



Cambridge O Level Literature in English 2010

The aim of this video is to give you and your learners a breakdown of how Assessment Objective 4 is assessed. However, remember that for each candidate answer, all four assessment objectives are considered by the examiner. The best candidate responses will consider all four when answering a question.

Prose Assessment Objective 4

AO4: Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts.

Notes

A 'sensitive personal response'.

You need to have a secure and considered knowledge and understanding of the text, and the writer's intended meanings and messages.

Assessment Objective 4 requires you to reflect on and incorporate the ideas you have expressed in relation to Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

Assessment Objective 4 states that you must respond in a 'personal' way. However, this does not mean that you should freely express any ideas, opinions or value judgements that you have about the text and the writer.

You should definitely avoid this when answering the exam question.

You should **not** comment on:

- how well a writer has written a text
- how well they have conveyed a theme
- how they could have improved the text
- how they should have ended the novel
- why we thought the text was '*boring*'.

Comments that include ideas like this are just a waste of words and time.

So, how should you structure and communicate an effective and sensitive personal response that fulfils Assessment Objective 4?

Think back to what you have considered about AO1, AO2 and AO3.

- What should you look out for when selecting your quotations?
- What are the key things to respond to when you are developing explanations of quotations (AO1 and AO2)?
- What aspects of the text did you identify that you had to respond to when developing your analysis of quotations?

You may wish to pause the video here to think about this.

Here are some lists to remind you of what we identified in your responses to Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

How to select quotations

How does the quotation help to explain something about:

Notes

character, events, themes, setting and/or atmosphere in relation to the question?

Aspects of the text to focus on when explaining the meaning and context of our quotations:

- Narrative/events
- How characters think and behave
- Relationships between characters
- Themes
- Settings
- Sense of atmosphere

Language devices to focus on when analysing how the reader is made to feel about events, characters, themes and settings:

- Dramatic irony
- Narrative style
- Red herrings
- Foreshadowing
- Symbolism
- Allegory
- Imagery
- Flashback

Now that you have reminded yourself about what you must do to cover Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 3, what do you think the areas of our 'sensitive personal response' should be? What aspects of the text do you respond to in order to express your Assessment Objective 4 personal response?

So, what have we concluded?

Hopefully, this list reflects some of the focus of your discussions:

- Character behaviour and actions
- Character relationships
- Themes
- Settings
- Events
- Atmosphere

These are the aspects of the text that you are most concerned about in relation to all of our assessment objectives.

- You should select quotations that are to do with these things (AO1).
- You should develop explanations about these things (AO1 and AO2).
- You should analyse how the writer's use of language and structure makes the reader feel about these things (AO3).

Notes

What constitutes a sensitive personal response is actually your **whole response**:

- It is your response to the writer's ideas and messages.
- It is your response to how the writer has created effects through his/her (use of) language devices and structure devices.
- It is how you develop your response and answer the essay question.

Context matters!!! Don't be the camera, see the whole picture!

Respond to what you know about the writer's intended meanings and messages.

It is very important to remember that you must show an appreciation and evaluation of the writer's intended meanings in your essay responses. You must not just make up your own ideas and apply them to the text.

Every explanation or point of analysis that you offer should be identifiable in the quotation you have used. All of your ideas must be linked to the text, and evidenced there. Do not make things up. Rely on what you have learnt in lessons about the meanings of the text and the writer's messages.

Remember to link your ideas to the focus of the essay question.

Let's look at the conclusion of your essay.

What is the purpose of a conclusion?

To begin with, your conclusions should not simply be a repetition of the ideas you have presented in the main body of your essay.

You can use your conclusion to express an explicit 'sensitive personal response' to the key messages and themes conveyed in the passage (or the whole text) that we are analysing.

You must develop a personal response in relation to one or more of the things on this list:

- Character behaviour and actions
- Character relationships
- Themes
- Settings
- Events
- Atmosphere

Try to use your personal response in your conclusion to relate the ideas of the text to your own personal experiences and how you understand such messages in relation to how you see the world.

This will help show ownership of the writer's messages and themes and satisfy AO4 in an effective way.

Let's look at an example of a conclusion.

In conclusion, Orwell conveys feelings of chaos and fear through Winston's observations of how hostile London is under Party rule. He emphasises the bleak weather and how the towering Party buildings and their slogans dominate the city and everyone's lives.

Notes

Orwell's ideas of a government watching and controlling its people's private lives through fear is becoming more and more real in today's world; especially after 9/11. For example, many governments now have laws that enable them to arrest and detain people without charge, and closely watch people's activity on social media. This makes the text haunting as it acts like a warning to us of what our world might become.

This is a response to the passage and essay question we looked at in our video on Assessment Objective 1 taken from George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Here is a reminder of the question that was attached to that passage-based question: **Explore how Orwell conveys feelings of chaos and fear in the following passage.**

Read this conclusion carefully. To what extent do you think it:

- works as a conclusion?
- satisfies Assessment Objective 4?
- satisfies the other assessment objectives?

Pause the video here to think about these things.

Here is why we think it is an effective conclusion:

- The first sentence summarises the sensitive personal response expressed in the main body of the essay. These two sentences also directly answer the essay question.
- The personal response in sentences 3, 4 and 5 identifies key themes of the passage that are relevant to the essay question.
- The personal response relates the key themes and the writer's messages to how the candidate views contemporary global events.
- The ideas in the candidate's personal response relate to the ideas in the essay question.

It could have been improved if it had been shorter.

Remember, in this paper you are not given marks for creating effects in your use of language. Instead, you gain marks for discussing the range of effects created by the writers' uses of language and structure.

Avoid repetition of ideas you expressed in the main body of your essay

Keep your personal opinion focused and related to the focus of the essay question.

Your conclusion should be 5–6 lines long in total.