

Please write clearly in block capitals.

School

Class

Name

Teacher

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel · 2025 series · mapped to the AQA 8702 specification

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- no other materials.

You must not use a dictionary.

Instructions

- Answer ONE question from Section A and ONE question from Section B.
- You must not use a copy of the texts in the examination.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your reading and writing, including the range of your vocabulary and sentence structures, and the accuracy of your spelling and punctuation.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 64.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation.

| For Examiner's Use |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Question           | Mark |
| 1                  |      |
| 2                  |      |
| TOTAL              |      |

Original GCSE English Literature Paper 1 skills practice using Macbeth and A Christmas Carol. This shorter set offers only these text choices, unlike an official AQA 8702 paper. Questions are original; printed extracts are from public-domain works. Not affiliated with AQA. © 2026 Learnaroo Hub Ltd.

## Section A — Shakespeare

## Macbeth – William Shakespeare

Answer the question on Macbeth. Read the following extract and then answer the question that follows.

## Extract from Macbeth

*At this point in the play, Macbeth is alone, considering whether he should murder King Duncan.*

MACBETH:

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well  
It were done quickly. If th'assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
With his surcease success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases  
We still have judgment here, that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
To plague th'inventor. This even-handed justice  
Commends th'ingredients of our poisoned chalice  
To our own lips.

1

Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a character driven by ambition.

*Write about: how Shakespeare presents Macbeth in this speech; how Shakespeare presents ambition in the play as a whole.*

AO4 (4 marks) are available for the range of vocabulary and sentence structures, and for the accuracy of spelling and punctuation, in this question.

**[34 marks]**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Do not  
write  
outside the  
box

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## Section B — The 19th-century novel

## A Christmas Carol – Charles Dickens

Answer the question on *A Christmas Carol*. Read the following extract and then answer the question that follows.

## Extract from A Christmas Carol

*This extract is from the opening of the novel (Stave One). Here the narrator describes Scrooge.*

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

2

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present Scrooge as a cold and unpleasant man?

*Write about: how Dickens presents Scrooge in this extract; how Dickens presents Scrooge in the novel as a whole.*

**[30 marks]**

---

---

---

Do not  
write  
outside the  
box

Handwriting practice area with 25 horizontal lines.

END OF QUESTIONS