

ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
January 2010

English Literature

Assessment Unit A2 3

assessing

Module 6: Drama

[A2L31]



A2L31

MONDAY 25 JANUARY, MORNING

TIME

2 hours.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklet provided.
Answer **one** question.

Answer on Option A or Option B or Option C.

The first 30 minutes of this examination are to be used for planning your essay.

There are four pages at the back of this question paper for you to use to plan your answer.

You will receive your Answer Booklet 30 minutes into the examination.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The total mark for this paper is 30.

Quality of written communication will be assessed in your answers.

You should have with you your copies of the prescribed texts for this examination.

Read all of this page – carefully – during your planning

Answer on **one** option.

In this examination, you will be marked on your ability to

- respond with knowledge and understanding to literary texts of different types and periods, exploring and commenting on relationships and comparisons between literary texts (AO2ii)
- show detailed understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings (AO3)
- articulate independent opinions and judgements, informed by different interpretations of literary texts by different readers (AO4)
- evaluate the significance of cultural, historical and other contextual influences on literary texts and study (AO5ii).

This means that

in your answer, you must

- (i) show an awareness of the **period** in which each play was written and of the **type** of each play – e.g. Classical Tragedy, late nineteenth-century Comedy of Manners – **where relevant to the question**
- (ii) draw appropriate comparisons and contrasts between the plays
- show an understanding of the **methods** which the dramatists use – e.g. character interactions, language (including imagery), structure and staging – **in relation to the main issues** of the question
- develop an argument in response to the statement about the text given at the beginning of the question
- provide information from outside the text, **relevant to the question**, about the context; this could be
 - historical, social, cultural circumstances in which the text was written and/or which are reflected in the text
 - literary context concerned with the type of text – e.g. Tragedy, Comedy of Manners – or with a particular literary notion such as the hero.

You must answer on **one** of the three synoptic options in this unit.

Option A

Sophocles: *Oedipus Tyrannus*

Miller: *Death of a Salesman*

The tragic hero is a courageous individual who confronts powerful forces within or outside himself with a dignity that reveals the breadth and depth of the human spirit in the face of failure, defeat, and even death. Oedipus and Willy may be equally described as two such individuals.

By comparing and contrasting appropriately selected parts of the two plays, show how far you would agree with the view expressed above. Your **argument** should include relevant comments on each writer's **dramatic methods** and **contextual material** on the nature of the tragic hero.

Option B

Farquhar: *The Beaux' Stratagem*

Wilde: *An Ideal Husband*

Even though Farquhar was writing almost two centuries before Wilde, a modern audience can relate much more easily to Aimwell and Archer, the central characters in *The Beaux' Stratagem*, than they can to the central characters in *An Ideal Husband*, Lord Goring and Sir Robert Chiltern, who seem too remote from modern life.

By comparing and contrasting appropriately selected parts of the two plays, show how far you would agree with the view expressed above. Your **argument** should include relevant comments on **dramatic methods** and **contextual material** on the Comedy of Manners.

Option C

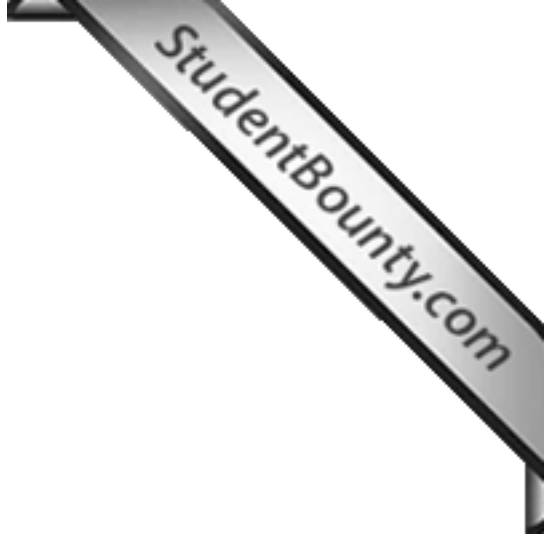
Webster: *The Duchess of Malfi*

Albee: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

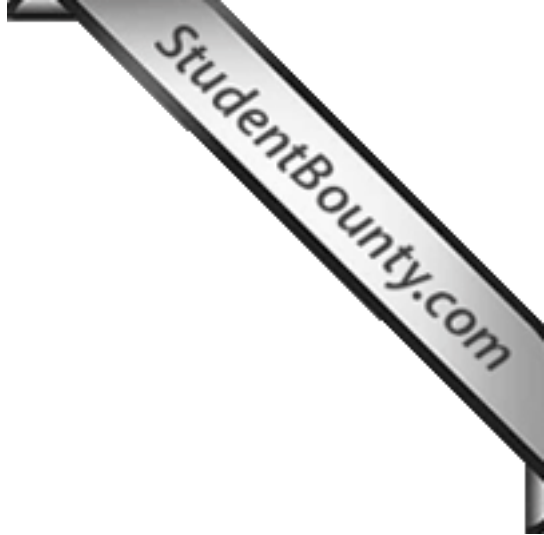
Martha may be foul-mouthed, vulgar and cruel, and therefore completely unlike the noble and dignified Duchess, yet she succeeds in arousing in the audience the tragic feelings of pity and fear, and so is just as deserving of the description “tragic heroine” as the Duchess.

By comparing and contrasting appropriately selected parts of the two plays, show how far you would agree with the view expressed above. Your **argument** should include relevant comments on **dramatic methods** and **contextual material** on the nature of the tragic heroine.

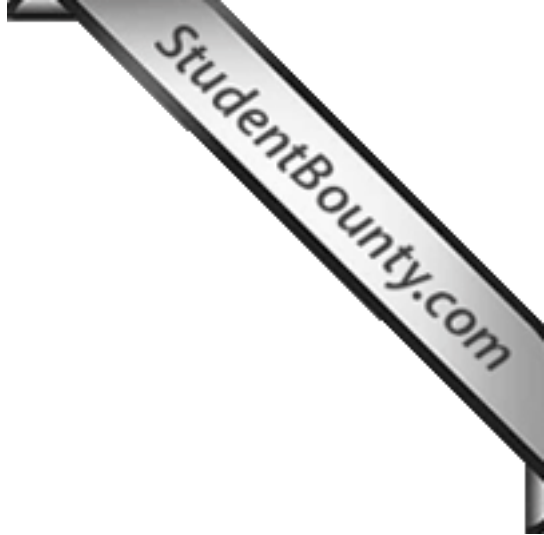
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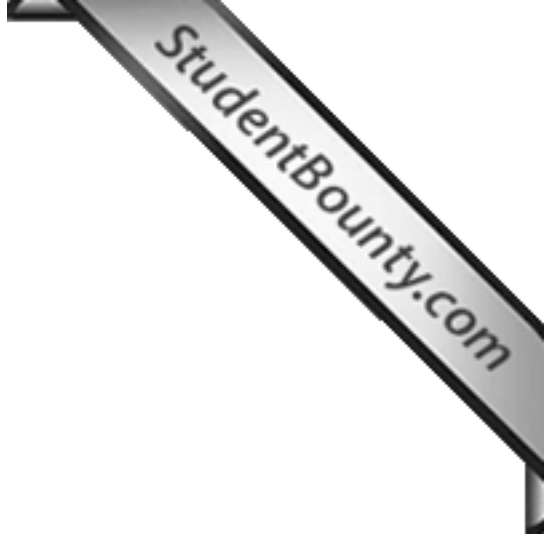
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