

PART SIX: GRADE BOOSTER

ASSESSMENT FOCUS

WHAT ARE YOU BEING ASKED TO FOCUS ON?

The questions or tasks you are set will be based around the four **Assessment Objectives**, **AO1** to **AO4**.

You may get more marks for certain **AOs** than others depending on which unit you are working on. Check with your teacher if you are unsure.

WHAT DO THESE AOs ACTUALLY MEAN?

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES	MEANING?
AO1 Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression.	You write about texts in accurate, clear and precise ways so that what you have to say is clear to the marker. You use literary terms (e.g. ' protagonist ') or refer to concepts (e.g. 'a mythical narrative ') in relevant places.
AO2 Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts.	You show that you understand the specific techniques and methods used by the writer(s) to create the text (e.g. narrative voice, dialogue, metaphor). You can explain clearly how these methods affect the meaning.
AO3 Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers.	You are able to see relevant links between different texts. You are able to comment on how others (such as critics) view the text.
AO4 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.	You can explain how social, historical, political or personal backgrounds to the texts affected the writer and how the texts were read when they were first published and at different times since.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR STUDY OR REVISION OF *THE KITE RUNNER*?

Depending on the course you are following, you could be asked to:

- Write about a specific extract and the methods used by Khaled Hosseini in that extract. For example:

How does Hosseini represent how Amir feels about Hassan leaving? (pp. 94–5)

- Respond to a question that challenges you to explore a particular perspective or critical view about the text as a whole. For example:

In what ways can we say that Amir only tells us one version of the story?

- Write about an aspect of *The Kite Runner* that is also a feature of up to two other texts. This may involve comparison between texts, or require that you write about each in turn. For example:

***The Kite Runner* can be seen to be a book about the effects of war. In what ways is its portrayal of war similar to, or different from, *Spies* and *The Ghost Road*?**

TARGETING A HIGH GRADE

Clearly, it is important to know what a high grade answer looks like. It is also important to understand the progression from a lower grade to a high grade. In all cases, it is not enough simply to mention some key points and references – instead, you should explore them in depth, drawing out what is interesting and relevant to the question or issue.

TYPICAL C GRADE FEATURES

FEATURES	EXAMPLES
A01 You use critical vocabulary accurately, and your arguments make sense, are relevant and focus on the task. You show detailed knowledge of the text.	<i>Amir is the narrator of "The Kite Runner". This means it is his perspective from which the story is told and he controls the information we are given.</i>
A02 You can say how some specific aspects of form, structure and language shape meanings.	<i>Amir is narrating the story from a point in time after the narrative has concluded. This allows him to tie together past and future events to create connections.</i>
A03 You consider in detail the connections between texts and also how interpretations of texts differ, with some relevant supporting references.	<i>The question suggests that the novel is about the search for atonement, but as well as seeking to be forgiven for his actions towards Hassan, Amir's journey is surely also about finding a way to live up to his father's legacy. A similar relationship, but reversed can be seen in the father's relationship with the boy in "The Road".</i>
A04 You can write about a range of contextual factors and make some specific and detailed links between these and the task or text.	<i>The concept of Western versus Eastern is important in the novel, but Amir is a product of both societies and attempts somehow to reconcile the two.</i>

TYPICAL FEATURES OF AN A OR A* RESPONSE

FEATURES	EXAMPLES
A01 You use appropriate critical vocabulary and a technically fluent style. Your arguments are well structured, coherent and always relevant, with a very sharp focus on task.	<i>Other than two small sections from Rahim Khan and one from Hassan, Amir's is the only voice we hear. As a result the narrative is informed by Amir's sense of guilt with regard to Hassan, and so we must be careful to evaluate the truth of what he tells us.</i>
A02 You explore and analyse key aspects of form, structure and language and evaluate perceptively how they shape meanings.	<i>The narrative is structured in a largely chronological order. However, the framing scene which opens the book shows us that Amir is narrating the story from its end point. He is therefore able to link together future and past events from within the story and highlight echoes between these events.</i>
A03 You show a detailed and perceptive understanding of issues raised through connections between texts and can consider different interpretations with a sharp evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses. You have a range of excellent supportive references.	<i>Themes of atonement are common in literature, such as Pip's attempts to re-establish his bonds with Joe in "Great Expectations". These themes are very often associated with father-son relationships such as the one between Amir and Baba. Amir's return to Afghanistan is as much about his desire to become the man his father always wanted him to be as it is about reconciling with Hassan's memory. Again, this is similar to Pip's actions towards the end of "Great Expectations". However, Amir's journey is complicated by his desire not only to live up to Baba's wishes but also to become the father to Sohrab that he wished Baba had been to him. In this way he does not simply wish to live up to his father, but also to exceed him.</i>
A04 You show deep, detailed and relevant understanding of how contextual factors link to the text or task.	<i>"The Kite Runner" is as much a text about the recent history of Afghanistan as it is about Amir's journey. His story is intimately linked to the fate of his country, with issues such as the split with Hassan and Amir's success in America occurring contemporaneously with major events in Afghanistan. This also works on a metaphorical level with Amir and Soraya's inability to conceive a child acting symbolically for the dubious future for Afghanistan under the Taliban.</i>