



A-level

ENGLISH LITERATURE B

Paper 1B Literary genres: Aspects of comedy

Wednesday 14 May 2025 Afternoon Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7717/1B.
- Answer **one** question from Section A, **one** question from Section B and **one** question from Section C.
- You may answer on the same Shakespeare play in Sections A **and** B.
- For Section C, you must write about **two** texts, at least **one** of which **must** be a pre-1900 drama text.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 75.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.
- In your response you need to:
 - analyse carefully the writers' methods
 - explore the contexts of the texts you are writing about
 - explore connections across the texts you have studied
 - explore different interpretations of your texts.

Section A

Answer **one** question in this section.

Either

0	1
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***The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the comedy of the play as a whole.

Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare's dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Enter Lucentio and his man Tranio

LUCENTIO

Tranio, since for the great desire I had
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,
I am arrived for fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy,
And by my father's love and leave am armed
With his good will and thy good company,
My trusty servant well approved in all,
Here let us breathe and haply institute
A course of learning and ingenious studies.
Pisa renowned for grave citizens
Gave me my being and my father first,
A merchant of great traffic through the world,
Vincentio come of the Bentivolii.
Vincentio's son, brought up in Florence,
It shall become to serve all hopes conceived
To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds.
And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study
Virtue, and that part of philosophy
Will I apply that treats of happiness
By virtue specially to be achieved.
Tell me thy mind, for I have Pisa left.
And am to Padua come as he that leaves
A shallow plash to plunge him in the deep,
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.

TRANIO

Mi perdonato, gentle master mine.
I am in all affected as yourself,
Glad that you thus continue your resolve
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
Only, good master, while we do admire
This virtue and this moral discipline,
Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray,
Or so devote to Aristotle's checks
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured.
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,

And practise rhetoric in your common talk,
 Music and poesy use to quicken you,
 The mathematics and the metaphysics
 Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you.
 No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en.
 In brief, sir, study what you most affect.

LUCENTIO

Gramercies, Tranio, well dost thou advise.
 If, Biondello, thou wert come ashore,
 We could at once put us in readiness,
 And take a lodging fit to entertain
 Such friends as time in Padua shall beget.
Enter Baptista with his two daughters Katherina and Bianca; Gremio, a pantaloon, and Hortensio, suitor to Bianca. Lucentio and Tranio stand by
 But stay awhile, what company is this?

TRANIO

Master, some show to welcome us to town.

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,
 For how I firmly am resolved you know;
 That is, not to bestow my youngest daughter
 Before I have a husband for the elder.
 If either of you both love Katherina,
 Because I know you well and love you well,
 Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.

GREMIO

To cart her rather. She's too rough for me.
 There, there, Hortensio, will you any wife?

KATHERINA *(to Baptista)*

I pray you, sir, is it your will
 To make a stale of me amongst these mates?

HORTENSIO

Mates, maid, how mean you that? No mates for you
 Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.

KATHERINA

I'faith, sir, you shall never need to fear.
 Iwis it is not halfway to her heart.
 But if it were, doubt not her care should be
 To comb your noddle with a three-legged stool,
 And paint your face, and use you like a fool.

HORTENSIO

From all such devils, good Lord deliver us!

GREMIO

And me too, good Lord!

(Act 1, Scene 1)

Turn over for the next question

Turn over ►

or

0	2
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***Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare**

Read the extract below and then answer the question.

Explore the significance of this extract in relation to the comedy of the play as a whole.

Remember to include in your answer relevant analysis of Shakespeare's dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Enter Sir Toby Belch and Maria

SIR TOBY What a plague means my niece to take the death of her brother thus? I am sure care's an enemy to life.

MARIA By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in earlier o' nights. Your cousin, my lady, takes great exceptions to your ill hours.

SIR TOBY Why, let her except before excepted.

MARIA Ay, but you must confine yourself within the modest limits of order.

SIR TOBY Confine! I'll confine myself no finer than I am. These clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be these boots too; an they be not, let them hang themselves in their own straps.

MARIA That quaffing and drinking will undo you. I heard my lady talk of it yesterday, and of a foolish knight that you brought in one night here, to be her wooer.

SIR TOBY Who? Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

MARIA Ay, he.

SIR TOBY He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria.

MARIA What's that to the purpose?

SIR TOBY Why, he has three thousand ducats a year.

MARIA Ay, but he'll have but a year in all these ducats. He's a very fool and a prodigal.

SIR TOBY Fie, that you'll say so. He plays o' the viol-de-gamboys, and speaks three or four languages word for word without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature.

MARIA He hath indeed all, most natural; for besides that he's a fool, he's a great quarreller; and but that he hath the gift of a coward to allay the gust he hath in quarrelling, 'tis thought among the prudent he would quickly have the gift of a grave.

SIR TOBY By this hand, they are scoundrels and sub-tractors that say so of him. Who are they?

MARIA They that add, moreover, he's drunk nightly in your company.

SIR TOBY With drinking healths to my niece. I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and drink in Illyria. He's a coward and a coistrel that will not drink to my niece till his brains turn o' the toe, like a parish top. What, wench! Castiliano, *vulgo* – for here comes Sir Andrew Agueface!

Enter Sir Andrew Aguecheek

SIR ANDREW Sir Toby Belch! How now, Sir Toby Belch?

SIR TOBY Sweet Sir Andrew!

SIR ANDREW Bless you, fair shrew.

MARIA And you too, sir.

SIR TOBY Accost, Sir Andrew, accost.

SIR ANDREW What's that?

SIR TOBY My niece's chambermaid.

SIR ANDREW Good Mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance.

MARIA My name is Mary, sir.

SIR ANDREW Good Mistress Mary Accost –

SIR TOBY (*aside*) You mistake, knight. 'Accost' is front her, board her, woo her, assail her.

SIR ANDREW (*aside*) By my troth, I would not undertake her in this company. Is that the meaning of 'accost'?

MARIA Fare you well, gentlemen.

SIR TOBY (*aside*) An thou let part so, Sir Andrew, would thou mightst never draw sword again.

SIR ANDREW An you part so, mistress, I would I might never draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you have fools in hand?

MARIA Sir, I have not you by the hand.

SIR ANDREW Marry, but you shall have, and here's my hand.

MARIA Now, sir, 'Thought is free.' I pray you, bring your hand to the buttery bar and let it drink.

SIR ANDREW Wherefore, sweetheart? What's your metaphor?

MARIA It's dry, sir.

SIR ANDREW Why, I think so. I am not such an ass, but I can keep my hand dry. But what's your jest?

MARIA A dry jest, sir.

SIR ANDREW Are you full of them?

MARIA Ay, sir. I have them at my fingers' ends. Marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren. *Exit*

(Act 1, Scene 3)

Turn over for Section B

Turn over ►

Section B

Answer **one** question in this section.

Either

0	3
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***The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare**

‘Petruchio’s attitudes and actions are disturbing rather than entertaining.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

or

0	4
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***The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare**

‘In comedy, characters engage in courtship: they try to attract a partner and then develop a romantic relationship.’

Explore the significance of courtship to the comedy of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

or

0	5
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***Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare**

‘In *Twelfth Night*, it’s funny when authority figures are disrespected and mistreated.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

or

0	6
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***Twelfth Night* – William Shakespeare**

‘In comedy, characters engage in courtship: they try to attract a partner and then develop a romantic relationship.’

Explore the significance of courtship to the comedy of *Twelfth Night*.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

Section C

Answer **one** question in this section.

In this section you must write about **two** texts, at least **one** of which must be a pre-1900 drama text.

You can write about the following texts:

She Stoops to Conquer (pre-1900 drama)
The Importance of Being Earnest (pre-1900 drama)
Emma
Small Island
The Nun's Priest's Tale
Poetry Anthology: Comedy

Either

0	7
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'In comedy, characters behave badly – and they always get away with it.'

To what extent do you agree with this view in relation to **two** texts you have studied?

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

[25 marks]

or

0	8
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Comedic texts contain narrative climaxes where situations reach a peak or a crisis happens.

Explore the significance of narrative climaxes to the comedy of **two** texts you have studied.

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the ways the writers have shaped meanings.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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