhyme, to depict religion as corrupted by the Church of England. Both poems are taken from ‘Songs of Experience’ although ‘The Little Vagabond’ was omitted from the first publication, allowing a more realistic, cynical representation of Blake’s views on religion to be explored.

Both poems use a simplistic rhyme scheme – ABCB in the ‘The Garden of Love’ and AABB in ‘The Little Vagabond’ - to belie the enigmatic cynicism in the message: that institutionalised religion is taking away from one’s relationships with God. The corruption of the rhyme scheme in the third line at each of the three quatrains in ‘The Garden of Love’ exemplify the corruption and erosion the church has caused to the previously joyous and pastoral setting. Similarly, the rhyme scheme of ‘The Little Vagabond’ is distorted in the first stanza ‘Cold’ and ‘warm’ contrast, immediately drawing a comparison between the ‘Church’ and the ‘Ale-house’. Also in ‘The Little Vagabond’ Blake uses disjointed amphibrachic meter to reflect, in his view, that the Church of England was not functioning as it should.

There is a difference in speaker in the two poems: In the ‘Garden of Love’, it is clear that it is an adult revisiting a site from his childhood, ‘I used to play’, whereas in ‘The Little Vagabond’, the speaker is a child, heightened with the repetition of ‘Dear Mother’ which creates a more maternal tone. However, as this poem is placed in ‘Songs of Experience’ it is clear that Blake is using a child to make his critical views on religion in the 18th century more acceptable.

Biblical imagery and allusions are used throughout both poems to show that Blake is not critical of religion or God, but critical of the Church of England and what they stood for at the time – they placed importance on land ownership and wealth, rather than the personal relationship with God Blake thought Christians ought to have. The title, and the repetition of ‘Garden of Love’ throughout, hint at the Garden of Eden. However, unlike the Church of England who were preaching that Adam and Eve’s sin was sexual, Blake viewed carnal desires as a God-given gift and something to celebrate. This is evident throughout the poem, especially with the pastoral imagery created with ‘so many sweet flowers bore’, and the final line – ‘joys & desires’.

‘The Little Vagabond’ also incorporates religious stories: the last stanza in particular alludes to both Satan as a fallen angel and the story of the prodigal son:

*‘Then he would have no more quarrel with the devil or the Barrel
But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel’*

Although this is a utopian ideal, Blake is making an interesting point about the importance of forgiveness.

The setting of both poems is key for Blake’s criticism of institutionalised religion. ‘A Chapel was built in the midst’ (of the garden) demonstrates the control the Church of England at the time, particularly because they owned 46% of the land in England. In ‘The Little Vagabond’, the Ale-house is presented as ‘healthy & pleasant & warm’. Blake’s use of triad here creates a benevolent tone as it has a cumulative effect, and allows Blake to express the view that the Church of England were not generous. He further states that if they were, the working classes would ‘sing and pray all the live-long day’ i.e. do what the church wants them to. The use of internal rhyme here emphasises the joy that religion could evoke in the public.

The restraint and control the Church had is explored in ‘The Garden of Love.’ ‘the gates of this Chapel were shut’, depicts the Church as cold and unwelcoming through metaphor: the gates represent constraint. The capitalisation of ‘Chapel’ again emphasises that Blake viewed the church as corrupt, not religion. The open ended sentence ‘Thou shalt not’ creates an archaic tone full of religious imagery, but it is a way for Blake to show how much control the church had and how many things were restricted. Finally, the alliteration ‘binding with briars’ illustrates conformity as ‘briars’ only inflict injury when you struggle against them. Although the Church may have put them there, fighting them well only induce more misery.

Similarly, in ‘The Little Vagabond’ criticism of the Church’s restraint is explored but through the use of irony ‘our souls to rejoice’ is sardonically humorous as Blake is pointing out that joy and celebration is not a feature of the Church of England. ‘Nor ever once’ wish from the Church to stray’ is also ironic in tone by the use of animal imagery in ‘stray’. It also implies that more and more people are leaving the Church of England for smaller denominations. Blake, for example, followed the principles of Swedenborgianism which believed that salvation came from within and that Jesus should be the sole leader of the church. This gives reason to his criticism of the

Church of England as they used their political influence to make not believing in the Trinity punishable by law under the Blasphemy Act of 1698.

The human figures of the church mentioned in both poems do not positively reflect religion. In 'The Garden of Love', the 'Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds', creates an ominous and unforgiving tone with the use of the word 'back' and the fact they are all wearing it gives a sense of uniform. In 'The Little Vagabond', the 'Parson' has potential to be a positive influence on religion as he 'might preach & drink & sing', but the use of 'might' shows that the Parson was not, in actual fact, full of joy. 'Modest Dame Lurch' is painted poorly with the ironic use of 'modest', and she was known in folklore for her evil mistreatment of children. Even God is not altogether positive in this poem, as the use of simile, 'God like a father', implies he is not fully fulfilling his parental role. The capitalisation of 'Ale' and 'Barrel' personifies drink, allowing them to be seen as a juxtaposition to the religious figures in the poem. They provide warmth and happiness when the Church is not able to, but it reminds us of Chaucer's personification of the 7 deadly sins.

Both 'The Garden of Love' and 'The Little Vagabond' effectively demonstrate Blake's criticism of the Church, rather than God, and show that, in Blake's view, religion in 18th century Britain was not fulfilling its duty to the ordinary people. His parents were Protestant dissenters, so from birth Blake had a jaundiced, cynical view of institutionalised religion.

AO2 coherent and secure analysis of poetic methods, mostly linked to the key terms

AO3 increasingly purposeful comments on external context

AO4 makes secure connections

AO1 secure sense of order; coherent level of expression; secure understanding

Band 4

Examiner's comments

For this unit the driving Assessment Objective is AO2 (poetic methods). AO3, AO4 and as always AO1 (which includes QWC) are also under assessment, but the main determinant of the final mark should be understood to be AO2.

The response demonstrated an analytical understanding of the texts, conveying analytical ideas in a logical, orderly and relevant manner. It was written accurately and clearly, with a developed literary style (AO1).

This response demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the two poems and a useful awareness of their significance in Blake's wider work. For the most part, it is clearly paragraphed and expression is fluent and accurate, though there is a

slight falling-off towards the end. Good use is made of literary vocabulary. In places, there is a blurring of focus as the key term “[Blake’s] view of religion” is edged aside by wordings such as “institutionalized religion”, or “religion as corrupted by the Church of England”.

There was an analytical exploration of poetic methods (AO2)

Quite a wide variety of poetic methods is discussed successfully and a determination to adopt an analytical approach is evident. At times, for example in the consideration of the metaphor “And the gates of this Chapel were shut” and what follows, the analysis is well-developed, but towards the end of a long answer the demonstration of relevance to the key term weakens.

A discriminating use of was made of relevant external contextual information (AO3).

The stipulated contextual area was biographical and the candidate fulfills this requirement through references that are economical and relevant.

The response commented incisively on connections between the extract and the wider text, or between the given poem and the self-selected poem (AO4)

An appropriate second poem was selected, “The Little Vagabond”, which enabled the candidate to explore connections both thematic and technical such as the Church as a repressive and controlling social agent, or the use Blake made of the speaker in the poems.

Q3b By referring closely to “Holy Thursday” from *Songs of Experience* (Poem **3(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on social conditions in late eighteenth-century England, examine the **poetic methods** which Blake uses to write about social injustice.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q4 Keats

Answer either (a) or (b)

Q4a By referring closely to “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” (Poem 4(a)) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Keats uses to write about the classical Greek world.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q4b By referring closely to Extract 4(b) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and other appropriately selected parts of “The Eve of St. Agnes”, and making use of relevant external contextual information on the nature of Romantic poetry, examine the **poetic methods** which Keats uses to tell a love story.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q5 Dickinson

Answer either (a) or (b)

Q5a By referring closely to “Because I could not stop for Death –” (Poem 5(a)) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Dickinson uses to write about attitudes to death.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q5b By referring closely to “She rose to His Requirement” (Poem **5(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Dickinson uses to write about marriage.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q6 Barrett Browning

Answer either (a) or (b)

Q6a By referring closely to “The Forced Recruit” (Poem **6(a)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on nineteenth-century Italian nationalism, examine the **poetic methods** which Barrett Browning uses to write about the struggle for Italian independence.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Q6b By referring closely to “What can I give thee back” (Poem **6(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Barrett Browning uses to write about love.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

The above question not selected by Examiner.

Section B: Unseen Poetry

Answer the question set in Section B.

As he considers the city, the speaker conveys only admiration.

By referring closely to the ideas presented in the poem, and the poetic methods which Sandburg uses, **show how far you would agree** with the view expressed above.

Chicago

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women
under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.

And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the
gunman kill and go free to kill again.

And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children
I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.

And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I
give them back the sneer and say to them:

Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and
coarse and strong and cunning.

Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger
set vivid against the little soft cities;

Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against
the wilderness,

Bareheaded,

Shoveling,

Wrecking,

Planning,

Building, breaking, rebuilding,

Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,

Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,

Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,

Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart
of the people,

Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud
to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads and
Freight Handler to the Nation.

Carl Sandburg

[50]

Student's response

The poem, 'Chicago' sees a speaker comment on arguments against his city, which he agrees with, thus showing a lack of admiration for the city and understanding all of its faults and flaws which he has seen himself. However, in the second half of the poem, the speaker certainly conveys admiration as he defends the city he speaks of, showing he holds love for it. Therefore, although the speaker does show admiration, it is not all he shows as he considers the city, but rather also conveys an understanding of all its flaws, before he then evidently goes on to convey a certain admiration for the city.

The poem is free verse, and this suggests the ever-changing atmosphere of the city and the different elements that make the city which the speaker then goes onto describe. The opening of the poem suggests the uses of the city and how it is described. The speaker then goes onto comment on what people have said about the city before showing admiration for it in the second half of the poem and fighting back against the comments people have made about the city. Thus, the form and structure of the poem indicates the speaker's differing arguments – his understanding of the city's flaws and his utmost admiration for it in the second half of the poem. The form and structure thus effectively show that the speaker does not only convey admiration as he considers the city.

The effective use of language and tone throughout the poem further encapsulates how the speaker does not only convey admiration as he considers the city. Primarily, the list at the opening of the poem with the adjectives 'stormy, husky and brawling', suggest a negative aspect to the city and does not convey admiration for the city, but rather a recognition of its elements that make it what it is.

Furthermore, in the opening half of the poem, the city is personified and directly addressed by the speaker. 'They tell me you are wicked and I believe them'. This introduces a conversational element – between the speaker and the city in which the speaker addresses the flaws of the city, making it even more poignant as it adds a significant depth of realism. This realism is emphasised through the use of descriptive visual imagery, 'painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys'. This imagery introduces a theme of discontent towards these happenings – the speaker evidently does not convey admiration and this is the introduction of the flaws of the city that make the city 'crooked' and 'brutal'. These adjectives certainly suggest a cruel city and the speaker's agreement with these arguments emphasise how he does not only convey admiration. This is reinforced through the poignant imagery of 'faces of women and children' which are marked with 'wanton hunger'. Before this, the repetition of the monosyllable 'kill' is poignant and emphasises the 'crooked' nature of the city which the speaker agrees with. Thus, it is evident that as he considers the city, the speaker does not convey only admiration, but an understanding and recognition of the heart wrenching faults and flaws of the city.

However, in the second half of the poem, the speaker does convey admiration as he considers the city, giving 'back the sneer' as those who 'sneer at this [his] city'. Rather than agree, the speaker begins to defend the city through listing its positive elements through the repetition of 'and' which emphasises the endless positive elements to the city, 'with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning'. His city is 'set vivid against the little soft cities', emphasising its strength despite its flaws mentioned in the opening half of the poem. Moreover, the speaker then utilises similes to reinforce his admiration, 'Fierce as a dog with a tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness'. The use of two similes certainly emphasises the speaker's admiring tone for the city and its elements which he describes. The second simile is carried on through a list, 'Bareheaded, / Shoveling / Wrecking, / Planning' which reinforces the variety of skills throughout the city, 'Building, breaking, rebuilding,' , suggesting that the city always repairs what is broken. The repetition of 'laughing' enforces the positivity within the city as part of the extended simile and metaphor of the savage. The speaker, to end the poem, again mentions the list which began the poem, but now, the monosyllable 'proud' emphasises the speaker's tone of admiration towards the city. The speaker is defiant about his city, as seen through the imperative statement 'Come and show me' which began the second half of the poem. This imperative indicates his belief that no other city could be like his and therefore as he considers the city, the speaker certainly conveys only admiration in the second half of the poem in which the defiant tone and the poet's effective use of language convey the speaker's admiration.

In conclusion, although it is certainly clear that the speaker conveys admiration as he considers the city in the second half of the poem, it cannot be argued that the speaker conveys only admiration, as in the opening of the poem and first half, the speaker recognises the flaws of the city and portrays a discontent towards it as he vividly describes what he has seen and dislikes for himself.

AO5: consistent interpretation with clear sense of relevance to the key terms

AO2: coherent, secure analysis of methods with clear linkage to key terms

AO1: very secure knowledge and understanding, and coherent level of expression

Band 4

Examiner's comments

The response demonstrated an analytical understanding of the text, conveying analytical ideas in a logical, orderly and relevant manner. It was written accurately and clearly, with a developed literary style (AO1)

This is an expansive response which generates interpretive momentum as it proceeds, after an uncertain opening. In its latter stages it displays a growing understanding of the unseen text. Ideas are expressed in most cases clearly and accurately (though a little repetitively) with the use of an adequate literary vocabulary.

There was an analytical exploration of poetic methods (AO2)

Without seeking out obscure terms, the candidate offers a range of methods and uses them rationally in addressing the stimulus statement.

The response offered sound, considered reasoning in support of opinions and reached well-grounded personal conclusions (AO5)

The early attempt to argue an organic relationship between content on the one hand and form and structure on the other, while worthy in its conception, is undermined by being presented in terms of generalized description, without any textual references. And attempts to produce alternative interpretations to “only admiration” are not always convincing: “discontent” and “dislike” do not do justice to the text. These criticisms do only a little to reduce the impact of the latter stages of the response where the discussion of poetic methods is used in a well-reasoned and convincing way in presenting a range of interpretations – that the speaker understands and recognizes the city’s flaws, that he is defensive, even defiantly so about his city, that he understands the variety and uniqueness of Chicago.