



RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
ADVANCED LEVEL
YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS 2
HIGHER 2

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9748/1
19 Sep
Band Room
3 hours

Paper 1 Reading Literature

Set texts may be taken into the examination room. Only underlining, highlighting or the use of vertical lines in the margins is permitted. Nothing else should be written in the texts. Any kind of folding or flagging of pages in texts (e.g. use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is also not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, index no. and class on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black on both sides of the paper.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **THREE** questions, **one** from **each** section.

Start each answer on a fresh piece of paper.

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 carry equal marks

This document consists of **8** printed pages.

[Turn over

SECTION A

1 Either

- (a) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, paying particular attention to ways in which language, style and form shape your understanding of subject matter.

The Breather

Just as in the horror movies
when someone discovers that the phone calls
are coming from inside the house

so too, I realized
that our tender overlapping
has been taking place only inside me. 5

All that sweetness, the love and desire—
it's just been me dialing myself
then following the ringing to another room

to find no one on the line,
well, sometimes a little breathing
but more often than not, nothing. 10

To think that all this time—
which would include the boat rides,
the airport embraces, and all the drinks— 15

it's been only me and the two telephones,
the one on the wall in the kitchen
and the extension in the darkened guest room upstairs.

Billy Collins (1973 -)

The Aged Lover Discourses in the Flat Style

There are, perhaps, whom passion gives a grace,
Who fuse and part as dancers on the stage,
But that is not for me, not at my age,
Not with my bony shoulders and fat face.
Yet in my clumsiness I found a place
And use for passion: with it I ignore
My gaucheries and yours, and feel no more
The awkwardness of the absurd embrace, 5

It is a pact men make, and seal in flesh,
To be so busy with their own desires
Their loves may be as busy with their own,
And not in union. Though the two enmesh
Like gears in motion, each with each conspires
To be at once together and alone.

10

J.V. Cunningham (1911 – 1985)

Or

- (b) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, paying particular attention to how an inspiring voice is created through form, language and imagery.

What Is to Come

WHAT is to come we know not. But we know
That what has been was good--was good to show,
Better to hide, and best of all to bear.
We are the masters of the days that were;
We have lived, we have loved, we have suffered...even so. 5

Shall we not take the ebb who had the flow?
Life was our friend? Now, if it be our foe--
Dear, though it spoil and break us! --need we care
What is to come?

Let the great winds their worst and wildest blow, 10
Or the gold weather round us mellow slow;
We have fulfilled ourselves, and we can dare
And we can conquer, though we may not share
In the rich quiet of the afterglow
What is to come. 15

William Ernest Henley (1849 – 1903)

The Coromandel Fishers

Rise, brothers, rise; the wakening skies pray to the morning light,
The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn like a child that has cried all night.
Come, let us gather our nets from the shore and set our catamarans free,
To capture the leaping wealth of the tide, for we are the kings of the sea!

No longer delay, let us hasten away in the track of the sea gull's call, 5
The sea is our mother, the cloud is our brother, the waves are our comrades all.
What though we toss at the fall of the sun where the hand of the sea-god drives?
He who holds the storm by the hair, will hide in his breast our lives.

Sweet is the shade of the cocoanut glade, and the scent of the mango grove,
And sweet are the sands at the full o' the moon with the sound of the voices we love; 10
But sweeter, O brothers, the kiss of the spray and the dance of the wild foam's glee;
Row, brothers, row to the edge of the verge, where the low sky mates with the sea.

Sarojini Naidu (1879 – 1949)

SECTION B

Edith Wharton: *The Age of Innocence*

2

Either

- a) "Oh, my dear - where is that country? Have you ever been there?" (Chap 29)

Discuss the theme of expectations and reality in the light of the statement above.

Or

- b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage paying particular attention to the portrayal of Newland Archer and Ellen Olenska, here and elsewhere in the novel.

She had grown tired of what people called "society"; New York was kind, it was almost oppressively hospitable; she should never forget the way in which it had welcomed her back; but after the first flush of novelty she had found herself, as she phrased it, too "different" to care for the things it cared about—and so she had decided to try Washington, where one was supposed to meet more varieties of people and of opinion. And on the whole she should probably settle down in Washington, and make a home there for poor Medora, who had worn out the patience of all her other relations just at the time when she most needed looking after and protecting from matrimonial perils. 5

"But Dr. Carver—aren't you afraid of Dr. Carver? I hear he's been staying with you at the Blenkers'." 10

She smiled. "Oh, the Carver danger is over. Dr. Carver is a very clever man. He wants a rich wife to finance his plans, and Medora is simply a good advertisement as a convert."

"A convert to what?"

"To all sorts of new and crazy social schemes. But, do you know, they interest me more than the blind conformity to tradition—somebody else's tradition—that I see among our own friends. It seems stupid to have discovered America only to make it into a copy of another country." She smiled across the table. "Do you suppose Christopher Columbus would have taken all that trouble just to go to the Opera with the Selfridge Merrys?" 15

Archer changed colour. "And Beaufort—do you say these things to Beaufort?" he asked abruptly.

"I haven't seen him for a long time. But I used to; and he understands." 20

"Ah, it's what I've always told you; you don't like us. And you like Beaufort because he's so unlike us." He looked about the bare room and out at the bare beach and the row of stark white village houses strung along the shore. "We're damnably dull. We've no character, no colour, no variety.—I wonder," he broke out, "why you don't go back?"

Her eyes darkened, and he expected an indignant rejoinder. But she sat silent, as if thinking over what he had said, and he grew frightened lest she should answer that she wondered too. 25

At length she said: "I believe it's because of you."

It was impossible to make the confession more dispassionately, or in a tone less encouraging to the vanity of the person addressed. Archer reddened to the temples, but dared not move or speak: it was as if her words had been some rare butterfly that the least motion might drive off on startled wings, but that might gather a flock about it if it were left undisturbed. 30

"At least," she continued, "it was you who made me understand that under the dullness there are things so fine and sensitive and delicate that even those I most cared for in my other life look cheap in comparison. I don't know how to explain myself"—she drew together her troubled brows—"but it seems as if I'd never before understood with how much that is hard and shabby and base the most exquisite pleasures may be paid." 35

"Exquisite pleasures—it's something to have had them!" he felt like retorting; but the appeal in her eyes kept him silent.

"I want," she went on, "to be perfectly honest with you—and with myself. For a long time I've hoped this chance would come: that I might tell you how you've helped me, what you've made of me—" 40

Archer sat staring beneath frowning brows. He interrupted her with a laugh. "And what do you make out that you've made of me?"

She paled a little. "Of you?"

"Yes: for I'm of your making much more than you ever were of mine. I'm the man who married one woman because another one told him to." 45

Her paleness turned to a fugitive flush. "I thought— you promised—you were not to say such things today."

"Ah—how like a woman! None of you will ever see a bad business through!"

She lowered her voice. "IS it a bad business—for May?" 50

He stood in the window, drumming against the raised sash, and feeling in every fibre the wistful tenderness with which she had spoken her cousin's name.

"For that's the thing we've always got to think of— haven't we—by your own showing?" she insisted.

"My own showing?" he echoed, his blank eyes still on the sea. 55

"Or if not," she continued, pursuing her own thought with a painful application, "if it's not worthwhile to have given up, to have missed things, so that others may be saved from disillusionment and misery—then everything I came home for, everything that made my other life seem by contrast so bare and so poor because no one there took account of them—all these things are a sham or a dream—" 60

SECTION C

Arthur Miller: *All My Sons*

3

Either

(a) "In the play, time is an enemy and a moral force". Discuss.

Or

(b) Write a critical appreciation of the following passage, highlighting its significance to the play as a whole.

- Chris: I know all about the world. I know the whole crap story. Now listen to this, and tell me what a man's got to be! (Reads:) "My dear Ann: ...", you listening? He wrote this the day he died. Listen, don't cry.... Listen! "My Dear Ann: it is impossible to put down the things I feel. But I've got to tell you something. Yesterday they flew in a load of papers from the States and I read about Dad and your father being convicted. I can't express myself. I can't tell you how I feel... I can't bear to live any more. Last night I circled the base for twenty minutes before I could bring myself in. How could he have done that? Every day three or four men never come back and he sits back there doing 'business'.... I don't know how to tell you what I feel.... I can't face anybody... I'm going out on a mission in a few minutes. They'll probably report me as missing. If they do, I want you to know that you mustn't wait for me. I tell you, Ann, if I had him there now I could kill him..." (Keller grabs the letter from Chris's hand and reads it. After a long pause) Now blame the world. Do you understand that letter? 5
- Keller: (speaking almost inaudibly) I think I do. Get the car. I'll put on my jacket. (he turns and starts slowly for the house. Mother rushes to intercept him) 10
- Mother: Why are you going? You'll sleep, why are you going? 15
- Keller: I can't sleep here. I'll feel better if I go.
- Mother: You're so foolish. Larry was your son too, wasn't he? You know he'd never tell you to do this.
- Keller: (looking at letter in his hand) Then what is this if it isn't telling me? Sure, he was my son. But I think to him they were all my sons. And I guess they were, I guess they were. I'll be right down. (exits into house) 20
- Mother: (to Chris, with determination) You're not going to take him!
- Chris: I'm taking him. 25
- Mother: It's up to you, if you tell him to stay he'll stay. Go and tell him! 30

Chris: Nobody could stop him now.
Mother: You'll stop him! How long will he live in prison? Are you trying to kill him?
Chris: (holding out letter) I thought you read this! 35
Mother: (of Larry, the letter) The war is over! Didn't you hear? It's over!
Chris: Then what was Larry to you? A stone that fell into the water? It's not enough for him to be sorry. Larry didn't kill himself to make you and Dad sorry.
Mother: What more can we be! 40
Chris: You can be better! Once and for all you can know there's a universe of people outside and you're responsible to it, and unless you know that, you threw away your son because that's why he died.
A shot is heard in the house. They stand frozen for a brief second. Chris starts for porch, pauses at step, turns to Ann. 45
Chris: Find Jim! (He goes on into the house and Ann runs up driveway. Mother stands alone, transfixed.)
Mother: (softly, almost moaning) Joe... Joe... Joe... Joe... (Chris comes out of house, down to Mother's arms.)
Chris: (almost crying) Mother, I didn't mean to... 50
Mother: Don't dear. Don't take it on yourself. Forget now. Live.
Chris stirs as if to answer. Shhh... She puts his arms down gently and moves toward porch. Shhh... As she reaches porch steps she begins sobbing.
CURTAIN

END OF PAPER