

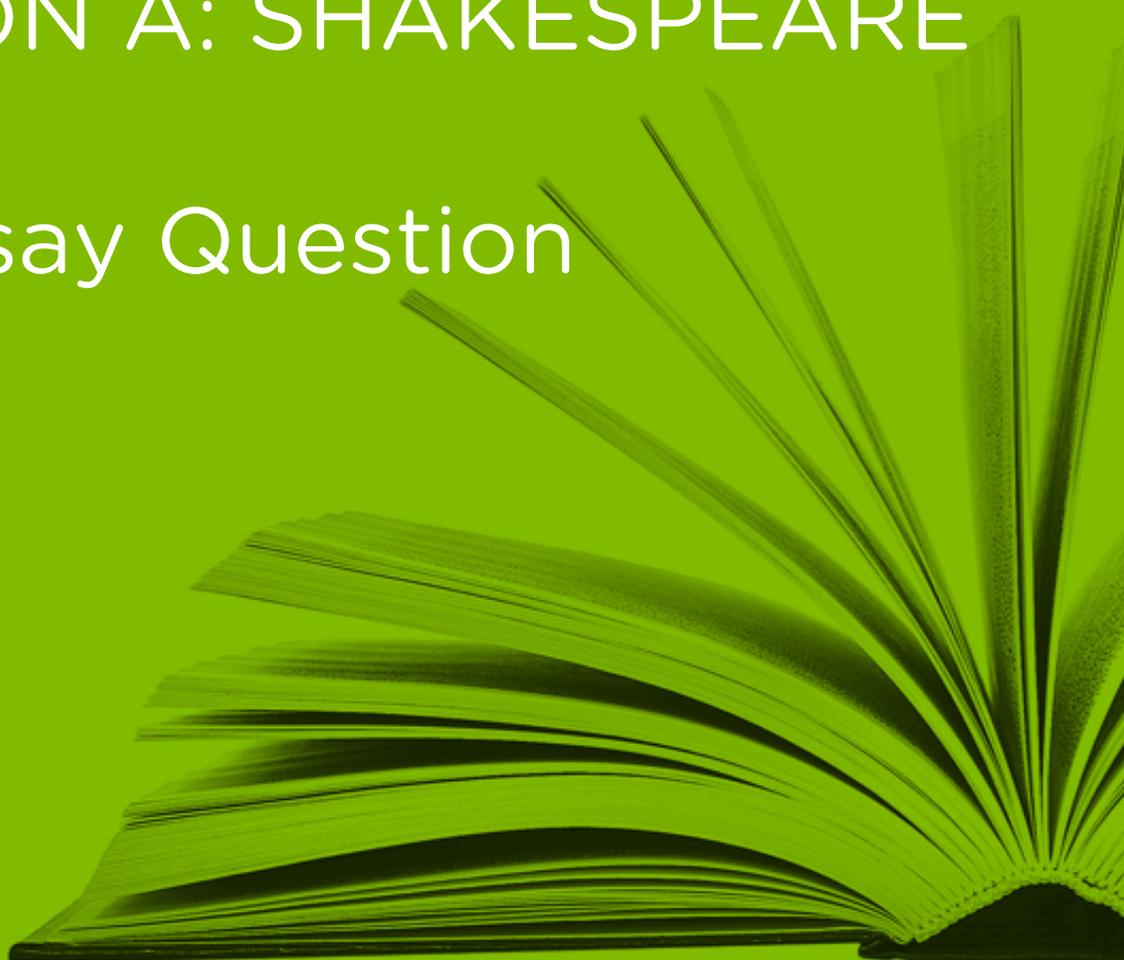
GCSE

WJEC Eduqas GCSE in
ENGLISH LITERATURE

ACCREDITED BY OFQUAL

COMPONENT 1
SECTION A: SHAKESPEARE

The Essay Question



KEY ASPECTS OF THE SPECIFICATION FROM 2015

COMPONENT 1, SECTION A: SHAKESPEARE

AREA OF STUDY	DESCRIPTION
<u>Shakespeare Essay Question</u>	Factors to consider, and guidelines for approaching, the Shakespeare essay question.
<u>Example Shakespeare Question</u>	An Example Shakespeare question.
<u>Example Shakespeare Question Mark Scheme</u>	The specific Assessment Objectives, Mark Scheme and indicative content for the Shakespeare question.
<u>Example Shakespeare Question responses</u>	Example responses to the Shakespeare essay Question

AREA OF STUDY

The Shakespeare Essay Question

Key Points:

- Learners will be assessed on their ability to make specific references to the text as well as having an overview of the character/theme.
- Knowledge of the whole play is essential. Learners often find it helpful to see productions but should be very wary of letting film references come into their responses
- Context (AO3) is not assessed in the Shakespeare essay question.
- SPaG (AO4) is assessed and candidates should be aware of this. Learners should proof read their work carefully and check to ensure that character names have capital letters. Careful spelling and punctuation will make a real difference in this question.

AMPLIFICATION FOR TEACHING



Approaching the Shakespeare Essay Question:

- Learners should check the focus of the question and underline any key words. The questions will be designed to focus on AO1 (read, understand and respond) and AO2 (Analyse) Selection of relevant material is very important when answering the question. Look for instructions such as 'presented at different points in the play.' This signals the requirement to track through the play.
- Learners should write a strong, focused opening, summing up the argument they will present in the answer as a whole, and clearly addressing the question posed. They should aim to range across the whole play in their response tracking the character or theme across the whole text.
- Contextual factors (AO3) are not assessed in this question and candidates should be wary of wasting time on contextual details that will not be rewarded in the response.
- Learners should be able to analyse some of the writer's intentions when creating characters and plot and highlight important turning points and key contrasts and their effects

USEFUL INTERACTIVE RESOURCES

[Ways into Shakespeare](#)

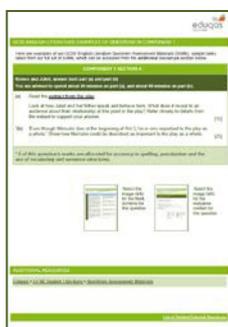
[Specimen Assessment Materials](#)

Part 12, AO1 and AO2 are equally weighted in this question.

BAND	AO1: 1a+b, AO1:2	AO2
5 17–20 marks	Candidates: sustain focus on the task, including overview, convey ideas with consistent coherence and use an appropriate register; use a sensitive and evaluative approach to the task and analyse the text critically; show a perceptive understanding of the text, engaging fully, perhaps with some originality in their personal response; their responses include pertinent, direct references from across the text, including quotations.	Candidates: analyse and appreciate writers' use of language, form and structure; make assured reference to meanings and effects exploring and evaluating the way meaning and ideas are conveyed through language structure and form; use precise subject terminology in an appropriate context.
4 13–16 marks	Candidates: sustain focus on the task, convey ideas with considerable coherence and use an appropriate register; use a thoughtful approach to the task; show a secure understanding of key aspects of the text, with considerable engagement; support and justify their responses by well-chosen direct reference to the text, including quotations.	Candidates: discuss and increasingly analyse writers' use of language, form and structure; make thoughtful reference to the meanings and effects of stylistic features used by the writer; use apt subject terminology.
3 9–12 marks	Candidates: focus on the task, convey ideas with general coherence and use a mostly appropriate register; use a straightforward approach to the task; show an understanding of key aspects of the text, with engagement; support and justify their responses by appropriate direct reference to the text, including quotations.	Candidates: comment on and begin to analyse writers' use of language, form and structure; make some reference to meanings and effects; use relevant subject terminology.
2 5–8 marks	Candidates: have some focus on the task, convey ideas with some coherence and sometimes use an appropriate register; use a limited approach to the task; show some understanding of key aspects of the text, with some engagement; support and justify their responses by some direct reference to the text, including some quotations.	Candidates: recognise and make simple comments on writers' use of language, form and structure; may make limited reference to meanings and effects; may use some relevant subject terminology.
1 1–4 marks	Candidates: have limited focus on the task, convey ideas with occasional coherence and may sometimes use an appropriate register; use a simple approach to the task; show a basic understanding of some key aspects of the text, with a little engagement; may support and justify their responses by some general reference to the text, perhaps including some quotations.	Candidates: may make generalised comments on writers' use of language, form and structure; may make basic reference to meanings and effects; may use some subject terminology but not always accurately.
0 marks	Nothing worthy of credit.	Nothing worthy of credit.

Here you will find the Mark Scheme for the **example Shakespeare essay question, based on the play *Romeo and Juliet*** (taken from our full set of **Specimen Assessment Materials**, which can be accessed from the **additional resources** section below).

LEVEL	AO4
High performance 4–5 marks	In the context of the Level of Demand of the question, Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy, and consistently use vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve effective control of meaning.
Intermediate performance 2–3 marks	In the context of the Level of Demand of the question, Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy, and use a considerable range of vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve general control of meaning.
Threshold performance 1 mark	In the context of the Level of Demand of the question, Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy, and use a reasonable range of vocabulary and sentence structures; any errors do not hinder meaning in the response.
0 marks	Candidates do not reach the threshold performance outlined in the performance descriptor above.



Select the image (left) for the example question.



Select the image (left) for the Indicative Content for this question.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Ways into Shakespeare](#)

[Specimen Assessment Materials](#)

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS IN COMPONENT 1 - MARK SCHEME

Here you will find Indicative Content for part 12 of the [example Shakespeare essay based on the play *Romeo and Juliet*](#) (taken from our full set of [Specimen Assessment Materials](#)).

This is not a checklist. Please reward valid alternatives.

COMPONENT 1: SECTION A

Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Question Part 12

Responses may include:

AO1

- His attitude to love
- His friendship with and loyalty to Romeo
- His wit, imagination and humour, e.g. as shown in the Queen Mab speech and in the scene with the Nurse
- His anger towards Tybalt and their subsequent fight
- How his death sets up the rest of the events of the play
- The significance of his dying words

AO2

- Comments on Shakespeare's use of language in the presentation of the character of Mercutio
- The use of imagery in his Queen Mab speech, showing his wit and imagination
- His bawdy teasing of Romeo and the Nurse and how this adds humour to the play
- How his attitudes to love are in contrast with those of Romeo
- How structure is revealed e.g. how his death and dying words change the atmosphere of the play and lead on to its tragic outcome



Select the image (left) for the Mark Scheme for this question.



Select the image (left) for the Assessment Objectives for this question.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS AND EXAMINER COMMENTS FOR THE ESSAY QUESTION IN COMPONENT 1

<p>Romeo and Juliet essay question.</p> <p>Even though Mercutio dies at the beginning of Act 3, he is very important to the play as a whole. Show how Mercutio could be shown to be important to the play as a whole.</p> <p>Mercutio is best friends with Romeo, they have known each other for such a long time that they know everything about one another. Mercutio, is the complete opposite to Romeo because Romeo believes in love, however Mercutio doesn't, he feels that love is pointless and only believes in sex. Also, Mercutio is the type of guy that is in your face, constantly taking the mick out Romeo and all the surrounding friends. He is ribbing Romeo because he has fallen in love with a girl who he just met.</p> <p>In the play, Mercutio is Romeo's closest friend, if Romeo was ever in trouble he would be there by his side to ensure that he didn't get hurt. From the scene where Tybalt and Romeo fall out, Mercutio shows his true colours and how much he cares about Romeo. At this point Mercutio says that he will fight Tybalt so that Romeo doesn't get hurt.</p> <p>Mercutio and Tybalt joule whilst Romeo tries talk him out of it because someone will end up getting hurt. The joule went on for while when all of a sudden Tybalt somehow gashes Mercutio and is fatally wounded. Romeo runs over to his best friend who has been left for dead by Tybalt. In revenge later on in the play Romeo kills Tybalt for killing his best friend and then gets told that he is to be exiled for what he has done.</p>
<p>Examiner's Comment:</p> <p>AO1: Some general reference to the play and Mercutio's role. No real reference to his 'importance'.</p> <p>AO2: No reference to or comments on language.</p> <p>AO4: 2/5</p> <p>Overall: Although mainly narrative, this response does show an emerging focus on the task and some engagement with the text. It would receive a mid-Band 2 mark.</p>

Comment [W1]: General

Comment [W2]: Proof?

Comment [W3]: General reference-lacks detail

Comment [W4]: General reference to incident

Comment [W5]: Still general

EXAMPLE ANSWERS AND EXAMINER COMMENTS FOR THE ESSAY QUESTION IN COMPONENT 1

Romeo and Juliet essay question.	
<p>Even though Mercutio dies at the beginning of Act 3, he is very important to the play as a whole. Show how Mercutio could be import to the play as a whole.</p>	
<p>Mercutio is shown to be important in the play as he is Romeo's most loyal friend, he gives his life to protect him. Although he is a good friend to Romeo, he usually makes fun of him. For example, in Act 1, Scene 4 Romeo tells him about a troubling dream and Mercutio just mocks him, talking about how it was just Lady Mab coming into his dream and giving him strange fantasies. He is the opposite to Romeo who idealised love were Mercutio just wants sex.</p>	<p>Comment [W1]: Clear focus</p> <p>Comment [W2]: Reference to text</p> <p>Comment [W3]: Nearly!</p> <p>Comment [W4]: Engaged discussion, with some detail.</p>
<p>Moreover, he's also important to the play and to Romeo because in Act 3 scene 1 he died protecting Romeo. Romeo then gets revenge and kills Tybalt because he killed his best friend. Mercutio sacrifices himself so Romeo could live, this causes Romeo to owe him his life but that isn't that long. I feel that Romeo didn't only take his own life, because he lost Juliet but also because the guilt on Mercutios death was getting too much for Romeo.</p>	<p>Comment [W5]: Yes</p> <p>Comment [W6]: Could explain in more detail</p> <p>Comment [W7]: Speculates - engaged</p>
<p>Furthermore, in act 2 scene 1 Romeo hides from his friends and apart from Mercutio they're concerned. Mercutio however, continues to mock him. He calls out asking him to come out, but he also mocks him asking him if he hiding from his friends of from love. It's only later you realise he may have been hiding from both, because Mercutio loved Romeo enough to die for him and Romeo risked death to settle the score with Tybalt. They loved eachother like brothers and even death didn't change that.</p>	<p>Comment [W8]: Reference</p> <p>Comment [W9]: Some discussion</p>
<p>In Act 2 scene 4 he is told about Romeo being challenged to fight Tybalt and he was petrified for him. He takes Tybalt on saying how it would be the fight of a lifetime. I don't know if he meant it literally but he did end up dying. Mercutio loved Romeo, but Romeo didn't love Mercutio enough to tell him about the wedding. If they were such good friends, then surely Romeo could have trusted him enough to tell him about Juliet. Even if she was a Capulet.</p>	<p>Comment [W10]: Very engaged personal response</p>
<p>Also, he continues to be important in the play because he isn't forgotten. His character was witty and funny. He was the nicest character. Juliet only was thinking about herself when she pretended to be dead, where as Mercutio actually died. Moreover, she kills herself because she killed her love, whereas Romeo hilled himself because he thought he'd lost another love, he now felt like he had three deaths upon his shoulders. However, I don't feel like Romeo felt as if her death was his fault, but he knew Mercutio's and Tybalt's were.</p>	<p>Comment [W11]: ?</p> <p>Comment [W12]: ?</p> <p>Comment [W13]: Maybe</p> <p>Comment [W14]: Some loss of focus here</p>
<p>Furthermore, he was also important, because although he wasn't a main character he was the most likeable and the most memorable. This is why I feel Mercutio is important in the play.</p>	
<p>Examiner's Comment: AO1: Very engaged discussion, with some relevant references and a strong personal response. AO2: No specific references to 'how' / use of language, etc. However there is some implicit reference to language and its effects. AO4: 3/5</p>	
<p>Overall: The candidate has a clear focus on the task; AO1 is much stronger than AO2 here. Overall the candidate would receive a mark in mid Band 3.</p>	

EXAMPLE ANSWERS AND EXAMINER COMMENTS FOR THE ESSAY QUESTION IN COMPONENT 1

Romeo and Juliet essay question.	
<p>Even though Mercutio dies at the beginning of Act 3, he is very important to the play as a whole. Show how Mercutio could be shown to be important to the play as a whole.</p>	
<p>Mercutio is the most outspoken, opinionated and witty character, making him stand out as being the complete opposite to the majority of other characters in the play. At the beginning of the play Mercutio is introduced as a close friend of Romeo's. He gives Romeo advice about women which Romeo doesn't necessarily take as they have different views/beliefs.</p>	<p>Comment [W1]: Clear focus</p>
<p>Mercutio is lively and loud, he seems the sort of person to be a party animal and popular among peers, however in serious situations he shows loyalty and dedication. This is shown when Romeo is challenged to a duel by Tybalt. Mercutio, as Romeo's close friend, recognises Romeo would be in danger should he fight Tybalt as he isn't as strong nor experienced at fighting. Selflessly, Mercutio takes the place of Romeo and defends him by fighting Tybalt himself. This shows a profound level of loyalty and commitment he has, as he dies protecting his best friend in hope he will get to live the happy life he deserves. This links to the theme of love and commitment which run through the play as it shows the lengths to which people will go to protect the ones they love and also know no matter what difficulties are in their way, the characters will find a way to get round it in order for them to be together.</p>	<p>Comment [W2]: Reference</p> <p>Comment [W3]: Apt reference</p> <p>Comment [W4]: Thoughtful</p> <p>Comment [W5]: Engaged</p>
<p>I believe that what happens to Mercutio sticks with Romeo throughout the play as he seems very aware that the threats made towards him for being with / going to see Juliet are very much real and he is in danger. I think Mercutio's outlandish and outspoken behaviour somewhat inspires Romeo to get what he wants (which in this case is Juliet) and not let other people stop him. I think Romeo also obides by the rules less as he has seen what happened to his best friend and feels there is no time to waste as you never know how long you've got left.</p>	<p>Comment [W6]: Discussing</p> <p>Comment [W7]: e.g.?</p> <p>Comment [W8]: Maybe</p>
<p>Mercutio is an inspiring character as around the Elizabethan era, people generally did what they were told and got on with it whereas Mercutio wouldn't change his beliefs or the way he spoke/acted for anyone. He was very confident and more like someone from the modern time. I think Mercutio would have been someone other characters may have looked up to as they would have liked to have felt able to express their own true feelings and opinions and have a choice in the things they do, however this would have been seen as unruly and wrong at that time as people, especially women did what they were told and didn't express their true opinions.</p>	<p>Comment [W9]: Context not assessed here</p> <p>Comment [W10]: Engaged response</p> <p>Comment [W11]: Getting a bit general here</p> <p>Comment [W12]: Focus</p> <p>Comment [W13]: Loss of focus</p>
<p>Perhaps Mercutio was a character who would have given people of that era hope that one day it will be seen as normal / acceptable to make your own choices and have your way in a big decision such as the person you shall marry.</p>	
<p>Another idea is Romeo could have been influenced by Mercutio and felt it only right to be happy with Juliet despite all of the costs after Mercutio's death so he could do something the way he did / would have done, in his honour.</p>	<p>Comment [W14]: Repeats</p>
<p>Mercutio was very clever and quick witted. however due to his jokey personality people could have underestimated him. I believe this strongly links to the way Romeo is undermined for just being a Montague and not the strong, loyal person he really is who will go to any length to ensure he gets what he longs for, despite the cost.</p>	<p>Comment [W15]: Proof?</p> <p>Comment [W16]: Maybe</p> <p>Comment [W17]: Proof?</p>
<p>I feel Mercutio strongly influences the play even after his death, not only for his personality but the way he died defending a friend he loved dearly. I think his death puts things into perspective, that life doesn't last forever and you have to hold on to what you want however hard. I believe this is a</p>	<p>Comment [W18]: Engaged</p>