

# Eduqas English Language and Literature GCE: Component 2

Practising the extract question (Section A): Much Ado About Nothing (*The Collins Alexander Complete Works of William Shakespeare*)

“By focusing on the linguistic and literary techniques used, explore the dramatic significance of this extract from...”

AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

AO2: Analyse the ways in which meanings are shaped in text.

1.

Select a passage from the play about 30-35 lines long. It should make sense on its own. Look at past papers for examples of this if required.

2.

Look up any words you are not familiar with e.g. “victual”, “skirmish”, “pestilence” from 1i.

## 3. Now ask yourself:

- How does this extract relate to what has gone before? As an example, heavy dramatic irony is created in 3v as we are aware that two scenes earlier Claudio declared his intention to “shame” Hero in the church. Only mention other parts of the play briefly, in passing, where necessary.
- Who is on stage? How does this extract introduce the characters? If there is more than one character, what is their relationship at this point? What is going on between them? How is this conveyed in the language?
- Are there any striking visual effects (e.g. someone kneeling, someone on a balcony, someone brandishing a sword in threat?) If so, how do they relate to the language?
- Is there any dramatic irony? What effect does it have?
- Speech types (e.g. prose or verse, soliloquy, stichomythia)? What effect does it have?
- What kind of tone is used? Any contrasts?
- Conversation analysis: Is there a dominant speaker? What does it tell us?
- Grice’s maxims – are any being flouted or broken? What effect do they have?
- How is imagery and lexis? What effect do they have?
- If comic language is used, are there any euphuisms? What effect do they create?

## Euphuistic language

The prose language of the play (especially that of Benedick and Beatrice) is influenced by John Lyly’s *Euphues*. Common features include:

<b>Parallelism</b>	“still be talking/are you yet living?” “God forbid it should be so!/ God forbid it should be otherwise” - 1i, “speak low if you speak love” - 2i
<b>Antithesis</b>	“merry war” - 1i, “too <u>low</u> for a <u>high</u> praise, too <u>brown</u> for a <u>fair</u> praise and too <u>little</u> for a <u>great</u> praise”, “ <u>first</u> of <u>May/last</u> of <u>December</u> ” “not till a <u>hot</u> <u>January</u> ” - 1i; “Because I will not do them the <u>wrong</u> to mistrust any, I will do myself the <u>right</u> to...” (Some of these are combined with other features such as <i>oxymoron</i> , <i>puns</i> and <i>parallelism</i> .)
<b>Chiasmus</b>	“How much better it is to <u>weep</u> at <u>joy</u> than to <u>joy</u> at <u>weeping</u> !” - 1i
<b>Puns</b>	“A kind overflow of kindness” - 1i l.25; “You have put him down./So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools” -2i l.252 “Lady Beatrice, I will <u>get</u> you one....Your father <u>got</u> excellent husbands” -2i , l.289
<b>Multiple rhetorical questions</b>	“What should I do with him? Dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting gentlewoman?” - 2i
<b>Sound patterns</b>	<i>alliteration</i> (“a <u>b</u> ird/ <u>b</u> etter than a <u>b</u> east”1i, “ <u>m</u> annerly- <u>m</u> odest as a <u>m</u> asure”2i); <i>assonance</i> (“full of <u>s</u> tate and <u>a</u> ncientry” 2i);

4.

Now write your response (24 minutes total). If you have a study partner, check each other’s work. If not, come back to it in 24 hours and reassess it.

### Do

- Start directly and relevantly; look for patterns of language and imagery; make and support points succinctly; always say what effect the language has. Remember that it’s a play!

### Don’t

- Write lengthy and redundant introductions e.g. “This is from Act 1 Scene 1 of Much Ado About Nothing, written in 1598...”; make extended references to context; try to take account of other readings or interpretations; use overlong quotations or copy out large portions of the text.