Cambridge Assessment International Education

# Cambridge IGCSE™

**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH** **0475/22**

Paper 2 Drama **February/March 2024**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

*1331069486*

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- Answer **two** questions.
- Your answers must be on **two** different set texts.
- You must answer **one** (a) passage-based question and **one** (b) essay question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

**INFORMATION**

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

This document has **12** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

DC (CE) 326921/1
© UCLES 2024

**[Turn over**

stemup.co.uk

## LYNN NOTTAGE: *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 1 (a)** Read this passage carefully, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Ernestine* [*To audience*]: My essay was entitled "The Colored Worker in the United States"; the mistake was using the word "worker" too liberally. The principal called in Daddy Goodness and told him to stop mingling with the Jews at his job and everything would be all right. Daddy didn't bother to tell him that his coworkers were all colored. And the Jews on our block won't speak to us. Well, except the Levys, who if they didn't talk to us they'd have to sit in the darkness on Friday night.

[*Lights rise on* GODFREY *shining his shoes in the living room.* LILY *sits in the armchair reading a movie magazine.*]

*Godfrey* [*Hushed*]: Whole school thinks I'm a communist. It's all your fault, ya know.

*Lily:* And I suppose I'm to blame for segregation, war and polio as well.

*Godfrey:* You can't ever leave well enough alone. It's fine for you and your smart set, but I'm a working man gotta ride the bus each morning.

*Lily:* Surprised you ain't walking as tight as you are.

*Godfrey:* Don't change the subject on me.

*Lily:* Well, hell, Godfrey I ain't said nothing about nothing. I can't help it if that child got eyes and ears, and a mind that ain't limited to a few pages in the Bible. I ain't seen you this spirited since I got here … in fact, I think being a communist agrees with you.

[LILY *gives* GODFREY *a few playful jabs.* GODFREY *feigns laughter.*]

*Godfrey:* That's funny! Try telling that to the fellas at work, ain't none of them speaking to me. [*Pointing to* LILY] This is your doing. Got that old bad magic rubbing off on us.

*Lily:* Don't get superstitious on me. [*Laughs*]

*Godfrey:* My little voice told me something like this could happen.

*Lily:* That little voice got you wound too tight! Shucks, I think you need to come uptown with me and get a little taste of reality.

*Godfrey:* Sister, I don't care what you think, that's the honest-to-God truth. But I do care what my gals think. [*To* ERNESTINE] Darling, you gonna have to go up to school and apologize.

*Ernestine:* Why's that, Daddy?

*Lily:* Ya gonna make the chile do that? Punish her for having thoughts. How are we ever gonna get ahead? Have you read it? It might be a fine piece of writing, Godfrey. Look here, it says –

*Godfrey:* I don't care what it say, but it upset that white teacher and she seemed like a smart lady.

[LILY *makes a show of sitting down to read the essay.*]

© UCLES 2024


stemup.co.uk

*Lily:* I like the way it starts already. Simple, don't bother with them highfalutin words.

[GODFREY *snatches the essay out of* LILY*'s hand.*]

*Godfrey:* She gonna apologize!

[ERNESTINE *shakes her head furiously.*]

And I'm going to tell you once, then I'm gonna leave it alone: we were doing just fine without your sorta learning. We don't want and we don't need it.

*Lily:* Well, I promised my mama I'd look after these babies. They need a woman's voice in this house, that's what they need.

*Godfrey:* Maybe you ain't the right woman.

[LILY *stares long and hard, fighting back the urge to respond.* GODFREY *turns away from her and jots down some notes in his pad.*]

*Lily:* That's right! Go on, ask Father Divine! Ask him what to think.

[*Lights begin to fade on a simmering* GODFREY*, leaving* ERNESTINE *and a laughing* LILY *in separate pools of light.*]

*Ernestine:* I … Darling Angel, apologize for anything in my essay that might suggest that communism is a good thing. My intent was to deal with the labor movement in the United States, which primarily consists of God-fearing patriotic Americans dedicated to improving the conditions for the working man.

[*She crosses her heart. The National Anthem plays.*]

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America … [*Her eyes cloud over with tears*]

(*from* Act 1, Scene 3)

How does Nottage powerfully convey the conflict between Godfrey and Lily at this moment in the play?

**Or** **1 (b)** Explore the ways in which Nottage movingly depicts the marriage between Gerte and Godfrey.



stemup.co.uk

## WOLE SOYINKA: *Death and the King's Horseman*

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 2 (a)** Read this passage carefully, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Iyaloja:* We called you leader and oh, how you led us on.

**Content removed due to copyright restrictions.**

**Content removed due to copyright restrictions.**

There are some who choose to reverse
the cycle of our being.

(*from* Scene 5)

How does Soyinka make this such a powerful moment in the play?

**Or** **2 (b)** Explore how Soyinka strikingly conveys the way Simon Pilkings thinks and feels about Yoruba customs.

## TENNESSEE WILLIAMS: *A Streetcar Named Desire*

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 3 (a)** Read this passage carefully, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Stella:* My sister lived at Belle Reve.

**Content removed due to copyright restrictions.**

© UCLES 2024


stemup.co.uk

**Content removed due to copyright restrictions.**

[*The bathroom door is opened and* BLANCHE *thrusts her head out holding a towel about her hair.*]

(*from* Scene 7)

In what ways does Williams make this moment in the play so shocking?

**Or** **3 (b)** Explore how Williams vividly conveys the feelings Blanche and Mitch have for each other.



stemup.co.uk

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 4 (a)** Read this passage carefully, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Lysander:* How now, my love! Why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

*Hermia:* Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes.

*Lysander:* Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But either it was different in blood –

*Hermia:* O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low.

*Lysander:* Or else misgraffed in respect of years –

*Hermia:* O spite! too old to be engag'd to young.

*Lysander:* Or else it stood upon the choice of friends –

*Hermia:* O hell! to choose love by another's eyes.

*Lysander:* Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness, did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,
Brief as the lightning in the collied night
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say 'Behold!'
The jaws of darkness do devour it up;
So quick bright things come to confusion.

*Hermia:* If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny.
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor Fancy's followers.

*Lysander:* A good persuasion; therefore, hear me, Hermia:
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child –
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues –
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena
To do observance to a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.

*Hermia:* My good Lysander!
I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow, with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,



stemup.co.uk

By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage Queen,
When the false Troyan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

*Lysander:* Keep promise, love.

(*from* Act 1, Scene 1)

In what ways does Shakespeare make this early moment in the play so memorable?

**Or** **4 (b)** How does Shakespeare's use of magic contribute to the dramatic impact of the play?



stemup.co.uk

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 5 (a)** Read this passage carefully, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Desdemona:* I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts
By being in his eye. Most gracious Duke,
To my unfolding lend your prosperous ear,
And let me find a charter in your voice
T' assist my simpleness.

*Duke:* What would you, Desdemona?

*Desdemona:* That I did love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world. My heart's subdu'd
Even to the very quality of my lord:
I saw Othello's visage in his mind;
And to his honours and his valiant parts
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
The rites for why I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.

*Othello:* Let her have your voice.
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not
To please the palate of my appetite;
Nor to comply with heat – the young affects
In me defunct – and proper satisfaction;
But to be free and bounteous to her mind.
And heaven defend your good souls that you think
I will your serious and great business scant
For she is with me. No, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness
My speculative and offic'd instruments,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let huswives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation!

*Duke:* Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going. Th' affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it. You must away to-night.

*Desdemona:* To-night, my lord!

*Duke:* This night.

*Othello:* With all my heart.

*Duke:* At nine i' th' morning here we'll meet again.
Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you;
With such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.

© UCLES 2024


stemup.co.uk

*Othello:* So please your Grace, my ancient;
A man he is of honesty and trust.
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good Grace shall think
To be sent after me.

*Duke:* Let it be so.
Good night to every one. [*To* BRABANTIO] And, noble signior,
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

*1 Senator:* Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well.

*Brabantio:* Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt* DUKE, SENATORS, OFFICERS]

*Othello:* My life upon her faith! – Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee.
I prithee let thy wife attend on her.

(*from* Act 1, Scene 3)

How does Shakespeare strikingly portray the characters at this early moment in the play?

**Or** **5 (b)** To what extent does Shakespeare suggest that Emilia is to blame for Desdemona's death?

© UCLES 2024


stemup.co.uk

**BLANK PAGE**

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced online in the Cambridge Assessment International Education Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download at www.cambridgeinternational.org after the live examination series.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is part of Cambridge Assessment. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is a department of the University of Cambridge.

© UCLES 2024



stemup.co.uk

| Surname | StemUp Model Solution |
| --- | --- |
| Answer booklet | Write the question number in the left-hand margin at the start of each answer. |

Question number

1a

At this moment Nottage turns a schoolgirl's essay into a battleground, and the conflict between Godfrey and Lily becomes a struggle over who will shape Ernestine's mind. What makes it so powerful is that the argument moves from comic sparring to genuine hurt, and that the person who pays the price is the child standing between them.

Nottage frames the quarrel through Ernestine's narration. Her dry irony, that "the mistake was using the word 'worker' too liberally", shows a girl who already sees the absurdity of the adults around her, and the joke about the Levys, who speak to the family only because they need someone in "the darkness on Friday night", reveals a world of suspicion in which the family is isolated from every side. The audience therefore enters the scene knowing that Godfrey's fear of disgrace is real, which makes his anger understandable even when it is unjust.

Godfrey's first line is "Hushed", and the stage direction is revealing: he is a man who wants to keep trouble quiet. His accusation, "It's all your fault, ya know", is blunt and childlike, while Lily's reply, "And I suppose I'm to blame for segregation, war and polio as well", deflates him with comic exaggeration. Nottage makes their voices sharply different. Godfrey speaks of himself as "a working man" who must "ride the bus each morning", so his concern is survival and respectability; Lily mocks his meanness with the pun that he is surprised not to be "walking as tight as you are". Her teasing, and the "playful jabs" to which he responds with feigned laughter, keep the conflict on the surface for a while, but the word "feigns" warns us that his good humour is a mask.

Question number

The deeper division is about belief. Godfrey blames Lily's "old bad magic" and trusts his "little voice", the language of superstition and faith, whereas Lily calls for "a little taste of reality" and praises a mind "that ain't limited to a few pages in the Bible". Nottage sets religion against politics, obedience against questioning, and Lily's rhetorical question, "Punish her for having thoughts", puts the moral weight on her side. Yet Godfrey is not simply a tyrant. His admission, "I do care what my gals think", is tender, and his deference to the "white teacher" who "seemed like a smart lady" exposes how deeply he has learned to defer to white authority. The audience may feel that his harshness grows out of fear rather than cruelty.

The conflict reaches its height through physical action. Lily "makes a show" of reading the essay and enjoys its plainness, until Godfrey "snatches" it from her hand. The violent verb turns the essay into a possession to be fought over, and his exclamation, "She gonna apologize!", is a command delivered over his daughter's head while she "shakes her head furiously". His dismissal of "your sorta learning", with its flat repetition of "We don't want and we don't need it", shuts down the debate.

The most wounding line is the quietest. When Lily claims the children need "a woman's voice", Godfrey answers, "Maybe you ain't the right woman." The short sentence strikes at her role in the family and perhaps at her memory of her dead sister, and the stage direction, which has her staring "long and hard, fighting back the urge to respond", lets silence carry the pain. Her retort, "Go on, ask Father Divine!", is scornful, suggesting that Godfrey cannot think for himself, and the lighting divides them literally: Godfrey fades "simmering" while Lily laughs in a separate pool of light.

Question number

Nottage ends not with the adults but with Ernestine's forced apology. Its stiff, official phrases, such as "God-fearing patriotic Americans", sound borrowed rather than felt, and as she pledges allegiance her "eyes cloud over with tears". This final image is deeply moving, because it shows the true cost of the quarrel: a bright girl made to recite words she does not believe, caught between her father's fearful conformity and her aunt's defiant freedom.

2b

Simon Pilkings, the District Officer, thinks about Yoruba customs with a mixture of amused contempt, impatience and a firm belief in his own good intentions. What makes Soyinka's portrayal so striking is that Pilkings never sees himself as cruel: he regards the customs around him as quaint at best and barbaric at worst, and his certainty that he knows better is exactly what brings about the catastrophe of the play.

Soyinka's most memorable image of this attitude comes in Scene 2, when the audience first meets Pilkings and his wife Jane dancing a tango in the costume of the egungun, the masquerade through which the ancestral dead are honoured. The stage picture is deliberately jarring. A sacred garment, which Amusa cannot even bear to look at, has become fancy dress for a colonial ball, and the contrast between the Western dance and the costume of the dead sums up Pilkings's view that Yoruba belief is a set of props he may pick up and put down as he pleases. When Amusa, horrified, refuses to deliver his report to a man dressed in this way, Pilkings is exasperated rather than embarrassed. He finds it absurd that Amusa, a Muslim, should still fear the cult, and Soyinka uses this moment to show that Pilkings cannot imagine a belief that runs deeper than official religion.

His treatment of his servant Joseph reveals the same blindness. Pilkings questions

Question number

Joseph about the drumming he hears and expects simple, rational answers, and when Joseph explains that the drums might mean more than one thing, Pilkings is irritated by what he takes to be confusion. Soyinka makes the scene comic, but the comedy has an edge: Pilkings treats a whole system of meaning as a nuisance standing in the way of his evening. He is also casually mocking of Joseph's Christianity, which suggests that he respects no belief at all very deeply, his own included.

When he learns that Elesin intends to die that night, Pilkings's feelings harden into moral outrage. To him the ritual death is simply a suicide, something primitive that a civilised administration must stop, and he acts quickly and with energy. Soyinka allows him a certain decency here: he believes he is saving a life. But the audience, who have already watched Elesin in the marketplace preparing joyfully for a passage that will keep the world of the living in harmony with the ancestors, understand what Pilkings does not, that his intervention is not rescue but violation.

The conversation that Jane has with Olunde in Scene 4 makes Pilkings's attitude look even more limited. We learn that Pilkings helped Olunde travel to England to study medicine against his father's wishes, and Pilkings clearly regards this as proof of his kindness and as the young man's escape from his traditions. The irony is sharp, because Olunde has returned precisely to bury his father and to honour the custom Pilkings despises. Olunde's calm, intelligent defence of his people's values exposes the arrogance of a coloniser who assumes that education must mean conversion to his own way of seeing.

In the final scene Soyinka shows the consequences. Pilkings has imprisoned Elesin in a cell where slaves were once held, an ironic setting that links his "civilising"

Question number

mission to an older history of domination. He speaks to Elesin with a kind of nervous self-justification, and he is wary and suspicious of Iyaloja, treating her and the women as a threat to be managed. When Olunde's body is brought in, the tragedy that Pilkings has caused by preventing one death ends in two: Olunde's, and then Elesin's own suicide in his chains. Pilkings is left baffled and powerless in the presence of a meaning he never understood, while Iyaloja's scorn makes clear that he has destroyed what he could not see.

Overall, Soyinka presents Pilkings less as a villain than as a man trapped inside his own assumptions. His jokes, his costume and his confident orders all show a mind that measures Yoruba custom by English standards and finds it wanting. The striking effect is that the audience comes to see the customs Pilkings mocks as profound and coherent, and the colonial officer, so sure of his reason, as the one who is truly blind.

3b

Williams presents the relationship between Blanche and Mitch as a fragile hope built on loneliness and illusion. Each sees in the other a means of escape, Blanche from her past and Mitch from his solitude, but because Blanche's feelings are mixed with calculation and Mitch's with idealism, their love cannot survive the truth. Williams conveys these feelings vividly through staging, light, music and the gap between what the characters say and what they want.

From their first meeting in Scene 3 Williams shows that Blanche is performing. While the poker game rages, she notices that Mitch seems "superior to the others", and with him she plays the delicate Southern lady. Her request that he put a paper lantern over the naked bulb is one of the play's central images: she cannot stand "a naked light bulb, any more than I can a rude remark or a vulgar action".

Question number

The lantern softens the light, just as Blanche softens the truth about her age and her history, and Mitch, gentle and slightly clumsy, is charmed. His feelings are sincere; he speaks tenderly of the dying girl who gave him his cigarette case, and Blanche responds with genuine sympathy, which suggests that beneath the act she recognises a fellow sufferer.

Williams makes Blanche's motives painfully clear to the audience, if not to Mitch. In Scene 5 she admits to Stella that she wants Mitch because she needs security, and her confession that she wants "to deceive him enough to make him" want her is startlingly honest. The verb "deceive" shows that her affection is entangled with desperation, yet the wish to be wanted also reveals how lonely she is. Her greeting of him as her "Rosenkavalier" at the end of that scene, demanding that he bow to her, is playful and theatrical, while Mitch's earnest talk of his mother, his weight and his work shows a simple man trying hard to impress.

The emotional climax comes at the end of Scene 6. Blanche tells Mitch the story of her young husband, Allan, his secret and his suicide, and Williams supports her memory with the Varsouviana polka and the gunshot that only she hears. Here her feelings for Mitch become real need rather than strategy. Mitch's response, "You need somebody. And I need somebody, too", is plain and moving in its simplicity, and he takes her in his arms. Blanche's broken reply, that sometimes there is God "so quickly", turns a rather awkward courtship into something close to grace. For a moment the audience believes that two damaged people might rescue each other.

Williams then destroys this hope. In Scene 7 Stanley tells Stella about Blanche's past, and in Scene 8 the empty chair at Blanche's birthday supper is a silent, painful sign that Mitch has been told. When he arrives in Scene 9, drunk and bitter, the light becomes the symbol of their conflict. He tears the paper lantern

Question number

from the bulb because he wants to see her clearly, and Blanche's protest, "I don't want realism. I want magic!", sums up the difference between them. She insists, "I don't tell the truth, I tell what ought to be truth", a line that is both an evasion and a strange kind of honesty. Mitch's wounded pride turns into crudeness: he tries to take what he thinks she owes him, but refuses to marry her, saying she is not clean enough to bring into the house with his mother. Blanche drives him away by screaming "Fire!", a cry that reveals how alone she has become.

Williams does not let Mitch's feelings simply disappear. In the final scene, at the poker table, he cannot look at Blanche, and when she is taken away he breaks down and lashes out at Stanley, blaming him for what has happened. His grief suggests that his love was real, if too weak to survive.

In the end Williams presents Blanche and Mitch as two lonely people whose feelings are genuine but cannot overcome illusion on one side and conventional morality on the other. The vividness lies in the way he stages their hope and its collapse through light and sound, so that the audience feels both the tenderness of their bond and the cruelty of its end.

4a This early moment is memorable because Shakespeare takes two lovers who have just been threatened with death or a nunnery and lets them turn their despair into poetry, and then into a plan. The passage moves from tears to a shared lament, from lament to patience, and finally to the bold decision to run away, so that in a few lines it sets out the play's central idea: that "The course of true love never did run smooth".

The opening exchange is tender and quietly witty. Lysander's question, "Why is

Question number

your cheek so pale?", and his image of the "roses" fading from Hermia's cheek use the conventional language of love poetry, but Hermia answers by extending his metaphor: the roses lack "rain", which she could easily supply "from the tempest of my eyes". The hyperbole is touching, because it shows her grief, yet it is also playful, as if even in sorrow the lovers enjoy matching each other's conceits. Shakespeare establishes them as true partners in feeling and in language.

The most striking part of the passage is the duet that follows. Lysander lists the obstacles that history and "tale" have placed in love's way, and Hermia completes each line with an exclamation: "O cross!", "O spite!", "O hell!". This stichomythia gives the speech the rhythm of a litany or a lament sung by two voices, and the pattern is almost formal, as though they are rehearsing a familiar story. Each complaint is precise: love may be "different in blood", "misgraffed in respect of years", or subject to "the choice of friends". The last of these matters most, because Hermia's cry, "to choose love by another's eyes", is exactly her situation, since Egeus has chosen Demetrius for her. The motif of eyes, of seeing and choosing, will also become central once the love-juice makes lovers' eyes betray them in the wood.

Lysander's long speech about love that is "momentary as a sound" is the poetic heart of the passage. Shakespeare builds a series of similes, "Swift as a shadow, short as any dream, / Brief as the lightning in the collied night", each shorter and quicker than the last, so that the rhythm itself seems to rush past. The lightning that "unfolds both heaven and earth" before "The jaws of darkness do devour it up" is a vivid, almost violent image of beauty swallowed by night, and the closing line, "So quick bright things come to confusion", is haunting in its simplicity. It is memorable partly because it is so dark for a comedy; Shakespeare reminds us that the threat to the lovers, under "the sharp Athenian law", is serious. The mention

Question number

of "dream" also quietly anticipates the dreamlike confusion to come.

Hermia's response shows a different side of her. She argues that if true lovers have always been crossed, their suffering is "an edict in destiny", and they must "teach our trial patience". Her calm reasoning contrasts with Lysander's lyrical gloom, and the list of love's companions, "thoughts and dreams and sighs, / Wishes and tears", has a gentle, rueful tone. Lysander's reply, "A good persuasion", shows him seizing on her words and turning patience into action. His plan is practical, almost businesslike, with a wealthy aunt "seven leagues" beyond the reach of Athens. The wood, where he once met Hermia with Helena "To do observance to a morn of May", is introduced here as a place of freedom and natural celebration, setting up the play's movement from the strict city to the magical forest.

Hermia's vow ends the passage memorably. She swears by "Cupid's strongest bow", by "the simplicity of Venus' doves", and by classical tragic lovers, and her speech shifts into rhyming couplets that give it the feeling of a solemn spell. Yet there is humour too: in swearing by "all the vows that ever men have broke, / In number more than ever women spoke", she teases Lysander even while pledging herself to him, and the reference to the "false Troyan" who abandoned Dido hints, with dramatic irony, at the faithlessness Lysander will soon show. His brief reply, "Keep promise, love", is simple and sincere, and the audience leaves the moment hopeful but uneasy, knowing that in this play, as he has said, true love will not run smooth.

4b

Magic is the engine of A Midsummer Night's Dream. It drives the comic confusions of the plot, creates the play's most memorable stage images, and allows Shakespeare to explore the irrational, changeable nature of love. Its dramatic

Question number

impact comes from the way it makes the audience laugh at human folly while also reminding them how strange and dreamlike desire can be.

Shakespeare prepares for magic by contrasting the wood with Athens. In the opening scene the city is ruled by "the sharp Athenian law", which gives Egeus the power to demand his daughter's obedience or her death. The wood outside the town is a world beyond that law, ruled instead by Oberon and Titania, and when the fairies first appear in Act 2 the verse changes to light, lyrical rhythms that signal a different order of things. We also learn that the quarrel between the fairy king and queen over the changeling boy has thrown nature itself into disorder, with seasons confused and crops ruined. Magic is therefore presented not as mere decoration but as a powerful force whose moods affect the whole world.

The love-juice is the central device. Oberon describes the flower that Cupid's arrow struck, "love-in-idleness", whose juice laid on sleeping eyelids will make a person dote on the next creature seen. This idea turns Shakespeare's recurring motif of eyes into a plot mechanism, and its dramatic impact depends on dramatic irony. Oberon, pitying Helena, sends Puck to anoint the "Athenian" youth, but Puck finds Lysander instead. The audience knows the mistake while the lovers do not, and so we watch Lysander wake and fall instantly for Helena, abandoning Hermia, with comic speed. When Puck's attempt to correct the error leaves both young men pursuing Helena, the confusion reaches farcical heights. Helena believes she is being mocked, Hermia is bewildered and furious, and the quarrel of Act 3 Scene 2 becomes one of the funniest scenes in the play. Puck's delighted comment, "Lord, what fools these mortals be!", invites the audience to share his amused, superior view of human love.

Yet the magic also says something serious. The lovers' affections change at the

Question number

touch of a flower, which suggests that human desire is already irrational and fickle, as Helena observed earlier when she said that love looks "not with the eyes, but with the mind". Shakespeare uses the supernatural to exaggerate what is already true: that people in love can be unjust, cruel and blind. The magic makes these truths comic rather than tragic, but the audience still sees them clearly.

The most striking use of magic is Oberon's revenge on Titania. Puck transforms Bottom's head into an ass's head, and Titania, waking under the spell, falls in love with him. The stage image of the delicate fairy queen caressing the weaver, adorning him with flowers while her fairies attend to his needs, is both absurd and strangely tender. Bottom's cheerful, matter-of-fact response to the situation adds to the comedy, since he seems far less amazed than anyone else would be. At the same time, this episode shows magic as a tool of power: Oberon humiliates Titania to win the changeling boy, and the audience may feel a little uneasy at how easily she is controlled.

Magic is finally the means of resolution. Oberon orders the spells to be reversed, Titania is released and reconciled with him, and Lysander's eyes are restored, while Demetrius is left enchanted, now loving Helena as he once did. The lovers wake believing their experiences were a dream, and Bottom's famous attempt to describe his "most rare vision" turns the confusion into wonder. When the couples return to Athens, the harsh law is overruled by Theseus, so magic has achieved what the city could not. In the final scene the fairies bless the marriages, and Puck's epilogue asks the audience to think of the whole play as a dream, linking the magic of the fairies to the magic of theatre itself.

Overall, Shakespeare's use of magic gives the play its comic energy, its spectacle and its meaning. It creates confusion and laughter, exposes the foolishness of love,

Question number

and finally restores harmony, leaving the audience, like the lovers, uncertain where dreaming ends and waking begins.

Sa

At this early moment Shakespeare presents the characters at a point of apparent triumph, as Desdemona and Othello publicly defend their love before the Venetian senate. Yet he also fills the scene with small warning signs, so that the confident, loving couple, the brisk Duke and the bitter Brabantio are all portrayed in ways that look forward to the tragedy to come.

Desdemona is portrayed strikingly as a woman of courage and independence. She begins politely, asking the "Most gracious Duke" to lend her his "prosperous ear", but her request is bold: she will not stay in her father's house and wishes to go to war with her husband. Her declaration, "That I did love the Moor to live with him", is plain and unashamed, and the phrase "My downright violence and storm of fortunes / May trumpet to the world" uses dramatic, almost military language for her elopement, as if she is proud of her defiance. The most moving line is "I saw Othello's visage in his mind". Shakespeare makes her answer the prejudice around her: she loves him not for his appearance but for his inner qualities, his "honours and his valiant parts". The verb "consecrate" gives her love a religious seriousness. She also refuses to be "A moth of peace", left behind while he goes to war, and the image suggests both something fragile and useless. Her final short sentence, "Let me go with him", is direct and determined. For an audience, she seems a remarkably strong young woman, yet her frankness about wanting "The rites for why I love him" will later be twisted by Iago into evidence of appetite.

Othello is portrayed as dignified and self-controlled. He supports her with "Let her have your voice", but he takes care to deny any merely physical motive, insisting

Question number

that he does not ask "To please the palate of my appetite". He claims that youthful passion is "defunct" in him and that he wishes only to be "free and bounteous to her mind". This shows his respect for her, but it may also reveal an anxiety to appear as the senate wants him to appear: a soldier whose love will never distract him from duty. His elaborate vow that if "light-wing'd toys / Of feather'd Cupid" ever corrupt his business, then "huswives" may "make a skillet of my helm", is grand and confident, even comic in its image of his helmet turned into a cooking pot. The irony is painful, because the play will show love and jealousy destroying his judgement completely. His eager "With all my heart" when ordered to leave "To-night" contrasts with Desdemona's surprised "To-night, my lord!", a small hint that his military life comes first.

The Duke is portrayed as practical and generous. His short, brisk lines, "Th' affair cries haste, / And speed must answer it", show the urgency of the Turkish threat, and his parting couplet to Brabantio, "Your son-in-law is far more fair than black", is meant kindly. Yet it reveals how even Othello's supporters think in racial terms, equating "fair" with virtue and "black" with its opposite. The Senator's "use Desdemona well" is friendly but adds to a sense that Othello's conduct is being watched.

Brabantio's bitter couplet is the most ominous moment in the passage. "Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: / She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee." The rhyme gives it the force of a curse or prophecy, and the idea that a daughter who deceived once will deceive again plants a seed that Iago will later water. Othello answers with complete faith, "My life upon her faith!", a line of terrible dramatic irony, since his life will indeed be staked on his belief in her.

Finally, Shakespeare places Iago at the centre without letting him speak. Othello

Question number

calls him "A man he is of honesty and trust", entrusts his wife to his "conveyance", and ends with "Honest Iago, / My Desdemona must I leave to thee." The repeated word "honest" is chilling for an audience who already know Iago's hatred. In this way Shakespeare strikingly portrays characters who are noble, loving and trusting, while making us fear that this trust is exactly what will be used to destroy them.

5b Shakespeare does make Emilia partly responsible for Desdemona's death, because the handkerchief, the single "trifle" on which the tragedy turns, passes through her hands and she keeps silent about it. Yet the play is arranged so that her guilt is one of small, human failings rather than malice, and by the final scene she becomes the fiercest voice of truth in the play. To me, Shakespeare suggests she is to blame only in the way that ordinary loyalty and fear can feed a villain's plan; the real murderers are Iago's cunning and Othello's jealousy.

The case against Emilia rests on Act 3 Scene 3. When Desdemona drops the handkerchief, Emilia picks it up with an apparently innocent remark, "I am glad I have found this napkin", but she knows exactly what it means, calling it Desdemona's "first remembrance from the Moor". She also admits that her "wayward husband" has "a hundred times" urged her to steal it. Her decision to hand it over anyway is summed up in the chilling line "I nothing but to please his fantasy." The clipped syntax, with its missing verb, sounds almost like a reflex: Emilia does not think, she obeys. Shakespeare lets the audience see that she senses danger, since she pleads "Give't me again" and imagines that Desdemona will "run mad" without it, yet she lets Iago snatch it. The dramatic irony is painful, because we already know from Iago's soliloquies that such "trifles light as air" will become "proofs of holy writ" to a jealous mind.

Question number

Her guilt deepens in Act 3 Scene 4. When Desdemona asks where she could have lost the handkerchief, Emilia simply replies "I know not, madam." This short, flat lie is perhaps her most damning moment, because she then stands by while Othello demands it with mounting fury. Shakespeare seems to invite us to wonder why she does not speak. Her bitter comment that men "are all but stomachs, and we all but food" hints at an answer: she has learned that women are consumed and discarded, and she may fear her own husband too much to cross him.

However, Shakespeare complicates any simple verdict. Emilia never knows the use Iago intends for the handkerchief, and in Act 4 Scene 2 she almost exposes the plot herself, guessing that "some eternal villain, / Some busy and insinuating rogue" has slandered her mistress. The heaped insults and alliteration in "cogging, cozening slave" show her outrage, and the irony is that she is describing Iago to his face. She is blind, not wicked. In the Willow Scene her frank, worldly voice ("it is their husbands' faults / If wives do fall") offers Desdemona an alternative view of marriage, which deepens the pathos: Emilia is the only person who truly cares for her mistress.

The final scene transforms her. Discovering the murder, she abandons all caution, crying "O, the more angel she, / And you the blacker devil!" and calling Othello "O gull! O dolt! / As ignorant as dirt!" The exclamations are raw and fearless, and her line "'Tis proper I obey him, but not now" marks a decisive break from the obedience that earlier made her complicit. Repeating "Villainy, villainy, villainy!", she pieces the truth together and reveals the handkerchief's story, and Iago stabs her for it. Her dying wish to "play the swan, / And die in music" echoes Desdemona's willow song, binding the two women together as victims rather than setting Emilia apart as a culprit. Even Desdemona's last words, "Nobody; I myself",

Question number

refuse to blame anyone but herself, which makes us reluctant to blame anyone else beside her.

Ultimately, I think Shakespeare suggests that Emilia carries a real but limited share of blame. Her silence over the handkerchief gives Iago his "ocular proof", and the play does not excuse it. But her fault grows out of a marriage in which she has learned to please a cruel husband, and she pays for her truth-telling with her life. The greater responsibility lies with Iago, who manipulates everyone, and with Othello, whose own hand smothers Desdemona. Emilia's tragedy is that she sees clearly only when it is too late.