

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL  
AQA EXAMINATIONS

# INTERNATIONAL A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE

**Mark scheme**

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LT04A

Unit 4 Literary representations

Version 1.0 Specimen

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

## Information for Examiners

Welcome to this mark scheme which is designed to help you to deliver fair and accurate assessment. Please read carefully all sections and ensure that you follow the requirements that they contain.

### Arriving at marks

- 1 All questions are framed to address all the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Answers are marked holistically and when deciding upon a mark in a band, examiners should bear in mind the equal weightings of the assessment objectives. Examiners need to read the whole answer, taking into account its strengths and weaknesses, and then place it in the appropriate band.
- 2 Examiners should avoid making early snap judgements before the whole answer has been read. Some candidates begin tentatively but go on to make relevant points.
- 3 Examiners should be prepared to use the full mark range and not 'bunch' scripts in the middle for safety. Top marks are attainable if candidates could not be expected to do more in the time and under the conditions in which they are working.
- 4 Examiners should mark positively. Although the mark scheme provides some indicators for what candidates are likely to write about, examiners should be willing to reward what is actually there – provided, of course, that it is relevant to the question being asked.
- 5 Examiners should remember that there are no right answers. Candidates' views which are relevant, well-argued and supported by appropriate textual evidence must receive credit whether the examiner agrees with the views or not. It is important to try to remain flexible if a candidate introduces unusual or unorthodox ideas.
- 6 Examiners should remember that length and quality are not synonymous. Some brief answers may be relevant and concise. Equally, long answers may be diffuse and repetitive.
- 7 If answers are short or incomplete, examiners can reward only what is there and assess accordingly. Some further credit may be given to answers finished in note form.

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## Using the mark bands

- 8 When placing answers in mark bands, examiners need to look closely at the descriptors and the detailed generic mark bands on pages 6–8. The key words for the bands are important and are printed below.

MARK BAND DESCRIPTORS	
Band 5	perceptive/assured
Band 4	coherent/thorough
Band 3	straightforward/relevant
Band 2	simple/generalised
Band 1	largely irrelevant, largely misunderstood, largely inaccurate

- 9 Answers placed at the top of the band will securely address the descriptors; answers at the lower end of the band will securely address the descriptors below and begin to show the qualities of the band into which you are placing them. Careful judgements need to be made about marks in the middle of the range; here it is likely that the key descriptors will be more intermittent but still clearly evident.
- 10 There will be occasions when an answer addresses descriptors in different bands; in such cases, the ‘best-fit’ model applies. Here examiners will need to exercise a different kind of judgement, looking to see where the answer can be most fairly and appropriately placed, in terms of its quality, against the descriptors.
- 11 Examiners must remember that the mark bands are not equivalent to grades: grades are decided by the awarding committee at the end of each session.

## The assessment objectives and their significance

12 All questions are framed to test AOs 1 and 2 so if candidates answer the question, then they will be addressing the AOs. In marking questions, however, examiners must also take account of AO3, which tests more than technical accuracy.

The equally weighted AOs are as follows:

**AO1:** Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which readers find meanings in texts, showing an understanding of genre, the significance of contexts, and the ways in which different interpretations can be found.

**AO2:** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts with close attention to authorial methods.

**AO3:** Express informed, personal and argued responses to literary texts, using appropriate concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate writing.

## Mark scheme

It is important to remember that these students, in the main, are 18 years old so we are judging their skills at the end of Key Stage 5.

	AO	Typical features	How to arrive at mark
<p><b>Band 5</b> <b>Perceptive/Assured</b> <b>21–25 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Perception</b>’ is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task.</p> <p>‘<b>Assuredness</b>’ is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.</p>	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task</li> <li>assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression.</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>perceptive</b> and <b>assured</b> work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students are consistently <b>assured</b> and will demonstrate sensitivity and <b>perception</b> across all three assessment objectives in the course of their response.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some <b>perception</b> but with less consistency and evenness.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used.</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>assuredness in the connection between contexts and genre, leading to perceptive interpretations.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Band 4</b> <b>Coherent/ Thorough</b> <b>16–20 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Coherence</b>’ is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task. They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way.</p> <p>‘<b>Thoroughness</b>’ is shown when students write carefully and precisely with detail.</p>	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth</li> <li>appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression.</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> argument across all three assessment objectives in the course of their response.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in <b>coherence</b> and accuracy.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used.</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>coherence in the connection between contexts and genre, leading to carefully explained interpretations.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Band 3</b> <b>Straightforward/ Relevant</b> <b>11–15 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Straightforward</b>’ work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known.</p> <p>‘<b>Relevant</b>’ work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.</p>	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sensibly ordered ideas in a relevant argument in relation to the task</li> <li>• some use of literary critical concepts and terminology which are mainly appropriate; straightforward and clear expression.</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>straightforward</b> and <b>relevant</b> work where the student’s response to the task is clear and intelligible.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent <b>straightforward</b> understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed <b>relevantly</b>.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of <b>relevant</b> understanding with evidence of <b>straightforward</b> thinking.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>• relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used.</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>• relevant in the connection between contexts and genre, leading to straightforward interpretations.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Band 2</b> <b>Simple/Generalised</b> <b>6–10 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Simple</b>’ work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task.</p> <p>‘<b>Generalised</b>’ work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.</p>	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a simple structure to the argument which may not be consistent but which does relate to the task</li> <li>• generalised use of literary critical concepts and terminology; simple expression.</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> work which is mainly linked to the task.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will demonstrate a basic <b>generalised</b> understanding in the course of their answer. Ideas will be developed in a <b>simple</b> way.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> understanding.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>• generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used.</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>• generalised in the connections between contexts and genre, leading to simple interpretations.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Band 1</b> <b>Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate</b> <b>1–5 marks</b></p> <p>‘<b>Largely irrelevant</b>’ work is shown when students write in an unclear way with only occasional reference to what is required by the question.</p> <p>‘<b>Largely misunderstood</b>’ and ‘<b>largely inaccurate</b>’ work is shown when knowledge of the text is insecure, hazy and often wrong.</p>	AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s).</li> </ul>	<p>This band is characterised by work which is <b>largely irrelevant</b> and <b>largely misunderstood</b> and <b>largely inaccurate</b>, and so unlikely to be addressing the AOs in a relevant way.</p> <p>At the top of the band students will mention some unconnected points in relation to the task during the course of their writing. The writing is likely to lack clarity.</p> <p>At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; the writing will be hard to follow and <b>irrelevant</b>.</p>
	AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant.</li> </ul>	
	AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• little sense of the AOs in relation to the task; little sense of how meanings are shaped; little sense of any relevant contexts, genre or interpretations.</li> </ul>	
<b>0 marks</b>		No marks for response when nothing is written or where response has no connection to the text(s) or task.	



**Section A: Prose**

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**Extract from the novel *Family Life* by Akhil Sharma**

Write an analysis of this extract, in which you focus on the representation of children.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the assessment objectives might be addressed, but as ‘significance’ relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues some strands listed could easily address more than one AO.

**AO1: Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which readers find meanings in texts, showing an understanding of genre, the significance of contexts, and the ways in which different interpretations can be found.**

Focus might include:

- the direct expressions of boyish excitement
- a degree of innocence in the emotional responses
- what from an adult point of view might be seen as petty triumphs and grievances
- the child’s giving importance to the luggage label
- a sense of the children’s culture within the wider locality
- the strong influence of the family unit within which the children operate
- the significance of even minor age differences – as between Ajay and his brother
- significance of major age differences, through grandparents
- the ways children are acutely aware of the physical, sensuous, nature of the world
- the significance of America as a culture to aspire to.

**AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts with close attention to authorial methods.**

Much of what might be said links very closely with the AO1 ideas above.

Focus might be on:

- the combination of snatches of speech and the narrator’s reflections on that speech
- paragraphing and its structural effects
- the self-consciously artificial and mannered way in which the boy addresses his friends
- the generally simple vocabulary – appropriate to an 8-year old – but also at times glimpses of the more mature voice of the retrospective narrator (‘their heads turned like oscillating table fans’)
- the structural contrast between the two encounters
- repetition of ‘America’ in the first part
- the use of emphatic short sentences
- occasional use of Indian terms to remind us that the (fictional) conversation would not originally be in English.

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**AO3: Express informed, personal and argued responses to literary texts, using appropriate concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate writing.**

With respect to skill in writing:

- quality of relevant argument, here related to the significance of this passage as an extract from a novel
- organisation of ideas
- use of concepts and terminology appropriate to the question
- technical accuracy.

**Accept any valid any valid interpretation and any valid discussion of narrative method.**

**Section B Poetry**

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**W. H. Auden: *The Unknown Citizen***

Write an analysis of this poem in which you explore the significance of Auden's representation of social class and culture.

**[25 marks]**

**Some possible content** is given below. It suggests some of the ways the assessment objectives might be addressed, but as 'significance' relates to contextual, structural, linguistic and interpretative issues some strands listed could easily address more than one AO.

**AO1: Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which readers find meanings in texts, showing an understanding of genre, the significance of contexts, and the ways in which different interpretations can be found.**

Focus might include:

- the citizen as the 'common man' - how people at the lower levels of society can be seen merely as units of production
- the degree to which his life could be described as serving 'the Greater Community'
- the nature of the work culture of factory employment
- his place in the wider social culture of advertising and consumerism
- the representation of figures of authority
- questions of moral choice and responsibility that are raised by the poem
- the extent to which this might be a historical poem (ie relevant to 1940) or have contemporary relevance across various cultures.

**AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts with close attention to authorial methods.**

Much of what might be said links very closely with the AO1 ideas above.

Focus might be on:

- the form of the poem: a parody, mock-epitaph
- ironic use of words of apparent approval (eg 'saint')
- the suggestion that the narrative voice is that of a government department (use of 'officialese' such as 'policies taken out in his name', etc)
- the structural break before the questions of the last three lines
- rather impersonal references – organisations rather than individuals are named
- the impact and implications of the repeated pronouns 'he' and 'our'
- relatively simple, straight forward language
- references to commonplace consumer items
- the effect of the varied rhyme scheme and irregular line length.

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**AO3: Express informed, personal and argued responses to literary texts, using appropriate concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate writing.**

With respect to skill in writing:

- quality of relevant argument, here related to significance of this as an example of social and cultural criticism
- organisation of ideas
- use of concepts and terminology appropriate to the question
- technical accuracy.

**Accept any valid any valid interpretation and any valid discussion of poetic method.**



# GET HELP AND SUPPORT

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You can contact the English subject team directly at:

E: [english@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk](mailto:english@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk)



**OXFORD INTERNATIONAL AQA EXAMINATIONS**  
LINACRE HOUSE, JORDAN HILL, OXFORD, OX2 8TA  
UNITED KINGDOM  
[enquiries@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk)  
[oxfordaqaexams.org.uk](https://oxfordaqaexams.org.uk)