***Eduqas Component 2 Drama Resources***

**Section A: Shakespeare**

**Part (i) Extract**

In the following two examples of candidate responses to their Shakespeare extract, consider these points in relation to each response:

* How does the response begin to signal *engagement* with the *task/extract*? AO1
* Is there any sense of an *overview of task/extract*? AO1
* How does the candidate approach the analysis of how Shakespeare *presents* his character/character’s thoughts and feelings and considers how *meanings are shaped*? AO2
1. ***King Lear* extract response**

|  |
| --- |
| This extract shows Cordelia at a point of honourable integrity, sacrificing her paternal relationship to stay true to her morals which whilst controversial displays great humility.Shakespeare creates a patriarchal perspective of how Cordelia is seen by her male counterparts as France refers to her as Lear’s “best object”, dehumanising her in an attempt to sway Lear’s scornful wrath. France continues this objectification, by claiming that she was `’the balm of [Lear’s] age, “suggesting that she soothes Lear and his fury. This presentation of Cordelia as “the best, the dearest” creates a sense of her kindness, however it also reveals that Cordelia is like a possession, held in high regard for her soft, unformidable nature.However, Shakespeare goes on to create a sense of rebellious ferocity in Cordelia’s refusal to pander to her father’s hubris as France refers to her actions as “monstrous to dismantle” the allegedly harmonious family. This feeling of distaste for Cordelia’s disobedience is intensified by the adjective “unnatural” used in describing her aversion to Lear’s egotistical love game.This depiction of Cordelia as a “monstrous” rebel does not continue throughout as we are reminded that it is Lear’s “taint[ed]” perspective that casts this light on her.  Once Cordelia speaks we become aware of the evil forces she is rejecting in the “glib and oily art” of her sisters’ greed. Cordelia contests Lear’s view of her betrayal, “beseech[ing]”his \*willfull folly and denying that it is a “vicious blot, murder or foulness”. Shakespeare presents her purity as she rejects the “unchaste action [and] dishonoured step” that has been forced upon her by her male counterparts with her morality and integrity being reinforced by her being “glad that [she] has not […] a still soliciting eye and such a tongue” to commit such manipulation.In conclusion, Shakespeare presents Cordelia in this extract as resisting the oppressive scorn of her brutish father, displaying honesty and moral strength in her \*resilliance.* *Spelling errors are candidate’s own*
 |

1. ***Hamlet* extract response**

|  |
| --- |
| Hamlet is portrayed by Shakespeare to look upon Horatio favourably. He is shown to deny that he “flatters” Horatio when suggesting that Horatio is “as just a man” as he has ever spoke to. The verb “flatters” implies falseness or sycophancy and moreover, Hamlet’s rejection of the suggestion that he is flattering implies that his admiration for Horatio is genuine. This, when compounded with the adjective “just” which connotes honesty or loyalty, implies that the friendship between Hamlet and Horatio is genuine.Additionally, Hamlet is described to feel as if all men are driven solely by desire. “Give me that man that is not passion’s slave” shows this as the personification of passion depicts it as a more tangible or imposing concept. The preposition “that”  before “man” suggests a particular focus or rarity of the only man who is not driven  by passion.  Hamlet is also presented to oppose this idea of being governed by passion through the oxymoron “ passion’s slave”. The noun “passion” connotes zeal or enthusiasm whereas the “slave” implies a lack of autonomy or freedom. Hamlet opposes the idea that we forfeit our own sovereignty in pursuit of our own desires.Shakespeare also creates the feeling of Hamlet’s acceptance that both good and bad things happen in life. Hamlet, through monologue, talks of “A man that Fortune’s buffets and rewards hast ta’en with equal thanks” to show this. The plural of both “buffets and rewards” implies that Hamlet accepts that throughout life a series of both positive and negative events happen. Equally, the verb “buffets” suggests a gradual erosion as with a sandstorm. This implies that Hamlet feels that over time, the multitude of negative events in one’s life will wear them down. Yet the notion that both the positive and negative were taken with “equal thanks” conveys Hamlet’s recognition of the inevitability of negative events. |

**Activity**: Read the extract from *King Lear*, taken from the **WJEC** **Shakespeare** 2017 paper

***Question***

***With close reference to the language and imagery in this extract, examine Shakespeare’s presentation of Lear’s thoughts and feelings at this point in the play.***

What essential aspects do we learn about ***Lear’s presentation*** here?

What do we understand about the ***situation*** in this extract?

What are the ***key words and phrases*** from the extract to help the candidate develop a relevant response to the question?

|  |
| --- |
|  REGAN What need one?LEAR O, reason not the need! Our basest beggars Are in the poorest thing superfluous. Allow not nature more than nature needs, Man’s life is cheap as beast’s. Thou art a lady; If only to go warm were gorgeous, Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear’st, Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need – You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need. You see me here, you gods, a poor old man, As full of grief as age; wretched in both. If it be you that stirs these daughters’ hearts Against their father, fool me not so much To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger, And let not women’s weapons, water-drops, Stain my man’s cheeks! No, you unnatural hags, I will have such revenges on you both That all the world shall – I will do such things – What they are yet I know not; but they shall be The terrors of the earth. You think I’ll weep. No, I’ll not weep. [Storm and tempest. I have full cause of weeping; but this heart Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws Or ere I’ll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!  [*Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, Kent and Fool.* (Act 2, Scene iv) |

Section A Part (ii) Essay

Unpacking the Shakespeare essay question

|  |
| --- |
| * Each essay question is designed to enable access to *AO3* and *AO5* in addition to AO2 and AO1.
* Read the question carefully and note the key words/phrases which are intended to encourage discussion of contexts and different interpretations.
* Plan your approach to the response first, deciding on which areas of the text you will explore in relation to the question.
 |

Consider the view that “the conflict between good and evil forces in *King Lear* is shown primarily through Shakespeare’s presentation of the female characters”.

Two potential opportunities for considering the significance and influence of contexts (AO3) are highlighted in green. Red signals the focus on how meanings are shaped (AO2) while blue shows where the opportunity to debate is presented in the question (AO5).

In the following examples of candidate responses to the Shakespeare essay question, identify where the candidate addresses/begins to address all the relevant AOs.

* How is the focus on the question sustained?
* How does the candidate *integrate* AO3 and AO5 discussion?
1. ***King Lear* essay response**

|  |
| --- |
| In Shakespeare’s King Lear he creates polarized depictions of women as either cruel and headstrong or weak and vulnerable to convey the corruptive impact of both good and evil forces. This stereotyped presentation of women as a narrative on good and evil is shaped and dictated by the mysogynistic conventions of Jacobean England that saw hierarchical patriarchy championed above all else.A clear example of the conflict between good and evil being epitomised in female characters is in Lear’s hubristic love competition. In this scene Lear reduces his daughters to their love for him and their filial obedience, questioning “which of [them] say doth love [him] the most. Lear bribes his daughters with his “kingdom split in three” offering the greatest dowry to whichever of the three daughters is able to feign affection for their brutish father. This test illustrates the integrity of his daughters as Cordelia confesses that she is unable to “heave her heart into her mouth” as she “loves [Lear] according to her bond, no more nor less”. Her inability to pander to Lear’s tragic hubris reveals her morality, resisting the Jacobean belief that “money enchants the female sex”. This dedication to her moral compass has led feminist critics to champion her as a “feminist rebel and martyr” an opinion that confirms R. Warren’s view of her as “a symbol of womanly strength”.Cordelia’s distaste for her father’s willful folly and the integrity with which she handles the situation is juxtaposed by the self indulgent greed with which Goneril and Regan prey on Lear’s vulnerability through pride. The two sisters prize themselves as being made of the “self metal”, claiming equality in their false undying affection for their weak father. This depiction of Goneril and Regan as cunning and manipulative in comparison with the “ever soft and gentle” voice of Cordelia that Lear said to be an “excellent trait in a woman” reinforces Lynda Boose’s statement that “overwhelmingly women in King Lear are depicted as either innocent victims or evil vixens that either need male protection for survival or the corruption of men for success.” This view compliments the narrative of integral goodness and forces of evil being summed up in women, also potentially vocalising an observation of Shakespeare that saw women in such a state of institutionalised oppression that their only route to success was being through crime and evil.The concept of Goneril and Regan as symbols of evil forces in a Jacobean world of hierarchy is reinforced by the psychological warfare they inflict upon Lear. Lear laments over their cruelty as he descends into lunacy “Striking his head” while grieving over his betrayal, weeping “how sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is to have ungrateful daughters”. Lear’s descent into madness is arguably at the fault of Goneril and Regan’s evil as they painstakingly strip him of power, questioning “what need you five and twenty, ten or five” as they reduce his train of men. This torturous degradation drives lear “onto the heath” as these “unnatural hags” remove his final sense of control after he disrupts the divine right of kings, sending the chain of being into chaos reflected in both nature and society.The evil of Goneril and Regan is intensified by the extent of Lear’s lunacy as he commands “fire [to be] spat and rain [to be] spouted” covered only in rags, plunged into vulnerability. However, it is this evil that allows Lear’s spiritual awakening, supporting C. Tracy’s view that Lear “fumbles his way through negation to anagnorisis”. This sense of purpose in Lear’s isolation does not however go to excuse the evil of the “marble-hearted fiends” that use his tragic flaw to their advantage.In conclusion, it can be said that from the drastic juxtaposition between Lear’s daughters, he creates a sound and clear presentation of the forces of good and evil in the play that reflect the issues of Jacobean society. Although, it is not true to say that women are the sole root of these forces, revealed by the indulgent hubris of Lear that instigates this societal collapse and the cruelty of the male dominated subplot that shows both cruelty and integrity in male characters. |

1. ***Hamlet* essay response (extracts from response)**

|  |
| --- |
| Throughout “Hamlet” the prince’s ill-fated destiny may seem to present him as a victim of the world around him. Hamlet is caught between the world of the medieval and the Renaissance, the Catholic and the Protestant, which renders him in a position of insecurity. However, we might too suggest that Hamlet’s witty criticism of the world around him leaves him not a “helpless victim” but simply in opposition to the corruption he sees rife around him.Hamlet is pushed by a Ghost to avenge the murder of his father and kill his uncle Claudius. Yet, this task may demonstrate Hamlet’s victim status in his world: he is uncertain of whether to even follow the Ghost’s orders, or whether this Ghost is a symbol of the Devil. Upon their interaction, Hamlet wonders, “bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell”. The balanced structure of this line demonstrates the great choice presented to Hamlet: he becomes a victim as there is no obvious path for him to follow. We might suggest that Shakespeare here uses the symbol of the ghost to further communicate Hamlet’s victim status to the audience. England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth was facing a lack of religious unity: CatholicsWould have viewed the Ghost to have emerged either from purgatory – as he returns to the “flames” of this religious limbo – or a spirit of the Devil. Simultaneously, Protestants, not believing in purgatory, would have been faced with their own dilemma, as to whether Hamlet should follow the Ghost’s orders, or make his own moral judgement. He is trapped: to ignore the Ghost could result in an ignorance of his late father’s wishes, but to follow the Ghost may result in one succumbing to the will of the Devil. Hamlet laments, “The time is out of joint. O cursed spite that I was ever born to set it right!” The vocative “O” demonstrates his helpless suffering at his situation, and the biting rhythm of “spite…right” communicates his tortured state. Stephen Greenblatt has claimed Hamlet to be, “A Protestant man haunted by a Catholic Ghost” and this suggestion furthers the feeling of Hamlet’s victim status in the world around him; whilst Hamlet – a student of Wittenburg, where Martin Luther laid the foundation for Protestantism – might be pushed to ignore the Ghost’s commands, he is plagued by the Catholic faith of his ancestors – and his father’s. The religious instability thus renders him a helpless victim of the world around him.……This shift in belief also comes to affect Hamlet on an ideological level. During this period, Europe was shifting from a Medieval to a Renaissance manner of feeling., leaving Hamlet helpless as he wonders which way to align himself….. “How all occasions do inform against me and spur my dull revenge.” The diction of “dull” allows Shakespeare to demonstrate Hamlet’s feeling of being burdened, and the hyperbolic “all occasions” the opposition he feels within himself against his fate. Mackenzie claims that, “Hamlet’s strongest qualities reinforce his inability to cope with the world around him.” These “strongest qualities” may refer to his moral conscience, shifting away from the mindlessly enacting of brutal revenge of the medieval hero – as he is depicted in Shakespeare’s portrayal of Laertes [“only I’ll be revenged most thoroughly for my father”] and moving towards the philosophical considerations of a Renaissance hero…. |

Section B: Drama

Unpacking the question

Q. 9 *The Duchess/Streetcar*

“The audience sees nothing but a disordered and violent world in which cruelty is commonplace.” How far would you apply this comment to both *The Duchess of Malfi* and *A Streetcar Named Desire?*

* Where are the *AO3* stimulus words/phrases?
* Where are the *AO5* stimulus words/phrases?
* What are the key connections *AO4* to explore in response to this question?

Look at the examples of beginnings to candidate responses which follow. Identify the *strengths* of each in terms of (a) answering the question and (b) addressing the assessment objectives, and any *advice* you might suggest for improving the response.

Q 9 The Duchess/Streetcar response 1

|  |
| --- |
| The worlds in which “The Duchess of Malfi” and “A Streetcar Named Desire” are set are both disordered and violent, in which cruelty is commonplace. Through deceit and the destruction of the delicate things in life, both Webster and Williams conform to the statement in question.The destruction and death of the Duchess’ character suggests that the world in which “The Duchess of Malfi” is set is both disordered yet moreover violent. The Duchess suggests that ‘the robin redbreast and the nightingale never live long in prison’ foreshadowing the fate of both her and Cariola following their imprisonment. “Robin” connotes the delicate and fragility whilst the adjective “redbreast” conveys passion or defiance. Equally, the “nightingale” conveys images of solidarity through its distinct song. Arguably, the birds serve as metaphors for the Duchess and Cariola, bringing pertinence to the noun “cages”. The juxtaposition between birds and moreover, flying and “cages” reveals the cruel nature of the world as the Duchess and her passion or love for Antonio shown through the use of “redbreast” are restricted both physically through her imprisonment and socially through the patriarchal dominance that forbids her remarrying.A similar destruction of the fragile is seen throughout ‘A Streetcar Named Desire”… |

Q 9 The Duchess/Streetcar response 2

|  |
| --- |
| Throughout both Webster’s “The Duchess of Malfi” and Williams’ “A Streetcar Named Desire” the audience sees nothing but a disordered and violent world in which cruelty is commonplace. Both written in times of social instability on the backs of wars and conflict, the violence so evident in both is reflective of the world in which the authors lived. In The Duchess of Malfi Webster creates a lust for power so strong that nothing is too much in order to gain power through the character of Bosola. Presented to the audience as a ”court-gall” imagery of a bird, something sub-human is created from the outset implying to the audience the corruption and violence to come. Highlighting the fact that “the play is set against a background of corruption and idealism” (Theodora Jankowski) |

Q. 8 The Duchess/Streetcar: (opening paragraph) response

|  |
| --- |
| *Webster’s “The Duchess of Malfi” has strong underlining sexualisation and sexual innuendo. As a young widow the Duchess uses her sexuality as something that gives her power, whereas Ferdinand takes an unhealthy interest in her participation in “the shameful act of sin’. R.S. White argues that the play tells “the tragedy of a virtuous woman who achieves heroism through her death”. Williams uses Blanche Dubois and Stella Kowalski as symbols of female sexuality. Williams’s own sister, Rose Williams, was taken into a mental institution due to her having too many sexual fantasies, this therefore became entrenched in ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’. Sexualisation of women was neither accepted in Jacobean England or 1940’s America, although New Orleans was a symbol of sex, jazz and racial acceptance in comparison to other areas.* |

Q 10 The Revenger’s Tragedy/ Loot response

|  |
| --- |
| In both The Revenger’s Tragedy and Loot, the playwrights use the conventions of farcical theatre and black comedy to deliver the unsettling home truths of their contexts. Influenced by their contemporary experiences of Jacobean and 1960’s England, Orton and Middleton scrutinise and undermine their societal conventions in an attempt to encourage their audience to question these restrictive parameters.One of the most unsettling topics confronted in the two plays is death and the stigmas that surround it.…….. Further unsettling controversy is created through the dramatic scrutiny of figures of authority represented in Truscott and the Duke. |

Component 2 key points to remember:

* *Overview* of extract in Section A part (i)
* Reading extract carefully ‘to the punctuation’
* Remember it is a play with an audience
* Unpack the Shakespeare essay question
* Plan the essay response
* Use contexts and different interpretations *purposefully* as an integral part of your argument
* Unpack the essay question in Section B
* Plan your response through key “connections”
* Use contexts and different interpretations *purposefully* to develop the central argument in response to the question, maintaining focus on *connections*.