



# GCSE (9-1)

**Examiners' report** 

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

# **J352** For first teaching in 2015

J352/12 Summer 2022 series

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# Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

#### Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our <u>website</u>.

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# Paper 12 series overview

Examiners reported seeing some highly impressive responses to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century texts in Paper 12, in this session a discrete paper for the 19<sup>th</sup>-century text. It was clear that many candidates demonstrated true engagement with the literary heritage texts studied and could marshal their thoughts successfully in the 50-minutes allowed to demonstrate a secure critical response to the task. Candidates were offered a choice of an extract-based question leading to a whole-text response, or a discursive question on the whole text. Both question types proved very popular and there were few instances of a candidate failing to move beyond the extract in the former. When responding to extract-based questions, some candidates chose to look at one other moment in the text in detail and others looked at several moments or took an overview of the character, theme or relationship in the whole text. Any of these approaches will work successfully if an appropriate amount of time has been spent exploring the potential of the extract. Occasionally candidates did not spend enough time looking at the wider text which meant that they could not access marks in the higher levels. In discursive questions candidates can choose which parts of the text to analyse in response to the task but must look at a minimum of two moments. Most responses looked at several moments, with many showing an impressively wide knowledge of the whole text. Most of these responses were able to use textual references to support the responses or refer to specific incidents and moments in the text. Many candidates tackled the discursive questions very convincingly across all levels of ability.

The most popular 19<sup>th</sup> century text was *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* followed closely by *A Christmas Carol. Great Expectations* and *Pride and Prejudice* were also popular choices and there were a reasonable number of responses on *War of the Worlds*. Examiners reported seeing relatively few responses on *Jane Eyre*. However, examiners commented on the wide range of texts and questions seen during the marking session.

On this section of the question paper all three assessment objectives are addressed, although for this year there was no assessment of SPaG (AO4). Candidates seemed very aware of the need to both analyse language, form and structure, and show understanding of the contextual details relevant to their set text. When choosing extract-based questions, most candidates were aware that the extract offered great opportunities to address AO2 and use textual references effectively. Many then discussed the wider text focusing much more on AO3. This was a sensible approach and worked very well in ensuring that all the assessment objectives were addressed fully.

AO1: The majority of candidates structured their responses appropriately, using relevant textual support to support a critical response to the task. Responses in the higher mark levels usually made great use of introductions to set out a thesis to work to in their answers showing focus and understanding from the outset. These responses also tended to use a concluding paragraph to consolidate the big ideas and relate back to the question demonstrating understanding of the writer's intentions. A small number of candidates did not move beyond the extract or made rather fleeting references to the wider text. As this is a whole-text response, to access the higher mark levels candidates must spend a reasonable amount of their response considering the wider text and failing to do so inevitably limits the level of achievement.

#### Assessment for learning

Use of quotations varied widely with the most successful responses embedding precise and pithy textual support. Some candidates demonstrated a tendency to use overlong quotations even when using the extract. Other responses would have been more successful if a more weighted balance between quotation and analysis had been achieved; in some there was a

tendency to move through the extract describing the content using neat quotations but offering very little in terms of discussion and analysis.

AO2: Many responses offered close analysis of language, form and structure, using subject terminology naturally and effectively. There were some examples of candidates who moved through the extract spotting literary features and offering an example but failing to make any meaningful comments about how the use of such language or literary techniques enhanced the effect of the writing. At times, subject terminology was used inappropriately with limited understanding of its implications in the writing. Some of the best analysis was offered at word and phrase level, simply commenting on the impacts and effects of individual words and phrases. Candidates do not need to repeatedly name parts of sentences in an English Literature examination; it was a common approach to identify an adjective or verb then comment on it even if the word itself was not significant or interesting. A significant number of candidates confused the genre of the text, referring to their novel as a play throughout their response. There was also a tendency to confuse the writer's names, with Priestly often credited as the writer of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

AO3: The vast majority of responses showed understanding of relevant contextual knowledge and were able to use it effectively to support their analysis of the text when answering the question. Occasionally learned context was too dominant in responses, and sometimes not particularly relevantly. This was most notable in responses to Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde where some candidates wrote at length about the expectations of Victorian gentlemen without relating it directly to their discussion of the text. There was also a great deal of biographical information about Charles Dickens in some responses to *A Christmas Carol* and *Great Expectations* that did not inform textual discussion and analysis. Centres are reminded that contextual knowledge should be integrated fully into a response to the task, informing and underpinning understanding of the text. Candidates should avoid regurgitating learned information without considering its relevance to the task.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:			lidates who did less well on this paper rally did the following:
•	<ul> <li>selected the question carefully to use their knowledge and understanding effectively</li> <li>wrote in a secure critical style using appropriate and helpful textual support</li> </ul>	W	elected the extract-based question even /here understanding of the extract or uestion focus was limited
			ended to describe events from the text with
• offered some developed analysis of language and structure		ttle analysis or comment	
	• u	sed long or imprecise quotations	
•	offered close analysis of the extract in extract-based questions		ncluded irrelevant learned material lacking ocus on the question
•	demonstrated a sound working knowledge of the whole text in discursive questions	ir	<ul> <li>included bolted-on contextual or biographic information which did not inform or support</li> </ul>
•	integrated contextual knowledge and understanding to support textual discussion and analysis.	the response to the task.	

#### Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

1 Explore the ways in which Dickens presents sympathy for Magwitch in this extract and elsewhere in the novel.

[40]

Examiners reported seeing a small number of responses to this extract-based question. A number of candidates who attempted it found the extract quite challenging thus moved on to the wider text quite guickly where they were able to refer to other moments in which the reader is invited to sympathise with Magwitch. Many looked at moments throughout the text to trace the reader's first impressions when he threatens Pip in the marshes, his subsequent interactions with Pip (particularly his visit to London) and how the novel ends with Pip's softer stance in the extract and on Magwitch's deathbed. When discussing the extract candidates tended to focus more on the action than the language, commenting on Magwitch's treatment as a convict, including his physical condition and the officer's indifference, his loss of all liberty resulting in Pip making requests on his behalf and being 'carried down and put on board'. They also focused on the dehumanising references to him as 'the prisoner' and 'his prisoner', the protective love displayed by Pip, and the bond between them conveyed in 'affectionately, gratefully and generously...'. Consideration of AO3 was usually secure with Magwitch's unfair treatment cited as well as the harsh criminal justice system that he is subjected to as illustrated in the extract. Many candidates also considered Pip's realisation at the end of the extract that Magwitch is 'a better man than I had been to Joe'. Responses in the middle range tended to focus less on the extract but show understanding of Pip and Magwitch's relationship in the wider text, mostly focusing on how the reader is encouraged to feel sympathy for the latter, but sometimes straying into more general considerations. Some less successful responses lacked basic understanding, sometimes even discussing Pip as a character called Dickens in the extract.

### Question 2

2 'Estella is cruel and causes pain and suffering.' How far do you agree with this view?

Explore at least two moments from the novel to support your ideas.

[40]

This was a reasonably popular discursive question for those candidates who had studied *Great Expectations* with most responses demonstrating good understanding of Estella and able to offer a relevant response to the task. Most candidates agreed that Estella behaves cruelly towards Pip but qualified this with an understanding of her strange upbringing by Miss Havisham arguing that Estella was moulded to eek her revenge on all men and 'break their hearts' therefore not wholly to blame. A number explored Miss Havisham's pain on realising that Estella's coldness due to having 'no heart' also extends to her. Many candidates explored her treatment of Pip throughout the text and cited hope at the end of the text that the softer version of Estella, having 'been bent and broken', truly is in 'better shape' and can move forward.

#### Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

**3** How does Austen present Mr and Mrs Bennet as parents, in this extract and elsewhere in the novel?

[40]

Examiners reported seeing a number of responses to this extract-based question with some excellent work cited. AO3 was particularly strong in many of the responses with candidates demonstrating sensitive awareness of the differing attitudes of Mr and Mrs Bennet to Elizabeth's refusal to marry Mr Collins. Many argued that while in the extract Mr Bennet appears to be the more empathetic parent in his support of Elizabeth only marrying a man for love rather than financial security, in fact, it is Mrs Bennet who is taking the more caring and pragmatic approach due to the entailment of the estate requiring all the Bennet daughters to marry well to secure their futures. Many of the best responses judged Mr Bennet harshly citing his indifference to his family's future and his constant undermining of Mrs Bennet providing a poor example of marriage to his daughters. These responses acknowledged Mrs Bennet's shortcomings and 'mean understanding' as well as her persistence as she 'coaxed and threatened her by turns' but also understood that her fears for her future and those of her daughters were very real. The extract was used to exemplify the dysfunctional relationship of Mr and Mrs Bennet and often linked neatly to the narrowly averted disaster caused by Lydia's elopement with Mr Wickham due to Mr Bennet ignoring Elizabeth's warning and Mrs Bennet encouraging the flirtatious and silly behaviour of her younger daughters. This often led on to a consideration of Mr Gardiner's role in helping Darcy rescue the family's reputation and an unfavourable comparison to Mr Bennet who is ultimately responsible for the mess that has to be cleared up. Many of the responses to this question drew on extensive knowledge of the text, offering some excellent analysis of language in both the extract and wider text as well as fully integrated consideration of contextual factors such as marriage and social reputation in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. Very few less successful responses were seen to this question, although some were rather descriptive in approach offering an overview of Mr and Mrs Bennet as parents but lacking analysis and textual detail.

### **Question 4**

4 'Pride and Prejudice is a novel about money.' How far do you agree with this view?

Explore at least two moments from the novel to support your ideas.

[40]

Examiners reported seeing few responses to this discursive question, presumably because the extractbased question on the Bennets as parents was so accessible to most candidates. Of the responses seen most candidates focused heavily on the links between money and marriage, comparing Elizabeth's determination to marry a man she loves and respects to Charlotte Lucas's more pragmatic view that marriage is about financial and social security rather than love. Most candidates cited that in the 19<sup>th</sup>century marriage was often a business arrangement citing the attempt made by Lady Catherine De Bourgh to derail Elizabeth and Darcy's marriage believing that it would 'ruin him' to marry beneath him.

# Exemplar 1

4	Throughout "pride and Prejudice", money is explored
	in depth as a key theme and an undoubtable
	prevalent issue in society. From the first
	line of the nord, we hear, throngs Austen's
	use of free indirect discourse : that it is a
	truth universally alknowledged, that a single
	man in possession of a large forsure nuest
	Le in want of a wife. Here, Austen's use of
	the extreme worth of money is society, particularly
	in individuals tike Aus Bennet, who believe
	that money is the only necessity in a working
	suitor, such as Mr Bingley. contextually, in
 	this the Regency Era, thereas
	verse nomen could hat inherit, as estates
	were often entrailed to me nearest made
	relative, which shows a to key reason for
	the need for financial stability in marriage.
	one moment in Pride and Prejudice unica
	presents money as important in society is at
	the Meryton Ball. Davag and Binguy enter
	together and Ansten unites Most within
	<u>Sminutes'</u> there was a general = circulation
	of the fact that Darry has "10,000 a
	year? The use of the works general
	circulation here, suggest the and the
	short time frame of 'S minutes' suggests put rapidites in which news spreads of
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<b></b>		
A/	·	someone's weath in society, highlighting the
	· · · - · · ·	extreme importance of money in Pride and
		Prejudice'. Before a character's personality
		seven known or acknowledged, their
	- <u>.</u>	wealth must first be uncovered, in order
		to ranke them an a scale of their unthiness
		in society. Darcy's wealth here, is seen to
		have a keen impact in how he is riened;
		thanksomer he is declared to have -
		"fine countenance", "noble mich, and is
×		declared to the be much handsomer' than Mr
		Bingley. This exaggeration of Darty's
		features after the fact is revealed that he
		has a high income highlights free at
		extreme worth of wealth in society's eyes

This is a good example of a strong introduction to a discursive essay which considers the task more widely before moving to a specific moment in the text to explore.

#### The War of the Worlds by H. G. Wells

5 Explore how Wells presents events as tense and exciting in this extract and elsewhere in the novel.

[40]

Examiners reported seeing a reasonable number of responses to this extract-based questions. The extract offered many opportunities to explore language and structure and candidates seemed very familiar with discussing how Wells builds tension and makes the writing exciting for the reader. Many focused on the pace of the extract, the obvious danger posed by the Martians' technology, and the narrator's clear excitement when the humans fight back and show some promise of defeating them. Considerations of AO3 tended to focus on the belief that the British Empire was undefeatable, as well as fear of technological advances. Successful responses looked closely at the structure of the extract and were able to analyse how tension is built up in the first longer paragraph by charting the movement of the 'monster' and the sudden firing of the guns. The shorter paragraphs that follow quicken up the pace as well as the narrator's own responses such as 'cry of astonishment' and the direct speech of "'Hit!" shouted I, with something between a scream and a cheer.' Other moments in the text included the first use of the heat ray, the description of the Martians, the exodus from London, and the killing of the Curate. Examiners reported some responses exploring in detail how a variety of filmed versions of the text build tension for the audience. Centres are reminded that in this examination, analysis of filmed versions cannot be credited, as the focus should always be on the novel itself.

# Question 6

6 'The narrator is a character who can be relied on.' How far do you agree with this view?

Explore at least two moments from the novel to support your ideas.

[40]

Examiners reported seeing very few responses to this discursive question. There were some highly knowledgeable responses considering the lessening reliability of the narrator as the novel progresses, and he is more affected by the events and his experiences. Moments explored in detail tended to include the opening sequence, the killing of the curate, his interactions with the artillery man and his reflections at the end of the novel. Some candidates cited other characters who were more reliable such as the narrator's brother when he helps the Elphinstone ladies.

#### The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson

7 Explore how Stevenson presents an incident that is shocking, in this extract and elsewhere in the novel.
 [40]

This was the most popular question on the paper eliciting response across the ability range. The extract provided many opportunities for analysing language and structure and the most commonly chosen moments from the wider text included the trampling of the girl, the murder of Carew, and the incident at the window. The majority of responses tended to analyse the extract in some detail looking at Lanyon's observations of the transformation itself as well as his own dramatic reaction to it. They then tended to look at one, two or three moments in the wider texts where shocking incidents occur. The depth of analysis on the extract varied widely with the most successful responses offering cohesive and detailed analysis supported by precise and pithy quotations and using subject terminology accurately. These responses chose apt moments in the wider text and looked at them in some detail, including consideration of Hyde's dramatic impact on the onlookers such as Sawbones and the 'harpies' after trampling the girl, for example. Where the murder of Carew was chosen as another moment, the analysis was detailed and thorough. Responses in the middle range tended to move through the extract chronologically spotting literary techniques, quoting an example and offering relevant comment. These responses were less cohesive as a whole, often repeating the word 'shocking' rather than breaking down the term 'shocking' to consider different elements of the shocking revelation. When discussing a moment in the wider text these responses tended to focus on a few quotations such as 'ape-like fury' or 'bones audibly shattered' rather than considering the way that the shocking incident unravels and its impact on the reader. Less successful responses were less secure on the extract, often mistakenly assuming that Lanyon was witnessing Jekyll transforming into Hyde, and tended to pick out a few details incorporating them into a descriptive account of the events. On the wider text these responses often muddled events – attributing Hyde's 'ape-like fury' to the trampling of the girl, for example, or asserting that the child was brutally murdered. There was also some confusion between characters such as Utterson, Enfield and Lanyon. In terms of contextual understanding the best responses integrated understanding of the conflicts between science and religion, the importance of reputation to Victorian gentlemen, and the mistrust of Darwin's theories into a full discussion and analysis of the extract and wider text. Less successful responses tended to bolt on learned contextual knowledge without making it fully relevant to the response – Stephenson being a drug addict is a common example. Examiners reported a sharp increase in unsupported assertions in this session, such as Carew making homosexual advances to Hyde, the trampled child being a prostitute, and Utterson and Enfield being gamblers.

#### Exemplar 2

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This exemplar exemplifies the use of the extract provided to offer detailed and developed analysis of language and structure. (AO2)

8 'It is difficult to have sympathy for Dr Jekyll.' How far do you agree with this view?

Explore at least two moments from the novel to support your ideas.

[40]

This discursive question was less popular with candidates presumably due to the accessibility of the extract-based question. It was mostly attempted by candidates who could demonstrate a sound working knowledge of the whole text. A common approach was to consider the seriousness of the crimes committed by Hyde and acknowledge Jekyll's responsibility for them as evidence of why readers should feel little sympathy, but then consider Jekyll's regret in his statement and his growing lack of control over Hyde as evidence of him deserving some sympathy from the reader. Most responses, however, ultimately felt that he was guilty of his own downfall. Examiners reported a number of impressive responses to this question where, unusually, candidates drew links between incidences in the wider text and Jekyll's musings and reflections on them in his statement at the end of the text. Many of the responses were able to offer precise quotations to link parts of the text together.

# Question 9

#### Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë

**9** Explore how Brontë presents the relationship between Jane and Rochester in this extract and elsewhere in the novel.

[40]

Examiners reported seeing few responses to this question. Many candidates struggled to analyse the extract in much detail often mistakenly asserting that Jane falls instantly in love with Rochester and declares him to be 'handsome' and 'heroic-looking'. The responses were usually better on the wider text where they could chart the course of their relationship more accurately with many looking in detail at the fire motif, Jane's struggle for independence and equality, the revelation that Bertha is Rochester's wife, Jane's flight, and her eventual return to find Rochester blind after the fire. AO3 tended to be strong as many candidates commented on the unconventional nature of their relationship and eventual marriage.

## Question 10

10 'Jane Eyre is a novel about the importance of family.' How far do you agree with this view?

Explore at least two moments from the novel to support your ideas.

[40]

There were too few responses seen to this question to offer meaningful feedback.

#### A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

11 Explore how Dickens presents Scrooge as an outsider in this extract and elsewhere in the novel. [40]

This was a popular extract-based question with the majority of candidates engaging successfully with both text and task. Candidates were able to engage fully with the notion of Scrooge as an outsider and were able to use the extract effectively to explore their ideas. The use of weather imagery to describe Scrooge's cold nature were analysed effectively by most candidates, particularly the idea that 'he carried his own low temperature always about him' and 'external heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge'. Most candidates were also able to explore the third paragraph in some detail recognising that people across society never 'stopped him in the street' with the use of 'children' and 'beggars' cited as evidence of his isolation and aura of unfriendliness and unapproachability. Fewer candidates went on to discuss the final paragraph which suggests that Scrooge's status as an outsider is a self-manufactured one by analysing phrases such as 'it was the very thing he liked' and 'edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance'. Where candidates did consider this section of the extract, they were able to make some neat links to his treatment of other characters in the novel such as Fred and Bob Cratchit. The most successful responses analysed the extract in detail paying close attention to the use of language and structural techniques to explore how Dickens introduces the character of Scrooge as an outsider by considering the wider implications of the term 'outsider'. They also supported their analysis with relevant contextual ideas about the social context of A Christmas Carol and Dicken's intentions when writing the novel. Some responses considered Scrooge's adoption of Malthusian theory, encapsulated in his suggestion that the poor should die and 'decrease the surplus population', very effectively when discussing Scrooge's lack of interest in the charity workers or care for anyone around him such as the Cratchits. Answers in the middle range tended to look at the extract in less details but were able to make relevant comments in relation to the presentation of Scrooge as an outsider offering textual support. In these responses there was often bolted-on contextual information about Dicken's experience of poverty and the novel's social commentary, but this information was not used effectively to support the discussion of the text. Less successful responses tended to move through the extract describing its content without addressing the task other than repeating that Scrooge is presented as an outsider. When considering the wider text, the majority of responses looked at Scrooge as a lonely schoolboy when he visits his schoolhouse with the Ghost of Christmas Past suggesting that his difficult childhood was formative in his desire to keep his distance from others. Many candidates also examined Belle's comments about the 'golden idol' replacing her, and also considered his continual rejections of Fred's invite to Christmas dinner as evidence of Scrooge's desire to keep his family at bay. The most successful responses also looked at the Ghost of Christmas Future and the warnings presented to Scrooge about his death if his isolation and rejection of society is allowed to continue. Some candidates simply picked out a few learned quotations from the wider text such as 'Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?' and 'solitary as an oyster' and used them as evidence of Scrooge's refusal to involve himself in society. Clearly this was a relevant but slightly limiting approach to considering the wider text to address the task.

12 'A Christmas Carol is a novel about greed.' How far do you agree with this view?

Explore at least two moments from the novel to support your ideas.

[40]

This was another very popular discursive question. The majority of responses focused sharply on the concept of 'greed' although there were a few which dismissed the idea that it was a novel about greed, instead suggesting that it was a novel about redemption, or Christmas, and writing about that. This approach should be avoided as at times it led to a response which did not focus on the task set. The most successful responses used Scrooge as a vehicle through which to explore the theme of greed with many citing that his greed is to accumulate wealth rather than indulge himself. There were some excellent considerations of his miserly nature resulting in no one at all benefitting from his greed, not even himself. The most commented moments in the novel to consider greed were the charity workers visiting Scrooge and receiving short shrift, Belle breaking off their engagement and citing the 'golden idol' replacing her in Scrooge's affections, the warnings given by Marley's ghost and the introduction of Ignorance and Want by the Ghost of Christmas Present as a stark and shocking warning to Scrooge of the effects of poverty and neglect. Many responses also looked at characters who represent generosity and true Christmas spirit such as Fezziwig and Fred and explored them as contrasts to Scrooge's miserly approach to life. Considering the lessons that Scrooge learns about greed and therefore exploring his redemption at the end of the text was entirely relevant as long as the discussion was linked clearly to the lessons that he learns about greed. As with all discursive essays the most successful approach to the task was where candidates took an overview of the topic and explored how it is presented in the text looking at key moments in detail. Less successful responses tended to be rather superficial sometimes lacking textual support and analysis. Again, there were responses where contextual information was regurgitated without being linked to a discussion of the text itself.

#### Exemplar 3

product of the hemore; greed show eeo 5 NG and cha ama NOR ( gnor C e マ Societi esent *p*1  $\mathcal{O}$  $^{\circ}$ Nº CZ Malpus nas ላው Ghost Presen 25 nist 0 look here Scrooge look ruct  $S^{\dagger}$ ۱۲) eader れら ere dour Scrooge 40 fqq force 1~o poduct -01 Conseg. <del>1ì s</del> prevents att itudes, inter-Scroge viewing prod the 0 dis ۵ chion 5 Conce 9 (an II was as 200 12-0-01 the 0 L ( wei rer Sent 10 epitomises-Child tutter en ragged described are as asyndetic wed V na desc ロク f2 child 10112 OP 0 JUGh đ USe animalistic mag ickens detaches 0 Tr nanitu ρ £ Λa 0 greed thias 3 octCarol Olitica Ó 仅 ιhρ ۵

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This exemplifies integrated understanding of AO3: contextual knowledge used to underpin and support textual analysis.

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