

Specimen question and mark scheme commentary

AS English Language and Literature Paper 2 (7706/2), Section A, Remembered places

This resource explains how the question in the specimen assessment materials for AS Paper 2, Section A, Remembered places, addresses the assessment objectives, with some suggestions as to how each task might be approached. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every point that could be made, but it provides teachers and students with some guidance that will support their work on this paper. In addition, this resource is designed to help teachers and students engage with the specimen mark scheme to understand how it will be applied by our examiners. This will be useful when preparing for examination. Furthermore, the information provided here will help teachers to create their own questions and mark schemes for use in the classroom.

Engaging with the question

Read Text A and Text B, printed below and on page [number inserted].

Compare and contrast how [the writer and speaker] in these extracts present Paris. You should refer to both extracts in your answer and consider:

- the language choices made and their likely effects
- the different audiences and purposes of the texts
- aspects of mode.

The students' classroom study of the *AQA Anthology: Paris* will have been focused on a 'detailed exploration of the ubiquitous nature of narrative and systematic study of the representation of place' (outlined in the Specification, pages 15-16). In studying, thinking and writing about the anthology prior to the examination, students will have considered:

- the ways in which writers and speakers present places, societies, people and events

- the metaphorical nature of representation: the ways that narrative itself can sometimes be seen as a personal journey for writers and speakers
- the influence of contextual factors such as time period, race, social class and gender on the content and focus of narratives
- the affordances and limitations of different media
- different generic conventions and different purposes for communicating ideas and viewpoints about travel, people and place
- how people and their relationships are realised through point of view, attitude, specific registers, physical descriptions, speech and thought.

The question itself will always remain the same for each examination series. The primary focus is on how the writers and/or speakers of the two extracts chosen from the *AQA Anthology: Paris* for the examination **present** Paris, and so students are being asked to call upon the knowledge outlined in the bullet points above to respond to this specific question on presentation in light of the extracts/texts chosen.

Although the questions remain constant, the combination of the two texts chosen will vary. Any two of the anthology texts could be picked for comparison with no combinations impossible. Shorter extracts from a whole text contained in the *AQA Anthology: Paris* will be selected. (The specimen paper indicates the approximate length of extracts chosen to form Texts A and B on Section A of the examination paper.)

The terms 'writer' and 'speaker' will be changed as appropriate for the mode of the texts selected.

The command words 'compare and contrast' mean that students should identify similarities and differences between the two texts that have been selected in each examination series from the *AQA Anthology: Paris*.

How the question addresses the Assessment Objectives

The AOs assessed in these questions are A01, A03 and A04 (A01 10 marks, A03 20 marks and A04 10 marks).

The question wording gives students clear direction to address the Assessment Objectives that are assessed in Section A of Paper 2. Specifically:

- A01 is pointed to through the direction to consider 'the language choices and their likely effects'

- A03 is pointed to through the second and third bullet points in asking students to consider ‘the different audiences and purposes of the texts’ and ‘aspects of mode’
- A04 is foregrounded in the wording of the question and the use of the command words ‘compare and contrast’. It is also signposted by the instruction to ‘refer to both extracts’ in the answer.

The weighting of the AOs is also signalled by the two bullet points focusing the students’ attention on A03, the dominant AO for this question.

How the Assessment Objectives apply to Section A

A01: Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression.

The three strands within each level are about:

Using terminology

Clearly in their response to this question students will need to use correct and relevant terminology for the concepts, methods and features they select in order to thoroughly compare and contrast how the writers and speakers in these extracts present Paris.

In responding to the texts on the specimen paper students could discuss accurately and precisely the use of third person pronouns ‘they’, ‘them’ to present the walkers as ‘others’ in **Text A**, or the use of the second person pronoun to directly address the viewer in **Text B**.

Applying concepts and methods

In order to compare and contrast (A04) how the writers and speakers in the given extracts present Paris, students will need to apply linguistic and literary concepts and methods as appropriate to illuminate the extracts. The examples they choose to consider will enable them to illustrate understanding of both linguistic and literary methods by drawing on the field of Stylistics. Students will be drawing on appropriate language levels (eg grammar).

For example, in responding to the texts on the specimen paper students could discuss in **Text A** the use of first person narrator and past tense to recount experience; negatively-oriented lexis to describe the walkers,

‘uncertain’, ‘huddled’ and representation of tourists as out of place in Paris. In **Text B** students could discuss the use of third person narrator, lexical choices made to influence the viewer and present Paris as attractive ‘grand boulevards’.

Expressing and presenting ideas

Students will need to use coherent written expression in their answer in order to efficiently compare and contrast how the writers and speakers in these extracts present Paris. Their ability to maintain an academic style and organise their ideas into topics and paragraphs is also being assessed.

A03: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received.

Through this question students will demonstrate understanding of the contextual factors influencing the production and reception of the texts in question. Clearly comparing and contrasting how the writers and speakers in these extracts present Paris will require consideration of the texts’ contexts of production and reception; students will be required to evaluate the different factors associated with mode and the use of particular genre conventions in the extracts.

For example in responding to the texts on the specimen paper, for **Text A** they might refer to the context of tourism or the conventions of the memoir, while for **Text B** they might comment on the likely situation of viewing and opportunity to view on a number of devices (eg tablet, smartphone, laptop).

A04: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods.

The key words in the question are ‘compare and contrast’ with these command words directing students to identify similarities and differences in how the writers and speakers in the two extracts present Paris. They are thus clearly invited to explore connections between the two texts.

In terms of their exploration being informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods, concepts could include ideas about how individual and societies are framed and represented, while relevant methods could include similarities or differences in aspects of grammar, lexis or phonetics in the language which is

used in the texts to present Paris. They are therefore being directed to make connections and comparisons by applying A01 (concepts and methods).

In exploring the connections between texts, students are also invited to draw upon aspects of mode, genre and other contextual factors (A03) to highlight similarities and differences.

For example in the specimen paper, students could make connections between **Text A** and **Text B** around:

- similarities and differences in likely readerships and situations of reading
- similarities and differences in purpose and genres of texts (Text A: a memoir, Text B: to inform but also to persuade – both to visit France and to buy more of the video company’s products)
- ways in which Paris is made to appear attractive
- distinction between own culture/society and Paris
- Paris as intriguing and worthy of narrative attention
- any other connections that are linked by narrative presentation and conventions

Engaging with the mark scheme

A01:

The mark scheme descriptor is:

This rewards students’ ability to apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study to literary and non-literary material. A01 also rewards the ability to maintain an academic style throughout the essay.

The mark scheme shows that A01 assesses three distinct stands:

- use of terminology
- selection of analysis at different/appropriate language levels
- expression and presentation of ideas.

Awarding at the different levels (1-5) for the *first strand* will be based on the level of accuracy and precision in using terminology and labelling features.

For the *second strand*, the selection of language levels relevantly to the texts (rather than any hierarchical judgements about the language levels themselves) and the quality of discussion of the patterns and effects of these is being awarded. In addition, this second strand also includes features (where relevant to the specific texts) that highlight **distinctive ways that places, societies, people and events** are represented so as to allow for the strand of A04 that focuses on **an analysis of the representation of place**.

The *third strand* of A01 rewards, at the higher levels, the ability to present ideas academically with good expression and development of ideas, as well as the overall structural organisation of the answer to respond to the question.

Indicative content for A01 includes likely/possible language features (at any analytical level) that students could comment on. In particular, those features which are foregrounded. In addition, reference is made to the following features where relevant so as to allow for the second strand of A04.

- the subjective nature of reconstruction
- different perspectives on places, people and societies depending on age, gender, class
- the ways that spaces and places are remembered and retold and reconstructed in narratives
- attitudes to culture and society
- the importance of journeys: physically and metaphorically
- the use of memory as a tool for representation and reconstruction

A03:

The mark scheme descriptor is:

This relates to students' ability to explore the significance and the influence of contextual factors on the production and reception offered by different genre and text types, and examine why writers and speakers choose to communicate using various forms.

The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:

- factors associated with mode
- the use of particular genre conventions
- the influence of contextual factors (production and reception).

Students' considerations of all these three contextual strands will help determine both the level they are awarded and where within that level they are placed. The balance of comments for each strand will depend on the texts themselves.

The three strands remain consistent in the bullet points throughout the different levels but the quality of the exploration will be measured through the key words – 'evaluate' and 'perceptive'(Level 5), 'explore' and 'clear' (Level 4), 'explain' and 'some'(Level 3), 'describe' and 'generalised' (Level 2) and 'identify' and 'little' (Level 1).

For this Assessment Objective, indicative content addresses all three of these bullet points, with balance depending on the text itself.

A04

The mark scheme descriptor is:

This relates to the students' ability to make connections between texts, exploring their similarities and differences in the light of how the writers and speakers present place.

The mark scheme shows that this assesses two distinct strands:

- making connections between texts, exploring their similarities and differences
- making connections, exploring similarities and differences in the context of an overarching focus on the representation of place.

The *first strand* calls upon the students' exploration of key/foregrounded language features (A01) and aspects of mode, genre, audience, purpose and context (A03).

The *second strand* calls upon the students' exploration any of the **aspects/areas of representation** identified for A01.

The mark scheme band descriptors also highlight the coverage of the texts. This is assessed in A04 as the comparative element requires a discussion of both extracts (as stated in the question).

Coverage of the texts is expected to be 'even' for Levels 4-5, while a slight imbalance is possible in Level 3 with the expectation of 'reasonably even' coverage. Where the texts are covered unevenly, Levels 1-2 can be awarded. This means in practice that where the students' focus is mainly on one text, although there might be a little discussion of the other, the maximum possible mark for A04 will be 4. Where one of the extracts is not discussed at all then a mark of 0 will be awarded as there will be no connections made between texts. An answer that offers two separate analyses of the extracts cannot be placed above Level 1 for A04.