



**SERANGOON JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2014**

ENGLISH LITERATURE

HIGHER 2 9748/03
PAPER 3: The Individual and Society

TUESDAY

26 AUGUST 2014

3 HOURS

TIME: 0800 - 1100

VENUE: Hall

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 papers in texts (e.g. the use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your name, civics group on every answer sheet.

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

You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams or graphs.

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

Write your answers on the separate answer paper provided.

Answer **three** questions.

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.

This question paper consists of 6 printed pages and 0 blank pages. [Turn over]

Section A
Answer one question in this section

1

Either (a) Write a critical appreciation of the following extract from Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, relating it to the individual's search for and assertion of identity.

AMANDA Laura, where have you been going when you've gone out pretending that you were going to business college?

LAURA I've just been going out walking.

AMANDA That's not true.

LAURA It is. I just went walking. 5

AMANDA Walking? Walking? In winter? Deliberately courting pneumonia in that light coat? Where did you walk to, Laura?

LAURA All sorts of places – mostly in the park.

AMANDA Even after you'd started catching that cold?

LAURA It was the lesser of two evils, Mother. 10
[Screen image: Winter scene in a park.]
 I couldn't go back there. I – threw up – on the floor!

AMANDA From half past seven till after five every day you mean to tell me you walked around the park, because you wanted to make me think that you were still going to Rubicam's Business College? 15

LAURA It wasn't as bad as it sounds. I went inside places to get warmed up.

AMANDA Inside where?

LAURA I went inside the art museum and the bird houses at the Zoo. I visited the penguins every day! Sometimes I did without lunch and went to the movies. Lately I've been spending most of my afternoons in the Jewel 20
 Box, that big glass house where they raise the tropical flowers.

AMANDA You did all this to deceive me, just for deception? *[Laura looks down.]*
 Why?

LAURA Mother, when you're disappointed, you get that awful suffering look on your face, like the picture of Jesus' mother in the museum! 25

AMANDA Hush!

LAURA I couldn't face it.
[There is a pause. A whisper of strings is heard. Legend on screen: "The Crust of Humility."]

AMANDA *[hopelessly fingering the huge pocketbook].* So what are we going to do the rest of our lives? Stay home and watch the parades go by? Amuse 30
 ourselves with the glass menagerie, darling? Eternally play those worn-out phonograph records your father left as a painful reminder of him? We won't have a business career – we've given that up because it gave us nervous indigestion! *[She laughs wearily.]* What is there left but 35
 dependency all our lives? I know so well what becomes of unmarried women who aren't prepared to occupy a position. I've seen such pitiful cases in the South – barely tolerated spinsters living upon the grudging patronage of sister's husband or brother's wife! – stuck away in some little mousetrap of a room – encouraged by one in-law to visit another – 40
 little birdlike women without any nest – eating the crust of humility of their life! Is that the future that we've mapped out for ourselves I swear it's the only alternative I can think of! *[She pauses.]* It isn't a very pleasant alternative, is it? *[She pauses again.]* Of course – some girls *do* marry. *[Laura twists her hands nervously.]* Haven't you ever liked some boy? 45

LAURA Yes. I liked one once. *[She rises.]* I came across his picture a while ago.

AMANDA *[with some interest]*. He gave you his picture?

LAURA No. It's in the yearbook.

AMANDA *[disappointed]*. Oh – a high school boy. 50

[Screen image: Jim as the high school hero bearing a silver cup.]

LAURA Yes. His name was Jim. *[She lifts the heavy annual from the claw-foot table.]* Here he is in *The Pirates of Penzance*.

AMANDA *[absently]*. The what?

LAURA The operetta the senior class put on. He had a wonderful voice and we sat across the aisle from each other Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 55

in the Aud. Here he is with the silver cup for debating! See his grin?

AMANDA *[absently]*. He must have had a jolly disposition.

LAURA He used to call me – Blue Roses.

[Screen image: Blue roses.]

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following extract from *New Year's Day* by Edith Wharton, relating it to the wider concerns of the topic paper.

One of the party had abruptly exclaimed: "Oh, there's a lady running out of the hotel who's not in evening dress!"

The exclamation caused all our eyes to turn toward the person indicated, who had just reached the threshold; and someone added, in an odd voice: "Why, her figure looks like Lizzie Hazeldean's - "

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A dead silence followed. The lady who was not in evening dress paused. Standing on the door-step with lifted veil, she faced our window. Her dress was dark and plain - almost conspicuously plain - and in less time than it takes to tell she had put her hand to her closely-patterned veil and pulled it down over her face. But my young eyes were keen and far-sighted; and in that hardly perceptible interval I had seen a vision. Was she beautiful - or was she only someone apart? I felt the shock of a small pale oval, dark eyebrows curved with one sure stroke, lips made for warmth, and now drawn up in a grimace of terror; and it seemed as if the mysterious something, rich, secret and insistent, that broods and murmurs behind a boy's conscious thoughts, had suddenly peered out at me...As the dart reached me her veil dropped.

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"But it IS Lizzie Hazeldean!" Aunt Sabina gasped. She had stopped laughing, and her crumpled handkerchief fell to the carpet.

"Lizzie - LIZZIE?" The name was echoed over my head with varying intonations of reprobation, dismay and half-veiled malice.

20

Lizzie Hazeldean? Running out of the Fifth Avenue Hotel on New Year's day with all those dressed-up women? But what on earth could she have been doing there? No; nonsense! It was impossible...

"There's Henry Prest with her," continued Aunt Sabina in a precipitate whisper.

"With her?" someone gasped; and "OH - " my mother cried with a shudder.

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The men of the family said nothing, but I saw Hubert Wesson's face crimson with surprise. Henry Prest! Hubert was forever boring us youngsters with his Henry Prest! That was the kind of chap Hubert meant to be at thirty: in his eyes Henry Prest embodied all the manly graces. Married? No, thank you! That kind of man wasn't made for the domestic yoke. Too fond of ladies' society, Hubert hinted with his undergraduate smirk; and handsome, rich, independent - an all-round sportsman, good horseman, good shot, crack yachtsman (had his pilot's certificate, and always sailed his own sloop, whose cabin was full of racing trophies); gave the most delightful little dinners, never more than six, with cigars that beat old Beaufort's; was awfully decent to the younger men, chaps of Hubert's age included - and combined, in short, all the qualities, mental and physical, which make up, in such eyes as Hubert's that oracular and irresistible figure, the man of the world. "Just the fellow," Hubert always solemnly concluded, "that I should go straight to if ever I got into any kind of row that I didn't want the family to know about"; and our blood ran pleasantly cold at the idea of our old Hubert's ever being in such an unthinkable predicament.

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I felt sorry to have missed a glimpse of this legendary figure; but my gaze had been

enthralled by the lady, and now the couple had vanished in the crowd.

The group in our window continued to keep an embarrassed silence. They looked almost frightened; but what struck me even more deeply was that not one of them looked surprised. Even to my boyish sense it was clear that what they had just seen was only the confirmation of something they had long been prepared for. At length one of my uncles emitted a whistle, was checked by a severe glance from his wife, and muttered: "I'll be damned"; another uncle began an unheeded narrative of a fire at which he had been present in his youth, and my mother said to me severely: "You ought to be at home preparing your lessons - a big boy like you!" - a remark so obviously unfair that it served only to give the measure of her agitation. 45 50

"I don't believe it," said Grandmamma, in a low voice of warning, protest and appeal. I saw Hubert steal a grateful look at her. 55

But nobody else listened: every eye still strained through the window. Livery-stable "hacks," of the old blue-curtained variety, were driving up to carry off the fair fugitives; for the day was bitterly cold, and lit by one of those harsh New York suns of which every ray seems an icicle. Into these ancient vehicles the ladies, now regaining their composure, were being piled with their removable possessions, while their kid-gloved callers ("So like the White Rabbit!" Kate exulted) appeared and reappeared in the doorway, gallantly staggering after them under bags, reticules, bird-cages, pet dogs and heaped-up finery. But to all this - as even I, a little boy, was aware - nobody in Grandmamma's window paid the slightest attention. The thoughts of one and all, with a mute and guarded eagerness, were still following the movements of those two who were so obviously unrelated to the rest. The whole business - discovery, comment, silent visual pursuit - could hardly, all told, have filled a minute, perhaps not as much; before the sixty seconds were over, Mrs. Hazeldean and Henry Prest had been lost in the crowd, and, while the hotel continued to empty itself into the street, had gone their joint or separate ways. But in my grandmother's window the silence continued unbroken. 60 65 70

Section B

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

2

Either **(a)** With reference to any two texts you have studied, compare how tensions between the private and public spheres are depicted.

Or **(b)** With reference to any two texts you have studied, compare the ways they present the plight of those who are marginalised.

Section C
Answer one question in this section.

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON: *The Woman Warrior*

3

Either **(a)** 'The Woman Warrior reveals social identity as an illusory construct.'
 Is this an accurate reading of the novel?

Or **(b)** Comment on the presentation and significance of authority figures in the
 text, relating your discussion to issues related to the individual and society.

PHILIP LARKIN: From *Collected Poems*

4

Either **(a)** Discuss the importance of setting in Larkin's poetry and how it illuminates
 the relationship between the individual and society. You should refer to at
 least two poems.

Or **(b)** 'Larkin's poetry is rooted in a distrust of traditions.'
 Assess the validity of the above claim about Larkin's poetry. You should
 refer to at least two poems.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

5

Either **(a)** "The lieutenant is a cipher in his captain's presence, a power in his
 absence." Discuss this quotation in relation to the homosocial world of the
 play.

Or **(b)** Discuss the significance of alienation in the play, relating your response to
 the concerns of the individual and society.

END OF PAPER