



**DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL**  
**General Certificate of Education Advanced Level**  
**Higher 2**  
**YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**

CANDIDATE  
NAME

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**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

**9748/03**

Paper 3 The Individual and Society in Literature

**24 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.

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your class, index number 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.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

## SECTION A

Answer ONE question in this section.

1

**Either (a)** The extract below is from the novel *Coming Up for Air* (1939), by George Orwell. The narrator, George Bowling, is describing his discussion about England with Porteous, an academic scholar.

Write a critical appreciation of the extract, relating it to the theme of the individual and society in literature.

The argument went on for a bit. All day I'd been wanting to talk to somebody about this business. It's funny. I'm not a fool, but I'm not a highbrow either, and God knows at normal times I don't have many interests that you wouldn't expect a middle-aged seven-pound-a-weeker with two kids to have. And yet I've enough sense to see that the old life we're used to is being sawn off at the roots. I can feel it happening. I can see the war that's coming and I can see the after-war, the food-queues and the secret police and the loudspeakers telling you what to think. And I'm not even exceptional in this. There are millions of others like me. Ordinary chaps that I meet everywhere, chaps I run across in pubs, bus drivers and travelling salesmen for hardware firms, have got a feeling that the world's gone wrong. They can feel things cracking and collapsing under their feet. And yet here's this learned chap, who's lived all his life with books and soaked himself in history till it's running out of his pores, and he can't even see that things are changing. Doesn't think Hitler matters. Refuses to believe that there's another war coming. In any case, as he didn't fight in the last war, it doesn't enter much into his thoughts – he thinks it was a poor show compared with the siege of Troy. Doesn't see why one should bother about the slogans and the loudspeakers and the coloured shirts. 'What intelligent person would pay any attention to such things?' he always says. Hitler and Stalin will pass away. This, of course, is simply another way of saying that things will always go on exactly as he's known it. Really it was no use talking to him.

Finally old Porteous drags another book out of the shelves and begins reading Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale' (or maybe it was a skylark – I forget). I don't know what poetry is or what it's supposed to do. When he's reading I don't actually listen, that's to say I don't take in the words, but sometimes the sound of it brings a kind of peaceful feeling into my mind. On the whole I like it. But somehow tonight it didn't work. I just felt that this was all bunk. Poetry! What is it? Just a voice, a bit of an eddy<sup>1</sup> in the air. And Gosh! what use would that be against machine-guns? I watched him leaning up against the bookshelf. And a curious thought struck me. *He's dead*. He's a ghost. All people like that are dead.

It struck me that perhaps a lot of the people you see walking about are dead. We say that a man's dead when his heart stops and not before. It seems a bit arbitrary. After all parts of your body don't stop working – hair goes on growing for years, for instance. Perhaps a man really dies when his brain stops, when he loses the power to take in a new idea. Old Porteous is like that. Wonderfully learned, wonderfully good taste – but he's not capable of change. Just says the same things and thinks the same thoughts over and over again. There are a lot of people like that. Dead minds, stopped inside.

<sup>1</sup> *eddy*: a current moving in a swirling motion

Old Porteous's mind, I thought, probably stopped working at about the 40  
time of the Russo-Japanese war. And it's a ghastly thing that nearly all the  
decent people, the people who *don't* want to go round smashing faces in with  
spanners, are like that. They're decent, but their minds have stopped. They can't  
defend themselves against what's coming to them, because they can't see it,  
even when it's under their noses. They think that England will never change and 45  
that England's the whole world. Can't grasp that it's just a left-over, a tiny corner  
that the bombs happen to have missed. But what about the new kind of men  
from eastern Europe, the streamlined men who think in slogans and talk in  
bullets? They're on our track. Not long before they catch up with us. And all the  
decent people are paralysed. Dead men and live gorillas. Doesn't seem to be 50  
anything in between.

I cleared out about half an hour later, having completely failed to  
convince old Porteous that Hitler matters. I was still thinking the same thoughts  
as I walked home through the shivery streets. The trams had stopped running.  
The house was all dark and Hilda was asleep. I dropped my false teeth into the 55  
glass of water in the bathroom, got into my pyjamas and prised Hilda over the  
other side of the bed. It's funny, the tremendous gloom that sometimes gets hold  
of you late at night. At the moment, the destiny of Europe seemed to me more  
important than the rent and the kids' school bills and the work I'd have to do  
tomorrow. For anyone who has to earn his living such thoughts are just plain 60  
foolishness. But they didn't move out of my mind. Still the vision of the coloured  
shirts and the machine-guns rattling. The last thing I remembered wondering  
before I fell asleep was why the hell a chap like me should care.

**Or (b)** The poem below (published in 1983) was written by the poet Marge Piercy.

Write a critical appreciation of the poem, discussing ways in which it explores the theme of the individual and society in literature.

*Always Unsuitable*

She wore little teeth of pearls around her neck.  
They were grinning politely and evenly at me.  
Unsuitable they smirked. It is true

I look a stuffed turkey in a suit. Breasts  
too big for the silhouette. She knew 5  
at once that we had sex, lots of it

on my neck. I could never charm  
the mothers, although the fathers ogled  
me. I was exactly what mothers had warned

their sons against. I was quicksand 10  
I was trouble in the afternoon. I was  
the alley cat you don't bring home.

Where I came from, the nights I had wandered  
and survived, scared them, and where  
I would go they never imagined. 15

Ah, what you wanted for your sons  
were little ladies hatched from the eggs  
of pearls like pink and silver lizards

cool, well behaved and impervious  
to desire and weather alike. Mostly 20  
that's who they married and left.

Oh, mamas, I would have been your friend.  
I would have cooked for you and held you.  
I might have rattled the windows

of your sorry marriages, but I would 25  
have loved you better than you know  
how to love yourselves, bitter sisters.

**SECTION B**

**Answer one question in this section, using two texts that you have studied.  
The texts used in this section cannot be used in Section C.**

**2**

**Either (a)** Compare or contrast the ways in which **two** texts you have studied present individuals' reactions to social changes.

**Or (b)** 'The road to social acceptance is never smooth.'

With the comment in mind, compare the ways in which **two** texts you have studied present social acceptance.

## SECTION C

Answer one question in this section, using one text you have studied.  
The text used in this section cannot be used in Section B.

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON: *The Woman Warrior*

3

**Either (a)** Consider how the title of the novel *The Woman Warrior* is an appropriate one that contributes to the theme of the individual and society.

**Or (b)** Consider some of the ways symbolism is used in Kingston's novel, and how its effects contribute to the theme of the individual and society.

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS: *A Streetcar Named Desire*

4

**Either (a)** Discuss the ways in which the social environment of Elysian Fields is presented as a broken world.

**Or (b)** 'The past is strapped to our backs.'

With this comment in mind, discuss how Williams depicts individuals and society's response to their past.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

5

**Either (a)** Discuss the view that *Othello* is a tragedy of both the individual and society.

**Or (b)** Discuss Shakespeare's dramatic presentation of Cassio in *Othello*, in relation to the character's position in the society of the play.

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*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

Question 1(a) © George Orwell; *Coming Up for Air*; © 1939, George Orwell; Penguin Classics; New Ed edition (25 Jan 2001)

Question 1(b) © Marge Piercy; *Always Unsuitable in Stone, Paper, Knife*; Alfred A. Knopf; 1st edition (March 12, 1983)

