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English Literature

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Features of tragedy



Narrative sequence of Macbeth

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Feature	Description
Anagnorisis	A group of characters who narrate the play.
Peripeteia	Mental blindness.
Ate	An event that sets the tragedy to begin.
Hamartia	The revelation of a fact not previously known.
Chorus	A satisfactory ending that restores the order of society.
Complicating action	An action that has an outcome that is the opposite of the intention.
Catharsis	The protagonist's fatal flaw.
Hubris	The protagonist's overbearing arrogance

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Feature	In Macbeth
Anagnorisis	<p>In V.viii Macduff uses an imperative to tell Macbeth to 'Despair thy charm!' and that he was 'untimely ripped' from his 'mother's womb'. Ironically, given his association with evil, Macbeth cries 'curs'd be the tongue that tells me so, for it hath cow'd my better part of man.' The visceral violence of the imagery in Macduff's declarative echoes both Lady Macbeth's observations on motherhood and the killing of Macduff's family. It is this point of anagnorisis that forces Macbeth to confront the delusion he has been clinging onto as the equivocation of each of the witches' prophecies has been revealed. This point of the play serves then as the final point in the tragic decline of Macbeth: he had previously lost his reputation, honour, wife, and titles, now, in a cyclical reference to I.ii, Macbeth has lost his courage. His head was, to a Jacobean audience's view, metaphorically lost in I.iii when the witches' predictions entered it; it is physically lost in an extra-diegetic decapitation at the end of this scene.</p>
Peripeteia	<p>In IV.i. Macbeth says he'll 'make assurance double sure' by having Macduff and his family killed so that he can't harm Macbeth. This generates peripeteia as it is this failed attempt of Macduff's life that motivates him to kill Macbeth.</p>
Ate	<p>Banquo suggests, "to win us to our harm, / The instruments of darkness tell us truths only to betray us in the end"; Macbeth says that "this supernatural soliciting cannot be ill, cannot be good." Shakespeare presents Macbeth as regarding the witches as being paradoxically both good and bad for him. His lack of clarity on where witches sit in the chain of being and outside god's kingdom is exposed by Banquo's noble certainty and demonstrates not just Macbeth's ate, but also a religious certainty that James I would have approved of in early 17th century England.</p>

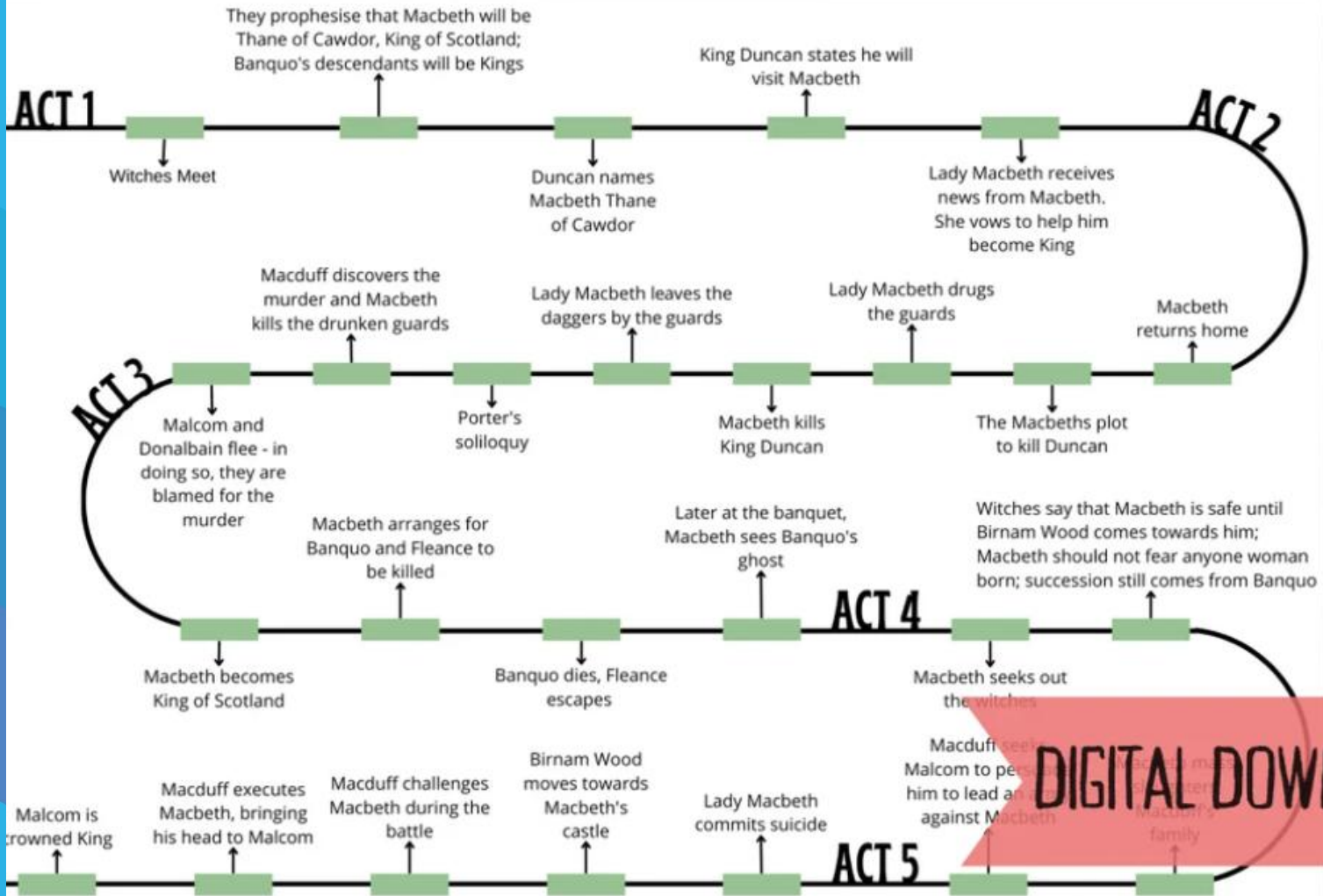
Hamartia	Macbeth's hamartia can be argued to be a range of aspects of his personality - or perhaps a composite of these. A traditional interpretation highlights his greed and ambition outside of the restrictions of the chain of being; one could argue that the love he has for his wife also subverts gender normative behaviour in Renaissance England in that he values her above his religious conscience and so this could be his hamartia; perhaps also his delusional hubris both that he could successfully be king and escape retribution for regicide could be considered.
Chorus	The witches are a close approximation of a chorus both outlining sequence ("By the pricking of my thumb, something wicked this way comes") but also enigmatically alluding to the thematic conflict in the play ("Lesser than Macbeth but greater").
Complicating action	This could be when the witches first tempt Macbeth in I.iii., it could be Lady Macbeth manipulating him in I.vii, but the point of no return is the extra-diegetic regicide of Duncan between II.i and II.ii.
Catharsis	Macbeth's death resolves the issues of the play and is just punishment delivered in revenge by MacDuff. His decapitation ('behold where stands. The usurper's curs'd head'), provides a cyclical reference to the death of the traitor Macdonwald in I.ii. The anagnorisis described above completes the cathartic end of the play.
Hubris	Macbeth's ate is not only a symptom of his hubris, it is perhaps a cause of it. At the start of V.v. Macbeth uses a hubristic imperative as demands 'Hand our banners on the outward walls!' in an effort to demonstrate his nonchalance regarding the threat of Malcolm and the English. His hubris is quickly eroded though and he demonstrates a range of emotions through V.v. culminating in the almost nihilistic impotence of the imperatives, "Blow wind! Come wrack! At least we'll die with harness on our back."

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DIGITAL DOWN

- Lancelot Andrews (a bishop and scholar and contemporary of Shakespeare) described the people involved in the failed plot to blow up parliament in the following way: ""Be they fair or foul, glad or sad (as the poet calleth Him) the great Diespiter, 'the Father of days' hath made them both." Shakespeare echoes these words in the witches' speech from A1 S1.
- The play was performed in 1606, two years after James I ascended to the throne (he is supposed to be a descendent of Banquo and so Banquo is portrayed as a noble character).
- James I published a book called 'Demonology' that explored witchcraft.
- James I's wife (Princess Anne of Denmark)'s ship nearly sank due to a storm when sailing to Edinburgh to meet James. He executed 30 women in Berwick who he accused of making the storm due to witchcraft. In I.iii the witches plot to make a ship 'tempest tossed'.
- The porter references the Jesuit plotter 'Father Garnet when he says the equivocator 'could not equivocate to heaven' (II.iii)
- 'Look the the innocent flower but be the serpent under it' (I.v) is an allusion to the medal the Protestant Dutch struck to celebrate the discovery of the Catholic gunpowder plot.
- The 'two-fold balls and treble scepters' Macbeth sees in the 'glass' (IV.i) reference James I being king of England and Scotland (Wales only gets a scepter for being a principality and not a kingdom).

Poems - 'Power and Conflict': Quick Revision videos

'Remains' by Simon
Armitage

'Exposure' by Wilfred
Owen

'War Photographer'
by
Carol Ann Duffy

'Bayonet Charge' by
Ted Hughes

'Poppies'
by Jane Weir

'Kamikaze' by Beatrice
Garland

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Poems - 'Power and Conflict': Quick Revision videos

'Charge of the Light
Brigade'
by Tennyson

'Ozymandias' by Percy
Shelley

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'Storm on the Island'
by Seamus Heaney

Extract from 'The
Prelude'
By William Wordsworth

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'My Last Duchess'
by Robert Browning

'London' by William
Blake

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'Tissue'

By Imtiaz Dharker

"Checking Out me
History'

By John Agard

'The Emigree'

By Carol Rumens



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.Copies of
the poems
and areas to
focus on.

.Copies of the
poems and
tasks to
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around each
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A Christmas Carol

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Structure

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The novella is set out in five Staves. This is an unusual structure that mimics the way a musical piece is put together. The Staves follow the action of the story with the first stave setting the scene, the middle stave showing the turning point for Scrooge and the final stave concluding the story by presenting him as a changed man.

Carols and the five staves

Carols are songs that are popular at Christmas time and usually deal with stories of Christ's birth or with themes associated with the festive season. Some carols focus on joy and the spirit of giving to others.

The structure of Dickens's novella uses a similar structure to a song to present a moral tale of transformation.

Three ghosts

The structure of the three ghosts showing the past, present and future appeals to readers on many levels. The number three is significant in fairy stories, religious tales and in traditional myths and legends. Characters are often faced with three choices, granted three wishes, or given three opportunities to change. Scrooge is shown his past, the present and a possible future and then finally finds the willingness to transform.

- the structure links to the theme of Christmas by reflecting the shape of a typical carol
- it has a clear beginning, middle and end through which we see a character's transformation
- the structure of three ghosts, showing the past, present and future, appeals to readers
- Scrooge's redemption in the final stave leaves the reader with a sense of both completion and possibility

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	How?	Why?	Effect?
Clear narrative voice	Dickens uses a narrative voice that offers opinions on the characters. For example 'Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge!'	The narrative voice is entertaining and instructs the reader how to feel about Scrooge.	We trust the narrator and know instantly that Scrooge is a man who is miserly and unpleasant.
Simile	When Dickens first presents Scrooge he describes him as 'Hard and sharp as flint'.	The simile likens the character to something that the reader can recognise.	We see that Scrooge is tough and unbreakable.
Dialogue	Dickens reveals the characters through the things they say. Scrooge famously uses the words 'Bah!' and 'Humbug!' in response to Christmas wishes.	The simple words are memorable and show that Scrooge is dismissive about Christmas.	Scrooge's determination to disengage with the spirit of Christmas shows him to be bad-tempered.
Personification	When Dickens describes Scrooge's childhood, he uses personification to emphasise how 'merry' the sound of the young boys is by saying 'the crisp air laughed to hear it!'	The sound of the boys playing and shouting is so delightful that even the 'air' is laughing.	The effect of this personification is to show how everything is affected by the good nature of the children. This contrasts with Scrooge's adult self.
Metaphor	The children 'Ignorance' and 'Want' are used to represent all the poor children in society: 'They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish'.	The children under the Ghost of Christmas Present's cloak are a metaphor showing the effects of greed and miserliness.	The reader, like Scrooge, feels pity for these 'ragged' children and this extends to a sense of responsibility for all the poor and homeless children in society.

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Language Structure Form	Symbolism The presentation of an object or image that represents something else	Colloquial The language of speech. Usually much more informal and chatty.	Verbs Words that describes an action, state or occurrence. They can create a sense of pace.	Abstract nouns Words that name things that are not concrete. The senses cannot detect an abstract noun, e.g. love, hate, fear.	Synecdoche A figure of speech in which a part is substituted for the whole, eg. "lend me a hand".	Imagery Visually descriptive or figurative language to create a picture for the reader	Simile A comparison of two things, using the words 'like' or 'as'. E.g. As fast as lightning.	Personification Giving an object human or animal qualities	Metaphor A comparison of two things by saying one thing is / was the other	Euphemism A mild expression used to replace something more offensive, rude or sexual	Onomatopoeia A word whose sound reflects its meaning. E.g. bang, pop, crash.	Semantic field When a group of words are linked by their similar connotations.
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Ode
A poem that is serious and thoughtful in tone and has a precise, formal structure

Elegy
A poem of serious reflection, typically a lament for the dead

Free verse
Poetry without formal meter or rhyme patterns

Sonnet
A particular type of poem with 14 lines and a formal rhyme scheme. Often associated with love.

Caesura
A pause in the middle of a line of poetry or prose

Refrain
A phrase, line or group of words repeated throughout a poem

The exam itself

What to expect:
1 hour
2 questions
AO1 and AO2
2 poems linked by a theme

Question 1 (15 marks)
Write about Poem A and its effect on you.

Question 2 (25 marks)
Compare Poem A and Poem B.

You are advised to consider:

- what the poem is about and how it is organised;
- the ideas the poet may have wanted us to think about;
- the poet's choice of words, phrases and images and the effects they create;
- how you respond to the poem.

Approaches to the exam

<p>Read the questions carefully and find the linking theme 3 minutes</p> <p>Read both Poem A and Poem B and note 1st Impressions 2 minutes</p> <p>Read Poem A and annotate, ready for the question 5 minutes</p> <p>Read and annotate Poem B and make links to Poem A 5 minutes</p> <p>Write answer to Question 1 15-20 minutes</p> <p>Write answer to Question 2 25-30 minutes</p> <p>Check answers. 2 minutes.</p>	<p>Read the questions carefully and find the linking theme 3 minutes</p> <p>Read both Poem A and Poem B and note 1st Impressions 2 minutes</p> <p>Read Poem A and annotate, ready for the question 5 minutes</p> <p>Write answer to Question 1 15-20 minutes</p> <p>Read and annotate Poem B and make links to Poem A 5 minutes</p> <p>Write answer to Question 2 25-30 minutes</p> <p>Check answers. 2 minutes.</p>
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Describing atmosphere, mood, and tone.

<p>Happy: Joyful Interesting Proud Accepting Powerful Peaceful Intimate Optimistic Inspiring Open Playful Sensitive Hopeful Loving Provocative Courageous Fulfilling Respecting Confident Important Inquisitive Amusing Ecstatic Liberating</p>	<p>Surprise: Startling Confusing Amazing Exciting Energetic Eager Awesome Astonishing Perplexing Disillusioning Disarming Shocking Alienated Bewildering Mystifying Unsettling Astounding Impressive Alarming Aghast Stunning</p>	<p>Fear: Humiliating Hopeless Submissive Insecure Anxious Scary Terrifying Frightening Worrying Inadequate Inferior Worthless Insignificant Inadequate Alienated Disrespectful Ridiculing Unsettling Disconcerting Daunting Startling Alarming Formidable Overwhelming Tense</p>	<p>Anger: Hurtful Threatening Hateful Maddening Aggressive Frustrated Distant Critical Sarcastic Scornful Suspicious Withdrawn Irritating Infuriating Hostile Provocative Enraging Furious Jealous Insecure Devastating Embarrassing</p>	<p>Disgust: Disapproving Disappointing Awful Avoidable Hesitating Aversion Detestable Revulsive Repulsive Repugnant Loathsome Judgemental Distasteful Repugnant Aversive Odious Nauseating Turbulent</p>	<p>Sad: Guilty Abandoned Despairing Depressing Lonely Bored Indifferent Apathetic Isolated Abandoned Empty Vulnerable Powerless Victimizing Ignorant Shameful Remorseful Sorrowful Miserable Melancholic Wretched Desolate Tragic Harrowing</p>
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Discourse markers and comparative vocabulary

Initially	Furthermore	Similarly	Like	Whereas	Unlike
In addition	Subsequently	Equally	In the same way	On the other hand	However
Moreover	Consequently	Likewise	Also	Instead of	Conversely
Additionally	Ultimately	As with	Both	Alternatively	Although
				Otherwise	In contrast



If you can address the following questions in your answers, you will have covered everything

Question
Possible sentence frame

How does the title communicate ideas linked to the question?
The theme of _____ can be explored immediately through an interpretation of the title, as...
How does the use of language in the opening of the poem link to the question?
By introducing the idea of _____ through the quotation "_____", the writer is...
What tone is created at the start of the poem?
Initially, the poet establishes a tone of _____ through their use of _____ in order to...
How are the ideas introduced at the start of the poem developed in the middle section? Which techniques are used here?
As the poem progresses, the theme of _____ is explored through the writer's use of...
Is the poem structured in order to achieve a particular effect? How are ideas shifting between stanzas?
The poet effectively manipulates the structure of the poem, in order to explore the idea of _____, through their use of...
Is there rhyme? What words are linked for emphasis? If so, how are they not, why not?
It can be interpreted that the _____ rhyme scheme has been used in order to highlight...
Can you identify the form of the poem? If so, how does this link with the main ideas expressed?
The poem's form, that of a _____, links to the theme / idea of _____ because...
Is there a change in tone / attitude by the end of the poem?
The poet's decision to shift the tone from _____ to _____ towards the end of the poem, can be interpreted to represent...
What does the last line / word of the poem suggest about the main idea? Can you link it back to the start?
By closing the poem with the quotation "_____", the writer is hoping to leave the audience with a sense of...
What do you think the poet is trying to communicate in the poem? How should the reader feel / what should they think at the end?
Throughout the poem, the poet attempts to communicate the idea of _____, in order to make the reader consider...

Comparative analysis method

You must start your comparison with an overview of how both poems explore a similar theme. This doesn't need to be too long, but it will shape the direction of your essay. For example:
Although both poems explore the idea of _____, they do so in contrasting ways. Poem A focuses more on _____, whereas Poem B...
As you will have already written about Poem A, you would not be expected to repeat all of your analysis. Therefore, one option is to focus more on Poem B. You can analyse Poem B in a similar manner to your answer to Poem A but make links to Poem A at each separate point. This might read like:
Poem B explores the theme of _____ through their use of _____. This is done in order to _____ Similarly, Poem A also uses _____ however in this instance it creates an alternative impression of...
Your comparisons shouldn't be completely random and should be linked in some way. For example, both poems may use the same technique but for a different effect or they might be establishing the same tone through differing methods.
You should conclude with an evaluative statement that recognises the merits of both poems but ultimately expresses a preference for one's exploration of the theme.

Hints and tips

Read all of the information provided. It will give you a clue about the main theme of the poems.
Don't panic! If you don't understand a poem, read it carefully and break it down into manageable chunks.
Focus on the words and phrases that you understand, rather than those that you don't.
Focus on the poet's intention and the effect on the reader.
Don't just feature spot / label techniques. Always consider what effect a technique has.
Always use evidence and quotations. Remember quotation marks.
Take your time to plan your answers and annotate the poems.
Read your answers carefully.

Metre The regular use of stressed and unstressed syllables in poetry	Stanza The blocks of lines into which a poem is divided (sometimes called 'verses')	Repetition Repeating a word or phrase for emphasis	Rhyme Corresponding sounds in words, usually at the end of lines (though not always)	Rhythm The 'movement' or beat (of a poem) created through meter and stress	Enjambment The continuation of a sentence over two lines (a run-on line)	Couplet A pair of successive rhymed lines	Dissonance Harsh sounding, unusual, or impolite words in poetry to create a disturbing effect.	Juxtaposition The placing of two contrasting things / ideas close together	Alliteration Repeating the same sound or letter in close proximity	Assonance Repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds in a sequence of words	Consonance The repetition of the same consonant two or more times in short succession,
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Oxymoron
A combination of seemingly opposing terms in the same idea

Paradox
A rhetorical figure embodying a seeming contradiction that is nonetheless true.

Synesthesia
A figure of speech in which one sense is described using terms from another.

Udotessteme
r for effect, often used for irony.

Plosive
The spitting sound that is produced by the 'p', 'b', 't', 'k', 'd' and 'g' sounds

Simile
The use of words with a hissing 's', 'sh' or 'z' sound

Technique	Definition	Effect	Example
Simile	<i>Comparing one thing to another, normally using "like" or "as...as...".</i>	Comparison can highlight certain themes or moods; emphasises similarities between ideas.	<i>Fishing boats strung out like bunting on a green-blue translucent sea.</i>
Metaphor	<i>Applying one thing to another in a non-literal way, normally using "it is...".</i>	More forceful in its comparison – more powerful highlighting of themes or ideas.	<i>Bandage up me eye with me own history.</i>
Personification	<i>Giving an inanimate object/thing human attributes.</i>	Gives power, influence or imminence (presence) to an object/thing.	<i>In the merciless iced winds that knife us...</i>
Alliteration	<i>Repetition of the same letter/sound with adjacent or closely connected words.</i>	Emphasises particular sounds to reflect themes/objects/moods within texts.	<i>And wrinkled lip, and sneer of <u>c</u>old <u>c</u>ommand.</i>
Sibilance	<i>Repetition of the "s" sound with adjacent or closely connected words.</i>	Emphasises softer, whispering tones in the text, or mimicking an object (wind, bullets etc.)	<i><u>S</u>udden <u>s</u>uccessive flights of bullets <u>s</u>treak the <u>s</u>ilence.</i>
Onomatopoeia	<i>A word of which its name is also associated with its sound.</i>	Emphasis on sudden sounds, mimicking objects/noises within the poem, vivid imagery.	<i>Crash, thud, bang, crack</i>
Repetition	<i>Repeating words/ideas across a text.</i>	Draws attention to and highlights importance of a theme/idea within text.	<i>Cannon to the right of them, cannon to the left of them, cannon behind them.</i>
Juxtaposition/ Oxymoron	<i>Contrasting opposite ideas/concepts across a text/with two words next to one another.</i>	Contrasts whilst also comparing two opposites, subverts expectations/norms.	<i>And blights with plagues the <u>marriage</u> <u>hearse</u>. (Oxymoron)</i>
Rhyme	<i>Correspondence between sounds of words, normally at ends of lines in poems.</i>	Reflects patterns/routines/rhythms within the text; creates emphasis on certain sounds.	<i>Theirs not to make <u>reply</u>, theirs but to do and <u>die</u>.</i>
Enjambment	<i>The continuation of a sentence without punctuation past a line/stanza.</i>	Reflects ideas in the text relating to freedom, flowing freely or builds pace.	<i>I found / a little boat tied to a willow tree / within a rocky cove</i>
Caesura/ End-stopped line	<i>The use of punctuation/pauses within a line of poetry/at the end of a line</i>	Reflects ideas in the text relating to entrapment, pauses or rigidity.	<i>In every voice, in every ban, the mind-forged manacles I hear...</i>
Half-rhyme	<i>When two words have similar vowel/consonants but are not perfect rhymes so it is incomplete.</i>	Creates unnerving, fractured effect; reflecting broken/imperfect ideas within the text.	<i>A stare, <u>snow-dazed</u> / deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, <u>sun-dozed</u>.</i>

Question: In 'Scaffolding', how does the poet present the speaker's feelings about their relationship?

Scaffolding

Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;

Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.

And yet all this comes down when the job's done
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.

So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be
Old bridges breaking between you and me

Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall
Confident that we have built our wall.

Seamus Heaney

Example answer:

In "Scaffolding," Seamus Heaney uses the metaphor of building construction to explore the speaker's feelings about their relationship. The poem focuses on the "scaffolding" – the temporary supports that help them build a strong and lasting connection.

The speaker recognizes the importance of these temporary supports, acknowledging that they are crucial for the relationship to progress: "Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points." This highlights the need for carefulness and attention to detail in their interactions, suggesting a conscious effort to maintain stability and avoid unnecessary friction.

However, the speaker also expresses a degree of apprehension about the eventual removal of the scaffolding: "And yet all this comes down when the job's done." This line reveals a sense of uncertainty and a fear of vulnerability. The speaker wonders if the relationship will be strong enough to stand on its own without the temporary supports, highlighting a natural anxiety about the transition to a more independent phase.

Despite these anxieties, the poem ultimately conveys a sense of optimism and appreciation for the strength of their bond. The image of "walls of sure and solid stone" suggests that a strong foundation has been built, implying that the relationship has the resilience to withstand the challenges that lie ahead.

In conclusion, "Scaffolding" presents a nuanced portrayal of the speaker's feelings about their relationship, acknowledging both the importance of temporary support and the anxieties associated with its eventual removal.

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Responsibility

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Responsibility

	How does Priestley show this?	Evidence	Analysis
Sheila feels socially responsible	Sheila is shocked when she learns that she had a part to play in Eva's death.	<i>"All right Gerald, you needn't look at me like that. At least I'm trying to tell the truth. I expect you've done things you're ashamed of too."</i>	Sheila takes responsibility for her actions and tells the truth. Gerald is being judgemental of her even though he has not yet taken responsibility for his own actions.
Mr Birling does not feel socially responsible	Mr Birling refuses to take any responsibility for Eva Smith's death.	<i>"If we were all responsible for everything that happened to everybody we'd had anything to do with, it would be very awkward, wouldn't it?"</i>	Mr Birling dismisses the idea that we should be responsible for each other, suggesting that such a situation would be 'awkward'.
Eric feels socially responsible	Eric shows that he takes responsibility for his actions in the final act of the play.	<i>"I don't see much nonsense about it when a girl goes and kills herself. You lot may be letting yourselves out nicely, but I can't. Nor can mother. We did her in all right."</i>	Eric clearly shows that he has a sense of social responsibility. Whilst Gerald and Eric's parents are enjoying being in the clear, Eric still takes the matter of Eva's death very seriously. He is even brave enough to tell his mother that she should feel responsible too.
Mrs Birling does not feel socially responsible	Sybil Birling will not take any responsibility for the death of Eva Smith even after she has been questioned by the Inspector.	<i>"I should think not. Eric, I'm absolutely ashamed of you."</i>	In telling Eric that she is ashamed of him she shows that she has learned nothing from the Inspector's investigation. The audience would know that she is in no position to be questioning the behaviour of anyone else given her own treatment of Eva Smith and lack of social responsibility.
The Inspector's lessons	When the Inspector is questioning the Birlings.	<i>"It's better to ask for the earth than to take it."</i>	Here the Inspector is suggesting that it is socially irresponsible to be greedy and 'take' things without permission. This is a

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Capitalism Vs Socialism

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What is Capitalism?

Capitalism is an **economic system** where the **factors of production** (capital goods, natural resources, and entrepreneurship, the skill of setting up businesses) are owned and controlled by **private groups or individuals**. People who **control** these factors set up and own **companies**. Individuals own their labour (they get paid for it).

One motto of Capitalism is “**Greed is good**”. Business owners want to keep their **sale prices low to attract customers** and **compete** with others, so their production costs need to be as low as possible to increase profit. In a Capitalist society, people are **rewarded according to their wealth, not contribution**.

What is Socialism?

On the other hand, Socialism is where the **factors of production** are owned **equally by everyone in society**. Socialism considers the resources' **usefulness** to people. For example, a Socialist government would **provide services** such as **education** and **health care**. People in society are **rewarded by how much they contribute**. Socialism also ensures that those who can't contribute to production, such as the elderly, are **still cared for**. There are aspects of socialism within British society: our NHS, free education and benefits system are examples.

Socialism was initially designed in the nineteenth century to **improve the standard of living for the working class**. Poverty is not possible in an ideal Socialist society because everyone has **equal access** to profits and resources such as health care. Everyone owns the means of production, so they **cannot be exploited for their labour** - everyone contributes and everyone benefits.



<https://images.app.goo.gl/R8jh8KeRePPdGQXB9>

AN INSPECTOR CALLS

SOCIAL CLASS

KEY QUOTES AND ANALYSIS



ES
VERT
NCE
LEGE

BACK TO
THEMES AND
MOTIFS

AN INSPECTOR CALLS

THEMES: GENDER ROLES - QUOTATIONS

WOMEN
RIGHTS
BY B. WACKFORD
M.C. HANFORD

WOMEN
RIGHTS
BY B. WACKFORD
M.C. HANFORD

ES
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CE
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BACK TO
THEMES AND
MOTIFS

Structure

Also see: [Structure & Chronology - English Lit: AQA GCSE An Inspector Calls](#)

BACK TO
INSPECTOR
CALLS MENU

Plot Summary (AO1)

Act 1

The Birling family (Arthur, Sybil, Sheila and Eric) and Gerald Croft, are having a meal to celebrate the engagement of Sheila and Gerald.

Arthur Birling makes a toast. In it, he informs the younger members of the family that their future looks bright and that it is important to look after themselves. Priestley makes use of dramatic irony to undermine Arthur Birling – Birling says there won't be a war and talks about the success of the Titanic.

Just as Mr. Birling says, "a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own", the doorbell rings. Shortly after, the maid shows Inspector Goole into the room.

The Inspector explains that a young woman has died after drinking bleach. He questions Mr. Birling, who admits to having her sacked after she was involved in a strike at the factory. The Inspector then questions Sheila, who admits to having the girl sacked from Milwards because she was jealous that the girl looked better in the dress she liked than she did.

Act 2

The Inspector's attention falls on Gerald. When questioned, he admits that he knew the girl. After meeting her at the Palace Music Hall in Brumley, Gerald set her up in the flat of a friend and they became lovers. After a happy period, it came to an end and Eva / Daisy left Brumley and went to the seaside. After the questioning, Gerald goes for a walk.

The Inspector questions Mrs. Birling next. She admits that the girl came to her charitable organisation and asked for help, as she was pregnant and could not ask the father for money. Mrs. Birling believes the girl is putting on graces and is offended that she uses the name "Mrs. Birling". She therefore persuades the other members of the charity to refuse her request. Mrs. Birling is defiant and refuses to accept she did anything wrong. She tells the Inspector that the father of the child is to blame and it is the Inspector's "duty" to arrest him.

Instead of leaving as Mrs. Birling hoped, the Inspector waits to "do his duty."

Act 3

Eric returns to the house and into the firing line. He knows that his secret is already out but does explain what happened – he had an affair with the girl and she fell pregnant. He offered to marry her but she declined, knowing that he didn't love her. Eric gave her money to begin with, which he stole from his father's business. When she realised the money was stolen, she refused to take any more.

The Birling family appear to have learnt their lesson and seem sorry for what they have done. The Inspector tells them that we all have to look after each other and that there are plenty of other people in the world like Eva Smith. He then leaves.

Shortly after, Gerald Croft returns from his walk. He brings into doubt the identity of the Inspector (having spoken to a policeman who has never heard of him) and even explains that it is possible that Eva Smith never existed.

Quickly convinced by Gerald's arguments, Mr. and Mrs. Birling decide that it was a joke and laugh the whole thing off. They have not really learnt anything.

Eric and Sheila are not so easily swayed. They argue with their parents that this doesn't change anything – they are still responsible for the terrible things they did.

The telephone rings – it is for Mr. Birling. A young woman has just died at the infirmary and a police inspector is on his way to the house. The play ends on this chilling note, leaving both the audience and the Birlings in suspense.

Context

1901- Queen Victoria died, King Edward VII, her son, became king. The era changed from the Victorian era and became the Edwardian era.

April 15th 1912- the Titanic sank. Approximately 1,500 people died.

1918- Germany surrenders and WW1 ends. Approximately 8 million lost their lives.

1930s- America is bankrupted which effects the rest of the world. It was named the Great Depression. Adolf Hitler becomes the Fuhrer (dictator) of Germany.

1945- Germany surrenders and WW2 ends. 60 million people were killed including Holocaust victims, soldiers and civilians. This was 2.5% of the world's population.

1910- King Edward VII died and his son, King George V, took the throne.

1914- WW1 broke out.

1920s- A time of prosperity.

1939- WW2 broke out.

Spring 1912- The play is set two weeks before the Titanic sank and two years before WW1 broke out. During this period there was a very strict social hierarchy where the rich and the poor were divided. The rich generally did not care about the poor. The capitalists took charge of the country; there was no welfare system so this was a laissez-faire society.

During WW1 no matter how rich or poor young men were they were forced to conscript to the armed forces and fight the Germans. What do you suppose the implication would be for the characters in the play?

1918- Women were given the vote and although men were still considered the superior gender this was a monumental step for women's rights.

1916- Priestley served during WW1 and was wounded in 1916 by mortar fire. His experiences during the war, like so many other soldiers, changed his perception of society.

1945- 'An Inspector Calls' was published during a time when Britain was in great disorder. People had learnt to 'pull together' during this time they had to take care of one another and this is an important moral message in the play.

BACK TO
INSPECTOR
CALLS MENU

Language in an Inspector Calls



JAMES
CALVERT
SPENCE
COLLEGE

BACK TO
INSPECTOR
CALLS MENU

Character and
plot quiz



JAMES
CALVERT
SPENCE
COLLEGE

BACK TO
INSPECTOR
CALLS MENU

Character and quote matching activity



JAMES
CALVERT
SPENCE
COLLEGE

BACK TO
INSPECTOR
CALLS MENU

Quiz

BACK TO
INSPECTOR
CALLS MENU



JAMES
CALVERT
SPENCE
COLLEGE

BACK TO
MAIN MENU