



A-level ENGLISH LITERATURE B 7717/1B

Paper 1B Literary genres: Aspects of comedy

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Information for examiners marking Aspects of comedy: closed book

Welcome to this mark scheme which is designed to help you deliver fair and accurate assessment. Please read all sections carefully and ensure that you follow the requirements that they contain.

The significance of closed book

Examiners must understand that in marking a closed book exam there are examining implications. Students do not have their texts in front of them, so while it is expected that they will use quotations, it is also legitimate to use close textual references. They will have had to memorise quotations so there may be some errors which should not be over penalised. Detailed discussions of particular sections of texts are less likely here than in open book exams. Instead, students may range broadly across their texts as they construct their arguments.

There are specific issues for AO2 – how meanings are shaped in texts. Students will not have their texts in front of them, so although they will be able to make specific references to structural and organisational issues, comments on other methods may be less specific.

Arriving at Marks

1. All questions are framed to address all the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Answers are marked holistically. Examiners need to read the whole answer taking into account its strengths and weaknesses and then place it in the appropriate band.
2. Examiners should avoid making early snap judgements before the whole answer has been read. Some students begin tentatively but go on to make relevant points.
3. Examiners should be prepared to use the full mark range in order to discriminate and not 'bunch' scripts in the middle for safety.
4. Examiners should mark positively. Although the possible content of the mark scheme provides some indicators for what students are likely to write about, examiners should be willing to reward what is actually there – **provided of course, that it is relevant to the question being asked**.
5. Examiners should remember that there are no right answers. Students' views which are relevant, well-argued and supported by appropriate textual evidence must receive credit whether the examiner agrees with the views or not. It is important to remain open to a student's ideas which could be unusual or unorthodox.
6. Examiners should remember that length and quality are not synonymous. Some brief answers may be relevant and concise. Equally, long answers may be diffuse and repetitive.
7. If answers are short or incomplete, examiners can only reward what is there and assess accordingly. Some further credit can be given to answers finished in note form.

Using the Mark Bands

8. When placing answers in mark bands, examiners need to look closely at the descriptors and the detailed generic mark bands on page 9–12. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

MARK BAND DESCRIPTORS	
Band 5 (21–25)	perceptive/assured
Band 4 (16–20)	coherent/thorough
Band 3 (11–15)	straightforward/relevant
Band 2 (6–10)	simple/generalised
Band 1 (1–5)	largely irrelevant, largely misunderstood, largely inaccurate

9. Answers placed at the top of the band will securely address the descriptors; answers at the lower end of the band will securely address the descriptors below and begin to show the qualities of the band into which you are placing them. Careful judgements need to be made about marks in the middle of the range; here it is likely that the key descriptors will be more intermittent but still clearly evident.
10. There will be occasions when an answer addresses descriptors in different bands; in such cases, the ‘best-fit’ model applies. Here examiners will need to exercise a different kind of judgement, looking to see where the answer can be most fairly and appropriately placed in terms of its quality against the descriptors.
11. Examiners must remember that the mark bands are not equivalent to grades: grades are decided by the awarding committee at the end of each session.

Advice about marking each section

Section A

12. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking extract-based questions:
- does the student have an overview of the extract?
 - has the student written about dramatic method?
 - has the student seen the significance of the extract in relation to the overall comedy?
 - has the student quoted from the extract to support ideas?
 - the student’s AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 4.

Section B

13. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions based on single texts:

- has the student engaged in a debate or constructed an argument in line with the question?
- has the student referred to different parts of the play to support their views?
- has the student referred to Shakespeare's dramatic method?
- the student's AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 4.

Section C

14. Examiners need to bear in mind the following key points when marking questions connecting two texts:

- has the student focused on the aspect of comedy set up in the question and referred to two texts?
- has the student engaged in a debate or constructed an argument around the two texts in line with the question?
- has the student commented on the writers' authorial methods in the two texts?
- has the student adhered to the rubric – one drama text and one other, with one of the texts being pre-1900?
- has the student given substantial coverage of two texts?
- the student's AO1 competence.

In the case of a significant omission to an answer the examiner should not give a mark higher than Band 4.

Annotation

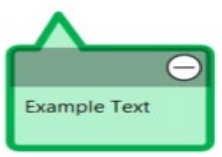
15. Examiners should remember that annotation is directed solely to senior examiners.

16. In addition to giving a mark, examiners should write a brief summative comment indicating how the mark has been arrived at. These comments are likely to mirror the appropriate mark band descriptors but comments must not be mechanical. Examiners need to describe student performance.

17. The most important annotation you will use elsewhere is the tick. This will signal positive achievement in relation to the question. Ticks should be placed in the body of an answer where apt points are made. Further ticks should be given for development of points and support. Strong answers will have more ticks than weaker responses. If points are partially made the bracketed tick can be used.

18. Apart from making a summative comment in a comment box, you could use the comment box elsewhere in your marking if you need to explain your thinking to a senior marker. However, in most cases the annotation stamps will be sufficient to explain your ticks or the absence of them.

The following annotation is available for use on e-Marker 2:

Annotation Name	Toolbar Image	Details	Examples of Use on Script	Y/N
Annotation Type: Stamp				
Correct		Toolbar Tooltip: Correct		Y
Seen		Toolbar Tooltip: Seen		Y
NotRelevant		Toolbar Tooltip: Not Relevant		Y
Red Line		 Toolbar Tooltip: Red Line		Y
Green Empty Comment		Toolbar Tooltip: Green Empty Comment No Default Text - text shown in screenshot was typed into annotation by user		Y
AssessObjective1		Toolbar Tooltip: Assessment Objective 1		Y
Repetition		Toolbar Tooltip: Repetition		Y
Vague		Toolbar Tooltip: Vague		Y
Development		Toolbar Tooltip: Development		Y
SomethingHere		Toolbar Tooltip: Something here		Y
Unfocused		Toolbar Tooltip: Unfocused		Y
UnclearExpression		Toolbar Tooltip: Unclear expression		Y
LackOfClarity		Toolbar Tooltip: Lack of Clarity		Y
FactualInaccuracy		Toolbar Tooltip: Factual Inaccuracy		Y
PartiallyMadePoint		Toolbar Tooltip: Partially made point		Y
Text		Toolbar Tooltip: Needing textual support		Y

19. Please remember that scripts can go back to students, so although your audience is a senior examiner, you must express yourself temperately when writing in the comment boxes.

The assessment objectives and their significance

20. All questions are framed to test AOs 5, 4, 3 and 2, so if students answer the question, then they will be addressing the AOs. In marking questions, however, examiners must also take account of AO1.

Reminder: The AOs are as follows:

- AO5** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.
- AO4** Explore connections across literary texts.
- AO3** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
- AO2** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- AO1** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Mark	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at a mark
Band 5 Perceptive/Assured 21–25 marks ‘Perception’ is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task. ‘Assuredness’ is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.	AO5	perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by perceptive and assured work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task. At the top of the band students are consistently assured and will demonstrate sensitivity and perception across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response. At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some perception but with less consistency and evenness.
	AO4	perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study	
	AO3	- perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied	
	AO2	- perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task - assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression	

Band 4 Coherent/Thorough 16–20 marks ‘Coherence’ is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task. They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way. ‘Thoroughness’ is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.	AO5	thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by coherent and thorough work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task. At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully coherent and thorough argument across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response. At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in coherence and accuracy.
	AO4	logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study	
	AO3	- thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - coherence in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied	
	AO2	- thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth - appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression	

Band 3 Straightforward/Relevant 11–15 marks ‘Straightforward’ work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known. ‘Relevant’ work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.	AO5	straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by straightforward and relevant work where the student’s response to the task is clear and intelligible. At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent straightforward understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed relevantly. At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of relevant understanding with evidence of straightforward thinking.
	AO4	explores connections across literary texts arising out of generic study in a straightforward way	
	AO3	- straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - relevant connections between those contexts and the genre studied	
	AO2	- straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- sensibly ordered ideas in a relevant argument in relation to the task - some use of literary critical concepts and terminology which are mainly appropriate; straightforward and clear expression	
Band 2 Simple/Generalised 6–10 marks ‘Simple’ work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task. ‘Generalised’ work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.	AO5	simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task	This band is characterised by simple and generalised work which is mainly linked to the task. At the top of the band students will demonstrate a basic generalised understanding in the course of their answer. Ideas will be developed in a simple way. At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a simple and generalised understanding.
	AO4	simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study	
	AO3	- simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task - generalised connections between those contexts and the genre studied	
	AO2	- simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task - generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used	
	AO1	- a simple structure to the argument which may not be consistent but which does relate to the task - generalised use of literary critical concepts and terminology; simple expression	

Band 1 Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate 1–5 marks ‘Largely irrelevant’ work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question. ‘Largely misunderstood’ and ‘largely inaccurate’ work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.		• some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s) • the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant • little sense of the AOs in relation to the task; little sense of how meanings are shaped; little sense of any relevant contexts; little sense of any connection arising out of generic study; little sense of an argument in relation to the task	This band is characterised by work which is largely irrelevant and largely misunderstood and largely inaccurate, and so unlikely to be addressing the AOs in a relevant way. At the top of the band students will mention some unconnected points in relation to the task during the course of their writing. The writing is likely to lack clarity. At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and irrelevant.
0 marks		No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.	

0 1

***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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the comedy of the play as a whole.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

The students are given an extract so when working on that they should quote directly to support their ideas. This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about other parts of the play, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations here in relation to readers and audiences. Some students might comment on the choices made by directors.

Some possible ideas:

- the comedic trajectory in the extract: the entrance of Lucentio and Tranio, Lucentio's account of his desire to travel and learn, his father's support and servant's company, Tranio's advice to enjoy pleasure alongside virtue, the entrance of Baptista, his daughters and Bianca's suitors, Baptista's stating of his stipulation about Bianca's marriage, Gremio's disparaging comment about Katherina, her accusatory statement to Baptista, the frank exchange between Katherina and Hortensio, Hortensio and Gremio's disparaging comments about Katherina
- contextualisation: the Induction's setting up of Sly as a drunken spectator of events, the Induction's establishment of ideas about gender, power and relationships, the subsequent desire Lucentio feels for Bianca, the taming of Katherina, the fulfilment of Baptista's stipulation, the pursuit of Bianca by Gremio and Hortensio
- the extract as part of the play's opening phase where Lucentio is introduced, his desires are expressed, and his character is established
- Lucentio as a comedic hero who seeks to explore and learn, his position as an upbeat figure who intends to experience new places
- Lucentio as a romantic character – a type of adventurer whose quest will likely lead him to interesting situations
- Lucentio as a character on a comedic journey, one which leads him to love and marriage
- Lucentio as a faintly ridiculous character, a privileged and naïve young man whose status affords him power, his desires a comic affectation

- the portrayal of the master-servant relationship, the power dynamic and the preparation for the later comic business of their relationship
- Tranio as an able, supportive servant, his comically polite challenging of Lucentio's lofty desires
- the introduction of the comedic problem of how Bianca and therefore Katherina will be married
- the introduction of Katherina, the audience's prior knowledge of Katherina's character and the potential for comedic clashes
- the introduction of Katherina as a type of comedic heroine, her feisty and powerful refusal to play the servile role expected of her
- Katherina's conduct as the main comedic obstacle in the play, her establishment as a comedic problem that must be overcome for happiness to result for all
- Katherina as a comic figure, a fiery and unattractive character, her position as the shrew of the play's title
- Katherina as a comedic victim trapped by her situation, her position in a patriarchal world, the darkly comic expectation that she must be dominated to ensure the happiness of others
- Baptista as cruel father, a comedic obstacle to his daughters' happiness and that of the suitors
- Baptista as a ridiculous character, an old man whose outdated values and attempts to assert his power will be overcome through the trickery and ingenuity of others
- the role of Gremio and Hortensio as suitors to Bianca, the comic thwarting of their desires by Baptista
- the ridiculous notion of the aged Gremio's expectation that Bianca would accept him as a serious suitor
- the amusingly disparaging comments of Gremio and Hortensio, the verbal sparring between Katherina and Hortensio
- the comic violence threatened by Katherina towards Hortensio
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to significance of connections with the comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspect of desires
- the comedic aspect of problems and obstacles
- the comedic aspect of the feisty but powerless woman
- etc

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of power as seen in Baptista's control over his daughters' love lives
- the context of gender as seen in the male attitudes towards marriage
- the economic context as seen in Lucentio and Baptista's privileged positions
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance of dramatic method students might focus on:

- the extract's function in introducing a main comedic problem, the establishment of Lucentio's intentions and backstory, the introduction of comedic pairing in Lucentio and Tranio, the subsequent introduction of Baptista's family after Lucentio's position has been established, the way

conflict between Baptista and Katherina is established, the further establishment of conflict between Katherina and Bianca's suitors

- the dramatic nature of the scene, eg the upbeat speech of Petruchio, the energy of the mass entrance of Baptista and daughters and their suitors, the positioning of Lucentio and Tranio as bystanders to the conflicts of Baptista's family, the verbal sparring between Katherina and Hortensio
- the variety of dialogue, eg romantic elevated speech of Lucentio, the polite but challenging dialogue of Tranio, the powerful words of Baptista, Katherina's confrontational dialogue, the comic words of Gremio
- relevant language features, eg Lucentio and Tranio's elevated classical references, Baptista's imperatives, Katherina's confrontational language
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, references to other parts of the play may be more generalised than those from the passage.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy.

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any valid discussion of dramatic methods which are grounded in the passage and which relate to the play as a whole.

0 2***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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO. In their answer students should refer to the significance that can be seen in the extract and how some of this significance may pertain to the comedy of the play as a whole.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

The students are given an extract so when working on that they should quote directly to support their ideas. This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about other parts of the play, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations here in relation to readers and audiences. Some students might comment on the choices made by directors.

Some possible ideas:

- the comedic trajectory of the extract: the entrance of Sir Toby and Maria, his complaint about his niece's grief, Maria's scolding and Toby's rejection of it, the mention of Sir Andrew, the conversation about Andrew's character and supposed talents, Maria's disparagement of them and the relationship between the two knights, the entrance of Andrew and his encounter with Maria, his misunderstanding, the conversation between the knights in aside, Maria's playful mockery of Andrew followed by her exit
- contextualisation: the first appearance of Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and Maria in the play, the preceding establishment of Olivia's grief and mourning, the relative seriousness of the prior scenes that contrast the comic business in the extract, the subsequent anarchic behaviour of Toby, his refusal to abstain, the tricks he plays upon Andrew and the comeuppance the two knights receive, the collapse of their friendship at the end, the marriage of Toby and Maria
- Sir Toby as an anarchic, festive figure whose manner and actions embody the free-wheeling, rebellious spirit of the festival of *Twelfth Night*
- the reversal of expected behaviour, the attitudes and antics of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew given their social status, Sir Toby's comic disrespect for his niece's mourning
- the drunken nature of Sir Toby and the way it is played for laughs in performance, his amusing refusal to mend his ways or take advice
- the portrayal of comic excess, the references to drinking and loss of control and propriety, the entertaining refusal to comply to social expectations, Toby's flippant suggestion that his actions are a type of bravery

- Sir Toby's behaviour as a light-hearted refusal to take life seriously, a celebration of the enjoyable aspects of life and awareness that 'it's all one'
- the comic truth regarding those with status and their foibles, the position of Sir Toby as a wasteful and reckless member of the privileged classes who parties while others suffer
- Sir Toby's playful use of language in his responses to Maria, the double-meanings, his ironic protestations at the criticism of Sir Andrew
- the playful interaction between Maria and Sir Toby, her attempts to control him and his refusal to obey, the comic reversal given their social status, the sense that their dialogue is knowingly combative
- Maria and Sir Toby's dialogue as a kind of flirtation, the playful scolding and role-playing of naughty boy and matronly figure as part of their burgeoning romance seen at the end of the play
- the manipulation of Sir Andrew by Sir Toby, the sense that he is exploiting his supposed friend, the amusement and/or dismay this produces
- the entertaining descriptions of Sir Andrew prior to his entrance, the comic to-ing and fro-ing between Maria and Sir Toby as they recount his talents, the contrast between his supposed skills and Maria's less flattering assessment
- Sir Andrew as a comic victim who is the butt of the joke, his role as an object of mockery for Sir Toby, the comic cruelty of the way he is ridiculed and exploited for his money by a supposed friend
- Sir Andrew's inability to grasp situations as a source of humour, his misinterpretation of 'accost' and failure to realise he is being mocked
- the audience's superior knowledge of the mockery of Sir Andrew before he enters, the entertainment generated from Maria and Toby's ridicule
- the knights as a type of double act, their carousing, their contrasting onstage appearance
- Maria as a lively and quick-thinking character, her banter with Sir Toby and ability to judge the characters of the knights and see them for what they are
- Maria as an attractive character in Sir Toby's eyes, her playfulness and attempt to scold him as desirable qualities in his eyes
- Maria as a type of quick-thinking servant whose intellect outstrips Sir Andrew's, her facility with language as part of her comedic appeal
- the playful sexual qualities in the exchange between Maria and Sir Andrew, often played for physical comedy in performance, Andrew's inability to realise he is being mocked rather than flirted with
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to significance of connections with the comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspect of mockery and insults
- the comedic aspects of drunkenness and anarchic behaviour
- the comedic aspect of the comic double act
- etc.

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of gender as seen in relationships between Maria and the two male characters
- the context of power as seen in the way Toby mocks and exploits Sir Andrew
- the social context as seen in the various statuses of the characters
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance of dramatic method students might focus on:

- the extract's place near the beginning of the play, the entrance of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, their positioning as a kind of comic double act, the establishment of Sir Toby's character and his position in the household, the establishment of Maria and Sir Toby's playfully combative relationship in relation to their future marriage, the dialogue concerning Sir Andrew prior to his entrance, the positioning of the audience so they are in on the joke, the entrance of Sir Andrew, the playful asides, the establishment of Sir Andrew as a comic fool, the positioning of Sir Toby and Maria as another type of double act
- the dramatic spectacle of the scene, eg the way the scene is usually performed in a night-time setting in a house of mourning, the comically disrespectful aspect to Sir Toby's behaviour, the inebriated manner of Sir Toby, his mildly confrontational but playful interaction with Maria, her role as a playfully scolding figure, the entrance of Sir Andrew whose appearance usually forms a comic contrast with Sir Toby, the smutty asides, Maria's comically flirtatious manner with Sir Andrew, the way in which she and Sir Toby knowingly perform their mockery of Sir Andrew
- the variety of dialogue, eg Sir Toby's inebriated exchange with Maria, his lively dismissal of her concerns, his playful defence of Sir Andrew, Maria's ironic scolding, the ironic pleasantries on Sir Andrew's entrance, Maria's flirtatious mockery, the asides as part of the mockery
- relevant language features, eg words connected with drinking and quarrelling, disparaging terms used to describe Sir Andrew, the misinterpretation of 'accost', the sexually loaded double meanings
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, references to other parts of the play may be more generalised than those from the passage.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy.

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any valid discussion of dramatic methods which are grounded in the passage and which relate to the play as a whole.

0 3

***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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- Petruchio’s disturbing treatment of Katherina, his intention to make her comply through his taming strategy, the disparaging way he speaks to her and plots her submission is no cause for amusement
- the cruelty of his actions when he denies her food and humiliates her in the tailor scene are examples of coercive and controlling behaviour that are difficult to watch
- the breaking of Katherina during the journey to the point where she will agree with anything in order to gain respite raises serious concerns about Petruchio’s conduct and can’t be seen as entertainment
- Petruchio’s stated aim of arriving in Padua to find a wife for financial gain irrespective of her other qualities appears conniving and motivated by bad intent
- the manipulative way he takes advantage of the situation in the Minola family, the manner in which he trades with Baptista for Katherina’s hand, his assumption that she isn’t entitled can’t be seen as entertaining
- Petruchio’s reported actions and appearance at his wedding seem designed to humiliate his wife and destroy an important occasion, suggesting the disturbing lengths he is prepared to go to in order to gain his wife
- Katherina’s last speech as a disturbing indication of the extent to which Petruchio’s controlling ways have broken her – a far cry from an entertaining conclusion to the play
- Petruchio’s physical and verbal mistreatment of Grumio shows him to be a nasty piece of work who exploits his power over less powerful people
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the audience's knowledge that they are watching a comedy where outrageous behaviour is entertaining – judging Petruchio's actions as disturbing is taking things far too seriously
- Petruchio's conduct as a highly amusing comic character whose actions are far too over-the-top to be viewed as disturbing, his obviously comic persona and actions provide much entertainment
- the entertaining combat between Petruchio and Katherine is part of the comic narrative that is viewed as an amusing battle of sexes in which both parties give as good as they get
- Petruchio as an engaging comedic hero whose playful and hilarious actions are enjoyed by the audience, the pleasure of watching the process by which he secures Katherine and his ultimate victory
- the hilarious tailor scene where the teasing of Katherine is amusing to watch, his outrageously funny conduct at the wedding, the clever manner in which he tames her provides the audience with harmless entertainment
- Katherine's final speech that endorses Petruchio's actions – no suggestion that she has suffered any upset and no sense in which his conduct could be called disturbing
- the slapstick action between Petruchio and Grumio (and also the servants) that is entertaining comic business where no harm occurs
- the framing of the play suggesting the action is designed to reflect and satirise Sly's fantasies rather than an endorsement of Petruchio's actions
- etc.

NB Students may legitimately write about audiences and/or the characters' reactions to Petruchio's attitudes and actions.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspect of the lively hero whose desires drive the plot
- the darker comedic aspects of cruelty and manipulation
- the comedic aspect of entertaining events and actions
- etc.

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the context of power as seen in the way Petruchio tames Katherine
- the context of gender as seen in the way male desires are presented
- the moral context as seen in Petruchio's questionable treatment of Katherine
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- the placement of Petruchio's actions in the sequence of the narrative, eg his entrance in the play and explicitly stated intention of taming Katherine, the entertaining banter between Petruchio and Katherine, the recount of the events of the wedding day, the process of the taming strategy such as the scene with the tailor and the denial of food as key events, the journey as a turning point

where the final compliance of Katherina is a climactic moment, the final speech of Katherina as the moment where his actions achieve success

- the resolution of the play where Petruchio succeeds and questions of compliance, patriarchal dominance and morality are brought into sharp focus
- the dramatic spectacle of the combative banter between Petruchio and Katherina, the amusing demeanour of Petruchio and his outrageous actions in regard to Katherina, the physical energy of the scenes with the haberdasher and the meat, the climactic moment of Petruchio's victory, the sight of Petruchio's foot on Katherina's hand
- aspects of dialogue such as Petruchio's admission of his intent on finding a wife, the rapid interactions between Petruchio and Katherina, the more controlling language Petruchio uses in the tailor/food scene, the crowing words of Petruchio regarding the success of his strategy, his command to 'Kiss me Kate'
- relevant language details such as Petruchio's amusing descriptions of Katherina, his reference to her in animal terms, his physical threats to her, imperatives used by Petruchio towards Katherina
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy.

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 4

***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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *The Taming of the Shrew* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations here in relation to readers and audiences. Some students might comment on the choices made by directors.

Some possible ideas:

- the process of courtship in the play, the events where potential lovers meet and the development of their relationship occurs
- the familiar patterns of courtship shown in the play where would-be lovers try to attract the interest of a love object, attempt to win the heart of another, engage in romantic behaviour, try to secure a long-term romantic partnership
- courtship as a comedic journey in the play where relationships are secured or challenged, matrimony as the end point of courtship for some characters as seen in the trio of marriages that occur at the end of the play
- the inclusion of unusual forms of courtship where conventional romantic behaviour is ignored or subverted, the failure of would-be lovers to secure the attention of a partner, the competition between suitors as part of the initial phase of courtship
- Petruchio and Katherina’s brief and confrontational courtship which results in marriage, Petruchio’s successful acquisition of her, the sense that an agreeable marriage eventually results
- the highly unconventional nature of Petruchio and Katherina’s courtship, her initial rejection of his advances, his determination to pursue the relationship, Katherina’s reluctance to entertain Petruchio’s advances, her refusal to engage in conventional courtship behaviour
- the amusing speed by which their marriage is settled, the sense that normal courtship rituals are largely eschewed
- Petruchio’s approach to courtship as a strategy, part of a long-term game of taming and changing Katherina, their courtship as a one-sided affair

- the initial combative meeting between Petruchio and Katherina, the verbal sparring, the entertaining conflict and banter, the comic physical violence, his use of praise and the amusing effect of it upon the audience, the sexual punning
- the disturbing aspect to their courtship, Katherina's aggression and Petruchio's threats and restraint of her, Petruchio's insistence that they will be married, Katherina's horrified reaction to the news she will be married, Baptista's lack of interest towards his daughter's feelings and wishes
- the agreement between Baptista and Petruchio prior to the commencement of wooing, the transactional nature of their deal, the sense that financial matters drive his courtship behaviours
- the horse-trading between the men that reduces courtship and romance to a male-controlled process where women's input is non-existent or irrelevant
- the immediate nature of Lucentio's attraction to Bianca, his feverish pursuit of her, the lengths he is willing to go to
- the successful outcome of Lucentio's attempt to woo Bianca, the idea that energetic and resourceful courtship can result in triumph, her decision to accept his advances, the romance that ensues
- Lucentio's courtship rituals as a satire of the courtly lover, the amusement resulting from his elevated language, his juvenile feelings and foolishly idealised view of Bianca
- the competition between suitors for Bianca's affections, courtship as a form of competition where suitors need to outdo each other to win, courtship as a game
- the use of disguise as part of the courtship of Bianca, the amusement and comic events resulting from this, the more troubling idea that courtship involves concealing oneself in order to attract a mate, courtship as a form of deception
- Bianca as a sought-after lover, a prized trophy who makes her suitors work hard during the initial phase of courtship, her conscious role-playing as an ideal female
- the failure of courtship as seen in Gremio and Hortensio's pursuit of Bianca, the entertainment deriving from Gremio's unlikely attempt to win her hand, Hortensio's marriage to the Widow as a rebound to his failure in courtship with Bianca
- the presentation of courtship as part of the play Sly observes, depictions of courtship as a mockery of Sly's basic views of relationships
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to significance of connections with the comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspects of courtship and attraction
- the comedic aspects of love and relationships
- the comedic aspect of happy endings where relationships are cemented
- etc.

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of gender as seen in relationships between male and female characters
- the context of power as seen in the way conflicts and competition between partners is shown
- the context of the affections as seen in the feelings and emotions arising from courtship
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance of dramatic method students might focus on:

- the placing and sequence of events involving courtship in the narrative, eg the initial meeting between Petruchio and Katherine and their confrontational encounter, the infatuated response of Lucentio upon seeing Bianca for the first time, the development of relationships in the middle phase of the play, eg Petruchio's rough treatment of Katherine and his ignoring of her wishes, Lucentio's adoption of disguise, the placing of marriages at various points in the play and their significance as markers of success
- the ending of the play where Petruchio and Katherine appear to have found a happy ending to their unusual courtship, the wager scene which suggests that Lucentio and Bianca's courtship has resulted in a potentially more troublesome marriage
- the use of dramatic irony giving the audience knowledge of Petruchio's stated intentions before he meets Katherine and his strategy, the audience's knowledge of Petruchio's disguise
- the dramatic spectacle, eg the confrontational manner of Petruchio and Katherine's first meeting, the onstage energy of their interaction, the bold and cruel manner of Petruchio, the physical resistance and aggressiveness of Katherine, the entertaining exchange of costumes between Lucentio and Tranio, the energy of Lucentio's pursuit of Bianca
- aspects of dialogue such as Petruchio and Katherine's combative exchanges, Lucentio's expression of his infatuation to Tranio, the exchange between Petruchio and Baptista as part of the business deal of his courtship
- relevant language details such as Petruchio's playful description of 'Kate of Kate Hall', the various double-meanings in their quickfire dialogue, her imperatives, Lucentio's elevated description of his feelings
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy.

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the play, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student’s response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- the hilariously disrespectful attitudes shown towards Malvolio and Olivia during the play, the amusement arising enjoyed by audiences and characters on stage, the expectation that comedy and the nature of *twelfth night* revelry will feature mistreatment of authority for comic purposes
- the entertaining disrespect shown by Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and Feste when Malvolio tries to quell their riotous behaviour, the laughter arising as he fails to control them, the drunken nature of their behaviour placed against his serious demeanour, Sir Toby’s insults and enjoyment at the situation
- audiences’ delight at seeing a pompous killjoy being ignored, the laughter arising from Malvolio’s frustration and anger, the fun in seeing a supposedly powerful figure made to look foolish
- the laughter generated during the box tree scene as Malvolio is tricked, the amusing spectacle of his fantasy, the sight and sound of a puritanical character being covertly exposed and held up for ridicule
- the hilarious appearance of Malvolio in his yellow stockings and his embarrassing displays towards Olivia, the highly entertaining sight of an authority figure being publicly shamed and held up for mockery
- the funny spectacle of Malvolio being declared mad and incarcerated, his amusingly pathetic pleading, the laughter arising from the deserved comeuppance of a prig, his flouncing off in the final scene, the hilarity of Feste’s Sir Topas disguise
- Feste’s pointed mockery of Olivia’s mourning, the amusement arising from his witty deconstruction of her grief, the truthful analysis of her excessive behaviour that causes mirth
- Sir Toby’s disrespectful attitude towards his niece’s grief, his hilariously inappropriate conduct in a house of mourning, his amusing refusal to curb his ways under her roof
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- the disrespectful attitudes towards Malvolio and Olivia that give rise to responses other than laughter, the sense that mistreatment is cruel rather than funny
- the anarchic behaviour of Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and Feste that annoys Malvolio, their privileged, entitled actions that cause problems for a working man who is simply trying to do his job, the sympathy, rather than laughter, that arises for his predicament
- Sir Toby's unwarranted and mean insults towards Malvolio, the pitiful spectacle of a character being abused for no good reason, the power that Sir Toby's social and family position affords him makes his treatment of Malvolio seem churlish rather than funny
- the cruel sight of Malvolio's gulling in the box tree scene, the sympathy that arises as he is tricked, the emotional cruelty visited upon him, the sadness of him finally believing he is happy
- the public humiliation of Malvolio as he parades in his yellow stockings, the unwarranted shaming of him, the way his desires are exposed and used to belittle him in front of his boss and the object of his affections give rise to pity rather than laughter
- the abject cruelty of the dark room scene, Malvolio's genuine fear, the torture meted out for no good reason other than entertainment is not funny at all, the scene as a comment on attitudes towards mental health and bullying
- Feste's intentional mockery of Olivia's grief, his nasty comments about her mourning period, his inappropriate manner towards a likeable character are contemptible rather than funny
- the entitled, drunken behaviour of Sir Toby under Olivia's roof is despicable rather than comic, his thoughtless and selfish actions towards his niece are not funny at all
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspects of funny events and amusement
- the comedic aspect of disrespect for authority figures
- the darker comedic aspects of mistreatment and cruelty
- etc.

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the play students might focus on:

- the context of power as seen in the status of authority figures
- the economic context as seen in Malvolio's job and role in the household
- the social context of attitudes towards grief and mourning
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic method students might focus on:

- the placement of various events that establish the role of authority figures prior to the moments of disrespect and mistreatment towards them, eg the setting up of Malvolio in his role as steward and his snooty manner prior to the scene with the revellers, the use of Malvolio and Sir Toby as conflicting characters, the letter plot as part of the climactic sequence of revenge, the public nature of Malvolio's humiliation as a climactic moment in the story, the dark room scene as the cruel

culmination of Malvolio's journey, the setting up of Olivia as a grieving head of household prior to the entrance of Feste and the carousing of the revellers

- the dramatic spectacle of scenes involving disrespect and mistreatment, eg the court-style scene where Feste publicly questions Olivia's mourning, the lively, rebellious action of the knights' revelry, the dancing, singing and confrontational nature of the scene, the simmering temper of Malvolio and Sir Toby's dismissive manner, the hilarity of the box tree scene with the concealed plotters, the public humiliation of Malvolio, the mockery of Malvolio when he appears in yellow stockings, Feste's bating of him as the disguised Sir Topas, the dark room scene
- the use of dramatic irony as seen in the audience's superior knowledge of the plotting compared to those being mistreated, their positioning on the side of the plotters so they are in on the joke
- aspects of dialogue such as Feste's witty exchange with Olivia, the combative exchanges between Malvolio and Sir Toby, the manipulative dialogue of the disguised Feste
- relevant language details such as Sir Toby's dismissive imperatives, Sir Topas' doggerel, Malvolio's pleading words
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy.

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 6

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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied *Twelfth Night* through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about other parts of the play, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations here in relation to readers and audiences. Some students might comment on the choices made by directors.

Some possible ideas:

- the process of courtship in the play, the points where potential lovers meet and development of their relationship occurs (or not), courtship as part of the pattern of comedy
- the familiar patterns of courtship shown in the play where would-be lovers try to attract the interest of a love object, attempt to win the heart of another, engage in romantic activities, try to secure a long-term romantic partnership
- courtship as a comedic journey in the play where initial attractions falter or develop in unexpected directions, matrimony brought about by the process of courtship (often in unexpected ways) for some characters as seen in the trio of betrothals that occur at the end of the play
- forms of courtship where conventional romantic behaviour is observed through flattery, statements of love and go-betweens
- forms of courtship where conventional romantic behaviour is rejected, the failure of would-be lovers to secure the attention of a partner, the humiliation that can accompany displays of affection
- the same-sex nature of some courtship in the play, the exploration of the complexity of human attraction, the space that comedy allows for investigation of less dominant forms of sexuality
- the attempts by Orsino to woo Olivia, his failure to do so, his use of go-betweens to attempt to woo, the sense that he has never met Olivia and doesn’t know her, the ultimate failure of his attempts
- the superficial nature of his feelings for Olivia, the sense that his attempts at courtship and the rejection of them allow him to wallow in lovesickness
- the stilted and unimaginative means by which Orsino attempts to woo Olivia, his lovelorn and wooden letters, his approach to courtship as a mockery of courtly love and the Petrarchan lover
- Olivia’s rejection of Orsino’s approaches, the amusing idea that her grief is used as a means of keeping him at bay, the donning of her veil as a barrier, his perception of her as a cruel mistress

- the initial meeting between Viola and Olivia where Olivia is intrigued by the description of Viola's youthful looks, Olivia's role-playing of the grieving woman which breaks down as her interest in Viola grows
- the way in which Viola's role in Orsino's courtship of Olivia ironically sets up the love triangle
- the cruelty of Viola having to woo on behalf of the man she loves, the pain she feels at the situation, her improvised words to Olivia (with Orsino as the target) that spark Olivia's interest in her, the impassioned nature of her speech
- Olivia's immediate interest in Viola as a would-be partner, the irony that she falls for the messenger who acts as wooer, her attraction to Viola's appearance and charm
- Olivia's attempts to attract and maintain the interest of Viola, the plot with the ring, her desire to meet Viola again, her embarrassment at her behaviour and words to Viola
- Viola's polite attempts to reject Olivia's advances, the difficulties arising from Olivia's feelings, Olivia's attempt to withdraw from the pursuit
- Viola's coded attempts to express her feelings to Orsino – a kind of furtive courtship, the way her disguise prevents her from pursuing her feelings, the growing attraction between them
- the manner in which Olivia's pursuit of Viola results in confusion when Sebastian arrives, the amusing speed by which she secures a betrothal with the wrong twin, Sebastian's perplexed acceptance of Olivia's advances
- Malvolio's fantasy courtship of Olivia, the cruel humour of the trick played upon him, the one-sided attraction, his mistaken belief that feelings are reciprocated
- the entertaining physical spectacle of Malvolio's attempts to woo Olivia, his yellow stockings and ridiculous behaviour, her recoil, the cruelty of this moment, his humiliation and the failure of his attempt
- Sir Toby's cruel encouragement of Sir Andrew's pursuit of Olivia, Sir Andrew's belief that he is an eligible suitor, Sir Andrew as a comic victim of this manipulation of his feelings
- the playful courtship of Sir Toby and Maria that results in betrothal, the flirtatiousness and attraction between them, the lively and mischievous nature of their behaviour
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to significance of connections with the comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspects of courtship and attraction
- the comedic aspects of love and relationships
- the comedic aspect of happy endings where relationships are cemented
- etc.

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of gender as seen in relationships between male and female characters
- the context of power as seen in the way Viola feels powerless in her role as go-between
- the context of the affections as seen in the feelings and emotions arising from courtship
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance of dramatic method students might focus on:

- the placing and sequence of events involving courtship in the narrative, eg the backstory of Orsino's fruitless pursuit of Olivia, the way the audience and Viola are shown Olivia's dismissive reaction to it, the development of the love triangle as a complicating aspect of the narrative, the way Malvolio's amusing attempts at courtship act in ironic contrast to the more serious feelings elsewhere, the despair of Viola in relation to courtship as a low point in the narrative of the play
- the ending of the play where Sebastian's arrival leads to Olivia's unusual courtship and rapid proposal, the sense that some loose ends are tied up and relationship problems are resolved, the way some characters' journeys and attempts at courtship end less happily
- the use of dramatic irony which provides the audience with superior knowledge of the feelings of those involved in the love triangle, the set-piece willow cabin speech with its levels of irony where the audience are aware of the various characters' true feelings
- the dramatic spectacle, eg the energy of Viola's willow cabin speech, the flustered attempts of Olivia to send the ring to Viola, the strutting fantasies of Malvolio and his visually hilarious costume, the desperate energy of Olivia as she tries to secure Sebastian's hand
- aspects of dialogue such as the irony-laden exchange between Viola and Orsino, Viola's playful and passionate exchanges with Olivia as she woos on Orsino's behalf, the cringeworthy interaction between the yellow-stockinged Malvolio and Olivia
- relevant language details such as the poetic content of Viola's words to Olivia, the irony of Viola's description of his sister and the passionate, coded words to Orsino
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy.

Accept any valid discussion of interpretations, any valid discussion of contexts and any relevant integrated comments of dramatic methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 7

'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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed. Some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the texts, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to meanings and interpretations, students may choose to look at all sides of the debate or just one. It is the quality of the student's response that matters.

Some students might consider:

- the various ways comedic characters misbehave including transgression of normal boundaries of conduct, mendacity, willingness to trick other characters, adversely affect others, say unacceptable things – and their lack of any real comeuppance or payback for their bad behaviour
- Jack's lying in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, his invention of Bunbury and a dead brother as a way of living another life and of getting out of scrapes, his poor treatment of Gwendolen, his ultimate victory at the end of the play without any sense that he has been punished, Lady Bracknell's conduct as an obstacle to happiness, her snobbish attitude towards Jack's parentage, the sense that she gets what she wants when his parentage is revealed and suffers no comeuppance
- Tony's playful trickery of Marlow and Hastings in *She Stoops to Conquer* when he misdirects them, the trick he plays on his mother on the supposed journey to Crackskull Common, his predilection for the pub rather than a responsible life, the lack of any real retribution for his pranks, his triumph as the truth of his age and status is revealed suggest he ultimately escapes any comeuppance, Marlow's disparaging treatment of lower-class women, his entitled manner towards Mr Hardcastle in his initial meeting, his ending as a husband for Kate and the overcoming of his shyness suggest he has got away with it
- Emma's meddlesome matchmaking and interference in Harriet's love life, Emma's humiliation of Miss Bates, Emma's jealousy and cruel gossip regarding Jane Fairfax, her lack of any real comeuppance given her happy ending, Mr and Mrs Elton's appalling snobbery, Mr Elton's behaviour towards Emma in the carriage, the lack of any real punishment, his subsequent marriage to Mrs Elton suggests he gets away with his behaviour
- the terrible attitudes of Bernard in *Small Island*, his racism and unacceptable conduct with the prostitute, the lack of any punishment for his actions beyond humiliation indicates that he has got away with things, Queenie's sexual relationship with Michael behind Bernard's back only brings her joy rather than retribution, the lack of any real punishment for the racist GIs
- the escape of Tam suggests that he avoids any type of punishment for his drunken, lascivious actions, the sense that luck is on his side and he lives to drink another day, the death of the

General in Swift's poem means he escapes without payback for his actions, the commanding position of the boy in *Not My Best Side* at the end in spite of his intention to slay the dragon and condescending attitude towards the girl suggests he endures no punishment

- the arrogance and pride of Chauntecleer in *The Nun's Priest's Tale* go unpunished as he escapes the fox's clutches, the sense that fortune is on his side, his sexual activity with other birds is celebrated rather than curtailed by his wife, the villainous fox endures no punishment for his attack on the hero
- etc.

Some students might consider:

- how characters suffer temporary punishment or suffering for their bad behaviour, how some are censured or viewed negatively by readers and audiences, the way in which characters never fully get away with their misdemeanours, how censure takes many forms in comedy from temporary comeuppance to long-term humiliation
- the way Jack's actions are viewed disparagingly during *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the audience's disgust at the way he has lied to Gwendolen makes him a less sympathetic character, his embarrassment at being caught out lying, Gwendolen's immediate response to his actions cause him some hardship – he gets away with things in the world of the play but his character is sullied and the reader suspects that long-term problems lie ahead given the indication that he hasn't changed intrinsically
- the temporary comeuppance Mrs Hardcastle suffers in *She Stoops to Conquer* as she is driven around the pond – a type of punishment for her previous manipulation and greed, the feeling that Tony's trickery and conduct haven't really been excused by Mr Hardcastle
- the continuing snobbery and negative conduct of the Eltons remain in the eyes of the characters and readership, Mrs Elton's lingering presence at the end of the book and her snobbish account of Emma's wedding forever cast her in a negative light – there is no sense that she gets away with her poisonous conduct in the eyes of the reader
- the cuckolding of Bernard and the utter humiliation of the birth of baby Michael in *Small Island* are significant punishment for his actions and attitudes, the harm done to his marriage, his emotional turmoil at events overseas and his treatment of the prostitute, Queenie's unhappy ending might be seen in part as punishment for her infidelity
- Tam's fearful experience with the witches as a significant comeuppance, the sense that his wife's wrath awaits him, the biting criticism of the General in Swift's poem as an indication that hasn't escaped censure, the violence meted out to the dragon in *Not My Best Side* as punishment for his capture of the girl, the artist's unflattering portrayal as a type of punishment
- Chauntecleer's terror as he is dragged away in *The Nun's Priest's Tale* as a form of punishment for his pride, the potentially fatal attack as a significant type of comeuppance for his comic flaws, Pertelote's near loss of her husband as karma for her dismissal of his rightful fears
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to connections with the wider comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspect of bad behaviour, eg lying, playing tricks, saying unacceptable things
- the comedic aspect of the protagonist whose charm or luck enables avoidance of a comeuppance or censure
- the comedic aspects of happy endings which means reward is usually preferred to punishment
- etc.

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to contextual issues arising from the question and the texts students might focus on:

- the context of power, eg how Emma's social status allows her to interfere in the lives of others, the power Bernard has as a white man in his world to express his racist views
- the context of gender as seen in the way the boy in *Not My Best Side* expresses his views about women, the way Tam's male desires lead him into trouble
- the moral context as seen in the way bad behaviour such as lying, manipulation, deception and expressing unacceptable views are judged by readers and audiences
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to dramatic/authorial method students might focus on:

- the placing of bad behaviour at various points in the narratives, eg the climactic moment where Jack's lie about his dead brother is exposed, the playful Tony Lumpkin misdirects Marlow and Hastings as a way of establishing his character and setting up the privileged travellers as comic victims in the early stages of the story, the establishing of Tam's drunken ways at the start of the tale and the climactic chase sequence
- the ending of narratives as places where characters may or may not experience a comeuppance, eg Jack's happy outcome where his lying appears to go unpunished, Tony's and Marlow's successful outcomes of avoiding/securing marriage, Tam's narrow escape as the climactic point of his tale, Bernard's cuckolding and humiliation at the end of his story as a type of punishment
- the onstage drama, eg the hilarious comic tension when Jack's lies are exposed, the happy spectacle of the revelation of his birth, the amusingly energetic scene where Tony takes his mother on her supposed journey
- the use of various voices, eg the knowing voices of the narrators in *Tam o' Shanter* and *The Nun's Priest's Tale* inviting readers to witness their characters' bad behaviour and ironically draw attention to their escape, the angry voice of Bernard expressing his racist views, the biting satirical voice of Swift's poem
- relevant language features, eg the censorious words of Mr Knightley, the fearful words of Mrs Hardcastle as Tony tricks her, the duplicitous words of Jack as he lies his way out of trouble
- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

- quality of argument
- organisation of ideas
- use of appropriate concepts and terminology
- technical accuracy.

Accept any valid interpretations, any valid comments on contexts and any relevant integrated comments on dramatic/authorial methods that are embedded into the argument.

0 8

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]

Some possible content is given below. It suggests some of the ways the Assessment Objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues, some ideas will inevitably address more than one AO.

Examiners must also remember that because students have read and studied the two texts through the lens of **comedy**, the AOs must necessarily be connected to that genre through the task.

This is a **closed book** exam, so while it is expected that students will use quotations when writing about the texts, it is also legitimate to make more general reference.

Please refer to pages 4–8.

AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

With respect to the interpretative significances that can be found, there will be a variety of interpretations here in relation to readers and audiences. Some students might comment on the choices made by directors.

Some possible ideas:

- climaxes as moments in comedic narratives where the action reaches a peak and problems are intensified or resolved soon afterwards, where lovers cement their relationships or an important revelation occurs, moments of crisis where a character is under threat or a dangerous situation arises, climaxes as parts which may lead to resolution and happy outcomes
- the revelation of Jack’s parentage in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the happiness and success that result from this, the revelation as the end point of the narrative where Lady Bracknell is overcome and Jack is victorious, the moment Jack is revealed to have been lying about his dead brother, the amusingly cringeworthy moment where he has to try to extricate himself
- the fulfilment of desire in *She Stoops to Conquer* where Kate gets her man and Mr Hardcastle and Sir Charles get their wish, the ending of the play where Constance and Hastings’ desire to be married is achieved, the revelation of Tony’s age and status which frees him from his obligations, the comic drama of the journey around the pond, the way these climactic moments lead to the happy outcomes of the play
- Emma’s realisation of her love for Mr Knightley as a climactic moment in her journey and the way it sets up the happy ending of the novel, the unhappy picnic at Box Hill as a climax, Mr Elton’s accosting of Emma as a dramatically horrible encounter, the way the novel is shaped to show Emma’s journey of self-improvement and the encounters and embarrassments that inform this
- the cementing of Gilbert and Hortense’s new life in *Small Island*, the moment where their sexual relationship begins, the terrible moment where Queenie gives up her baby, the hilariously comic moment where the baby is born, the confrontation between Bernard and Gilbert as a moment of crisis, the way these climaxes ultimately contribute to the bittersweet ending of the novel
- the absurdly entertaining chase sequence where Tam is in fear of his life, Tam’s ultimate escape as a climax which suggests that comedic heroes always come up smelling of roses, the way it releases the moral lesson about temptation, the moment where the would-be lover crushes the

insect in *The Flea* and seemingly defeats the speaker's argument, the critical moment where the girl makes her choice in *Not My Best Side* in an amusingly downbeat way, the desire for the mother-in-law's death in *My Rival's House* at the end of the text as a comically bitter ending

- the snatching of Chauntecleer as a crisis point, the way this event helps to release the comedic moral, the hilariously absurd chase that ensues, the moment where he escapes the fox's jaws signifying how the resourcefulness of the comedic hero results in a happy ending
- etc.

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

With respect to significance of connections with the comedic genre students might focus on:

- the comedic aspects of exciting moments and uplifting events
- the comedic aspect of revelations as part of the journey towards happiness
- the comedic aspect of happy outcomes resulting from climactic events in the story
- etc.

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

With respect to significance of contexts students might focus on:

- the context of human affections as seen in the characters' emotions arising from climactic events
- the context of power as seen in the way that climactic events can shift power balances and operate as turning points in characters' fortunes
- the context of gender as seen in the way climactic events affect outcomes of relationships and reveal male and female attitudes
- etc.

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

With respect to significance of dramatic/authorial method students might focus on:

- the structural pattern of comedic drama where comedic problems reach a peak, eg where the protagonists' search for marriage and/or happiness reach a turning point as revelations occur clinching their happiness
- the journey of the characters in the narrative where climactic moments reveal aspects of character or promote their development, eg Emma's unhappy experience at Box Hill as part of her gradual self-improvement, the snatching of Chauntecleer as part of his self-reflection and moral learning, the moment where the girl decides her future in *Not My Best Side* as a point where she pragmatically comes to terms with the way her world works
- the ending of the texts where happiness results from earlier climactic moments, eg Tam's ultimate escape following the chase sequence, Gilbert and Hortense's acquisition of baby Michael following the climactic birth and argument, the escape of Chauntecleer as release of tension and danger
- the onstage drama, eg the energetic and celebratory ending in *The Importance of Being Earnest* when Jack triumphs, the celebratory atmosphere at the conclusion of *She Stoops to Conquer* where Kate secures her man
- the use of various voices and dialogue, eg the way Gilbert happily recounts his lovemaking with Hortense, the knowingly ironic voices of the narrators recounting Tam and Chauntecleer's moments of danger, the upbeat expression of Jack as he learns of his birth
- relevant language features, eg the racist words of Bernard during the birth scene, the speaker's disparaging words about the General's war crimes in Swift's poem, the fearful words of Pertelote as her husband is snatched

- etc.

Given that this is a **closed book** exam, comment on the ways meanings are shaped may be generalised.

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

With respect to competence in writing focus needs to be on the:

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