

SECTION B: HAMLET (Shakespeare)

Answer ONE question from this section. Each question is worth 30 marks.

Remember: If you answer the essay question in Section B of this paper, you must choose the contextual question in Section C, and vice versa.

QUESTION 6 (Contextual)

Read the following passage and answer the set questions:

KING...

- but O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder?
That cannot be, since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder -
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned and retain th' offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above: 60
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
To give in evidence. What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can. What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that struggling to be free
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay.
Bow, stubborn knees; and heart with strings of steel, 70
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe.
All may be well. [He kneels]

... Enter HAMLET

HAMLET...

Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do 't: and so he goes to heaven;
And so am I reveng'd. That would be scann'd: 75
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread, 80
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought
'Tis heavy with him. And am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul, 85
When he is fit and season'd for his passage ?
No.
Up, sword, and know thou a move horrid hent ;
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed, 90
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't;...

(Act 3, Scene 3)

- 6.1 Consider lines 51 – 56. (*'but O! what form ... retain th' offence?'*)
- 6.1.1 Discuss Claudius's dilemma as reflected in these lines. (4)
- 6.1.2 'This extract reveals Claudius to be more than simply a villainous usurper.'
Comment on this statement, illustrating from the extract. (4)
- 6.1.3 Discuss Claudius's tone in this extract. (2)
- 6.2 *'In the corrupted ... not so above:'* (lines 57 to 60)

Explain how these lines illustrate Claudius's view of corruption, paying particular attention to his use of language. (4)
- 6.3 Does Claudius shows any nobility of character elsewhere in the play? (4)
- 6.4 *'My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.'* (line 55)

Comment on the order in which Claudius places the things for which he did the murder. (2)
- 6.5 Hamlet is often accused of being indecisive.

Considering lines 73 to 86 (*'Now might I ... for this passage?'*) and any other relevant incidents, would you agree with this criticism? (4)
- 6.6 *'Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.'* (line 79)

Discuss why Hamlet is determined not to kill Claudius at this moment. (3)
- 6.7 Later in the play, in Act Scene 7, Laertes says that he would take revenge even if it meant cutting Hamlet's throat in the church.

Discuss how Laertes' views on seeking revenge for the death of a father compare with Hamlet's. (3)(30)

SECTION B: SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMA

Answer *one* question from this section.

HAMLET

QUESTION 6 (CONTEXTUAL)

from Act 3, Scene 2 (starting from line 199)

PLAYER QUEEN

Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If once a widow, ever I be wife!

200

HAMLET

If she should break it now!

PLAYER KING

'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile,
My spirits grow dull and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep.

He sleeps

PLAYER QUEEN

Sleep rock thy brain,
And never come mischance between us twain.

205

Exit

HAMLET

Madam, how like you this play?

QUEEN

The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

HAMLET

O, but she'll keep her word.

KING

Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

HAMLET

No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest – no offence i'th' world

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KING

What do you call the play?

HAMLET

'The Mousetrap'. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna. Gonzago is the duke's name, his wife, Baptista – you shall see anon. 'Tis a knavish piece of work, but what o'that? Your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not. Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter Lucianus, a Player.

This is one, Lucianus, nephew to the King.



- 6.1 Refer to line 201: 'If she should break it now!'
To what is Hamlet referring? [2]
- 6.2 Refer to line 206: 'Madam, how like you this play?'
How does Gertrude's response, 'The lady doth protest too much, methinks',
reveal how much insight she has into her own situation? [3]
- 6.3 Why does Claudius ask, 'Is there no offence in't?' (line 209)? [3]
- 6.4 Ophelia says, 'You are as good as a chorus, my lord' (line 218).
Do you think it is wise of Hamlet to continually interject at this stage?
Give one reason for your opinion. [2]
- 6.5 'It would cost you a groaning to take off mine edge' (line 222).
What is Hamlet suggesting? [2]
- 6.6 Refer to lines 224–226: 'Pox! Leave thy damnable faces and begin! Come – the
croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.'
How are Hamlet's true **feelings** exposed here? [3]
- 6.7 There is garden imagery in lines 229 ('midnight weeds') and 233 ('i'th' garden')
Why does Shakespeare use garden imagery throughout the play? [4]
- 6.8 Why does Hamlet blurt out the rest of *The Mouse Trap* (lines 233–235) to
Claudius? [2]
- 6.9 Polonius shouts, 'Give o'er the play' (line 239).
Suggest **three** different qualities he displays here. [3]
- 6.10 What is ironic about Claudius's calling for 'some light' (line 240)? [2]
- 6.11 Refer to the last few lines of the extract (after line 235).
Explain why Claudius is badly disturbed by the play **and** by Hamlet's
comments? Remember: this question has **two** parts. (2+2) [4]