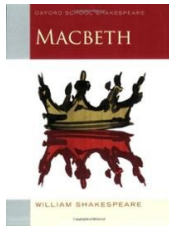


English Department Exam Guide



The extract question - Shakespeare

What: a 20 minute analysis of a given extract from the play

Where: English Literature Component 1, Section A

Time management

First 5 minutes MAXIMUM: read question carefully, highlight key words such as character names or themes. Read the extract, highlighting short quotations or single words from every few lines. Make sure that your chosen quotations contain language which you can analyse in detail.

Remaining 15 minutes: analyse each chosen quotation in turn, relating everything back to the question.

Question types

- Presentation or importance of character
- Presentation of relationship
 - Mood and atmosphere
 - Audience reaction

Response technique and structure

In two or three sentences:

- Start by putting the extract into context.
 - Explain why the extract is important.
 - Establish an overview:
 - For mood and atmosphere, start by saying what the mood and atmosphere is.
 - For character, say how the character comes across in that extract.
 - For audience response, sum up how they would respond to the whole extract.

The bulk of the response:

- Track through the extract, pulling out and zooming in on language.
- Work through the whole extract and pick out imagery or powerful language – there will be some!

Character

The character will probably change in the extract so focus on how they appear at the start, how they are by the end and what has changed. Consider whether we learn something new about them or how others react.

Presentation of relationship

The relationship will either change in the extract or we might see a new side to it. Consider what is revealed throughout the whole extract.

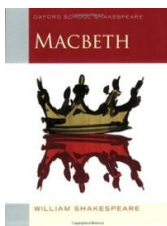
Mood and atmosphere

This will change through the extract. Name the specific mood or atmosphere and consider why it has been created. Key vocabulary: tense, dramatic, calm, comic, gloomy, foreboding, optimistic, expectant, uneasy, violent.

Audience reaction

The extract will likely be a dramatic or surprising scene. Consider different reactions to characters and events, remembering to be speculative. Consider dramatic irony and remember this is a piece of entertainment.

English Department Exam Guide



The essay question - Shakespeare

What: a 40 minute essay based on the entire Shakespeare text

Where: English Literature Component 1, Section A

Time management

First 5 minutes: read question carefully, highlight key words such as character names. Plan the points and key moments from across the whole play to refer to using around 5 bullet points.

Remaining 35 minutes: analyse each chosen point in relation to the question, developing in some detail and making close references to the text, including quotes you can analyse.

Don't forget that there are 5 marks for SPaG.

Question types

- Presentation of character
- Presentation of relationship
- Presentation or importance of theme

Essay technique and structure

In two or three sentences:

- Start with an overview of the character or relationship - sum up how they are presented overall throughout the play. Give a strong opinion here.

For each point:

- Explain the presentation or importance of character, theme or relationship. Evaluate different ways of viewing them, if relevant.
- Analyse specific things the character does or says, linking back to the point you made.
- Bring in any quotations you can so you can analyse some language. If you can't remember exactly, use reported speech.
- Zoom in wherever possible on quotes you have remembered.
- Use speculative words like 'suggests', 'implies', 'perhaps', 'maybe'.

Character

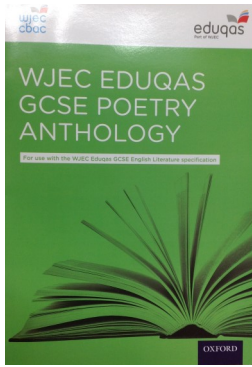
Plan 4-5 ways the character is presented in the play. Make sure you cover a range of points and focus on the beginning, middle and end. Do not miss any absolutely crucial moments (such as deaths). Make a detailed paragraph out of each point, aiming to analyse at least two close references or quotes where they are seen in this way.

Relationship

As with character, plan 4-5 ways the relationship is presented all across the play. Don't ignore key moments such as the first and last times we see characters together. Write up as with character but remember to consider where the relationship may differ on each side. It's better to talk about how a character feels than to label the relationship.

Theme

The best way to plan for themes is to consider 4-5 messages Shakespeare wanted to give us about, say, power or loyalty. Make a detailed paragraph for each where you link to at least two close references or quotations where the theme is explored.



English Department Exam Guide

Anthology Poetry Essay (a)

What: a **20 minute** essay based on a given theme in a given poem

Where: English Literature Component 1, section B

Time management

Up to 5 minutes: read question carefully, highlight key words and phrases in the poem which you can link to the theme.

15 minutes: track through the poem, analysing words or phrases from every few lines and linking all to the given theme.

Likely themes:

Love	Loss
War	Power
Nature	Memories
Change	Childhood

This is not a complete list!

Anthology Poetry (a)

Essay technique and structure

Begin with an overview, summing up what the poem is about and the given theme's presentation in the poem.

Track through the poem, selecting words or phrases from every few lines to analyse. Identify and explain key poetic techniques.

Link meaning to context where relevant. This could be related to the time the poem was written.

Speculate on the poet's aim in writing.

Example: how is war presented?

'Dulce et Decorum Est' shows the impact of war on an individual and aims to show the reader the reality and horrors of World War One. Owen describes a gas attack and its aftermath in vivid and brutal detail.

In the first stanza, Owen describes the exhausted and injured soldiers. In the first two lines, the similes 'like old beggars' and 'coughing like hags' creates sympathy by describing the soldiers as weak and ill. However, it also shocks the reader by comparing them to negative images, which is very different to the heroic way soldiers were being presented at the time.

...

Owen describes how he relives the man's gruesome death 'in all my dreams', suggesting that there is no escape from it. He uses 'helpless sight' to suggest that he cannot do anything about it. Owen suffered from 'shell shock' and is quite probably writing from experience. As elsewhere in the poem, 'helpless' contrasts with the stereotypical view of the brave and heroic soldier.

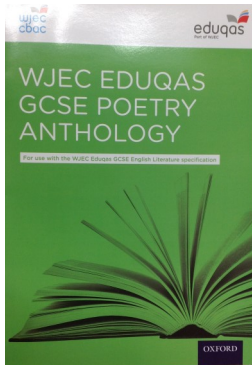
...

I think Owen's aim was to respond to the propaganda of the time to show people the realities of war and the terrible impact it could have on those fighting in it. He suggests that even the heroes are severely damaged. I find the poem shocking due to the large number of gruesome and vivid images of war, which I think is what Owen intended.

How to analyse

The question is always **HOW** a theme is shown so your points must make this clear. You don't have time to pick out many quotes so analyse what you're confident about. Link every single point back to the topic of the poem—never analyse quotes in isolation.

Never waste time counting stanzas or describing rhyme schemes.



English Department Exam Guide

Anthology Poetry Comparison Essay (b)

What: a **40 minute** essay comparing a chosen poem to the poem and theme from (a)

Where: English Literature Component 1, section B

Time management

5 minutes: choose your poem and plan what to say to analyse and compare. Make sure you can make enough points.

20 minutes: analyse how the theme is shown in your chosen poem, using quotes and close references

15 minutes: compare the two poems

Likely themes:

Love	Loss
War	Power
Nature	Memories
Change	Childhood

This is not a complete list!

Anthology Poetry (b)

Essay technique and structure

Begin with an overview of your chosen poem, summing up what it is about and the key similarities and differences to poem (a).

Track through your poem, selecting words or phrases from every few lines to analyse. Use the exact same structure as for (a). You may have more references as you don't have the poem in front of you.

Compare and contrast the two poems. Identify and explain key poetic techniques and make links between the ways they are used in each poem.

Example: compare how war is presented in *Dulce et Decorum Est* and one other poem.

'The Manhunt' is written from the point of view of a soldier's wife but, like 'Dulce et Decorum Est', tells of the lasting impact of war. Both poets describe the physical and mental damage in great detail.

Armitage uses a very large number of metaphors to describe the injuries the soldier suffers. For example, a 'frozen river' describes the scarring on his face. Most of the comparisons are with things that are broken, such as 'fractured rudder' or 'blown hinge'. This suggests that war has left the man physically scarred. The images are also of useless things, for example a hinge would not work if blown apart, so this could suggest the soldier feels useless now.

Armitage begins with the physical damage, such as a 'punctured lung', and then moves onto the mental impact. He describes the search for hidden trauma, which he compares to an 'unexploded mine'. The fact it is 'unexploded' suggests that it is dangerous and could go off at any time, perhaps meaning that the emotional trauma could surface and cause damage at any time. As the speaker is the wife and she is trying to find the source of the damage to her husband, this suggests it could be dangerous for her as his anger could be directed towards her.

...

Owen used similar imagery to create sympathy for the soldiers who were 'blood shod' and 'like hags'. In both poems, the effects of war have been physically obvious. Where Owen vividly describes the emotions a soldier suffers when reliving the horror of a death, Armitage's speaker suggests it is 'buried' because it is not from the soldier's point of view.

...

When Owen wrote his poem, few people accepted that soldiers suffered mental trauma due to war which could explain why he describes the dream so horrifically. Armitage, however, writes when Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome is more accepted but I think he implies that it can be hidden easily and overshadowed by physical scars.