

## **Success in Unit 4 (LTA4)**

### **Outline of a talk by Tom Rank at an A Level Revision Day**

The assessment objectives differ for Section A – drama – and Section B – poetry. The outline which follows shows the different emphasis. Assessment objectives 1, 2 and 3 apply to both sections of the paper, though the emphasis in AO2 and AO3 will differ slightly because of the different nature of the texts.

### **The common Assessment Objectives for Sections A and B**

#### **AO1 Clear communication**

Coherence - the importance of planning  
Connectives - signposts  
Consider the reader  
Clear handwriting!

#### **AO2 Knowledge and understanding**

What does *knowing the text* mean?

- The story?
- The characters?
- The ‘themes’?
- The ‘meaning’?
- Learning quotations?

Actually it means all of these – begin, though, by reading the text thoroughly again before you revise the approaches you have studied in class.

#### **AO2 – providing evidence of your knowledge and understanding**

Examiners will use this rule of thumb when assessing an answer:

- Band 1 - little evidence, assertion (*this will not be an A Level pass*)
- Band 2 - general reference
- Band 3 - competent knowledge
- Band 4 - detailed knowledge (*this is what you need for an A grade*)

*Textual knowledge must, of course, be relevant to the question.*

#### **AO3 Form, structure & language**

- Important to explore this aspect to reach Band 3 or Band 4
- Show awareness of dramatic aspects (for Section A) or poetic aspects (for Section B)
- Refer to audience, author, effects on stage (for Section A) and/or verse, imagery etc (for Section B – and verse, etc, may also be relevant to Section A)
- Look at language, verse etc.

It's *not* feature-spotting!

## **LTA4 Section A – Drama**

### **Assessment Objectives for LTA4 Section A**

AO4	Independent opinions	45%
AO1	Clear communication	20%
AO2ii	Knowledge & understanding	15%
AO3	Form, structure & language	20%

### **AO4 Independent opinions**

- Be used to debating key issues in your play
- Support your own opinions by close reference to the play
- Learn key short quotations
- Be familiar with common critical terms such as:
  - stereotype
  - melodramatic
  - soliloquy
  - revenge tragedy
- Also be aware of other terms that could be used in discussion of the play you are studying, such as “degenerate”, “gratuitous”, “coherent”, “barbaric” and so on.
- Critical opinions will be supplied in the questions - you do not need to learn a list of opinions
- You must be able to think on your feet - so practise planning
- **The text comes first!**

### **How to answer Section A**

- Write cogently - make each sentence develop your argument
- Always keep the question in mind
- Use frequent brief quotations and/or accurate references to the play
- Interrogate the text - why this word/incident?
- Consider each part of the question fully

### **Do not ...**

- Tell the story
- Make general unsupported assertions
- Ignore the text or insert long extracts
- Spend too much time on one aspect of the question
- Learn and recite quotations from critics
- Off-load irrelevant background material, summaries of critical opinions, etc.
- Write on a different question

## **LTA4 Section B – Poetry**

### **Assessment Objectives for LTA4 Section B**

AO5ii	Contexts	40%
AO1	Clear communication	20%
AO2ii	Knowledge & understanding	20%
AO3	Form, structure & language	20%

## **AO5 Contexts**

Which comes first - the context or the text?

### **The text!**

- Classify the poem (Wordsworth) or poems (the other texts) into themes or topics
- Identify two key extracts for each theme to know in detail
- Look for patterns in the poem/extracts
- Use the rest of the poetry for brief reference
- Think creatively - apply what you know to the question before you

### **How to answer Section B**

- Write cogently - make each sentence develop your answer
- Always keep the question in mind
- Use frequent brief quotations and/or accurate references to the poetry
- Consider each section of the question fully

### **Do not ...**

- Give an account of the poem or poems
- Make general unsupported assertions
- Ignore the text or insert long extracts
- Spend too much time on one aspect of the question
- Spend time on the context at the expense of the poetry
- Off-load irrelevant background material
- Write down all you have learnt in the hope that something will be relevant
- Write on a different question

## **Summary**

### **Examiners' pet hates**

These may seem trivial to you – but they are also easy to avoid, so why not remember them and make your marker a little bit happier? If your writing is hard to read, work at it – ask for help (don't be proud: it's too important), make it larger, use alternate lines, use a better pen – anything to avoid your carefully chosen words being wasted because nobody can read them!

- Not putting the question number on the cover (or even beside the answer)
- Bad handwriting – it really matters if the examiner can't make sense of your work!
- Careless expression, slang
- 'Negative/positive' and other simplifications
- Treating literature as soap opera (for example, this comment on *Othello*: 'Bianca shouted at Cassio for him not ringing her.')

### **It's as easy as A B C!**

**A**nswer the question

**B**ase it on the text

**C**lear, coherent and cogent in your writing

We wish you success in your examinations!