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# A-level

## ENGLISH LITERATURE B

Paper 2A Texts and genres: Elements of crime writing

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Thursday 22 May 2025

Morning

Time allowed: 3 hours

### Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book
- a copy of the set text(s) you have studied for Section B and Section C. These texts must **not** be annotated and must **not** contain additional notes or materials.

### Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7717/2A.
- You must answer the question in Section A, **one** question from Section B and **one** question from Section C. Over Section B and Section C you must write about **three** texts: **one** poetry text, **one** post-2000 prose text and **one** further 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 the question in this section.

0

1

Explore the significance of elements of crime writing in this extract.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways the author has shaped meanings.

**[25 marks]**

This extract is taken from *The Fine Art of Invisible Detection* by Robert Goddard, published in 2021. Wada is the secretary of a private detective in Tokyo. She is working to expose the criminal activities of Hiroji Nishizaki who is responsible for the death of her boss. She hopes that a man called Martin Caldwell will be able to help her to do this. In this extract, Wada has tracked Martin down to his remote hideout in Iceland where he faces her with a shotgun. She has been followed by a mysterious Japanese man, known as 'The Irishman'. The Irishman has just shot George Guptill, with whom Wada was travelling.

He led her a little further along the passage and turned into a large, low-ceilinged kitchen. It looked out to the rear of the house, across climbing, snow-covered ground. The sink, the range, the dresser and the table and stools belonged to a bygone age, maybe a century past. There was nothing modern or labour-saving to be seen. The light was thin, falling on well-worn flagstones and dust-laden surfaces.

Caldwell propped the shotgun in the corner. 'Does anyone know you're here?' he asked. It seemed to her she could read fear in his eyes as he posed the question.

'I came with a friend.'

'Where's this friend now?'

Wada took a deep breath. Should she tell him what had happened? There was no way of predicting how he might react. But if she *didn't* tell him... 'He's dead. Shot.'

'What?'

'We were followed.'

Caldwell stiffened apprehensively. 'Who by?'

'I do not know his name. But he is Japanese, I think.'

'Where's *he* now?'

'I reversed the car into him.'

'You killed him?'

'I think so. I hope so.'

'But maybe not?'

'I do not know for certain. I could not take the risk of stopping to check.'

'Do you know anything about him?'

'He was at your flat in Exeter last week. I suspect he works for Hiroji Nishizaki.'

Caldwell closed his eyes for an instant. 'You've led the Irishman straight to me,' he said dolefully.

'He's not Irish, Mr Caldwell.'

'It's what they call him.'

'And if he is dead—'

'But what if he isn't?' Caldwell's eyes were open again. He was glaring accusingly at her. 'I was supposed to be safe here.'

'Do you have a phone that works?'

'No.'

'It was heavy contact. At speed. Even if he is not dead, he will be seriously injured, I think.'

'You *think*?'

'And therefore unable to—'

They both heard it at the same time: a car, engine roaring, approaching fast. They looked at each other in horror. It could only be the Irishman. Not dead. And not giving up.

'Mr Caldwell, I—'

'We're as good as dead. You understand that, don't you?' Caldwell glared at her. 'If only you hadn't interfered.'

There was a final roar of the engine, then silence. Caldwell made no move towards the gun. He slumped back against the rail of the range. It was as if he'd lost all hope.

Wada didn't wait for him to rediscover any. She grabbed the gun. As she did so, a car door slammed outside.

The weapon was surprisingly heavy and she couldn't really imagine using it. But she was going to have to start imagining. And soon. She looked at Caldwell, but he was simply staring into space. Whatever she was going to do, she was going to have to do it alone. She hurried out into the passage.

She moved towards the front door, but as she passed the open door of one of the bedrooms she saw the Irishman through the window, heading in the opposite direction. He was following the footsteps she'd left in the snow, leading to the back door. He was limping, but still he was moving fast.

She turned round and headed back past the kitchen, glimpsing Caldwell, still leaning against the range. As she approached the back door and the broken window beside it, a shadow fell across the smashed pane. She couldn't see the Irishman, but she felt sure he was there. Then she saw the door handle turn and the woodwork strain against the lock.

She raised the shotgun, wondering if she should fire now, hoping to hit her target on the other side of the door. But she had no spare cartridges. There'd be no chance to reload if she missed. She had to wait until she had a clear shot.

Suddenly, there were several deafening cracks. The Irishman was firing into the door. The wood splintered around the lock. Then the whole lock mechanism was blasted off, crashing to the floor as the door sagged open.

Wada heaved the gun up against her shoulder, aware the barrel was shaking as she held it. Her fingers trembled around the triggers. She heard the Irishman kick the door. It flew wide open. She saw his face, twisted with fury. And she saw the gun in his hand, the gun he'd used to kill George Guptill.

She fired, both barrels.

But all she hit was wood. The door had struck the wall behind it so violently it had bounced back across her line of fire.

Then he was in and on her. The shotgun was wrenched from her grasp and flung aside. He shoved her against the wall and clapped the barrel of his gun to her temple. 'Where is Caldwell?' he demanded in Japanese.

She couldn't speak at first. All she could register was the brutality in his eyes and the cold, heavy pressure of the gun barrel against her skin.

'*Where is Caldwell?*'

She mustered her thoughts and forced out an answer, in English, so that Caldwell would understand. 'Caldwell is not here.'

'You are lying. You came here because you knew this was where he was hiding.'

**The extract continues on the next page**

'There is no one else in the house.' It was strange to confront her own stubbornness. It was the only weapon she had at her disposal.

'Tell me where he is.'

'I do not know where he is.'

Keeping the gun to her head, he grabbed her by the hair with his other hand and began dragging her along the passage, looking into each room as they went. She had to go with him, or be pulled off her feet. His right leg was stiff, she saw, with a length of wood strapped to the side of his knee as some kind of splint. He was probably in a lot of pain. And she was responsible for it. But he wasn't ready to kill her quite yet.

They reached the kitchen. Caldwell wasn't there. When he'd left and where he'd gone Wada couldn't guess. He might never have heard their exchanges for all she knew.

The door of the next room was closed. The Irishman kicked it open with his uninjured leg. It was a bathroom, fitted with a cupboard, hand-basin, loo and claw-footed bath that all looked about as old as the kitchen furnishings. The Irishman let go of Wada's hair for a second, pulled a set of handcuffs out of the pocket of his parka and closed one cuff round her right wrist. Then he forced her to the floor, bent over her and snapped the other cuff round the downpipe under the basin.

'When I have found Caldwell and killed him,' he rasped into her ear, 'I will come back to question you, Wada. And you will answer my questions, I promise you. You will answer every one of them.'

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Over **Section B** and **Section C**, you must write about **three** texts from the following list:

*Selected Poems*: Crabbe, Browning and Wilde (pre-1900 poetry)

*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (pre-1900 poetry)

*Atonement* (post-2000 prose)

*When Will There Be Good News?* (post-2000 prose)

*Oliver Twist*

*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*

*Brighton Rock*

*Hamlet*

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### Section B

Answer **one** question in this section.

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**Either**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 2 |
|---|---|

***Selected Poems* – George Crabbe, Robert Browning and Oscar Wilde**

To what extent do you agree with the view that the criminals in the poems are presented as being motivated by a desire for power?

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of the poets' authorial methods.

You should refer to the work of at least **two authors** in your answer.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 3 |
|---|---|

***The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* – Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

'We have more sympathy for the Mariner than for the victims of his crimes.'

To what extent do you agree with this view?

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Coleridge's authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

**Turn over for the next question**

**Turn over ►**

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 4 |
|---|---|

***When Will There Be Good News?* – Kate Atkinson**

‘Atkinson presents criminals as evil monsters who do not have motives for their crimes.’

To what extent do you agree with this view of the novel?

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Atkinson’s authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 5 |
|---|---|

***Atonement* – Ian McEwan**

Explore the significance of secrets to the elements of crime writing in the novel.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of McEwan’s authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 6 |
|---|---|

***Oliver Twist* – Charles Dickens**

‘Dickens presents a society where children are always victims of crime.’

To what extent do you agree with this view of the novel?

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Dickens’ authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 7 |
|---|---|

***Brighton Rock* – Graham Greene**

‘Bite it all the way down, you’ll still read Brighton. That’s human nature.’

To what extent do you agree with the view that in *Brighton Rock*, Greene presents human nature as thoroughly evil?

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Greene’s authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 8 |
|---|---|

***The Murder of Roger Ackroyd – Agatha Christie***

Explore the significance of the setting of King's Abbot to the elements of crime writing in the novel.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Christie's authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 9 |
|---|---|

***Hamlet – William Shakespeare***

'O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd villain!'

To what extent do you agree with the view that it is impossible to sympathise with Claudius?

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

**[25 marks]**

**Turn over for Section C**

**Turn over ►**

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**Section C**

Answer **one** question in this section.

In your answer you must write about **two** texts that you have **not** used in **Section B**.

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**Either**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |
|---|---|

Explore the significance of suffering in **two** crime texts you have studied.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | 1 |
|---|---|

'In crime writing, criminals are presented as being sorry for the crimes they commit.'

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

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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