

**GCE**

**History A**

**Y301/01: Thematic study and historical interpretations: The  
early Anglo-Saxons c.400-800**

A Level

**Mark Scheme for June 2024**

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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 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 posted on the RM Cambridge Assessment Support Portal <http://www.rm.com/support/ca>
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **number of required** standardisation responses.

YOU MUST MARK 5 PRACTICE AND 6 STANDARDISATION RESPONSES BEFORE YOU CAN BE APPROVED TO MARK LIVE SCRIPTS.

### 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% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) 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 or the RM Assessor messaging system, or by email.
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.*)

**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 a tick to confirm that the work has been seen.
7. Award No Response (NR) if:
  - there is nothing written in the answer space

Award Zero '0' if:

- anything is written in the answer space and is not worthy of credit (this includes text and symbols).

Team Leaders must confirm the correct use of the NR button with their markers before live marking commences and should check this when reviewing scripts.

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your team leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**  
If you have any questions or comments for your team leader, use the phone, the RM Assessor messaging system, or e-mail.
9. Assistant 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:
  - a. **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
  - b. **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

## 11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Blank Page
	Highlight
Off-page comment	
	Assertion
	Analysis
	Evaluation
	Explanation
	Factor
	Illustrates/Describes
	Irrelevant, a significant amount of material that does not answer the question
	Judgement
	Knowledge and understanding
	Provenance
	Simple comment
	Unclear
	View

Annotation	Meaning
<b>S</b>	Synthesis
<b>C</b>	Continuity/Change

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
1			<p><b>Evaluate the interpretations in both of the two passages.</b></p> <p><b>Explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the role of Offa in the development of the Mercian supremacy.</b></p> <p><b>In locating the Interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might suggest</b> that Interpretation A puts forward the view that Offa had no intention of unifying the English, but he did aim to expand Mercia using violence, international relations and the Church to do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In evaluating Interpretation A, answers might argue</b> that Offa succeeded in controlling a huge swathe of territory in central England and the south-east.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that Offa ruled by the sword having used force to seize throne from Beornred.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> Offa's execution of King Ethelbert of East Anglia, in 794.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> his campaigns to expand and secure his realm especially in the Thames Valley where he defeated the West Saxons at Bensington in 779, and the south-east where he took Sussex and Lindsey and recovered Kent in c.785.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that he improved his relations with neighbouring kingdoms by arranging the marriages of his daughters,</li> </ul>	30	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set.  <b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At Level 5 and above answers will evaluate both interpretations, locating them within the wider historical debate about the issue and using their own knowledge, and will reach a balanced judgement as to which they consider the most convincing about the issue in the question.</li> <li>• To be valid judgements they must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used to analyse and evaluate the sources, in line with the descriptions in the levels mark scheme.</li> </ul>



Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<p>Eadburh, to Wessex king, Beorhtric, and Aelfflaed, to Aethelred of Northumbria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that the anointing of his son by a bishop indicates his aim to establish the hereditary principle in Mercian monarchy and that in doing so he was probably inspired by Carolingian example.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> further evidence for the relations between Offa and Charlemagne (e.g. Alcuin; trade) and argue that Offa can be seen as an English Charlemagne.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that there are several indications of the flourishing of the Church under Offa (e.g. creation of the Lichfield archbishopric; founding of monasteries).</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that Offa's coins and charters do not style him as anything grander than king of the Mercians.</li> </ul> <p><b>In locating the Interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might suggest</b> that Interpretation B puts forward the view that Offa aimed to unite under his rule the people of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms south of the Humber by building a sense of Englishness among them and sharpening their sense of the 'otherness' of Britons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In evaluating Interpretation B, answers might argue</b> that Offa's ethnocentricity is reflected in some (controversial) later copies of charters from the 770s unequivocally identify him as <i>rex Anglorum</i> ('king of the English').</li> </ul>		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answers might argue there is ample evidence to support his 'determined attempt to bring all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms south of the Humber under his rule' (e.g. incursions into Wessex) even though he was not entirely successful.</li> <li><b>Answers might consider</b> the legacy of acute religious conflict between Britons and Anglo-Saxons in reflecting on Offa's capitalizing on an established and 'growing sense of ethnic unity'.</li> <li><b>Answers might argue</b> that the dyke is indicative of an empire-building mindset (perhaps by drawing parallels with other great imperial border structures).</li> <li><b>Answers might consider</b>, with material detail, the astonishing feat of constructing the dyke and argue that this demonstrates his commitment to physically separating the English from the Welsh/British.</li> <li><b>Answers might argue</b> the dyke served a socio-cultural function in being designed to prevent easy movement of people across the border as opposed to being a defence against full-scale assault.</li> <li><b>Answers might consider</b> how place-name evidence, especially that of places close to the English-Welsh border, supports the interpretation.</li> <li><b>Answers might argue</b> that the linguistic history of the peoples west and east of Offa's Dyke substantiates the interpretation.</li> </ul>		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
2*			<p><b>Assess the reasons for the expansion of early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms during the period from c.400 to 800.</b></p> <p><b>Answers might consider some of the following themes:</b> conquest and settlement, warfare and diplomacy, dynastic developments and development of the concept of kingship.</p> <p><b>In arguing warfare was the most important reason,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the evidence for the military activity of the earliest ‘invaders’ associated with the legend of Vortigern, Hengist and Horsa.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the evidence for the role of warfare in the establishing of the early kingdoms such as the legend of Arthur’s 12 battles (including <i>Mons Badonicus</i>).</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the place of warrior traditions, war bands and warfare in the development of emerging <i>Bretwaldas</i>.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the role of warfare (including the battle of Penselwood) in the emergence of Wessex.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the place of military conquest in the expansion of Northumbria.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the military achievements of the kings of Mercia: Aethelbald and Offa.</li> </ul>	25	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set.  <b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge the most important reasons.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.</li> </ul>

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the preoccupation with warfare in the period in Gildas, Bede, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.</li> </ul> <p><b>In arguing warfare was not the most important reason,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> other reasons for the appearance of Anglo-Saxons in England after c.400 including the post-imperial breakdown of social, economic and political systems.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> push factors as well as pull factors for the migration of Anglo-Saxon peoples.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the political and structural reasons for the insecurity of kings and kingdoms and how these contributed to the fragility of the heptarchy.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the evidence for pre-existing provinces and territorial continuity.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the importance of tribal affiliations, ethnicity, and tradition.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the evidence for peaceful interactions with Britons (e.g. social and cultural interactions).</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the importance of diplomacy (e.g. marriage alliances) in the development of early medieval polities.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the role of religion and religious affinity in the development of kingship.</li> </ul>		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
3*			<p><b>'Religious belief and practice in Britain and Ireland before Augustine's arrival in 597 was very different to that in the period from 597 to 800.'</b></p> <p><b>How far do you agree?</b></p> <p><b>Answers might consider some of the following themes:</b> the practice and survival of paganism; Christian theological disputes; monasticism and learning; kingship and the Church; ethnic/group identities; international relations.</p> <p><b>In arguing religious belief and practice was very different,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the widespread practice of pagan worship among Britons and early Germanic settlers before 597 and rapid spread of Christianity after 597.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the impact of conversion (starting with that of king Ethelbert of Kent) upon the beliefs of Anglo-Saxons.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the developing practice after 597 of harnessing the power of the Church in Anglo-Saxon kingship.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the importance of common belief post-597 in the developing relationship between Britain and Continental Europe (e.g. with popes and with Charlemagne).</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the proliferation of post-597 ecclesiastical centres and the place of monasticism (e.g. Augustine's own abbey at Canterbury) in early-medieval Britain.</li> </ul>	25	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed.</p> <p><b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge the validity of the interpretation.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.</li> </ul>

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the role of post 597 Christian belief and practice in developing a sense of identity in both English and British contexts after 597.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the role of the post-597 Church in promoting Christian belief-based learning and literacy (in Latin).</li> </ul> <p><b>In arguing religious belief and practice was not very different,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> the ‘conversion period’ post-dates 597 (‘ending’ with conversion of the Isle of Wight in 686), that for some conversion was nominal, and ordinary people maintained their older beliefs and practices.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that, in any case, the conversion was not started by Augustine – for example, St Columba’s supposed (by Bede) conversion of the Picts predates 597.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the widespread practice of Christianity and its establishments (e.g. Iona) prior to 597.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> elite conversions sometimes failed and the converts either hedged their bets (e.g. evidence of Sutton Hoo ship burial) or returned to their older beliefs and practices.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> theological points of similarity between the British and Roman positions greatly outweighed their differences.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> the Synod of Whitby (664) was a more important turning-point in</li> </ul>		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			belief and practice than the arrival of Augustine in 597.		
4*			<p><b>‘The similarities in the literature of the period from c.400 to 800 are much greater than their differences.’</b></p> <p><b>How far do you agree?</b></p> <p><b>Answers might consider some of the following themes:</b> content, purpose, provenance, form and style.</p> <p><b>In arguing that the similarities outweigh the differences,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the polemical elements common to Gildas, Bede and <i>Beowulf</i> and their common purpose in addressing aristocratic audiences.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the place of heroes (e.g. Bede’s saints) and anti-heroes (e.g. Grendel), and folkloric elements (e.g. reference to creation myths) in these works.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the importance of principles of morality / ethics / piety in the literature.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the religious elements and allusions, especially Bede and Gildas.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the value as literature of notably <i>Beowulf</i> and Bede.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the close similarities between Bede and Gildas in terms of content and as providential histories of Britain.</li> </ul>	25	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed.</p> <p><b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge the validity of the interpretation.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.</li> </ul>

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> there are folkloric elements in much of the literature (e.g. reference to creation myths).</li> </ul> <p><b>In arguing that the differences outweigh the similarities,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the strikingly different provenance of Gildas, Bede and <i>Beowulf</i>.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the different perspectives of Gildas (c.500, British), Bede (c.700, Anglo-Saxon), <i>Beowulf</i> (date of origin unknown, Germano-Scandinavian).</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the uniqueness of <i>Beowulf</i> as a fictional epic written in English.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the uniqueness of <i>Beowulf</i> as a work designed to entertain as opposed to being overtly didactic, unlike Bede and Gildas.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the contrast between Bede's diatribe against contemporary religious practice and Gildas' celebration of the Church and recent Anglo-Saxon conversion.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> how literature provides very different, albeit enormously valuable, evidence for historians (e.g. <i>Beowulf</i> as a uniquely valuable source for understanding Anglo-Saxon elite culture and mentality).</li> </ul>		



## APPENDIX 1 – this contains a generic mark scheme grid

	<i>AO3: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.</i>
	<b>Generic mark scheme for Section A, Question 1: Interpretation [30]</b>
<b>Level 6</b> 26–30 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question throughout. It has thorough and sustained evaluation of the interpretations, using detailed and accurate knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a convincing and supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
<b>Level 5</b> 21–25 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question throughout. It has good evaluation of the interpretations, using relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
<b>Level 4</b> 16–20 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. It has evaluation of the interpretations based on generally relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce an analysis of them in relation to the question.
<b>Level 3</b> 11–15 marks	The answer is partially focused on the question. It has partial evaluation of the interpretations based on some knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue. There may be some use of information from one of the two interpretations to support the evaluation of the other, but the evaluation will not rely on this. There is a limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
<b>Level 2</b> 6–10 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the question. Parts of the answer are just description of the interpretations, with evaluation in relation to historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue being weak, and evaluation relying heavily on information drawn from the other interpretation. There is a very limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
<b>Level 1</b> 1–5 marks	The answer has some relevance to the topic, but not the specific question. The answer consists mostly of description of the interpretations with very limited evaluation based on very generalised knowledge of historical context and minimal or no reference to the wider historical debate. Analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question is either in the form of assertion or lacking.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding and no demonstration of any relevant knowledge.

	<i>AO1: Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.</i>
	<b>Generic mark scheme for Section B, Questions 2, 3 and 4: Essay [25]</b>
<b>Level 6</b> 21–25 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question. Detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a fully developed synthesis supporting a convincing and substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent and logically structured. The information presented is entirely relevant and substantiated.
<b>Level 5</b> 17–20 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question. Generally accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a developed synthesis supporting a substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and in the most part substantiated.
<b>Level 4</b> 13–16 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. Relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a synthesis supporting a reasonable judgement. There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is in the most-part relevant and supported by some evidence.
<b>Level 3</b> 9–12 marks	The answer has a partial focus on the question. Some relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and explain key features of the period studied in order to attempt an undeveloped synthesis, which is linked to a judgement, though the supporting explanation may lack detail and clarity. The information has some relevance and is presented with limited structure. The information is supported by limited evidence.
<b>Level 2</b> 5–8 marks	The answer has only a limited focus on the question. Limited relevant knowledge and understanding is used to give a limited explanation and analysis of key features of the period studied. There is a judgement but this may not be clearly linked with the supporting explanation. The information has some relevance, but is communicated in an unstructured way. The information is supported by limited evidence and the relationship to the evidence may not be clear.
<b>Level 1</b> 1–4 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the topic, but not the specific question. The answer is largely descriptive, with only very generalised knowledge of the period studied being used to attempt basic explanation and very limited analysis. Judgements are unsupported and are not linked to analysis. Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.
0 marks	The answer contains no relevant information.

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