

RAFFLES INSTITUTION
2014 YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

HIGHER 2

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 2 Victorian Literature (1830-1899)

9748/02

Thursday 18 September 2014

3 hours

1330-1630h

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. use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and CT group 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, tie your answer sheets to each section securely.
Hand in your answers separately.
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **7** printed pages and **1** blank page.

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Section A

Answer one question in this section.

1

Either (a) The following is adapted from the opening chapter of *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), by Mary Elizabeth Braddon. Sir Michael Audley has fallen in love with and married his second wife, the beautiful Lucy Graham.

Write a critical commentary of the following passage, commenting in particular upon the presentation of women in the Victorian age.

Sir Michael Audley was fifty-six years of age, and he had married a second wife three months after his fifty-fifth birthday. For seventeen years he had been a widower with an only child, a daughter, Alicia Audley, now eighteen, and by no means too well pleased at having a step-mother brought home to the Court; for Miss Alicia's day was over; and now, when she asked anything of the housekeeper, the housekeeper would tell her that she would speak to my lady, or she would consult my lady, and if my lady pleased it should be done. So the baronet's daughter set her face with a sulky determination against any intimacy between herself and the baronet's young wife; and amiable as that lady was, she found it quite impossible to overcome Miss Alicia's prejudices and dislike; or to convince the spoilt girl that she had not done her a cruel injury by marrying Sir Michael Audley. 5 10

The truth was that Lady Audley had, in becoming the wife of Sir Michael, made one of those apparently advantageous matches which are apt to draw upon a woman the envy and hatred of her sex. She had come into the neighbourhood as a governess in the family of a surgeon in the village near Audley Court. Her accomplishments were so brilliant and numerous, that it seemed strange that she should have answered an advertisement offering such very moderate terms of remuneration as those named by Mr. Dawson; but Miss Graham seemed perfectly well satisfied with her situation, and she taught the girls to play sonatas by Beethoven, and to paint from nature after Creswick, and walked through a dull, out-of-the-way village to the humble little church, three times every Sunday, as contentedly as if she had no higher aspiration in the world than to do so all the rest of her life. 15 20

People who observed this, accounted for it by saying that it was a part of her amiable and gentle nature always to be light-hearted, happy and contented under any circumstances. 25

Wherever she went she seemed to take joy and brightness with her. In the cottages of the poor her fair face shone like a sunbeam. She would sit for a quarter of an hour talking to some old woman, and apparently as pleased with the admiration of a toothless crone as if she had been listening to the compliments of a marquis; and when she tripped away, leaving nothing behind her (for her poor salary gave no scope to her benevolence), the old woman would burst out into senile raptures with her grace, beauty, and her kindness, such as she never bestowed upon the vicar's wife, who half fed and clothed her. For you see, Miss Lucy Graham was blessed with that magic power of fascination, by which a woman can charm with a word or intoxicate with a smile. Every one loved, admired, and praised her. The boy who opened the five-barred gate that stood in her pathway, ran home to his mother to tell of her pretty looks, and the sweet voice in which she thanked him for the little service. The verger at the church, who ushered her into the surgeon's pew; the vicar, who saw the soft blue eyes uplifted to his face as he preached his simple sermon; the porter from the railway station, who brought her sometimes a letter or a parcel, and who never looked for reward from her; her 30 35 40

employer; his visitors; her pupils; the servants; everybody, high and low, united in declaring that Lucy Graham was the sweetest girl that ever lived.

Perhaps it was the rumour of this which penetrated into the quiet chamber of Audley Court; or, perhaps, it was the sight of her pretty face, looking over the surgeon's high pew every Sunday morning; however it was, it was certain that Sir Michael Audley suddenly experienced a strong desire to be better acquainted with Mr. Dawson's governess. 45

That one quiet evening sealed Sir Michael's fate. He could no more resist the tender fascination of those soft and melting blue eyes; the graceful beauty of that slender throat and drooping head, with its wealth of showering flaxen curls; the low music of that gentle voice; the perfect harmony which pervaded every charm, and made all doubly charming in this woman; than he could resist his destiny! Destiny! Why, she was his destiny! He had never loved before. What had been his marriage with Alicia's mother but a dull, jog-trot bargain made to keep some estate in the family that would have been just as well out of it? What had been his love for his first wife but a poor, pitiful, smouldering spark, too dull to be extinguished, too feeble to burn? But *this* was love—this fever, this longing, this restless, uncertain, miserable hesitation; these cruel fears that his age was an insurmountable barrier to his happiness; this sick hatred of his white beard; this frenzied wish to be young again, with glistening raven hair, and a slim waist, such as he had twenty years before; these, wakeful nights and melancholy days, so gloriously brightened if he chanced to catch a glimpse of her sweet face behind the window curtains, as he drove past the surgeon's house; all these signs gave token of the truth, and told only too plainly that, at the sober age of fifty-five, Sir Michael Audley had fallen ill of the terrible fever called love. 50 55 60

I do not think that, throughout his courtship, the baronet once calculated upon his wealth or his position as reasons for his success. If he ever remembered these things, he dismissed the thought of them with a shudder. It pained him too much to believe for a moment that any one so lovely and innocent could value herself against a splendid house or a good old title. No; his hope was that, as her life had been most likely one of toil and dependence, and as she was very young—nobody exactly knew her age, but she looked little more than twenty—she might never have formed any attachment, and that he, being the first to woo her, might, by tender attentions, by generous watchfulness, by a love which should recall to her the father she had lost, and by a protecting care that should make him necessary to her, win her young heart, and obtain, from her fresh and earliest love, the promise of her hand. 65 70

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- Or (b) Write a critical commentary of 'The Autumn' (published 1833), by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, paying attention in particular to the ways in which it is typical of Victorian poetry.

The Autumn

<p>Go, sit upon the lofty hill, And turn your eyes around, Where waving woods and waters wild Do hymn an autumn sound. The summer sun is faint on them – The summer flowers depart – Sit still – as all transform'd to stone, Except your musing heart.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>How there you sat in summer-time, May yet be in your mind; And how you heard the green woods sing Beneath the freshening wind. Though the same wind now blows around, You would its blast recall; For every breath that stirs the trees, Doth cause a leaf to fall.</p>	<p>10 15</p>
<p>Oh! like that wind, is all the mirth That flesh and dust impart: We cannot bear its visitings, When change is on the heart. Gay words and jests may make us smile, When Sorrow is asleep; But other things must make us smile, When Sorrow bids us weep!</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>The dearest hands that clasp our hands, – Their presence may be o'er; The dearest voice that meets our ear, That tone may come no more! Youth fades; and then, the joys of youth, Which once refresh'd our mind, Shall come – as, on those sighing woods, The chilling autumn wind.</p>	<p>25 30</p>
<p>Hear not the wind – view not the woods; Look out o'er vale and hill- In spring, the sky encircled them – The sky is round them still. Come autumn's scathe – come winter's cold – Come change – and human fate! Whatever prospect Heaven doth bound, Can ne'er be desolate.</p>	<p>35 40</p>

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) By comparing two texts from the period, show how the literature of this age is a powerful instrument in the quest for human progress.

Or (b) Compare and contrast the ways in which two texts of the period explore the significance of choices and circumstances.

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Section C

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

CHARLOTTE BRONTË: *Jane Eyre*

3

Either (a) 'Throughout the novel, the sensational and the supernatural weave a web round our senses and, in the end, permeate every level of our understanding.'

Comment on the ways this is true of *Jane Eyre*.

Or (b) 'Above all, Jane is the novel's moral centre.'

Using the above as a starting point, discuss the presentation of morality in *Jane Eyre*.

GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner*

4

Either (a) 'At times, Eliot implies that religion is no better than superstition.'

To what extent does your reading of *Silas Marner* support this view?

Or (b) To what extent do the characters in *Silas Marner* shape their own destiny?

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW: *Mrs Warren's Profession*

5

- Either (a)** 'If people arrange the world that way for women, there's no good pretending it's arranged the other way.'

In light of the above statement, discuss Shaw's presentation of the effects of social environment upon human behaviour.

- Or (b)** 'Shaw's plays deal with conflict in relation to the clash within the individual mind, the clash between individual characters, and the clash between the individual and the customs, manners, religion and policies of his time.'

Discuss the presentation of conflict in *Mrs Warren's Profession*.

OSCAR WILDE: *Lady Windermere's Fan*

6

- Either (a)** 'Lord and Lady Windermere are isolated in their idealism and virtue amidst a gallery of cynics and pragmatists.'

Discuss the validity of the above claim in light of characterisation in *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

- Or (b)** 'London Society, with its series of regulated and accepted excuses, is seen to depend upon lies.'

In light of this comment, discuss Wilde's presentation of London society.

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