



PIONEER JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH
Higher 1

8811/01

Paper 1 Reading Literature

16 September 2014

Only the set texts *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Age of Innocence* may be taken into the examination room.

It may bear underlining or highlighting.

Any kind of folding or flagging of pages in the text (e.g. use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

Additional materials: Writing Paper

3 Hours

Candidate's Name: _____ **CT Group:** _____

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your statutory name and CT group at the top of every sheet of answer paper used.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Answer three questions, one from each of Sections A, B & C.

At the end of the examination, fasten each answer script securely together.

Submit each answer script to the 3 sections separately.

Submit question paper separately.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

This question paper consists of 7 printed pages and 1 blank page.

Section A

1

Either (a) Write a critical appreciation of the following poem, *A Letter to her Husband, Absent Upon Public Employment* (1633) by Anne Bradstreet, paying close attention to ways in which language, style and form contribute to meaning.

A LETTER TO HER HUSBAND, ABSENT UPON PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

My head, my heart, mine Eyes, my life, nay more,
 My joy, my Magazine of earthly store,
 If two be one, as surely thou and I,
 How stayest thou there, whilst I at *Ipswich*¹ lie?
 So many steps, head from the heart to sever 5
 If but a neck, soon should we be together:
 I like the earth this season, mourn in black,
 My Sun is gone so far in's Zodiac,
 Whom whilst I 'joy'd, nor storms, nor frosts I felt,
 His warmth such frigid colds did cause to melt. 10
 My chilled limbs now numbed lie forlorn;
 Return, return sweet *Sol* from *Capricorn*²;
 In this dead time, alas, what can I more
 Then view those fruits which through thy heat I bore?
 Which sweet contentment yield me for a space, 15
 True living Pictures of their Fathers face.
 O strange effect! now thou art *Southward* gone,
 I weary grow, the tedious day so long;
 But when thou *Northward* to me shalt return,
 I wish my Sun may never set, but burn 20
 Within the Cancer of my glowing breast,
 The welcome house of him my dearest guest.
 Where ever, ever stay, and go not thence,
 Till natures sad decree shall call thee hence;
 Flesh of thy flesh, bone of thy bone, 25
 I here, thou there, yet both but one.

¹Ipswich: One of the oldest towns in Suffolk, England.

²Sol from Capricorn: Refers to the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year; the sun is at its greatest distance from the celestial equator over the tropic of Capricorn.

- Or (b) Write a critical commentary of the following poem, *Ballad by the Fire* (1921) by Edwin Arlington Robinson, considering in detail ways in which language, form and style are used to communicate meaning.

BALLAD BY THE FIRE

Slowly I smoke and hug my knee,
 The while a witless masquerade
 Of things that only children see
 Floats in a mist of light and shade:
 They pass, a flimsy cavalcade¹, 5
 And with a weak, remindful glow,
 The falling embers break and fade,
 As one by one the phantoms go.

Then, with a melancholy glee
 To think where once my fancy strayed, 10
 I muse on what the years may be
 Whose coming tales are all unsaid,
 Till tongs and shovel, snugly laid
 Within their shadowed niches, grow

By grim degrees to pick and spade, 15
 As one by one the phantoms go.

But then, what though the mystic Three
 Around me ply their merry trade? --
 And Charon soon may carry me
 Across the gloomy Stygian glade? -- 20

Be up, my soul! nor be afraid
 Of what some unborn year may show;
 But mind your human debts are paid,
 As one by one the phantoms go.

Life is the game that must be played: 25
 This truth at least, good friend, we know;
 So live and laugh, nor be dismayed
 As one by one the phantoms go.

¹Cavalcade: a formal procession of people walking, on horseback, or riding in vehicles.

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Section B

EDITH WHARTON: *The Age of Innocence*

2

Either (a) Wharton's novel offers us nothing more than non-fulfilled, 'stifled' passion and 'packed' regrets.

To what extent do you agree with the above statement?

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, paying particular attention to how Wharton's work can be read as a museum showpiece through the use of motifs here and elsewhere in the novel.

Avoiding the popular "Wolfe collection," whose anecdotic canvases filled one of the main galleries of the queer wilderness of cast-iron and encaustic tiles known as the Metropolitan Museum, they had wandered down a passage to the room where the "Cesnola antiquities" mouldered in unvisited loneliness.

They had this melancholy retreat to themselves, and seated on the divan enclosing the central steam-radiator, they were staring silently at the glass cabinets mounted in ebonised wood which contained the recovered fragments of Ilium. 5

"It's odd," Madame Olenska said, "I never came here before."

"Ah, well--. Some day, I suppose, it will be a great Museum."

"Yes," she assented absently. 10

She stood up and wandered across the room. Archer, remaining seated, watched the light movements of her figure, so girlish even under its heavy furs, the cleverly planted heron wing in her fur cap, and the way a dark curl lay like a flattened vine spiral on each cheek above the ear. His mind, as always when they first met, was wholly absorbed in the delicious details that made her herself and no other. Presently he rose and approached the case before which she stood. Its glass shelves were crowded with small broken objects--hardly recognisable domestic utensils, ornaments and personal trifles--made of glass, of clay, of discoloured bronze and other time-blurred substances. 15

"It seems cruel," she said, "that after a while nothing matters . . . any more than these little things, that used to be necessary and important to forgotten people, and now have to be guessed at under a magnifying glass and labelled: 'Use unknown.'" 20

"Yes; but meanwhile--"

"Ah, meanwhile--" 25

As she stood there, in her long sealskin coat, her hands thrust in a small round muff, her veil drawn down like a transparent mask to the tip of her nose, and the bunch of violets he had brought her stirring with her quickly-taken breath, it seemed incredible that this pure harmony of line and colour should ever suffer the stupid law of change. 30

"Meanwhile everything matters--that concerns you," he said.

She looked at him thoughtfully, and turned back to the divan. He sat down beside her and waited; but suddenly he heard a step echoing far off down the empty rooms, and felt the pressure of the minutes.

"What is it you wanted to tell me?" she asked, as if she had received the same warning. 35

"What I wanted to tell you?" he rejoined. "Why, that I believe you came to New York because you were afraid."

"Afraid?"

"Of my coming to Washington."

40

She looked down at her muff, and he saw her hands stir in it uneasily.

"Well--?"

"Well--yes," she said.

"You were afraid? You knew--?"

"Yes: I knew . . ."

45

"Well, then?" he insisted.

"Well, then: this is better, isn't it?" she returned with a long questioning sigh.

"Better--?"

"We shall hurt others less. Isn't it, after all, what you always wanted?"

"To have you here, you mean--in reach and yet out of reach? To meet you in this way, on the sly? It's the very reverse of what I want. I told you the other day what I wanted."

50

She hesitated. "And you still think this--worse?"

"A thousand times!" He paused. "It would be easy to lie to you; but the truth is I think it detestable."

55

"Oh, so do I!" she cried with a deep breath of relief.

Chapter XXXI

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Section C

JOHN WEBSTER: *The Duchess of Malfi*

3

Either (a) 'A man driven by equal parts greed and compassion.'

Consider the significance of Webster's portrayal of Bosola.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following extract, discussing the use of causality in *The Duchess of Malfi*, here and elsewhere in the play.

FERDINAND Now you're brave fellows. Caesar's fortune was harder than Pompey's; Caesar died in the arms of prosperity, Pompey at the feet of disgrace. You both died in the field. The pain's nothing; pain many times is taken away with the apprehension of greater, as the tooth-ache with the sight of a barber that comes to pull it out. There's philosophy for you. 5

BOSOLA Now my revenge is perfect.—Sink, thou main cause
Kills FERDINAND
Of my undoing!—The last part of my life
Hath done me best service.

FERDINAND Give me some wet hay; I am broken-winded. 10
I do account this world but a dog-kennel:
I will vault credit and affect high pleasures
Beyond death.

BOSOLA He seems to come to himself,
Now he's so near the bottom. 15

FERDINAND My sister, O my sister! There's the cause on 't.
Whether we fall by ambition, blood, or lust,
Like diamonds, we are cut with our own dust.
[Dies.]

CARDINAL Thou hast thy payment too.

BOSOLA Yes, I hold my weary soul in my teeth; 20
'Tis ready to part from me. I do glory
That thou, which stood'st like a huge pyramid
Begun upon a large and ample base,
Shalt end in a little point, a kind of nothing.

[Enter, below, PESCARA, MALATESTI, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN]

PESCARA How now, my lord! 25

MALATESTI O sad disaster!

<i>RODERIGO</i>	How comes this?	
<i>BOSOLA</i>	Revenge for the Duchess of Malfi murdered By the Arragonian brethren; for Antonio Slain by this hand; for lustful Julia Poison'd by this man; and lastly for myself, That was an actor in the main of all Much 'gainst mine own good nature, yet i' the end Neglected.	30
<i>PESCARA</i>	How now, my lord!	35
<i>CARDINAL</i>	Look to my brother: He gave us these large wounds, as we were struggling Here i' th' rushes. And now, I pray, let me Be laid by and never thought of. <i>[Dies.]</i>	
<i>PESCARA</i>	How fatally, it seems, he did withstand His own rescue!	40
<i>MALATESTA</i>	Thou wretched thing of blood, How came Antonio by his death?	
<i>BOSOLA</i>	In a mist; I know not how: Such a mistake as I have often seen In a play. O, I am gone! We are only like dead walls or vaulted graves, That, ruin'd, yield no echo. Fare you well. It may be pain, but no harm, to me to die In so good a quarrel. O, this gloomy world! In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness, Doth womanish and fearful mankind live! Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust To suffer death or shame for what is just: Mine is another voyage. <i>[Dies.]</i>	45 50 55

Act V, Scene v

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