

## AQA GCSE English Literature

### Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel (Set A)

Macbeth and A Christmas Carol

Tuesday 1 April 2025

Morning (Time: 1 hour 45 minutes)

Total marks

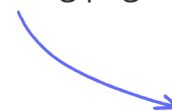
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#### Instructions

- Try to complete this mock exam paper in one sitting, under exam conditions. Use all the time available and check your answers to each question at the end before submitting.
- Remember this is PRACTICE. Mistakes are fine and will help you improve in time for the real exam - just do your best.
- This is a closed-book exam, which means you are not permitted to refer to annotated or clean set texts during the exam, except for the extracts printed on the exam paper. You may not use a dictionary.

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- 1 Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 3 of Macbeth and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, after receiving The Witches' prophecies, Macbeth and Banquo have just been told that Duncan has made Macbeth Thane of Cawdor.

BANQUO

But 'tis strange,

And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,

The instruments of darkness tell us truths;

Win us with honest trifles, to betray's

In deepest consequence. –

Cousins, a word, I pray you.

MACBETH [Aside]

Two truths are told,

As happy prologues to the swelling act

Of the imperial theme. – I thank you, gentlemen. –

This supernatural soliciting

Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,

Why hath it given me earnest of success,

Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor.

If good, why do I yield to that suggestion,

Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair

And make my seated heart knock at my ribs

Against the use of nature? Present fears

Are less than horrible imaginings.

My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,  
Shakes so my single state of man that function  
Is smothered in surmise, and nothing is,  
But what is not.

Starting with this moment in the play, explore how Shakespeare presents the attitudes of Macbeth and Banquo towards the supernatural.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents the attitudes of Macbeth and Banquo towards the supernatural in this extract
- how Shakespeare presents the attitudes of Macbeth and Banquo towards the supernatural in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

AO4 [4 marks]

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(34 marks)

2 In this extract, the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge back to his school.

"The school is not quite deserted," said the Ghost. "A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still."

Scrooge said he knew it. And he sobbed.

They left the high-road, by a well-remembered lane, and soon approached a mansion of dull red brick, with a little weathercock-surmounted cupola, on the roof, and a bell hanging in it. It was a large house, but one of broken fortunes; for the spacious offices were little used, their walls were damp and mossy, their windows broken, and their gates decayed. Fowls clucked and strutted in the stables; and the coach-houses and sheds were over-run with grass. Nor was it more retentive of its ancient state, within; for entering the dreary hall, and glancing through the open doors of many rooms, they found them poorly furnished, cold, and vast. There was an earthy savour in the air, a chilly bareness in the place, which associated itself somehow with too much getting up by candle-light, and not too much to eat.

They went, the Ghost and Scrooge, across the hall, to a door at the back of the house. It opened before them, and disclosed a long, bare, melancholy room, made barer still by lines of plain deal forms and desks. At one of these a lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire; and Scrooge sat down upon a form, and wept to see his poor forgotten self as he used to be.

Not a latent echo in the house, not a squeak and scuffle from the mice behind the panelling, not a drip from the half-thawed water-spout in the dull yard behind, not a sigh among the leafless boughs of one despondent poplar, not the idle swinging of an empty store-house door, no, not a clicking in the fire, but fell upon the heart of Scrooge with a softening influence, and gave a freer passage to his tears.

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the effects of loneliness and isolation in A Christmas Carol.

Write about:

- How Dickens presents the effects of loneliness and isolation in this extract
- How Dickens presents the effects of loneliness and isolation in the novel as a whole

[30 marks]

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**(30 marks)**