

Key messages for Drama

Successful answers

- An awareness that texts are written to be performed onstage inform the most successful answers.
- Good answers look at the text from an audience perspective and comment on the author's intentions with regard to the audience and comment in detail on the dramatic impact created.
- In discursive questions, the most successful answers cover a range of material from the whole text, supporting points with quotation or very specific textual reference. The ability to integrate brief, well-selected reference to the text is a key discriminator as indicated in the Level Descriptors.
- Conclusions need to be more than a reiteration of points.
- The selection of the most relevant material and issues to be discussed is an important skill.

Unsuccessful answers

- Beginning a response with lengthy comments on the writer's life, works and times, giving plot summaries or listing the writer's techniques to be addressed, **is an unproductive way to start an essay**. Lengthy introductions of extra information, or plot summaries, before referring to the question, result in a loss of focus on the actual terms of the chosen question.
- In passage-based questions linear approaches which work through the passage, explaining what was happening, often fail to reach the end so key points are missed. To avoid this, it is helpful to write a sentence or two, referencing the question and giving a brief overview of the key points before going on to develop them in the main body of the essay.
- Stage directions inform an actor's performance, an audience is not a reader, so commenting on the punctuation in the stage directions rather than the tone and mood created, is unproductive.

Quotations

- Candidates who memorise direct quotations are likely to be better prepared to analyse the ways in which writers achieve their effects (AO3). However, these should be fully explored rather than remain inert or used to support a narrative approach.
- Beginning a paragraph with a reference or quotation rather than supporting a point does little to progress an argument effectively.
- Candidates are reminded not to refer to line numbers instead of quoting from the text.

Candidates should endeavour to write legibly and to avoid numerous crossings out which result in a loss of clarity in expression.