



**NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION
2014**

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Higher 2

9748/01

Thursday, 18 September 2014

3 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

Set texts may be taken into the examination room. They may bear underlining or highlighting. Any kind of folding or flagging of pages in texts (e.g. use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your CT and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **three** questions, one from each of Sections A, B and C.
You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

Please begin each question on a fresh sheet of paper.
At the end of the examination, fasten your work according to sections.
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This paper consists of 7 printed pages.

Or (b) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which language, style and imagery contribute to each poet's presentation of nature.

A SPRING

To what purpose, April, do you return again?
Beauty is not enough.
You can no longer quiet me with the redness
Of little leaves opening stickily.
I know what I know. 5
The sun is hot on my neck as I observe
The spikes of the crocus.
The smell of the earth is good.
It is apparent that there is no death.
But what does that signify? 10
Not only under ground are the brains of men
Eaten by maggots.
Life in itself
Is nothing,
An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs. 15
It is not enough that yearly, down this hill,
April
Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers.

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)

B I AM VERTICAL

But I would rather be horizontal.
I am not a tree with my root in the soil
Sucking up minerals and motherly love
So that each March I may gleam into leaf,
Nor am I the beauty of a garden bed 5
Attracting my share of Ahs and spectacularly painted,
Unknowing I must soon unpetal.
Compared with me, a tree is immortal
And a flower-head not tall, but more startling,
And I want the one's longevity and the other's daring. 10

Tonight, in the infinitesimal light of the stars,
The trees and the flowers have been strewing their cool odors.
I walk among them, but none of them are noticing.
Sometimes I think that when I am sleeping
I must most perfectly resemble them — 15
Thoughts gone dim.
It is more natural to me, lying down.
Then the sky and I are in open conversation,
And I shall be useful when I lie down finally:
Then the trees may touch me for once, and the flowers have time for me. 20

Sylvia Plath (1932-1963)

Section B

JANE AUSTEN: *Mansfield Park*

2

Either (a) 'The novelist's problem here is to distinguish a love that blinds from one that sharpens the vision.'

Discuss Austen's presentation of love in light of this comment.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, paying particular attention to the portrayal of priorities, here and elsewhere in the novel.

Sir Thomas's return made a striking change in the ways of the family, independent of Lovers' Vows. Under his government, Mansfield was an altered place. Some members of their society sent away, and the spirits of many others saddened, it was all sameness and gloom compared with the past; a sombre family-party rarely enlivened. There was little intercourse with the Parsonage. Sir Thomas drawing back from intimacies in general, was particularly disinclined, at this time, for any engagements but in one quarter. The Rushworths were the only addition to his own domestic circle which he could solicit. 5

Edmund did not wonder that such should be his father's feelings, nor could he regret anything but the exclusion of the Grants. "But they," he observed to Fanny, "have a claim. They seem to belong to us—they seem to be part of ourselves. I could wish my father were more sensible of their very great attention to my mother and sisters while he was away. I am afraid they may feel themselves neglected. But the truth is, that my father hardly knows them. They had not been here a twelvemonth when he left England. If he knew them better, he would value their society as it deserves, for they are in fact exactly the sort of people he would like. We are sometimes a little in want of animation among ourselves; my sisters seem out of spirits, and Tom is certainly not at his ease. Dr. and Mrs. Grant would enliven us, and make our evenings pass away with more enjoyment even to my father." 10

"Do you think so?" said Fanny. "In my opinion, my uncle would not like *any* addition. I think he values the very quietness you speak of, and that the repose of his own family-circle is all he wants. And it does not appear to me that we are more serious than we used to be; I mean before my uncle went abroad. As well as I can recollect, it was always much the same. There was never much laughing in his presence; or, if there is any difference, it is not more, I think, than such an absence has a tendency to produce at first. There must be a sort of shyness. But I cannot recollect that our evenings formerly were ever merry, except when my uncle was in town. No young people's are, I suppose, when those they look up to are at home." 15 25

"I believe you are right, Fanny," was his reply, after a short consideration. "I believe our evenings are rather returned to what they were, than assuming a new character. The novelty was in their being lively.—Yet, how strong the impression that only a few weeks will give! I have been feeling as if we had never lived so before." 30

"I suppose I am graver than other people," said Fanny. "The evenings do not appear long to me. I love to hear my uncle talk of the West Indies. I could listen to him for an hour together. It entertains *me* more than many other things have done—but then I am unlike other people I dare say." 35

"Why should you dare say *that?* (smiling)—Do you want to be told that you are only unlike other people in being more wise and discreet? But when did you or any

body ever get a compliment from me, Fanny? Go to my father if you want to be complimented. He will satisfy you. Ask your uncle what he thinks, and you will hear compliments enough; and though they may be chiefly on your person, you must put up with it, and trust to his seeing as much beauty of mind in time." 40

Such language was so new to Fanny that it quite embarrassed her.

"Your uncle thinks you very pretty, dear Fanny—and that is the long and the short of the matter. Anybody but myself would have made something more of it, and anybody but you would resent that you had not been thought very pretty before; but the truth is, that your uncle never did admire you till now—and now he does. Your complexion is so improved!—and you have gained so much countenance!—and your figure—Nay, Fanny, do not turn away about it—it is but an uncle. If you cannot bear an uncle's admiration what is to become of you? You must really begin to harden yourself to the idea of being worth looking at—You must try not to mind growing up into a pretty woman." 45 50

"Oh! don't talk so, don't talk so," cried Fanny, distressed by more feelings than he was aware of; but seeing that she was distressed, he had done with the subject, and only added more seriously, "Your uncle is disposed to be pleased with you in every respect; and I only wish you would talk to him more—You are one of those who are too silent in the evening circle." 55

"But I do talk to him more than I used. I am sure I do. Did not you hear me ask him about the slave-trade last night?" 60

"I did—and was in hopes the question would be followed up by others. It would have pleased your uncle to be inquired of farther."

"And I longed to do it—but there was such a dead silence! And while my cousins were sitting by without speaking a word, or seeming at all interested in the subject, I did not like—I thought it would appear as if I wanted to set myself off at their expense, by shewing a curiosity and pleasure in his information which he must wish his own daughters to feel." 65

"Miss Crawford was very right in what she said of you the other day—that you seemed almost as fearful of notice and praise as other women were of neglect. We were talking of you at the Parsonage, and those were her words. She has great discernment. I know nobody who distinguishes characters better—For so young a woman it is remarkable!" 70

Chapter 21

Section C

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

3

Either (a) 'That instant was I turned into a hart,
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me.' (Act 1, Scene 1)

How far do you think the play reflects Orsino's comment?

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, paying close attention to the presentation of comedy, here and elsewhere in the play.

Olivia: What think you of this fool, Malvolio? Doth he not mend?
Malvolio: Yes, and shall do, till the pangs of death shake him. Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool. 5
Feste: God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity for the better increasing your folly. Sir Toby will be sworn that I am no fox, but he will not pass his word for twopence that you are no fool.
Olivia: How say you to that, Malvolio? 10
Malvolio: I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal. I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard already. Unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. I protest I take these wise men that crow so at these set kind of fools no better than the fools' zanies. 15
Olivia: O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless and of free disposition, is to take those things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon-bullets. There is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail; nor no railing in a known discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove. 20
Feste: Now Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speak'st well of fools 25
Enter MARIA
Maria: Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much desires to speak with you.
Olivia: From the Count Orsino, is it? 30
Maria: I know not, madam, 'tis a fair young man, and well attended.
Olivia: Who of my people hold him in delay?
Maria: Sir Toby, madam, your kinsman.
Olivia: Fetch him off, I pray you, he speaks nothing but madman. Fie on him. 35
[Exit MARIA
Go you, Malvolio. If it be a suit from the Count, I am sick, or not at home— what you will to dismiss it.
[Exit MALVOLIO 40

Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old, and people dislike it.

Feste: Thou hast spoke for us, madonna, as if thy eldest son should be a fool, whose skull Jove cram with brains, for—here he comes— 45
Enter Sir TOBY
one of thy kin has a most weak *pia mater*.

Olivia: By mine honour, half-drunk. What is he at the gate, cousin?

Sir Toby: A gentleman. 50

Olivia: A gentleman? What gentleman?

Sir Toby: 'Tis a gentleman here. (*He belches*) A plague o' these pickle-herring! (*To Feste*) How now, sot?

Feste: Good Sir Toby.

Olivia: Cousin, cousin, how have you come so early by this lethargy? 55

Sir Toby: Lechery? I defy lechery. There's one at the gate.

Olivia: Ay, marry, what is he?

Sir Toby: Let him be the devil an he will, I care not. Give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one. [*Exit*] 60

Olivia: What's a drunken man like, fool?

Feste: Like a drowned man, a fool, and a madman: one draught above heat makes him a fool, the second mads him, and a third drowns him.

Olivia: Go thou and seek the coroner, and let him sit o' my coz, for he's in the third degree of drink, he's drowned. Go look after him. 65

Feste: He is but mad yet, Madonna, and the fool shall look to the madman. [*Exit*] 70
Enter MALVOLIO

Malvolio: Madam, yon young fellow swears he will speak with you. I told him you were sick—he takes on him to understand so much, and therefore comes to speak with you. I told him you were asleep—he seems to have a foreknowledge of that too, and therefore comes to speak with you. What is to be said to him, lady? He's fortified against any denial. 75

Olivia: Tell him he shall not speak with me.

Malvolio: 'Has been told so, and he says he'll stand at your door like a sheriff's post, and be the supporter to a bench, but he'll speak with you. 80

Olivia: What kind o' man is he?

Malvolio: Why, of mankind.

Act 1, Scene 5

END OF PAPER