

KING LEAR¹ (i)

E King Lear – William Shakespeare

- (i) “Shakespeare’s play, *King Lear*, provides moments of riveting drama that offer thought-provoking insights into the human condition.”

Identify three moments of riveting drama in the play that, in your opinion, provide thought-provoking insights into the human condition. Give reasons why you find these moments dramatically riveting and discuss the thought-provoking insights they provide. Support your response with reference to the play.

Candidates should identify three moments of riveting drama in the play that in their opinion provide thought-provoking insights into the human condition. Candidates should give reasons why they find these moments dramatically riveting and discuss the thought provoking insights into the human condition that they provide. Allow for a broad interpretation of “dramatically riveting” and “thought-provoking insights”. Expect reference to the play in support of responses.

Mark ex 60 by reference to the criteria for assessment using the breakdown of marks below.

- P:** Focus/relevance of response/well chosen, compelling points /originality of thought/understanding of dramatic elements/ evidence of critical literacy, etc.
- C:** Sustained focus/appropriate management and sequencing of ideas/coherence/points effectively substantiated/apt use of examples, references and quotations, effective engagement with the text, etc.
- L:** Language managed and controlled to achieve clear communication throughout /fluency/ quality of expression, etc.
- M:** Accuracy of mechanics **Etc.**

Code RD for reasons why a moment from the play is dramatically riveting

Code TI for discussion of thought-provoking insights

Indicative material:

Moments of riveting drama: moments of revelation/unexpected developments/surprises/plot twists/extreme violence/poignant moments/shocking moments/moments of intense or heightened emotion, conflict/tension/suspense, etc.

Thought-provoking insights into the human condition:

- thought-provoking insights into the transitory/hopeful/ hopeless/fragile/meaningful/ meaningless nature of the human condition, the inequality and unfairness inherent in life, etc.
- humans possess an array of contradictory traits/emotions e.g. love/hate, bravery/cowardice arrogance/humility, etc., challenges of old age/human suffering/fate, etc.
- insights into human society: individual/social responsibility, power/powerlessness, transitory and arbitrary nature of power itself, etc.
- the fragile balance between sanity and madness, lack of self-knowledge, blindness/sight **Etc.**

(ii) “Cordelia plays a more significant role than Goneril or Regan in the play, *King Lear*.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement? In your response you should consider the roles played by all three sisters. Support your answer with reference to the text.

Candidates are free to agree or disagree wholly or in part with the statement, “Cordelia plays a more significant role than Goneril or Regan in the play, *King Lear*”. Candidates should consider the roles played by all three sisters and support their answers by reference to the text.

Mark ex 60 by reference to the criteria for assessment using the breakdown of marks below.

- P:** Focus/relevance of response, well chosen, compelling points, originality of thought, understanding of dramatic roles, evidence of critical literacy, etc.
- C:** Sustained focus/appropriate management and sequencing of ideas/coherence/points effectively substantiated/apt use of examples, references and quotations, key moments, effective engagement with the text, etc.
- L:** Language managed and controlled to achieve clear communication throughout/fluency/quality of expression, etc.
- M:** Accuracy of mechanics **Etc.**

Code CS for Cordelia plays the more significant role

Code G/RS for Goneril or Regan play(s) the more significant role

Indicative material:

Cordelia plays a more significant role than Goneril or Regan: an active protagonist in advancing the plot dominating Act 1, she is the catalyst for a series of disastrous events, she personifies goodness, highlighting the wickedness of others, raises issues of family/duty/responsibility/the role of women in society, an ally to those supporting Lear, her redemption of Lear offers hope, her death is central to the tragedy, initially Goneril and Regan are reactive, not initiating the action, the deaths of Goneril and Regan are peripheral to the action **Etc.**

Cordelia does not play a more significant role than Goneril or Regan: Cordelia absent from most of the action, Goneril and Regan become more dynamic characters, central to the action, with a more powerful dramatic presence, their evil propels the plot, their actions have an equal/greater impact, not bound by social conventions, Goneril and Regan raise significant issues of moral choice and consequences, Goneril’s strategic skill and Regan’s sadistic behaviour add to their significance **Etc.**