A-level English Language and Literature

AQA 7707

Practice questions by text

Paris · The Handmaid’s Tale · Duffy · The Great Gatsby · A Streetcar Named Desire

Use your set texts and anthology. Answer the questions selected by your teacher. Marks are shown for each task.

Paris anthology

How speakers establish their knowledge of Paris

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section A: Remembered places

Use the complete printed anthology selections Personal Narrative: Zara and Visiting Paris (the conversation between Mike and Sophia). Use the written transcripts in AQA Anthology: Paris; no associated recording is required.

Comparison [40 marks]

Compare and contrast how the speakers in Personal Narrative: Zara and Visiting Paris establish their knowledge of Paris. Refer to both anthology texts in your answer.

Expectations and discoveries during a city visit

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section A: Remembered places

Use the complete anthology selections from Bill Bryson, Neither Here Nor There, and John Baxter, The Most Beautiful Walk in the World. Restrict close analysis to the versions printed in AQA Anthology: Paris.

Comparison [40 marks]

Compare and contrast how Bryson and Baxter shape readers’ expectations of what is worth noticing during a visit to Paris. Refer closely to both anthology selections.

Paris as an opportunity for personal change

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section A: Remembered places

Use the complete anthology selections from Nancy K. Miller, Breathless: An American Girl in Paris, and Jennifer Cox, Around the World in 80 Dates, as printed in AQA Anthology: Paris.

Comparison [40 marks]

Compare and contrast how Miller and Cox present the possibilities that visiting Paris offers an individual. Refer closely to both anthology selections.

The Handmaid’s Tale

Spaces that hold different histories

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section B: Imagined worlds

Chapter 1, in full: Offred’s recollection of the former gymnasium used as the Red Centre sleeping area.

Extract and whole-text analysis [35 marks]

Starting with Chapter 1, explore how Atwood presents places as carrying more than one history. In your answer, analyse the chapter and make relevant connections with other parts of the novel. Consider Offred’s viewpoint and how the dystopian world is constructed.

Private communication under restrictions

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section B: Imagined worlds

Chapter 9: the passage in which Offred recalls searching her room and discovers the scratched message inside the cupboard, continuing through her response to its unknown writer. Stop before Chapter 10.

Extract and whole-text analysis [35 marks]

Starting with the discovery of the cupboard inscription in Chapter 9, explore the significance of private communication in the novel. Analyse the specified passage and connect it with relevant moments elsewhere. Consider how Offred’s narrative voice shapes the reader’s understanding.

Loss of economic independence

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section B: Imagined worlds

Chapter 28: Offred’s account of the suspension of women’s access to money and the dismissal of women from work, including the reactions of Moira and Luke. Use the chapter’s remembered pre-Gilead episode, not its present-day framing.

Extract and whole-text analysis [35 marks]

Starting with the remembered loss of employment and access to money in Chapter 28, explore how Atwood presents changes in a person’s ability to act independently. Analyse the specified episode and make relevant connections with other parts of the novel. Consider narrative viewpoint and the construction of the dystopian society.

Carol Ann Duffy - Mean Time

Claims to closeness

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section C: Poetic voices

Use Valentine and one other poem from your prescribed Duffy selection.

Poetry analysis [25 marks]

Examine how Duffy presents voices that claim closeness to another person in Valentine and one other poem of your choice.

The desire for social approval

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section C: Poetic voices

Use The Captain of the 1964 Top of the Form Team and one other poem from your prescribed Duffy selection.

Poetry analysis [25 marks]

Examine how Duffy presents the influence of social approval on people’s views of themselves and others in The Captain of the 1964 Top of the Form Team and one other poem of your choice.

The limits of returning to a familiar place

Paper 1: Telling stories · Section C: Poetic voices

Use Never Go Back and one other poem from your prescribed Duffy selection.

Poetry analysis [25 marks]

Examine how Duffy presents the relationship between returning to a familiar place and feeling that one belongs in Never Go Back and one other poem of your choice.

The Great Gatsby

Owl Eyes’s account of the library

Paper 2: Exploring conflict · Section A: Writing about society and critical commentary

Chapter 3: Nick and Jordan’s encounter with Owl Eyes in Gatsby’s library, from their entry into the library through Owl Eyes’s comments on the books, before Nick and Jordan leave that room.

Re-creative writing [25 marks]

Recast this episode as an account Owl Eyes gives to another guest on the terrace a few minutes later. Write about 300 words. Present his response to the books, his impressions of Gatsby’s display of wealth, and the impression he wants to make on this listener. Keep the events consistent with the base passage; he cannot report Nick’s unspoken thoughts.

Critical commentary [30 marks]

Write a critical commentary of about 400 words explaining how you used language to shape the new account. Compare your choices with the base passage, and evaluate how the changes of viewpoint, audience and spoken situation reshape meanings.

Catherine’s account of the apartment party

Paper 2: Exploring conflict · Section A: Writing about society and critical commentary

Chapter 2: the apartment party, from Catherine’s arrival through the incident in which Tom strikes Myrtle. Exclude Nick’s later departure and subsequent events.

Re-creative writing [25 marks]

Recast this episode as an account Catherine gives to a close friend the following morning. Write about 300 words. Present the party as she experienced it, her attitude towards her sister Myrtle and Tom, and how she chooses to explain what happened. She may misunderstand events, but the recast must remain consistent with the base passage.

Critical commentary [30 marks]

Write a critical commentary of about 400 words explaining how you used language to shape the new account. Compare your choices with the base passage, and evaluate how the changes of viewpoint, audience and spoken situation reshape meanings.

Wolfsheim’s response to Nick’s request

Paper 2: Exploring conflict · Section A: Writing about society and critical commentary

Chapter 9: Nick’s visit to Meyer Wolfsheim’s office on the morning of Gatsby’s funeral, from Nick’s attempt to gain admission through Wolfsheim’s refusal to attend. Use only this encounter as the base passage.

Re-creative writing [25 marks]

Recast this encounter as an account Wolfsheim gives to a trusted business associate after Nick has left. Write about 300 words. Present how he views Nick’s request, how he represents his connection with Gatsby, and how he justifies his decision. Keep any additional details within the possibilities of the base passage.

Critical commentary [30 marks]

Write a critical commentary of about 400 words explaining how you used language to shape the new account. Compare your choices with the base passage, and evaluate how the changes of viewpoint, audience and spoken situation reshape meanings.

A Streetcar Named Desire

Acts of welcome and the control of domestic space

Paper 2: Exploring conflict · Section B: Dramatic encounters

Scene 1: Blanche’s arrival at Elysian Fields and her reception, including the first exchanges with Eunice, Stella and Stanley. Use this arrival episode as the starting passage.

Drama analysis [45 marks]

Starting with Blanche’s arrival in Scene 1, explore how Williams presents acts of welcome as a way of shaping relationships. In your answer, analyse the specified episode and relevant moments elsewhere in the play. Consider dialogue, stage directions and the control of domestic space.

Celebration as a setting for power

Paper 2: Exploring conflict · Section B: Dramatic encounters

Scene 8, in full: Blanche’s birthday meal, Mitch’s absence, and Stanley’s presentation of the bus ticket.

Drama analysis [45 marks]

Starting with the birthday meal in Scene 8, explore how Williams uses occasions that are meant to bring people together to expose struggles for power. Analyse this episode and connect it with relevant moments elsewhere in the play.

Collective behaviour and responsibility

Paper 2: Exploring conflict · Section B: Dramatic encounters

Scene 11: the final episode, from the arrival of the doctor and matron through the end of the play. Use the whole of this final episode, including the behaviour of those remaining in the apartment.

Drama analysis [45 marks]

Starting with the final episode in Scene 11, explore how Williams presents a group’s responsibility for the treatment of an individual. Analyse dialogue, stage directions and contrasts between voices, making relevant connections with other parts of the play.