Section A: Shakespeare

Romeo and Juliet

Read the following extract from the start of Act 4 Scene 3 of *Romeo and Juliet* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play Juliet is preparing to take potion which will make it seem as if she is dead.

JULIET
Farewell.—God knows when we shall meet again.
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins
That almost freezes up the heat of life.
I'll call them back again to comfort me.—
Nurse!—What should she do here?
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.
Come, vial.⌜She takes out the vial.⌝
What if this mixture do not work at all?
Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?
⌜She takes out her knife
and puts it down beside her.⌝
No, no, this shall forbid it. Lie thou there.
What if it be a poison which the Friar
Subtly hath ministered to have me dead,
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear it is. And yet methinks it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man.
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point.
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place—
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle
Where for this many hundred years the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are packed;
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies fest'ring in his shroud;

Starting with this extract, explore how Shakespeare presents Juliet in Romeo and Juliet.

Write about:
- how Shakespeare presents Juliet in this extract.
- how Shakespeare presents Juliet in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]