

Looking closely at the Assessment Objectives

A01

Read, understand and respond to texts. Candidates should be able to

- **Maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response.**
- **Use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.**

This AO focuses clearly on candidates' response to a text and the need to maintain a critical style. This represents a shift away from legacy GCSE, which places more of an emphasis on themes, characters and ideas, and instead seeks to encourage candidates to provide a **personal response** to these aspects.

Candidates are expected to **use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations**. Where candidates have sections on the text provided as part of the question they can use quotations, they can also use textual references. Textual references can be used in different ways:

- **quoting**
- **summarising** the text
- **paraphrasing**
- referencing **single words**

These can all be powerful ways in which to support responses in closed book contexts. The accuracy of candidates' references are not assessed.