

AS LEVEL

Examiners' report

ENGLISH LITERATURE

H072

For first teaching in 2015

H072/01 Summer 2024 series

Contents

Introduction3

Paper 1 series overview6

Section 1 overview8

 Question 1 (a)8

 Question 1 (b)9

 Question 2 (a)9

 Question 2 (b)10

 Question 3 (a)12

 Question 3 (b)13

 Question 4 (a)13

 Question 4 (b)14

 Question 514

 Question 5 (b)15

 Question 6 (a)15

 Question 6 (b)16

Section 2 overview17

 Question 717

 Question 818

 Question 918

 Question 1019

 Question 1119

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.

Would you prefer a Word version?

Did you know that you can save this PDF as a Word file using Acrobat Professional?

Simply click on **File > Export to** and select **Microsoft Word**

(If you have opened this PDF in your browser you will need to save it first. Simply right click anywhere on the page and select **Save as . . .** to save the PDF. Then open the PDF in Acrobat Professional.)

If you do not have access to Acrobat Professional there are a number of **free** applications available that will also convert PDF to Word (search for PDF to Word converter).

H072/01 and its context in the specification

H072/01 (Shakespeare and poetry pre-1900) is one of two examination components for OCR's AS Level in English Literature. The component comprises two Sections.

Section 1 requires the candidate to answer one question from a choice of six Shakespeare plays. Each question has an either/or choice and requires the candidate to discuss a specific topic, taking into account a prompt quotation.

Section 2 requires the candidate to answer one question from a choice of five pre-1900 poets. The question directs the candidate towards a specific poem (or an extract from a longer poem) which is the principal focus of the question. Each question comprises a single poem or extract with no choice offered. The candidate is required to analyse the poem/extract closely and to make links between the set poem and other poems by the given poet or, if it is an extract, to the rest of the poem.

Section 1 assesses the four assessment objectives AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO5. Section 2 assesses the four assessment objectives AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.

Assessment for learning



1. Candidates are reminded that answers do not need to be excessively lengthy for this unit. It was noted during the current series that many scripts contained very long answers. Excellent responses to the questions on the unit can be succinct and focused, and candidates are not expected to write 'as much as they can' throughout the entire period allocated for the examination. 'Think more; write less' is often a good maxim for candidates to observe.
2. It is worth noting once again that it is not always necessary for candidates to use highly complex technical terminology, sometimes drawn from linguistics or from the study of Classical languages, to 'improve' their responses. As stated in the previous series, 'feature spotting' alone is rarely helpful, and the use of technical terms for their own sake generally adds very little to a candidate's overall response. Candidates should be encouraged to realise that they do not need to 'tick off' a long list of such terms in their responses, that linguistic effects can sometimes be described using more approachable means, and that any discussion of linguistic techniques is most effective when these are linked to the effect they have on the meaning and reception of a text.
3. Use of the extract: it is expected that between two-thirds and three-quarters of a Section 2 response will focus on, quote from, and analyse effects in the given extract.
4. Candidates should be mindful that AO3 is the least-weighted assessment objective in both sections. References to social, historical and biographical context are rewarded only where they genuinely contribute to the interpretations of the text being debated.

The fundamental principle of the marking is holistic: each response is given a mark out of 30. This reflects how the response has met the Level criteria, as set out in the mark scheme.

In both sections, AO1 and AO2 are more heavily weighted. To do well on this paper, candidates need to have sufficiently close familiarity with their texts to:

- Structure an argument which is genuinely responsive to the question;
- Develop their argument through detailed textual reference and discussion of effects.

For Section 1, knowledge of productions and specific references to critical views and perspectives will help candidates to achieve with respect to AO5, but these ideas should complement (and not be a substitute for) close familiarity with the written text. Relevant discussion of dramatic effects or of actors' delivery of lines within a particular production are also recognised as achievement with respect to AO5. Relevant discussion of Shakespeare's construction of dramatic tension, or his use of stagecraft, are recognised as achievement with respect to AO2.

For Section 2, responsiveness to the question necessitates a focus on the given extract. Sound comprehension of (and some range across) the extract is necessary for mid-level achievement. Candidates must know the rest of the poem (or the other set poems) well enough to select cross-references and to make connections apposite to the question. However, it is expected that most of the discussion of effects will use quotations from the extract itself. A lack of adequate focus on the extract is regarded as a partial attempt at the question.

Paper 1 series overview

The paper was very well received. Candidates were most effective when they responded to the specific questions set, and when they considered the assessment objectives being covered. Some creative responses to the questions and texts were seen, although centres would be advised to remember that certain conventions do apply when expressing ideas about literary texts in an examination context. Once again, reference was frequently made in responses to a whole variety of contemporary issues (critical and contextual) often including a perceived lack of global stability. The influence of the study of English Literature at GCSE was frequently perceived in answers, and this often had notably positive effects. At times a 'knowledge-intensive' approach or an obsession with obscure technical terminology (for its own sake) did not always aid candidates. Terms sometime mentioned in the current series included: 'diacope', 'aporia', 'lexical sets', 'pre-modifying adjectives'. Sometimes such terms were used to good effect. It is worth remembering that the study of English Literature at A Level is in many respects, a *creative* exercise which also requires an element of personal response. Overall, developments in the personal, imaginative and original qualities of candidates' responses have continued to increase markedly.

Examiners again reported that it was a pleasure to mark so many impressive, original and thoughtful answers. It was again encouraging for many to conclude that the core skills of English Literature have continued to be nurtured and refined, and the AS qualification continues to serve a valuable purpose - positioned as it is between the GCSE and the full A Level. Some examiners commented on the fact that several candidates also seemed to have been prepared to respond to questions on the same texts in Unit H472/01, and it is important to remember that the distribution of Assessment Objectives is sometimes different on the two papers. There was evidence in the current series that several candidates managed to mistime their approach to the paper, producing only a very short second answer.

Examiners did again witness a small number of causes for concern in aspects of the presentation of some answers. Handwriting and other skills of presentation were becoming a significant problem in some scripts. It is again worth reminding candidates that an assessment of this kind does invite a formally structured set of responses. The quality of typed work was again seen to improve, and it was good to note that candidates are now more aware that slips and errors in unchecked work could well affect the final quality of the response. It is worth reminding centres again that candidates should indicate which questions they have chosen to answer (by writing the numbers on their script).

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wrote accurately and legibly made it clear which questions they were answering made appropriate question choices answered the specific requirements of their chosen questions, bearing in mind the significance of the key words remembered to bear in mind the relevant assessment objectives for each question wrote to an appropriate length (neither a fragment or an excessive amount) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wrote illegibly or inaccurately, or answered in note form wrote very short or very long responses did not answer the questions chosen, or 'twisted' responses away from the question set to answer on a different topic focused their response on the incorrect assessment objectives wrote generally rather than answering a specific question

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• remembered that conventions for writing about literary texts in an examination context do exist• wrote essays with clear, well-structured arguments (which used quotation to good effect)• demonstrated detailed knowledge and understanding of their texts, and of their critical and contextual circumstances• selected and convincingly discussed effects of language, form and structure only when these genuinely developed the overall argument.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• responded partially to questions, sometimes deploying irrelevant pre-prepared material• wrote with little sense of direction or development (sometimes without paragraphing)• used few relevant quotations, perhaps because of insufficient textual knowledge• focused on textual events, sometimes drifting into narrative recount, and often without an appropriately literary tone• did not indicate on the script the numbers of the questions chosen.

Section 1 overview

Hamlet was again by some way the most popular text. *Measure for Measure* was also popular. There were far fewer responses to *The Tempest* and *Twelfth Night*. *Richard III* and *Coriolanus* were the least popular texts.

Candidates who did well in Section 1 generally: discussed in detail a number of moments in the play which were highly relevant to their selected question; quoted appropriately and pertinently from the play; selected quotations which developed their argument and interpretation in response to the question; recognised that there were multiple key words in each question, and devoted time and space to the consideration of each of these; used the question to prompt a debate, considering more than one side of the given proposition; discussed the play in ways which were genuinely informed by different interpretations; and referred selectively to aspects of historical context in order to enrich their interpretation of textual detail.

Candidates who did less well in Section 1 generally: referred to parts of the play which were not entirely relevant to their selected question; made little use of relevant quotations (or attempted to fabricate these); discussed characters' traits and actions without attempting to analyse language, structure or form; focused on one key word in the question at the expense of others, rather than answering the entire question set; wrote as if only one interpretation of the play were possible, generally presenting their opinions about characters as facts; used aspects of the play to make sweeping assertions about contextual aspects.

Question 1 (a)

1 *Coriolanus*

Either

(a) 'By the end of the play, something like justice is done.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this comment on the play *Coriolanus*?

[30]

This play was not a popular choice. Answers were probably even divided across the two options for the play. Candidates tended to focus on whether 'justice' is achieved for the Roman City-State and its neighbours. Candidates considered a number of individual characters (and groups of characters) in their responses. Candidates were divided about whether the outcome of the play is 'just' as far as the hero is concerned. A popular argument was that, for all his determination, heroism, and rough political insight, Coriolanus' ego is too large and awkward to dispense 'justice' or even to deserve it, though he can see through and deal with much of the hypocrisy and duplicity of the Romans. Some candidates saw the austerity of attitudes to justice as anticipating those of the later Roman Empire. One candidate referred contextually to Donald Trump and to 'making Britain great again'.

Question 1 (b)

Or

(b) '*Coriolanus* shows women can have a powerful influence on politics.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view on the roles of the women in the play *Coriolanus*?

[30]

Some answers to this question were seen. The three women (Valeria, Volumnia, Virgilia) have very distinctive roles, and candidates were most likely to take them separately, at least at first. Most candidates chose to focus on Volumnia. *Coriolanus*, it seems, has been raised in an atmosphere of chivalry, possibly a kind of matriarchy, winning his trophies for a collection of civilised, patriotic women, of whom the most energetic and considerable is clearly his mother, celebrating her son's wounds and subjecting the Tribunes to bitter rhetoric. Some candidates felt that the other patrician women are presented less as part of Rome's martial design than Volumnia, and that their subdued demeanour may suggest the impact on them of patriarchal pressure.

Question 2 (a)

2 *Hamlet*

Either

(a) 'A play focused on ambition and betrayal.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the play *Hamlet*?

[30]

This was by far the most popular text choice on the paper. Answers were evenly divided across the two question options available. This question was sometimes seen by candidates as a topic about the 'rotteness' of Denmark as portrayed in the drama. Ambition is everywhere. Claudius kills his brother to gain (or usurp) the Danish throne. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are called up to carry out unseemly work in the hope of social betterment. Osric's cameo seems to show how gilded language was a means of getting on at the contemporary Danish (i.e. English) court. Ambition is often linked to a willingness to betray others in the rush to get to the top (or just to stay there). Polonius may be 'losing' his daughter to spy on Hamlet; he is certainly setting his own spies to overlook his son Laertes. Claudius inveigles Laertes into his own devices, which are intricate and would-be fail-safe. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are in turn betrayed by Hamlet, who, with elaborate care, forges a diplomatic document to incriminate them. Gertrude may protest her innocence, but she shares all the spoils of Claudius' ambition and betrayal. Some candidates singled out Horatio as the play's only figure of humility and plain-dealing. Others saw Ophelia as a victim of all this double-dealing at court. Hamlet himself has plenty to say about ambition: in his speech about bad dreams, on the soldiers who are willing to die for a straw, and on the pointlessness of competition when everything ends in death.

Question 2 (b)

Or

(b) 'More man of action than dreamy intellectual.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the role of Hamlet in the play *Hamlet*?

[30]

This was also a very popular question. Whether or not Hamlet prevaricates is inevitably bound up with his other self as an action man, stoking a melodramatic plot and responsible for the deaths of six people. From the point of view of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, extrapolated in Tom Stoppard's 1966 comedy (mentioned by many candidates) Hamlet is almost impossible to manage. He refuses to answer their questions, sees them not as old school friends but 'making love to their employment', and forges state papers so that the King of England is forced to execute them. Horatio has some scruples about this diplomatic mischief, but Hamlet none. His accidental killing of Polonius is justified as collateral damage. Interacting with others, including the King and Laertes, he is provocative and fearless. Balanced essays pointed out that in some scenes the 'dreamy intellectual' is surely to the fore: producing theological reasons in chapel for not killing Claudius or, as in the most famous soliloquy ('To be or not to be' – mentioned by many in the current series) finding procrastination an antidote to mortality. Most of the other soliloquies investigate reasons for not getting on with things (while meaning to). Hamlet claims to be admonished by the active examples of honour-struck soldiers and barnstorming actors but remains hidebound 'by the pale cast of thought'. In the graveyard, confronted with the great paradoxes of death, he stands still and waits, wondering for the last time 'what is this quintessence of dust.'

Exemplar 1

		<p>In the early parts of the play, it is clear that Hamlet is not one for action. In fact, in the first scene he is present in 1.2, he spends the majority of the time silent and inactive, overshadowed more by the loud personalities of Claudius and Polonius. He only speaks when asked a direct question, and - even then - the stichomythia and bitter responses he gives, such as 'I am too much i' the sun', show his aversion to become being an active member of the conversation. However, it could be said that, in this scene, Hamlet does not yet have reason for action - his first meeting with the Ghost - which comes only later. However, even past that point, his inaction is still prevalent. Most of his time in the play is spent trying to formulate a plan of action, but he is ultimately unable to, something on which he himself remarks, in saying 'action makes us aware of us all', the harsh alliteration suggesting his anger that he has not yet acted. It seems that Hamlet's inaction angers even himself, as he calls himself a 'rogue and peasant slave' - a far step down from his true nobility - at the end of Act 2. He comments that action is 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought', the reference to disease showing the atrophy that he is experiencing, and that he views himself as sick and defective if he cannot act. Despite this, he refuses to at act even throughout the play. Most notably in 3.3, when he is - even by his own admission - given the chance to kill Claudius and avenge his father, saying he 'might do it yet', the word 'yet' suggesting a clean and easy killing. Even then, he hesitates, saying 'that would be</p>
--	--	---

		scann'd'. He reasons that he cannot kill Claudius during 'the purgation of his soul', as Christian belief at that time would state that Claudius is reconciled and so may go to heaven. He ultimately decides on a more 'horrid hent', the harsh alliteration once again showing his bitterness. Though he gives a logical reason for not killing Claudius, it rings out as yet more procrastination. As Jones argued 'Hamlet cannot kill Claudius without killing himself', as he is somewhat self-aware that his situation is like that of a Leontes tragedy, and that the death of Claudius will come at the cost of his own. As such, Hamlet can hardly be described as a man of action though his thoughts are far from that of a dreamy intellectual, either. As AC Bradley argued, Hamlet is characterised by a 'conflict of emotion', and his self-loathing at his inaction clashes with his penchant for procrastination.
--	--	--

This section from a Level 6 response to Question 2 (b) demonstrates helpful use of linguistic/dramatic analysis (AO2) and useful critical awareness (AO5).

Question 3 (a)

3 *Measure for Measure*

Either

(a) 'For a comedy *Measure for Measure* has a lot to say about death.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of *Measure for Measure*?

[30]

This was a popular text choice, although very few answers to this question were seen. Some candidates had studied this as a 'problem play', 'dark comedy' or 'tragicomedy', and were immediately aware of issues of genre, especially the difficulty in defining the mixed genre into which this gloomy but oddly fortuitous play falls. Some showed that humour tends to focus on the more broadly depicted characters: bawds, whores, pimps, furtive pleasure-seekers. There are plenty of disasters averted, old wrongs righted, farcical subterfuges unexpectedly brought off. The ending also provides a rash of marriages as a comedy should, though these did not necessarily please candidates. But potentially tragic outcomes cast a long shadow. Crime, punishment and physical decay seem to fit oddly with a benevolent Duke arranging marriages, but candidates did sometimes attempt to show how the jigsaw pieces of genre fit together. Performance history was sometimes cited to help.

Question 3 (b)

Or

(b) 'The Duke behaves as if he possesses God-like authority.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the role of Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*? [30]

This was a slightly more dominant question. Shakespeare's Duke was generally seen as one who bites off more than he can chew, trying to effect change without claiming responsibility, and possibly uncovering distorted views of himself and reputation, like Lucio's outrageous slanders. Some candidates saw him as the worst kind of tyrant, trying to tighten up his own lax legislation by letting someone else, the hypocritical 'Puritan' Angelo, wield the horsewhip. Others saw him as a kind of comic stage manager, playing with the hearts and (literally) the heads of others in a ridiculous but not always amusing Catholic disguise. The conceit that Shakespeare has written an allegory of the way God the Father conceals himself behind his creation was not an unreasonable reading of the play, as Wilson Knight has proved in *Wheel of Fire*. But many candidates found aspects of Duke Vincentio less than God-like: irresponsible, cowardly and impetuous. Answers focused on the moral implications of the Duke's role. Better responses provided more than just a character-study. Some candidates were able to supply useful performance history.

Question 4 (a)

4 *Richard III*

Either

(a) 'This is a world where honesty gets you nowhere.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of *Richard III*? [30]

Very few answers to this play (and question) were seen. Candidates were quick to point out that, for Richard, a consummate actor, dishonesty clears the path to the throne. The temperamentally dishonest gather round Richard: Catesby, Ratcliffe, Lovell, and Tyrell. Candidates were keen to point out a range of dishonest acts in the play. Honesty is rare until the fifth act of the play, and even then, the plots against Richard must be managed by subterfuge. Some candidates argued that the young Duke of York confronts Richard as bravely and truly as anyone, and the chorus of women are bleakly honest about their (often guiltless) victimhood.

Question 4 (b)

Or

(b) 'The wise and witty Buckingham's one mistake is to trust Richard.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the role of Buckingham in *Richard III*?

[30]

Again, answers to this question were very rare indeed. When the play begins Buckingham is Richard's 'other self'. He proceeds to prove this with several consummate acting displays. Only after the hard work of deposing the boy-king has been done, and when the usurper has been planted on the throne, does Richard pick a quarrel with the 'deep revolving witty Buckingham'. Richard treats Buckingham as a nagging suitor, and pushes him, fatally, into exile and revolt. Candidates could argue that Richard becomes jealous of Buckingham, even threatened by him, and that when Buckingham's ghost appears at Bosworth he is just as vindictive as the others, but possibly more filled with a sense of betrayal and regret.

Question 5

5 *The Tempest*

Either

(a) 'A play full of wonders and impossibilities.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of *The Tempest*?

[30]

This was a popular text choice in the current series, and this question was – by far – the more popular choice on *The Tempest*. 'Wonder' is often thought to be a characteristic of Shakespeare's Late Romances, often managed by bending or even breaking the laws of nature to put something like myth on the stage. Some candidates were keen to explore related ideas, listing – between them – a large range of ideas. Production history often proved to be useful, especially when candidates had been aware of a version with a large cast and elaborate choreography, or with impactful lighting. Some candidates chose to write about wonders and impossibilities separately (which was perfectly acceptable) whereas others drew distinctions between these two ideas. As ever in a question of this type, mere lists tended to be less effective than answers which synthesised different approaches and concepts to produce a broad, thoughtful response to the issues in the question.

Question 5 (b)

Or

(b) 'Gonzalo sees the best in everything.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the role of Gonzalo in *The Tempest*?

[30]

This was not a popular question, although some candidates were keen to point out that Gonzalo is sometimes seen as a relatively thankless role, even though Shakespeare has given him plenty of intelligence. Once again, impressive answers moved beyond a mere character study (with its associated lists) to respond more broadly to the terms of the question and the play. Some candidates thought Gonzalo to be tedious and sentimental. Others took him less at Sebastian and Antonio's value, and more at Prospero's, for whom this perennial optimist has proved 'Holy Gonzalo' and 'My true preserver.' 'Gonzalo's Commonwealth', a paraphrase of a passage in Montaigne's 'Of Cannibals', was often focused on by candidates, who interpreted it as an optimist's dream of millenarian perfection, but also as a vision of a modern Eden, drawn from a positive interpretation of the lifestyle of so-called 'savages' in the New World.

Question 6 (a)

6 *Twelfth Night*

Either

(a) '*Twelfth Night* mixes romance with less pleasant things, such as grief and revenge.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of *Twelfth Night*?

[30]

This was a popular play in the current series, and this question proved to be the more popular of the two available. This was a question about both structure and genre, and any effort to come to terms with these concerns was rewarded by examiners. Candidates were usually aware that *Twelfth Night* mixes broad, even farcical comedy with layers of quasi-tragic feeling. Illyria was often presented by candidates as a country of romance and music. Romance was shown to be explored in several contexts. Revenge and grief were also identified by nearly all candidates who attempted this question. Some candidates felt that the revenge-plot between Feste and Malvolio dramatises the growing division between the new Puritan middle class and retainers of the old landed gentry. Others suggested that the division between romance and vindictiveness is signalled by the play's twin settings, Italianate Romance and (something like) contemporary England.

Question 6 (b)

Or

(b) 'Sir Toby is a born exploiter, Sir Andrew a born victim.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this view of the roles of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night*? **[30]**

This was not a popular question. Very few answers were seen. Candidates sometimes pointed out that Sir Andrew is a variation on one of Shakespeare's stock characters, the 'silly gentleman' who sometimes (but not always) punches above his weight. It was suggested that in most productions Sir Andrew is a crowd-pleaser and that there is also a dark side to him as well. In candidates' assessment Sir Toby often emerged as the meaner and tougher of the two. Some saw in Toby's irregular vitality a ghost of Falstaff (another born exploiter) or a hint of the rollicking Cavaliers of the coming Civil War. In short, his exploitative character often seemed to candidates to embody the dark side of upper-class English life at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Section 2 overview

Christina Rossetti was again by far the most popular poet in this section. *Paradise Lost* was also popular, and there were several responses on Chaucer (and a smaller number on Coleridge). Tennyson was the least popular choice, and only a few answers on *Maud* were seen this series.

Candidates who did well in Section 2 generally: devoted between two-thirds and three-quarters of their response to the set extract; referred to details outside the extract only when they were relevant to their argument; structured their response around examples of language, imagery and verse form which were relevant to, and which generated different lines of interpretation in response to, the question; and discussed effects in ways which built on their study of key themes and concerns in the set text as whole.

Candidates who did less well in Section 2 generally: used only a small number of quotations from the extract, focusing more of their response on other poems (or parts of the poem); referred to other poems which were at best partially relevant to the question; seemed to work their way line-by-line through the extract, without constructing an argument in response to the question; attempted to discuss the effects of language features in ways which suggested only partial comprehension of the text; made entirely generalised references to linguistic techniques and effects, without making convincing connections between form and meaning; and deployed biographical knowledge of the poet (and other contextual material) without great relevance to analysis of the extract.

Question 7

7 Geoffrey Chaucer: *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*

Discuss what this extract from *The Merchant's Tale* suggests about the value of advice.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the extract characteristic of *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*. **[30]**

This text was not especially popular in the current series. A few responses were seen. Candidates were often quick to point out that the Merchant presents Placebo as a shameless yes-man, and that his philosophy is that you get on by contradicting no one. Candidates often presented Placebo's characteristics as a rhetorician in action as he lays his flattery of Januarie on 'with a trowel', although his language is often spiked with irony (frequently praising the sexual prowess of the *senex amans*). Placebo, who claims he quarrels with no one, has just been quarrelling with his fellow counsellor, Justinus. Januarie will fall for Damyan and May's deceits just as easily as those of Placebo. Some more successful candidates pointed out that Chaucer's decasyllabic couplet adapts well to set speeches, the rhythms half-concealed by Placebo's prolix reassuring, and there are plenty of appeals to 'Auctoritees' such as Christ and Solomon to back up Placebo's counsel. Some candidates felt that Placebo's advice arises less from professional competence than from a moral stupidity very like Januarie's.

Question 8

8 John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Books 9 & 10

Discuss Satan's attitude to paradise ('Terrestrial Heav'n') in this extract from *Paradise Lost* Book 9.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the extract characteristic of *Paradise Lost*, Books 9 & 10. [30]

This was a moderately popular text in the current series. Quite a few responses were seen. The beginning of the extract shows Satan as speculative theologian. Everything is linked in the great chain of being, of natural cause and effect, and Adam and Eve are clearly intended in Satan's view to be Lord and Lady of Creation. Satan, as so often when isolated in paradise, finds himself 'stupidly good', tempted to walk about like a picturesque landscape painter before recalling he has no 'place' in this 'sweet interchange' of prospects. Worse, he can find no 'refuge' there. He recalls the arguments that have defined 'Evil' as his 'Good' in his great speech in Book 4, and the passage ends confirming Satan in his determination to destroy Adam and his paradise. Some candidates pointed out that his passage is a kind of internal monologue by Satan, dramatic in the way he sympathises with God's handiwork before gloating over his power to destroy it. Though he has no audience, he makes much use of elaborate rhetoric. Some candidates thought that this passage shows Satan in a more positive light, a victim of unreasonable oppression, now cruelly exiled, longing for the sweets of creation he is forever denied, even the baffled would-be hero of the poem.

Question 9

9 Samuel Taylor Coleridge: *Selected Poems*

Discuss the mood of excitement and wonder in 'Kubla Khan'.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the poem characteristic of Coleridge's work in your selection. [30]

This was not a popular text in the current series. Only a few responses to the question were seen. Candidates were sometimes aware of the difficulty of imposing tight symbolic or allegoric programmes on this immensely suggestive text. In writing about 'mood' they often concentrated on the poem's prophetic qualities and its sense of controlled excitement. The final stanza was interpreted in many ways, but answers tended to point to an unsympathetic audience for the dreamer, weaving their own magic spell against the outsider who seems to have come from 'paradise.' Candidates sometimes reminded us that the mood of enchanted excitement is common in Coleridge. Candidates chose to point to parallel passages in 'The Nightingale: A Conversation Poem', in 'The Aeolian Harp,' and particularly the vision of icicles in the moon's glow at the end of 'Frost at Midnight'. Some showed how the ecstasy of 'Kubla Khan' becomes the agony of 'Dejection: An Ode'. Rhythm and line-length in the poem were shown to be constantly changing. Contextual material sometimes included the poem's fragmentariness, its literary borrowings, the poem's 'Orientalism' (Tartary and Abyssinia), and even the nature of opium visions.

Question 10

10 Alfred, Lord Tennyson: *Maud*

Discuss Tennyson's presentation of the narrator's relationship with *Maud* in this extract.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the extract characteristic of *Maud*. **[30]**

This text was not at all popular this year. Only a few responses were seen. This extract follows on from the narrator's complaint against the social evils of 'Mammonite' mid-Victorian society. Candidates had different theories about why the narrator reacts in such a defensive, even querulous way to a woman with whom he is obviously infatuated. Some thought he is offering conventional criticism of the contemporary feminine ideal, the 'angel in the house'; others felt Tennyson probing his narrator's inner life, where Maud generally functions as a mixture of beckoning ideal and fatal warning. This passage is written in hexameters, and is full of drags, plunges and abrupt caesurae. Candidates were sometimes reminded of the heavy hexameters of the poem's opening, or possibly of the overwrought metres of other imaginative sequences, such as the suicide burial, the garden of talking flowers, or Maud among the 'rosy' daisies.

Question 11

11 Christina Rossetti: *Selected Poems*

Discuss Christina Rossetti's presentation of Christian themes in 'Good Friday'.

In your answer explore the author's use of language, imagery and verse form, and consider ways in which you find the poem characteristic of Rossetti's work in your selection. **[30]**

This was a very popular text choice in the current series – and indeed by far the most popular in Section 2. Examiners saw many responses to this question. Candidates were sometimes keen to point out that this powerful devotional poem dates from comparatively early in Rossetti's career (1862) and that at its heart is one of the poet's favourite themes: how a self-denigrating belief that a Christian is not good enough for Jesus can lead to a recognition of the infinite generosity of salvation and grace. Candidates demonstrated that the poem makes much use of the image of Christ the good shepherd, taking more care of the stray sheep, or lost sinner, than of the ninety-nine who remain in the fold (Matthew 18: 12-13). This image is combined with that of another shepherd, Moses, who led his flock out of Egypt. Candidates showed that the poem is packed with Biblical references. Many picked up the account of the crucifixion in stanzas 1-3. Some pointed out that the poem follows the same devotional path as 'Twice', where heavenly love is gained through the renunciation of earthly desires; the poem's rather arduous impact recalled the strenuous journeys of 'Up-Hill'; the sense of being exiled from the devotions of the rest of God's world resembles 'Shut Out', but most candidates saw ways in which Christ's vicarious atonement in the poem resembles the allegorical self-sacrifice Lizzie performs for Laura in 'Goblin Market'. Some suggested that they find Rossetti more attractive as a poet of love, loss and longing than of Christianity, but these arguments were required to stay close to the idea of Christian faith.

Exemplar 2

		Rossetti explores 'soul sleep' on 'from the antique'. The speaker is expressing their her feelings about how hard and tiring it is to be a woman:
		"oh I wish, I wish I were a man / or better yet, nothing at all." The
		repetition repetition of the 'I wish' has puts emphasis on the speaker's desperation and longing. She also says "it's a weary life isn't, double on a woman's lot." These quotes imply it is
		tiring to be a woman, but also, the speaker also would prefer non-existence than be a woman. This
		is because in the Victorian Era women weren't equal to men, but belonged fully to men. They were meant to be submissive, dependent, and obedient to men - these were considered the traits of a good wam woman. Soul sleep is a form of deep rest and descent into
		In conclusion, Rossetti present nothingness where you would be at peace.

This section from a Level 4 response to Question 11 demonstrates 'competent' use of contextual material (AO3) which is expressed in a rather straightforward manner.

Supporting you

Teach Cambridge

Make sure you visit our secure website [Teach Cambridge](#) to find the full range of resources and support for the subjects you teach. This includes secure materials such as set assignments and exemplars, online and on-demand training.

Don't have access? If your school or college teaches any OCR qualifications, please contact your exams officer. You can [forward them this link](#) to help get you started.

Reviews of marking

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

Access to Scripts

We've made it easier for Exams Officers to download copies of your candidates' completed papers or 'scripts'. Your centre can use these scripts to decide whether to request a review of marking and to support teaching and learning.

Our free, on-demand service, Access to Scripts is available via our single sign-on service, My Cambridge. Step-by-step instructions are on our [website](#).

Keep up-to-date

We send a monthly bulletin to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular professional development courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses for your subject on **Teach Cambridge**. You'll also find links to our online courses on NEA marking and support.

Signed up for ExamBuilder?

[ExamBuilder](#) is a free test-building platform, providing unlimited users exclusively for staff at OCR centres with an [Interchange](#) account.

Choose from a large bank of questions to build personalised tests and custom mark schemes, with the option to add custom cover pages to simulate real examinations. You can also edit and download complete past papers.

[Find out more](#).

Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals (examined units only).

[Find out more](#).

You will need an Interchange account to access our digital products. If you do not have an Interchange account please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username, or nominate an existing Interchange user in your department.

Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

Call us on
01223 553998

Alternatively, you can email us on
support@ocr.org.uk

For more information visit

 **ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder**

 **ocr.org.uk**

 **facebook.com/ocrexams**

 **twitter.com/ocrexams**

 **instagram.com/ocrexaminations**

 **linkedin.com/company/ocr**

 **youtube.com/ocrexams**

We really value your feedback

Click to send us an autogenerated email about this resource. Add comments if you want to. Let us know how we can improve this resource or what else you need. Your email address will not be used or shared for any marketing purposes.



I like this



I dislike this

Please note – web links are correct at date of publication but other websites may change over time. If you have any problems with a link you may want to navigate to that organisation's website for a direct search.



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT

OCR is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored. © OCR 2024 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered office The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.

OCR operates academic and vocational qualifications regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA as listed in their qualifications registers including A Levels, GCSEs, Cambridge Technicals and Cambridge Nationals.

OCR provides resources to help you deliver our qualifications. These resources do not represent any particular teaching method we expect you to use. We update our resources regularly and aim to make sure content is accurate but please check the OCR website so that you have the most up to date version. OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in these resources.

Though we make every effort to check our resources, there may be contradictions between published support and the specification, so it is important that you always use information in the latest specification. We indicate any specification changes within the document itself, change the version number and provide a summary of the changes. If you do notice a discrepancy between the specification and a resource, please [contact us](#).

You can copy and distribute this resource in your centre, in line with any specific restrictions detailed in the resource. Resources intended for teacher use should not be shared with students. Resources should not be published on social media platforms or other websites.

OCR acknowledges the use of the following content: N/A

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR or are thinking about switching, you can request more information using our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Please [get in touch](#) if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support you in delivering our qualifications.