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OCR · GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE J352

Paper 2 — Exploring Poetry and Shakespeare

June 2025 exam series

MARK SCHEME

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GCSE (9-1)

English Literature

J352/02: Exploring poetry and Shakespeare

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Mark Scheme for June 2025

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING
RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.

2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor

3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.

2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.

3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.

4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone, email or via the RM Assessor messaging system.

5. **Crossed-Out Responses**
   Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed-out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed-out response where legible.

   Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions
   Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM Assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. (The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)

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Multiple-Choice Question Responses

When a multiple-choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.

Contradictory Responses
When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only one mark per response)
Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. (The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth two or more marks)
If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space).

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)
Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add the annotation 'SEEN' to confirm that the work has been seen and mark any responses using the annotations in section 11.

7.

7.There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response):

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- if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
- OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
- OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8.The RM Assessor **comments box** is used to explain the mark awarded and should only use language from the mark schemes

9.A*ssistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.*

10.For answers marked by levels of response:

To determine the level – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer

To determine the mark within the level, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

GCSE English Literature specific guidance:

Section A

Part a)

Where a candidate has only referred to one text, either the taught or the unseen, the mark awarded is unlikely to move beyond Level 2 and cannot move beyond Level 3. Your comment should include: 'only one text considered; no attempt to compare'.

Part b)

Where a candidate has responded to part a) on one anthology cluster and part b) on a different cluster, for example part (a) Love and Relationships and part b) Conflict, both responses should be marked and the marks entered under the appropriate item numbers. RM Assessor will select the highest of the two marks. ***You should attach a message to any script where this occurs and refer it to your Team Leader. Team Leader should forward these messages to their Senior Team Leader or Principal Examiner.***

Section B

Extract-based questions

Where a candidate has not moved beyond the extract, the mark awarded cannot move beyond Level 3. Where a candidate has referred briefly to the wider text, the mark cannot move beyond Level 4. Your comment should include: 'has not referred to wider text / brief reference to wider text'.

Discursive questions

Where a candidate has only referred to one moment from the text, the mark awarded cannot move beyond Level 3. Where a candidate has referred briefly to a second moment, the mark cannot move beyond Level 4. Your comment should include: 'brief / no references to second moment'.

11. Annotations

Stamp	*Description*	*Placement*
	AO1 To indicate relevant points and analysis	Body of response
K	AO1 Knowledge	Left margin
U	AO1 Understanding - applying knowledge to offer analysis and evaluation	Left margin
DET	AO1 Supporting detail/quotation	Left margin
L	AO2 Good analysis of language, structure and form/dramatic features	Left margin
CONT	AO3 Context	Left margin
LNK	Comparison (Section A, Part A) Link to wider text (Section B – extract-based questions)	Left margin
NAQ	Not relevant to question	Left margin
SEEN	Blank Page / plan / crossed out work	Middle of page
REP	Repetition	
NAR	Paraphrase or lifting	Left margin
^	Omission Needs development/needs example/general	Body of response Left margin

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7. **Subject-specific Marking Instructions**

INTRODUCTION

Your first task as an Examiner is to become thoroughly familiar with the material on which the examination depends. This material includes:

- the specification, especially the assessment objectives
- the question paper and its rubrics
- the texts which candidates have studied
- the mark scheme.

You should ensure that you have copies of these materials.

You should ensure also that you are familiar with the administrative procedures related to the marking process. These are set out in the OCR booklet **Instructions for Examiners**. If you are examining for the first time, please read carefully **Appendix 5 Introduction to Script Marking: Notes for New Examiners**.

Please ask for help or guidance whenever you need it. Your first point of contact is your Team Leader.

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ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Candidates are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

AO1	Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to: • maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response • use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.
AO3	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.
AO4	Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

WEIGHTING OF ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The relationship between the units and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid:

Component	**% of GCSE**				**Total**
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**	**AO4**	
Exploring modern and literary heritage texts (J352/01)	20	17.5	10	2.5	50
Exploring poetry and Shakespeare (J352/02)	20	22.5	5	2.5	50
Total	40	40	15	5	100

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USING THE MARK SCHEME

Please study this Mark Scheme carefully. The Mark Scheme is an integral part of the process that begins with the setting of the question paper and ends with the awarding of grades. Question papers and Mark Schemes are developed in association with each other so that issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed from the very start.

This Mark Scheme is a working document; it is not exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers. The Mark Scheme can only provide 'best guesses' about how the question will work out, and it is subject to revision after we have looked at a wide range of scripts.

The Examiners' Standardisation Meeting will ensure that the Mark Scheme covers the range of candidates' responses to the questions, and that all Examiners understand and apply the Mark Scheme in the same way. The Mark Scheme will be discussed and amended at the meeting, and administrative procedures will be confirmed. Practice scripts will be issued at the meeting to exemplify aspects of candidates' responses and achievements; the practice scripts then become part of this Mark Scheme.

Before the Standardisation Meeting, you should print out and read the practice scripts, in order to gain an impression of the range of responses and achievement that may be expected.

Please read carefully all the scripts in your allocation and make every effort to look positively for achievement throughout the ability range. Always be prepared to use the full range of marks.

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INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXAMINERS

1 The practice scripts provide you with *examples* of the standard of each level. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed with the Team Leaders and will be discussed fully at the Examiners' Standardisation Meeting.

2 The specific task-related indicative content for each question will help you to understand how the Level of Response band descriptors may be applied. However, this indicative content does not constitute the mark scheme: it is material that candidates might use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. For each specific task, the intended balance between different assessment objectives is highlighted in the Mark Scheme: dominant assessment objectives are flagged, or where assessment objectives are equally weighted, this is flagged, too. It is hoped that candidates will respond to questions in a variety of ways and will give original and at times unexpected interpretations of texts. Rigid demands for 'what must be a good answer' would lead to a distorted assessment.

3 Candidates' answers must be relevant to the question. Beware of prepared answers that do not show the candidate's thought and which have not been adapted to the thrust of the question. Beware also of answers where candidates attempt to reproduce interpretations and concepts that they have been taught but have only partially understood.

4 Candidates' answers should demonstrate knowledge of their chosen texts. This knowledge will be shown in part through the range and relevance of their references to the text (bearing in mind that this is a closed text examination). Re-telling sections of the text without commentary is of little or no value.

INSTRUCTIONS TO EXAMINERS:

A INDIVIDUAL ANSWERS

1 The INDICATIVE CONTENT indicates the sort of material candidates might use in their answers but be prepared to recognise and credit unexpected and alternative approaches where they are relevant.

2 **Using 'best-fit', decide first which set of LEVEL OF RESPONSE BAND DESCRIPTORS for the relevant assessment objectives assessed in the task best describes the overall quality of the answer. In Unit J352/02, the AOs have different intended weightings in the different sections:**

Component *Exploring poetry and Shakespeare* (J352/02)	**Intended weightings (% of GCSE)**				**Total**
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**	**AO4**	
Section A: Poetry across time Part a)	5	7.5			12.5
Section A: Poetry across time Part b)	6.25	6.25			12.5
Section B: Shakespeare	8.75	8.75	5	2.5	25
Total	20	22.5	5	2.5	50

Keep in mind the intended weightings of assessment objectives targeted by the question when initially identifying the correct Level of Response band. For each specific task, the intended balance between different assessment objectives is highlighted in the Mark Scheme: dominant assessment objectives are flagged, or where assessment objectives are equally weighted, this is flagged, too. Using 'best-fit', adjust the mark within the band according to the dominant (if applicable) assessment objectives following the guidelines below:

- **Highest mark**: If clear evidence of all the qualities in the band descriptors is shown, the HIGHEST Mark should be awarded.
- **Lowest mark**: If the answer shows the candidate to be borderline (i.e. they have achieved all the qualities of the bands below and show limited evidence of meeting the criteria of the band in question) the LOWEST mark should be awarded.
- **Middle mark**: This mark should be used for candidates who are secure in the band. They are not 'borderline' but they have only achieved some of the qualities in the band descriptors.

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- Further refinement can be made by using the intervening marks, if appropriate.

3 Be prepared to use the full range of marks. Do not reserve high band marks 'in case' something turns up of a quality you have not yet seen. If an answer gives clear evidence of the qualities described in the band descriptors, reward appropriately.

B ASSESSING AO3

Section B: Shakespeare

In this Section, candidates will have knowledge of contextual factors for their studied texts and will use this to develop their response to the question. Candidates should only refer to contexts that are relevant to the specific question asked. The questions are worded to prompt candidates to consider relevant social, historical or cultural contexts as demonstrated in the play. More general knowledge of Shakespeare's historical, dramatic or biographical contexts is not relevant for this assessment.

Section A, part (a): Poetry across time

Component *Exploring poetry and Shakespeare* (J352/02)	**Intended weightings (% of GCSE)**				**Total**
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**	**AO4**	
Section A: Poetry across time Part a)	5	7.5			12.5

SKILLS:	***AO2****: Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant terminology where appropriate.* ***AO1****: Read, understand and respond to texts: maintain a critical style; develop an informed personal response; use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.* *Critically compare and contrast texts, referring where relevant to theme, characterisation, context (where known), style and literary quality.* ***The response is to be marked holistically. Examiners to indicate overall mark awarded at the end of the response. AO2 is the dominant assessment objective.***

Level Descriptors: Section A, part (a): Poetry across time

Level 6 (18–20 marks)	**Sustained critical style in an informed personal response to both text and task** • Detailed and sensitive analysis of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Consistently effective use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Sustains a coherent critical style in an informed personal response to the text showing consistently perceptive understanding (AO1) • Textual references and quotations are precise, pertinent and skillfully interwoven (AO1) • Achieves a sustained, interwoven comparison of texts
Level 5 (15–17 marks)	**Convincing critical style in a well-developed personal response to both text and task** • Thoughtful examination of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Good use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Maintains a convincing critical style in a well–developed personal response to the text showing some insightful understanding (AO1) • Textual references and quotations are well–selected and fully integrated (AO1) • Achieves a sustained comparison of texts
Level 4 (11–14 marks)	**Credible critical style in a detailed personal response to both text and task** • Some analytical comments on writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Competent use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Demonstrates some critical style in a detailed personal response to the text showing clear understanding (AO1) • Relevant textual references and quotations are selected to support the response (AO1) • Develops some key points of comparison between texts
Level 3 (7–10 marks)	**A reasonably developed personal response to both text and task** • Reasonable explanation of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Some use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Develops a reasonably detailed personal response to the text showing understanding (AO1) • Uses some relevant textual references and quotations to support the response (AO1) • Makes some explicit, relevant comparisons between texts
Level 2 (4–6 marks)	**A straightforward personal response to both text and task** • Simple comments on writer's use of language, form or structure (AO2) • Limited use of subject terminology (AO2) • Begins to develop a straightforward personal response to the text showing some understanding (AO1) • Gives some relevant support from the text (AO1) • Some identification of key links between texts
Level 1 (1–3 marks)	**A basic response to both text and task** • A little awareness of language, form or structure (AO2) • Very little use of subject terminology (AO2) • Makes a few relevant comments about the text (AO1) • Makes limited references to the text (AO1) • Limited, if any, attempt to make obvious links between texts
0 marks	• No response or no response worthy of credit.

Question			Indicative content	Marks
1	(a)		**Compare how these poems present a relationship where one person feels more strongly than the other.** **You should consider:** • **ideas and attitudes in each poem** • **tone and atmosphere in each poem** • **the effects of the language and structure used.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO2:** • In Duffy, the one-sidedness of feelings is captured by the progress of the speaker's thoughts - from putting on the pearls in the opening line ("Next to my own skin…") to the closing lines' description of how they lie cold while "I feel their absence". Additionally, emotional difference is suggested by a series of structured opposites or contrasts: the images of heat and cold; the social distance; the colours ("…milky…pale…red…"); the loved-one's ability to "sleep" while "I lie awake". In Tea, the use of stumbling enjambment and the lack of a rhyme scheme might suggest a sense of emotional disconnection and difference in the dynamics of power within the relationship; the stanzas fracture and disrupt the poem, capturing lack of emotional connection or empathy. • In both poems, the voice is unloved or unknown, with no sense of *we*. However, in Duffy, the use of "I…my…she…her" pronouns and perspective captures a sense of personal engagement, while suggesting clear distance in terms of status and feelings; in Tea, there is the almost accusatory repetition of "you", suggesting anger or despair; the uncapitalized "i" hints at lack of self-esteem. • In Duffy, there is symbolic opposition of heat representing the speaker's passion ("warm them…my slow heat…I burn"), set against coolness that speaks her mistress's lack of reciprocal feeling ("…cool white throat…She fans herself…milky stones…cooling now"); in Tea, the wished-for lover lacks appetite for the relationship ("…you weren't hungry") and there is an extended metaphor of the faithful dog and its owner ("…you call and i come…straining against the leash…"). **AO1:** • Both poems share frustration and despair as the speaker feels more strongly than the other. In Duffy, the constant sensual and sensory language ("skin…brush…scent…blush…dust") conveys the constancy of frustration and longing ("I lie here awake") despite the hopelessness of the situation. In Tea, the despairing note created by the exclamation of the title ("Oh God"), is continued in the poem's recreation of what is seen as a lost opportunity ("awkward hug…smashes your cheek…") with a strong sense that this is just one of many *("another…another…gone again"). • In Duffy, the sense of the speaker's adoration being unreturned or shared is put into a context of the social impossibility of shared feelings ("My mistress bids…my attic bed…Her carriage"); whereas in the Tea, the sense of despair is sharpened by a recognition of what might have been ("you call…you could have picked it…should not have happened").	**20**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
2	(a)		**Compare how these poems present a world changed by conflict.** **You should consider:** • **ideas and attitudes in each poem** • **tone and atmosphere in each poem** • **the effects of the language and structure used.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO2:** • In Clarke, emotive language is used to capture the personal tragedy of change brought about by conflict – "Ahmed" mentioned by name to personalise him, along with the references to "boy…farmer's sons"; there is also a constant stream of painfully harsh emotive language throughout the poem, and an intense semantic cluster of fire-based lexis in the last five lines that captures what change has been wrought upon the world ("stink…anger… burnt…put out…scalded…ashes"). In Amichai, the blunt mostly-monosyllabic utterances capture the harsh reality of the world changed by conflict; while the breathless enjambment captures the conviction and earnestness of the speaker determined that the world changed by conflict can change again. • Use of extensive figurative language to convey a world changed by conflict: to engage the reader with the scope of change, Clarke uses metaphors suggestive of death ("nest of sickness…funeral silk"), as well as a hissing and unpleasant sibilance to describe the death of the cormorant ("silk…sand…shadow,…sea"). Amichai uses a string of harsh and grating lexical items to convey the dreadfulness of what conflict has done to the world ("never grow…hard…trampled…ruined") – language that is contrasted to the nature-based metaphor ("…doubts and loves Dig up") and similes ("Like a mole, a plow") that suggest how the change could be reversed. • In Clarke, the first word ("For") of each stanza has a relentless quality that captures a sense of significance and prayer-like invocation – with the pattern only broken in the third stanza and final line shifting to a call for "Vengeance",. In the Amichai, the first stanza laments what is in danger of being lost through conflict ("flowers"); the second the harsh reality of change ("hard and trampled"); and the final stanza looking forward to a better future. **AO1:** • In Clarke, there is a vitriolic sense of outrage and anger in a torrent of emotion about what conflict has done to the world; the poem reads like a fervent dedication or prayer for what has been lost, with no sense of reason or understanding. In Amichai, there is a more reflective and thoughtful tone suggestive of the power of people through understanding and commitment to reverse the change that conflict has created. • In the Clarke, the funereal tone throughout and the way that the poem ends on a note of hopelessness, with no suggestion of anything rising from the "ashes; contrastingly in the Amichai there is a contrary sense that the change practised upon the world through conflict can be reversed ("a whisper will be heard"), although it is only a whisper.	**20**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
3	(a)		**Compare how these poems present thoughts about life and death.** **You should consider:** • **ideas and attitudes in each poem** • **tone and atmosphere in each poem** • **the effects of the language and structure used.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO2:** In Lola's poem, the first ("new-born…counting down"), second ("naming ceremony…autopsy") and final stanza ("crowned…forget") contrast different expectations established between the birth of the speaker's brother and the approaching death of the grandfather, as if the one signalled the inevitability of the other; additionally, enjambment suggests death is an inevitable consequence. In Kay, after the initial blunt mentioning of "died", the first stanza of the poem consists of a sequence of romantic images describing death, interrupted by the one word line "Margaret", which is almost like a shout of triumph or celebration of life–the third stanza contrasts the physicality of the body ("skin and cells and bone") and language that suggests the essential and undying beauty of nature ("cairns, hills, the braes, barley") that truly captures Margaret's "spirit". • In Lola, unusual post-modifying use of the verb phrase "wailing into existence" and strong alliteration of "new-born brother", celebrate the new life, while a string of clear, concise, sharp words and phrases ("existence …stopwatches…ceremony…cut open…sipped…mathematician…equation") captures the grandfather's calm and logical acceptance of approaching death. In Kay, a semantic cluster of romantic words and phrases suggest the impotence of death (blush of pink…faint silhouette…the stars"), complemented by the gentle whispering sibilance of "she…swear…sky…sunsets"; and the triumph of life conveyed by calm monosyllabic last lines. • Lola uses the metaphor of eyes as "two stopwatches" to suggest an unflinching look; the simile of the grandfather's quiet compared to "a body cut open", is as if the event were already upon him; and the notion of the new-born being "crowned" with a name might suggest a royal succession. In Kay, natural symbolism is used to suggest undying qualities of Margaret that will survive her death ("cairns, hills, the braes"). **AO1:** • Both poems convey thoughts about life and death by the strong sense of a personal voice in the use of first person perspectives and the use of personal pronouns ("My…I", but also by the use of family relationships and terms in the Lola ("brother…grandfather") and sensitive personal details ("I had kissed your head") in Kay. • In Lola, despite a sense of inevitability captured by the clinical simile of the autopsy body, there are regretful notes struck with "My grandfather's brain began to forget his", and a moment of recognition signalled by "The pause between each sip elongated". In Kay, after the initial acceptance of death, the focus is upon the memory of a life lived and the sense in which death has no dominion.	**20**

Level Descriptors Section A, part (b): Poetry across time

Component *Exploring poetry and Shakespeare* (J352/02)	**Intended weightings (% of GCSE)**				**Total**
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**	**AO4**	
Section A: Poetry across time Part (b)	6.25	6.25			12.5

SKILLS:	***AO1****: Read, understand and respond to texts: maintain a critical style; develop an informed personal response; use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.* ***AO2****: Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant terminology where appropriate.* ***The response is to be marked holistically. Examiners to indicate overall mark awarded at the end of the response. AO1 and AO2 are equally weighted.***

Level Descriptors: Section A, part (b): Poetry across time

Level 6 (18–20 marks)	**Sustained critical style in an informed personal response to both text and task** • Sustains a coherent critical style in an informed personal response to the text showing consistently perceptive understanding (AO1) • Textual references and quotations are precise, pertinent and skillfully interwoven (AO1) • Detailed and sensitive analysis of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Consistently effective use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)
Level 5 (15–17 marks)	**Convincing critical style in a well-developed personal response to both text and task** • Maintains a convincing critical style in a well–developed personal response to the text showing some insightful understanding (AO1) • Textual references and quotations are well–selected and fully integrated (AO1) • Thoughtful examination of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Good use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)
Level 4 (11–14 marks)	**Credible critical style in a detailed personal response to both text and task** • Demonstrates some critical style in a detailed personal response to the text showing clear understanding (AO1) • Relevant textual references and quotations are selected to support the response (AO1) • Some analytical comments on writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Competent use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)
Level 3 (7–10 marks)	**A reasonably developed personal response to both text and task** • Develops a reasonably detailed personal response to the text showing understanding (AO1) • Uses some relevant textual references and quotations to support the response (AO1) • Reasonable explanation of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Some use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)
Level 2 (4–6 marks)	**A straightforward personal response to both text and task** • Begins to develop a straightforward personal response to the text showing some understanding (AO1) • Gives some relevant support from the text (AO1) • Simple comments on writer's use of language, form or structure (AO2) • Limited use of subject terminology (AO2)
Level 1 (1–3 marks)	**A basic response to both text and task** • Makes a few relevant comments about the text (AO1) • Makes limited references to the text (AO1) • A little awareness of language, form or structure (AO2) • Very little use of subject terminology (AO2)
0 marks	• No response or no response worthy of credit.

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Indicative Content Section A, part (b): Poetry across time

Question			Indicative content	Marks
1	(b)		**Explore in detail one other poem from your anthology which presents an unequal relationship.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* Possible poems might include: Helen Marie Williams "A Song"; Rita Dove's "Flirtation"; Raymond Antrobus "The Perseverance"; Sylvia Plath, "Morning Song", Martin Carter, "Looking at Your Hands"; Liz Lochhead, "I Wouldn't Thank You for a Valentine"; James Fenton, "In Paris With You"; Jackie Kay, "Dusting the Phone". **AO1:** • Critical overview of how another poem expresses unequal relationship: e.g. Williams's sense of an unequal relationship based upon differing values – "in search of gain…When love is all I ask"; Antrobus's creation of a sense of physical and emotional distance, with the repetition of the words "outside" and "disappear" suggesting how the speaker feels an inequality in the giving of love; Carter's declaration that he feels unequal in the presence of those who have come before him in the post-colonial search for enlightenment, but hopes to bridge that sense of distance by "coming to your house or walking in the sun" to find the "fire" he knows that he needs. • Textual reference and quotation may demonstrate appreciation of both surface meaning and deeper implications: e.g. Lochhead's repetition of "If you…" suggests the desperate and so-far unrequited longings for a declaration of love, while the forceful alliteration adds to that sense of increasingly desperate declarations of feeling; Plath's disabling sense of inadequacy, suggesting that she is unequal to the task of motherhood – with the figurative references to "statue", "museum" and "cow-heavy" capturing that sense of not being equal to the task of motherly love or receiving little in return. **AO2:** • Appreciation of the impact of poetic conventions such as lyrical voice, choice of stanza form, figurative language, rhythm and sound effects, e.g. how the sensual alliteration and sibilance of Dove's persona in "Flirtation" ("rolled up her rugs….strewn salt across the sky") captures the pleasurable relish being taken in the flirtation and playful anticipation, with no mention of how the other might be feeling because "Anything can happen"; how the metaphorical language of Fenton's persona ("talking wounded…hostage…maroonded"), along with spiteful and angry alliteration ("downed a drink" and "sod off…sodding…skip") that captures his sense of having been let down in the past. • Evaluation of the impact of language, aspects of poetic form and structure and the poet's choice of images to encourage the reader to reflect on how relationships can be unequal: e.g. Antrobus's use of irony with the repetition of the bar's name (The Perseverance") – which both stands for the essential values of the speaker and his culture, while being that which takes his father away from him, added to by the wistful alliteration of "working weekends…listening for the laughter"; Kay's speaker obsessing over the lack of the phone call, with metaphors suggesting the unequal quality of the relationship ("I am trapped in it. I can't move"), and hyperbole reflecting her frustration at the lack of returned passion or commitment ("I assault the postman").	**20**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
2	(b)		**Explore in detail one other poem from your anthology which presents how conflict changes things.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* Possible poems might include: Mary Lamb, "Envy"; William Wordsworth, "Boat Stealing"; Lord Byron "The Destruction of Sennacherib"; Emily Dickinson, "There's a Certain Slant of Light"; Frances E. W. Harper, "Songs for the People"; Ilya Kaminsky, "We Lived Happily during the War"; Keith Douglas, "Vergissmeinnicht"; Denise Levertov, "What Were They Like?"; Louise Bennett, "Colonization in Reverse"; Caleb Femi, "Thirteen"; Imtiaz Dharker, "Honour Killing"; Sujata Bhatt, "Partition". **AO1:** • Critical overview of how another poem conveys changes brought about by conflict: e.g. Lamb's criticism and awareness of how the conflict created by the envious person (unaware of "its own red rose") is likely to change the life of that person from "Some pretty flower in their own mind" to "fret" and "discontent"; Douglas's figurative description of the "burst stomach like a cave" showing how conflict has changed the life of the soldier and lover since he folded the Vergissmeinnicht letter into his pocket; Wordsworth's description of how the experience of conflict and "troubled pleasure" changed his speaker from one who "proudly rowed With his best skill" to someone haunted by "huge and mighty forms…..By day, and were the trouble of my dreams". • Textual reference and quotation will demonstrate understanding of both surface meaning and deeper implications, e.g. Levertov lamenting how conflict has changed the world of Vietnam and its people, expressed through nostalgic rhetorical questions ("Were they inclined to quiet laughter?") in the first section of the poem, and a clear identification with the values of the victims of the conflict and what has been lost through that change ("their speech…was like a song"); Dickinson's emotive language characterised by pain and suffering – "Winter …Hurt …scar… Despair… affliction… Death"; Kaminsky's creation of a voice and a community that thought to distance itself from conflict and change (""they bombed other people's houses") only belatedly to recognize guilt and a change that had gone unnoticed ("around my bed America was falling: invisible…") **AO2:** • Appreciation of the impact of poetic conventions, such as lyrical voice, choice of stanza form, figurative language, rhythm and sound effects, e.g. Harper's extended metaphor of song featuring "love and duty" to heal the damage ("fever and fret…jangle and discord") that has resulted from conflict"; Bennett's use of Jamaican Patois to humorously counterpoise how "Jamaica is Englan boun" with previous colonisation – where they "face war an brave de worse"; Dharker's extended metaphor of the clothes and trappings that initially triumphed in her internal sense of conflict and changed her ("made me faithless. Tied my mouth…beggared me") before she was able to plot her "new geography"; Femi's extended metaphor of the "supernova" that charts the damaging change brought about by conflict in communities – changing "the biggest and brightest stars" to something that is "dying". • Evaluation of the impact of language, aspects of poetic form and structure and the poet's choice of images to reflect on how conflict changes things: e.g. Byron's use of anapaestic tetrameter to convey the dreadful inevitability of change; the generational impact in Bhatt's poem, with multiple references to time passing and yet the damage of the conflict unaltered and wide-reaching alongside the calamitous details of the change ("the cries of the people…it was endless…even the birds sounded different…divide a country").	**20**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
3	(b)		**Explore in detail one other poem from your anthology which presents sad thoughts.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* Possible poems might include: William Blake, “Holy Thursday”; Anne Bronte, “The Bluebell”; Thomas Hardy, “Midnight on the Great Western”; Zaffar Kunial’s “Prayer”; Robert Frost, “Out, Out – “; Warsan Shire, “Tea with our Grandmothers”; Thom Gunn, “Baby Song”; Gillian Clarke, “Cold Knapp Lake”; Yusuf Komunyakaa, “Venus’s-flytraps”. **AO1:** • Critical overview of how another poem presents sad thoughts: e.g. Blake’s sad and solemn reflection on the dangers posed to the “multitudes of lambs” by their subjugation to the “aged men” and “grey-headed beadles” tasked with their care; Shire’s perspective balanced between grateful tribute (“a tally of surviving”) and the litany of familial suffering suggested by relentless enjambment of the first three stanzas; Frost’s recognition that the difference between life and death for the boy was the simple lack of someone saying ”Call it a day”, along with the final sad reflection of how no lesson has been learnt “since they Were not the one dead”; • Relevant use of textual reference and quotation to demonstrate understanding of surface meaning and perhaps deeper implications: e.g. Bronte’s symbolic bluebell and reassuring iambic trimeter call to mind the viewpoint of youth when the heart “is not so heavy”, where “I knew no care”, where “heart and soul were free” set against the sadness that is the result of a “thankless life” of later years full of “anxious toil and strife”; Hardy conveys the vulnerability of the “journeying boy” and sad thoughts felt as he moves towards the region of adulthood that he is “not of”, through the clumsy alliteration of “rude realms” – and with uncertainty of his progress from the world of childhood to the “region of sin” captured by the symbolism of the “roof lamp’s oily flame”. **AO2:** • Appreciation of the impact of poetic conventions, such as lyrical voice, choice of stanza form, figurative language, rhythm and sound effects, e.g. Clarke’s harsh alliteration (“drawn by the dread…beathed, bleating”) that lead to the grim retelling of how the girl was rescued from drowning only to be “thrashed” in a “poor house”; Komunyakaa’s use of a five-year-old voice to describe the inherent sadness awaiting in the grown-up world, from the metaphorical title with its suggestion of inescapability and slow death, to figurative images of “Wading out into deep…..” suggesting the sadness ahead. • Evaluation of the impact of language, poetic form and structure and the poet’s choice of images to encourage the reader to reflect on the presentation of sad thoughts: e.g. Frost’s relentless repetition of the word “boy” to hint at his anonymity and the lack of care given, and to emphasise the sense of lost youth in the context of doing a man’s work; Kunial’s short, sharp sentences near the end of “Prayer” (“Cancer…I stayed on. At her bed.”) that show how in the depth of sadness language is failing the speaker (“I made an animal noise”); Gunn’s oppositional structuring of lines suggest the viewpoint and the sadness of a baby in its journey from the “private ease of Mother’s womb” to the “lighted room”, and beyond that room the roaring of “all time” that represents the introduction to the process of growing.	**20**

Section B: Shakespeare

Component *Exploring poetry and Shakespeare* (J352/02)	**Intended weightings (% of GCSE)**				**Total**
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**	**AO4**	
Section B: Shakespeare	8.75	8.75	5	2.5	25

SKILLS:	***AO1****: Read, understand and respond to texts: maintain a critical style; develop an informed personal response; use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.* ***AO2****: Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant terminology where appropriate.* ***AO3:*** *Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.* ***AO4:*** *Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.* ***The response is to be marked holistically. Examiners to indicate overall mark awarded at the end of the response. AO1 and AO2 are the equally dominant assessment objectives.***

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Level Descriptors: Section B: Shakespeare

Level 6 (31–36 marks)	**Sustained critical style in an informed personal response to both text and task** • Sustains a coherent critical style in an informed personal response to the text showing consistently perceptive understanding (AO1) • Textual references and quotations are precise, pertinent and skilfully interwoven (AO1) • Detailed and sensitive analysis of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Consistently effective use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Shows a perceptive and sensitive understanding of how context informs evaluation of the text (AO3)
Level 5 (25–30 marks)	**Convincing critical style in a well-developed personal response to both text and task** • Maintains a convincing critical style in a well–developed personal response to the text showing some insightful understanding (AO1) • Textual references and quotations are well–selected and fully integrated (AO1) • Thoughtful examination of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Good use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Uses a convincing understanding of context to inform the response to the text (AO3)
Level 4 (19–24 marks)	**Credible critical style in a detailed personal response to both text and task** • Demonstrates some critical style in a detailed personal response to the text showing clear understanding (AO1) • Relevant textual references and quotations are selected to support the response (AO1) • Some analytical comments on writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Competent use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Uses clear understanding of context to inform the response to the text (AO3)
Level 3 (13–18marks)	**A reasonably developed personal response to both text and task** • Develops a reasonably detailed personal response to the text showing understanding (AO1) • Uses some relevant textual references and quotations to support the response (AO1) • Reasonable explanation of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2) • Some use of relevant subject terminology (AO2) • Makes some relevant comments about context to inform the response to the text (AO3)
Level 2 (7–12 marks)	**A straightforward personal response to both text and task** • Begins to develop a straightforward personal response to the text showing some understanding (AO1) • Gives some relevant support from the text (AO1) • Simple comments on writer's use of language, form or structure (AO2) • Limited use of subject terminology (AO2) • Shows some awareness of context which may be implied (AO3)
Level 1 (1–6 marks)	**A basic response to both text and task** • Makes a few relevant comments about the text (AO1) • Makes limited references to the text (AO1) • A little awareness of language, form or structure (AO2) • Very little use of subject terminology (AO2) • Implies a little awareness of context related to the text (AO3)
0 marks	• No response or no response worthy of credit.

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Marking Grid for AO4 –SPaG(1–4 marks)

High performance (4 marks)	In the context of the Level of Demand of the question, learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy, and consistently use vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve effective control of meaning.
Intermediate performance (2–3 marks)	In the context of the Level of Demand of the question, learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy, and use a considerable range of vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve general control of meaning.
Threshold performance (1 mark)	In the context of the Level of Demand of the question, learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy, and use a reasonable range of vocabulary and sentence structures; any errors do not hinder meaning in the response.

Question			Indicative content	Marks
4		*	***Romeo and Juliet*** **Explore the ways in which Shakespeare presents dreams and visions of the future in *Romeo and Juliet*. Refer to this extract from Act 1 Scene 4 and elsewhere in the play.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • Candidates may explore the links between the extract from the Queen Mab speech and the play's pattern of dreams and visions to analyse patterns of fate in the play as a whole. The Queen Mab speech is both Mercutio's scornful response to Romeo's love for Rosaline and a playful prologue to the Capulets' party, so it immediately precedes Romeo and Juliet meeting. Candidates may point out that this last section is rather dark, not least in its visions of violence and sexual encounter and hence is an 'ill-diving' dream of the future, not least for Mercutio himself. Mercutio's Queen Mab speech is initially a rebuke to Romeo's faith in dreams ('dreamers often lie') but becomes a vision of fantasies and frustrated desires. • Candidates may extend their responses by looking at other foreshadowing of tragedy in dreams and visions of the future. In Act 1 Scene 3, Juliet says that marriage is 'an honour that I dream not of', but her mother sees marriage as a 'golden story'; in Act 2 Scene 2, Romeo expresses his fear that 'all this is but a dream,/Too flattering-sweet to be substantial' before Juliet confirms her desire to marry him; in Act 3 Scene 5, she has an 'ill-divining soul' and a vision of Romeo 'As one dead in the bottom of a tomb'; in her Act 4 Scene 3 soliloquy, she dreams of waking 'before the time that Romeo/Come to redeem me' and is haunted by Tybalt's ghost; while Romeo 'dreamt my lady came and found me dead' in Act 5 Scene 1 and when he believes her to be dead he acts as if in a nightmare, as he admits after killing Paris 'did I dream it so?/Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,/ To think it was so'. • Dreams foretell a tragic ending for the lovers and contribute to the play's fatal misunderstandings. It is possible to see several characters in the play as victims of Queen Mab and of dreams that turn sour. **AO2:** • Queen Mab personifies the fantasies that drive people to violence and misfortune in the extract: the soldier's courage in his dream is comically contrasted with the cowardly reality when he awakes and 'swears a prayer or two', while maids become 'women of good carriage' punning on how maturity for women in Shakespeare's society depends on their ability to 'bear' their fate. • When Romeo dismisses this as 'nothing', Mercutio uses a metaphor of the 'inconstant' wind to suggest the twists of fate and fortune are a natural process. • Mercutio also calls fantasy 'thin of substance' and the product of an 'idle brain' but does not dismiss its power: **AO3:** • Candidates may consider themes of religion and superstition in a pre-Freudian Renaissance world which see dreams as visions linked to fate and a future over which they had little control, rather than revealing the suppressed desires of individual characters. • However, Mercutio explicitly references frustrated desire, which may include his own passionate friendship with Romeo, in the intense world of adolescent male friendship portrayed in this play and others.	**36+4 SPaG**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
5		*	***Romeo and Juliet*** **To what extent does Shakespeare suggest the love of Romeo and Juliet is fantasy rather than realistic? Explore at least two moments from the play to support your ideas.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • Candidates may quarrel with the view presented here and see Romeo and Juliet's love as a true love in contrast with the fantasy of Romeo's love for Rosaline and/or Lady Capulet's fantastic match-making when arranging the marriage between Juliet and Paris. Close analysis of Act 2 Scene 2 - the balcony scene – could argue that Juliet quickly moves beyond the poetry of love, and pushes Romeo to declare the truth of his desires through 'th'exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.' • The practical support of the Nurse, as go-between and ladder-bearer, and the Friar officiating at the wedding in the hope of reconciling the feuding families, helps to turn fantasy to reality; however, the intrusion of the real world, in the fights with Tybalt, Romeo's banishment and Lord Capulet's change of mind about Juliet's marriage shows how little chance the fantasies of the lovers and their supporters ever really had. • Dramatically, Shakespeare sustains the poetry of the lovers' passion for each other even when they are apart, to suggest that their love is real to them, but he also shows how the action of the real world seems to pile misfortune on them, right up until the final scene, to convince the lovers that they will be happier dead than alive. **AO2:** • Romeo's ardent language woos Juliet through metaphors: his lips are 'two blushing pilgrims' worshipping at the shrine of his saint; they construct sonnets together and 'kiss by the book'. • However, Juliet is eager for Romeo to make their 'bent of love ...honourable' and her worship of Romeo shows awareness of the consequences for herself ('I'll no longer be a Capulet').' Nevertheless, once her love for Romeo has become a reality, she wants to remain in a world of fantasy ('It was the nightingale, and not the lark') and to defer reality for as long as possible. Fantasy and reality become fatally confused when she fakes her own death, with tragic consequences. • Structurally, the story of the lovers is constantly contrasted with the intrusions of the real world: Mercutio's increasing recklessness, Tybalt's hot temper, the Nurse's interference, the Friar's bumbling best intentions, the Capulets' desire for status and the Prince's ineffective assertions of authority. **AO3:** • In the Early Modern world, most marriages, especially between wealthier families, were arranged, so the context of the play would be familiar to Shakespeare's audiences. • The contemporary fashion for sonnets and hyperbolic expressions of love and melancholy in verse and music provides a social as well as artistic context for the worship of the ideal of love in this play.	**36+4 SPaG**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
6		*	***The Merchant of Venice*** **Explore the ways in which Shakespeare presents love in this play. Refer to this extract from Act 2 Scene 9 and elsewhere in the play.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • Love in this passage is a matter of fortune, as Portia cannot choose; it is also important for Bassanio to bring 'gifts of great value' as well as to present a courtly appearance; in many ways, the play is a romantic comedy but love brings with it problems and consequences, as Bassanio's love for Portia required the loan from Shylock, Jessica's love for Lorenzo leads her to abandon her family while Nerissa's love for Gratiano means she is not an unbiased observer of the arrival of the Venetians. • As well as causing problems, love provides solutions and candidates may reference the Casket Scene (Act 3 Scene 2 "if you love me you will find me out"), Portia's love for Bassanio in the Trial Scene and subsequent Ring test, and the romance of Lorenzo and Jessica in Act 5 Scene 1 in Belmont in contrast with the more mercantile and judicial concerns of Venice. • Some candidates might include the self-sacrificial love of Antonio for Bassanio ("to you, Antonio I owe the most in money and in love") or consider whether Shylock's love for his daughter and her honour truly matters less to his than his ducats ("I would have given it for a wilderness of monkeys"). **AO2:** • In the passage, love is metaphorically "the candle" which singes the foolish moths who are drawn to it by their own 'deliberate' ego rather than romantic desire; if "hanging and wiving go by destiny", there is little individual characters can do to change their fate. • Bassanio's courtly nature makes him "the ambassador of love" and "Cupid's post" implying that he has the god of random desire on his side, but he needs Antonio's money, borrowed from Shylock to put on this show. • The "bond" of love ultimately triumphs over the bonds of finance and law in the Trial Scene through Portia's ingenuity in argument, but not before it is tested by further hyperbolic extravagance of language by Bassanio when he swears to Antonio "life itself, my wife, and all the world/Are not with me esteemed above thy life". **AO3:** • Candidates may reference the conventions of courtly love and how these determine Bassanio's actions and language, or the fairy-tale conventions which govern courtship and love in Belmont. • They might contrast this with the less conventional ways in which he expresses his love for Antonio; ironically, Portia needs to dress as a man in order to win a more binding commitment from Bassanio, with implications for Renaissance attitudes to marriage and same-sex love and friendship.	**36+4 SPaG**

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Question			Indicative content	Marks
7		*	***The Merchant of Venice*** **How does Bassanio's relationship with Antonio influence the way the play develops? Explore at least two moments from the play to support your ideas.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • Bassanio's relationship with Antonio is central to the way the play develops: it is the first thing we are introduced to in Act 1 Scene 1, becomes the motive for the loan and bond, is put to the test in Act 3 Scene 3 when Bassanio hears of his friend's misfortune so soon after his marriage and becomes the 'surety' of the marriage between Bassanio and Portia in Act 5 Scene 1. • Candidates may choose two or three scenes for close analysis or comment more widely on how the relationship determines the play's key developments: Bassanio convinces Antonio that he should risk an investment in him, in order to obtain the 'Golden Fleece' but Portia proves to be more intelligent than he is as well as wealthier, and seems to understand the nature of his sentimental and financial dependence on Antonio. The 'ring plot' could be seen as Portia's way of testing whether Bassanio's love for her can take priority over his friendship with Antonio. • Just as Bassanio wants to prove himself worthy of Antonio's investment, Antonio wants to prove his capacity for self-sacrifice by agreeing to 'break a custom' and make the 'merry bond' with Shylock as an enemy. **AO2:** • Although they say little about their feelings to each other, it is only Bassanio who lifts Antonio's melancholy in Act 1 Scene 1, and Antonio insists he need not 'wind about my love with circumstance', implying it is not something to be embarrassed about. • Antonio is not forgotten when Bassanio is in Belmont in Act 3, as he confesses that he has 'engag'd myself to a dear friend'. His language, to Portia, reveals how much the bonds of love and friendship have become confused with the bonds of venture capitalism and free trade. • Irony is most evident when Bassanio swears in Act 4 Scene 1 'life itself, my wife and all the world/ Are not with me esteem'd above thy life'. He is so focused on his relationship with Antonio at this moment that he is entirely unaware of what his disguised wife is doing for him, and this probably prompts the Ring Plot which re-establishes Portia's dominance and intelligence in the final Act. **AO3:** • Bassanio and Antonio share an arrogance about their superiority as Christians and as men, which is undermined by the events of the play. While Bassanio's relationship with Antonio drives the engine of the play, the last two Acts remind us that the women of this play are more resourceful than the men. • Candidates are likely to show their understanding of Bassanio's social status and of the relative capacity of agency between men and women in Elizabethan society. However, this is amusingly undermined by Portia, even if she must dress as a man to reverse society's expectations.	**36+4 SPaG**

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Question			Indicative content	Marks
8		*	***Macbeth*** **How does Shakespeare present the dangers of knowing too much about the future. Refer to this extract from Act 5 Scene 5 and elsewhere in the play.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • In this extract from the play's final Act, Macbeth's bluster and confidence in the prophecies of the Weird Sisters is undermined by the Messenger's tale of the moving wood of Birnam. For Macbeth, it is a revelation that all the vision he has seen are in truth 'the equivocation of the fiend' 'who lies like truth' and that he has only his own strength to fall back on. Candidates are asked to link this to other forms of foreknowledge in the play and evaluate just how little they have benefitted Macbeth. • Although the most obvious link is to the three prophecies of the witches in Act 4 Scene 1, many candidates may rightly see this as an extension of the threefold hailing of Macbeth as Glamis, Cawdor and 'King hereafter' in Act 1 Scene 3. This simple greeting of Macbeth as past, present and future suggests his fate is already known and determined, and begins the action of the play once Macbeth realises that 'two truths are told/ As happy prologues to the swelling act? Of the Imperial theme' suggesting he already sees himself as an actor in a play whose script has been written for him. Despite his own doubts and personal integrity, he comes to believe, under the influence of Lady Macbeth, that it is impossible for him to resist his fate. • The witches spend more time speaking to Banquo than Macbeth in Act 1 Scene 3, but the consequences of knowing too much about his future are unhappy and fatal for him too. They call him 'Not so happy, but much happier' but his future happiness will only come in the vision of his successful heirs in Act 4 Scene 1. In his soliloquy at the beginning of Act 3, he explains that the 'truth' of the witches is the reason why he has not in fact acted on his suspicions of Macbeth, saying 'May they not be my oracles as well'. By sunset, he will be dead. **AO2:** • Macbeth's reference to 'equivocation' is a reminder for the audience of the strange seesaw rhythms of the witches ' fair is foul and foul is fair', 'Lesser than Macbeth and greater' which suggest their truths are not to be trusted or taken literally. • Macbeth's language to the Messenger is typical of his language in Act 5, where aggression 'Liar and slave!' is simply a mask for his own inner despair: 'I 'gin to be aweary of the sun'. • Candidates may wish to link to Macbeth's growing understanding in his earlier Act 5 soliloquies of how little the knowledge of his future has brought him: 'I have lived long enough. My way of life/ Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf' and 'Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player'. The theatrical metaphor suggests he is fully aware of how little control he has over his actions, and that his words of 'sound and fury' are a cover for deep nihilism. **AO3:** • Candidates are likely to refer to Jacobean fears of witchcraft and solicitation of fears and demons • This might balance this with understanding of Puritan beliefs in predestination and knowledge of the future as ultimately belonging to God alone.	**36+4 SPaG**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
9		*	***Macbeth*** **'He has none of the qualities of a true king.' To what extent do you agree that this is how Shakespeare portrays Macbeth? Explore at least two moments from the play to support your ideas.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • This is likely to prove a popular question. It is Malcolm who pretends that he has 'none of the king-becoming graces' in Act 4 Scene 3, but this reflects better on Macbeth. The qualities of leadership and decisive action the audience see in Act 1 present him as a strong and courageous military leader, but he does not have the qualities of justice, verity, mercy and patience that Malcolm speaks of. He has no respect for the law or the truth and his impatience gets the better of him. His courage in battle is different from moral courage: he is unable to stand up to his wife and defend what is morally right. • Popular moments to explore might well include Macbeth's Act 1 Scene 7 soliloquy and the dialogue with Lady Macbeth which follows, his reaction to the King's murder in Act 2 Scene 3 contrasted with Banquo and Macduff, the collapse of his mind and his authority at what was meant to be a coronation banquet in Act 3 Scene 5 and his brutal response treatment of his few remaining followers in Act 5, but there are many potential scenes from the play to explore this viewpoint. • Some may argue that Macbeth's valour and initial moral integrity suggest he could have been a good King if he had not fallen for the enchantments of the witches and Lady Macbeth; there is an opportunity to explore the contradictions of his own character, which emerge most strongly in his own soliloquies. Others may explore his actions as King such as the murder of Banquo, the treatment of Macduff's family, his paranoia ('there's not a one of them but in's house/ I keep a servant fee'd'), the reactions of the Old Man and Ross to his kingship, and his brutality sustained up to the killing of Young Siward. **AO2:** • Macbeth asks the witches 'Why do you dress me in borrowed robes?' and this metaphor returns later when Angus says he must now feel 'His title/ Hang about him like a giant's robe/ Upon a dwarfish thief'. • The short choral scenes show structurally what his subjects think of him: in the Old Man's analogy, he is the 'mousing owl' who has hawked at and killed a falcon 'towering in his pride of place'. • Macduff comments on the state of Scotland in Act 4 ('each new morn/New widows howl') and this is contrasted with the scene in which the English King cures scrofula through 'healing benediction' to suggest that a true King is graced with healing powers rather than the power to wound. **AO3:** • Candidates are likely to refer to Jacobean assertions of the divine right of kings asserted in the royal motto of 'Dieu et mon droit'. Macbeth has asserted his rights with reference to the 'fiend' and not God. • However, kings in Tudor and Stuart England also had to rule within the law and by consent of the lords and the people: Macbeth breaks the law, alienates the lords and bullies ordinary people losing their loyalty.	**36+4 SPaG**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
10		*	***Much Ado About Nothing*** **Explore how Beatrice's 'merry war' with Benedick is presented in *Much Ado About Nothing.* Refer to this extract from Act 1 Scene 1 and elsewhere in the play.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • This extract from the beginning of the play introduces the 'skirmish of wit' which audiences most enjoy in this play. Benedick's hyper-masculinity is Beatrice's prime target and it becomes clear that she is concerned – perhaps rightly – about his influence on the impressionable Claudio. She attacks him where he is most vulnerable, as she is better armed with wit than he is. • She quickly resumes the contest when he arrives; 'I wonder you will still be talking, Benedick; nobody marks you'. Battle is resumed in the masked scene in Act 2 Scene 1, and this is the moment when Beatrice truly wounds Benedick by calling him, to his masked face, 'the Prince's jester'. The fact that he cares so much about this insult – 'she speaks poinards and every word stabs' – proves that this has gone beyond banter and that real feelings are involved. Some may interpret Beatrice's comment 'You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old' as hinting at a longer history between them, which would help to explain their quick conversion from hate to love at the persuasion of their friends. Neither actually wants to hurt the other, so this is a 'merry' war which has got out of hand, because both are afraid of the concessions they would need to make if they married. • Their growing understanding of their own vulnerabilities makes them the greatest help to the disgraced Hero, and their verbal sparring in Act 4 Scene 1 does end with Benedick agreeing to use his hand 'some other way than swearing by it' and to issue a challenge to Claudio. There is further teasing in Act 5 Scene 2 – 'thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably' and when their love letters are discovered in Act 5 Scene 4 – 'here's our own hands against our hearts'. Some candidates may be concerned that once Benedick stops Beatrice's mouth with a kiss, it is another jade's trick and that Beatrice's silence isn't exactly full consent, but the tenor of the play is that 'man is a giddy thing' and women's vulnerabilities should be taken seriously. **AO2:** • The military metaphors in the language of Beatrice and Benedick could be seen as a surrogate war in which Beatrice must use the best weapon she has. • Structurally, the comic wooing of Beatrice and Benedick is an interlude from the serious action of the play, but it is so funny that it tends to dominate. • Moreover, the two plots quickly intersect, and thus the language of warfare becomes more threatening; although it began as a war between the sexes, Benedick's conviction that Hero has been wronged makes him side more with truth and honour, so his sexist language of the first part of the play is superseded and revealed to be just a jest. **AO3:** • Candidates are likely to be very aware of the limited opportunity for women to express themselves aggressively in this context, so verbal wit is a useful weapon. • Candidates may be aware of how highly prized 'wit' was in the Renaissance and that Beatrice is probably the winner in this contest.	**36 + 4 SPaG**

Question			Indicative content	Marks
11		*	***Much Ado About Nothing*** **'People in love can behave foolishly.' To what extent do you agree with this view of lovers in *Much Ado About Nothing*? Explore at least two moments from the play to support your ideas.** *Please bear in mind that other content may be equally valid and should be credited.* **AO1:** • Most candidates will see this an invitation to write about Benedick and how quickly he contradicts his assertions about love at the beginning Act 2 Scene 3 about a man that has 'become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love' with 'Love me! It must be requited' by the end of the scene, after he has been successfully gulled by his friends. He looks especially foolish when he chooses to interpret Beatrice's reluctant summoning of him to dinner as 'a double meaning', and later he struggles to write poetry and behave as a romantic lover. • The statement could equally be applied to Beatrice, who changes just as dramatically in Act 3 Scene 1 by promising that she will tame 'my wild heart to thy loving hand'; she seems foolish when contradicting her earlier scornful treatment of Benedick and his attainments. • However, arguably the most foolish behaviour actually comes from Claudio when his love turns to jealousy, and there are many other characters who behave foolishly in the play for various reasons, whether jealousy, spite (Don John), ignorance (Leonato) or stupidity (Dogberry). Love helps Benedick to behave better than other men, championing Hero's virtue, and makes Beatrice an even stronger character. **AO2:** • Several characters in the play could be called fools, but this is a serious insult for gentlemen – and indeed for a proud woman like Beatrice, so they will fight to avoid that title; the gulling of Beatrice and Benedick is funny for the audience but serious for them as it seems to show them that their friends don't value their scornful words to each other. Irony is a significant structural device in this play. • Although characters love to talk about love, the songs of the play are characteristically ambiguous and melancholy rather than romantic – 'men were deceivers ever' – so the play's comedy comes from acceptance of love's foolishness rather than a straightforwardly happy ever after fairytale ending. • Pride prevents characters from wooing directly: Claudio tries to woo by proxy, and Benedick and Beatrice realise their love through the jests of others but the play's conflicts are resolved when characters admit that they 'suffer love' (Benedick - Act 5 Scene 2) and Benedick tries to recruit everyone into the foolishness of love: 'Prince, thou art sad, get thee a wife'. **AO3:** • Candidates are likely to have some understanding of how wooing and marriage were heavily bound by convention in Shakespeare's time, and the sexes grew up apart, so love could require an embarrassing willingness to confront vulnerabilities and misunderstandings. • They may understand the conventions of romantic comedy and Shakespeare's festive comedies in particular, in which foolishness and mistakes ultimately lead to true love.	**36 + 4 SPaG**

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