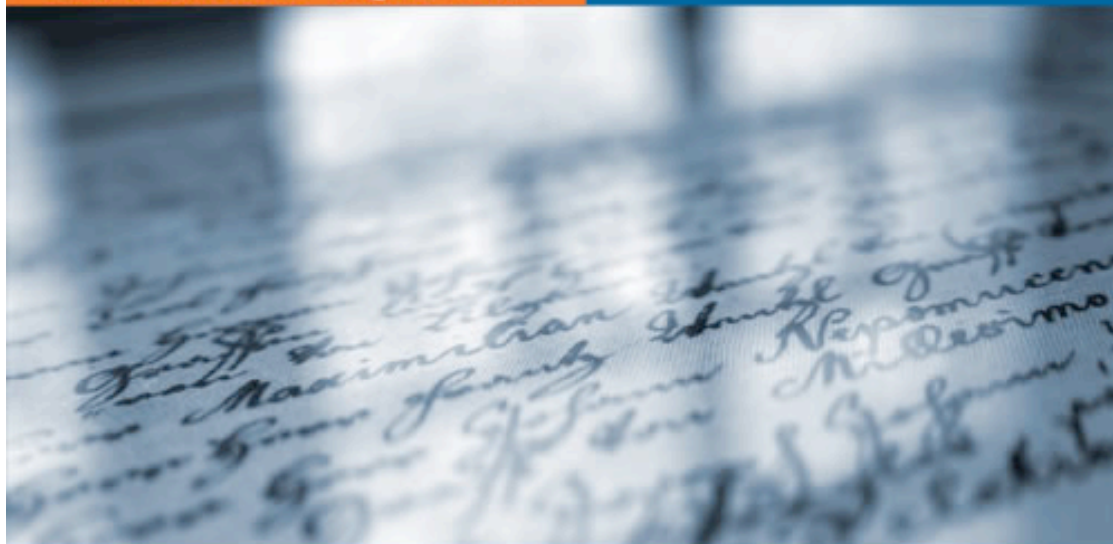


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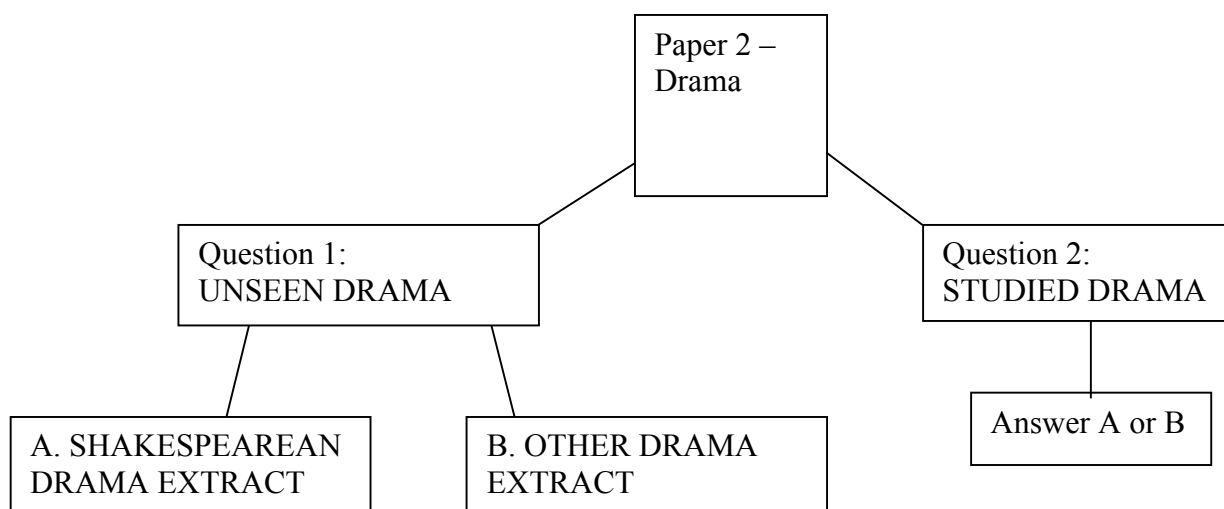


STUDY GUIDELINES: DRAMA

Paper 2 – Drama

Study Guidelines

The first section to appear on Paper 2 of the Higher Level exam paper is the Drama Section. The structure of the Drama Section may be summarised as follows:



In this Section, you have to answer questions on both **Unseen** and **Studied drama** texts. Areas that you need to have prepared include an understanding of character, setting, theme, tension and conflict. You would also need to have a good idea as to how you would stage a scene from a play or act in that scene.

Unseen Drama

When giving your impression of a character in an extract, you should consider the character's **dialogue, costume, facial expressions, gestures, movements** and **relationships** with other characters in the extract before making your response.

It is also very important that you read the **background information** at the top of the extract. This puts the extract into context for you.

First impressions of characters can include a wide variety of responses: you may feel a character is honest, trustworthy, fearless, courageous, kind, loving, caring, religious, superstitious, selfish/unselfish, devious, cunning, and so on.

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- Ensure you make a **personal response**, especially to questions which include phrases such as: 'What do you think . . .', 'Do you think . . .', 'In your view/opinion . . .' and so on.
- While the examiner will reward your personal response, you must always base your personal response **on the text before you**.

In the unseen drama question, you may only use **evidence** and knowledge that you gather **from the extract** and the introduction to the extract.

It is also important that in supporting your points, you do so with **relevant** and well chosen references and quotations from the play.

It is important to distinguish between the terms 'analyse' and 'evaluate' in a question. To analyse the text, you respond with some insight to the material you have read. To evaluate, you give your own opinions on the material; for example, you may write about whether the material in the extract is appropriate, or effective, and so on. The best responses include elements of insight, resulting in answers with interesting ideas accompanied by your personal opinion/evaluation of the text, all of which is supported with appropriate reference from the extract.

Studied Drama

Studied Drama refers to the play you have studied in school with your teacher. You must name your studied play and the playwright who wrote it.

When discussing the main **characters** in your studied play, the following aspects of significant characters should be referred to:

- Their full **name** (make sure you can spell their name correctly!)
- Their **role** or function in the play (hero or villain, friend, confidante, etc)
- Their key **relationships** in the play (positive and/or negative)
- The way they **speak** in the play (their characteristic dialogue – do they speak aggressively much of the time; are they timid in their speech? Do they use imagery in their speech, and so on.)
- Key moments in the play where characters are **challenged**.
- Key moments in the play where characters **change** or see things/themselves/others in a different light.
- In your preparation, you should make note of what you like or dislike about the significant characters in the play.

It is important to understand the difference between the terms 'describe' and 'discuss' when they appear in a question.

If you are asked to describe then do just that, *describe*, but as **accurately** as you can. If, on the other hand you are asked to *discuss*, you must avoid giving a mere summary. You may have to explore in some detail the character's behaviour on stage,

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how he/she acts and reacts in various situations, how his or her relationships have developed, or the importance of the character's role in the play.

The following elements of drama should be taken into consideration when discussing a play's atmosphere:

- **Lighting** – is the stage only partially lit, dimly lit or brightly lit? Why?
 - **Music** – are there any references to music being played? Is it soft, romantic or classical music, is it rock music, or pop music? Does the music reflect the feelings of the characters in that particular scene? Does the music convey a mood of happiness or something more sinister?
 - **Other sound effects (SFX)** – can you hear soldiers marching in the background? Do spirits call out in the night? Can you hear laughter off-stage or is it someone crying? Did the wind howl, or did lightning just crack?
 - **Costumes** – are they colourful or dark; are the characters dressed richly or in rags. Do costumes change at any point in the play? If so, does this mark a major shift in the atmosphere of the play?
 - **Setting** – do the events in the play take place against a background of war or harmony? Is there a conflict of values between different parties who live in that setting?
 - **Subject matter** – does the play explore the darker side of human nature? Is the play comic or tragic? What properties on the stage help to create a particular mood on the stage? Do characters brandish swords or love letters?
-

Questions for Student to Answer

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, by William Shakespeare

Question:

For each of the following quotations, state the speaker and in which act/scene it appears.

Quotation 1

*'Why look how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys . . .'*

Quotation 2

*'Therefore, prepare thee to cut off the flesh, -
Shed thou no blood, not cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh . . .'*

Quotation 3

*'I pray you think you question with the Jew, -
You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height,
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb. . .'*

Quotation 4

*'So may the outward shows be least themselves, -
The world is still deceiv'd with ornament-
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil?'*

Answer:

Quotation 1

Speaker: Shylock
Act/Scene: Act I, Scene iii

Quotation 2

Speaker: Portia
Act/Scene: Act IV, Scene i

Quotation 3

Speaker: Antonio
Act/Scene: Act IV, Scene i

Quotation 4

Speaker: Bassanio
Act/Scene: Act III, Scene ii

Question:

Who are they talking about?

Here is a selection of observations on various characters from the play *The Merchant of Venice*. Can you suggest the person to whom each statement is referring?

- The characters in the play regard _____ as an inhuman monster, frequently mocking him for being obsessed with money.
- _____ is frequently melancholy, and sometimes for no apparent reason.
- A belief in true love and a keen sense of justice are deeply held by _____.
- It is true that _____ is honest enough to admit that he has been licentious in the past, but he has still the belief that he can change his ways, and indeed, he does.

Answer:

- The characters in the play regard **Shylock** as an inhuman monster, frequently mocking him for being obsessed with money.
- Antonio** is frequently melancholy, and sometimes for no apparent reason.
- A belief in true love and a keen sense of justice are deeply held by **Portia**.
- It is true that **Bassanio** is honest enough to admit that he has been licentious in the past, but he has still the belief that he can change his ways, and indeed, he does.

Question:



The above poster was used to promote a film production of *The Merchant of Venice*. The film was directed by Michael Radford and released in December 2004.

The main roles in the film were played by Al Pacino, Joseph Fiennes, Lynn Collins, and Jeremy Irons.

In the press release for the film, the following character descriptions were circulated. Can you match the descriptions to the appropriate character? Tick the correct box after each description.

‘One of the most dramatic and tragic characters in Shakespearean literature’

- a) Shylock
- b) Antonio
- c) Portia
- d) Bassanio

‘The model of a typical Elizabethan lover – young, impulsive and romantic’

- a) Shylock
- b) Antonio
- c) Portia
- d) Bassanio

‘A gracious and resourceful person’

- a) Shylock
- b) Antonio
- c) Portia
- d) Bassanio

‘An honourable man whose generosity is unmatched in Venice’

- a) Shylock
- b) Antonio
- c) Portia
- d) Bassanio

‘He is seen as both a sympathetic and loathsome character.’

- a) Shylock
- b) Antonio
- c) Portia
- d) Bassanio