



LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

8811/01

Paper 1 Reading Literature

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

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, class and question number on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.
Write your answer to each question on a fresh sheet of paper.
Do not use paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid on your work.

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 each of your answers **separately**.
Attach the **cover sheet** to Section A.
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

Section A

1

- Either (a)** Write a critical commentary on the following poem, considering in detail ways in which your response is shaped by the poet's use of language, style and form.

PERFECTION WASTED

And another regrettable thing about death
 is the ceasing of your own brand of magic
 which took a whole life to develop and market —
 the quips, the witticisms, the slant
 adjusted to a few, those loved ones nearest 5
 the lip of the stage, their soft faces blanched¹
 in the footlight glow, their laughter close to tears,
 their tears confused with their diamond earrings,
 their warm pooled breath in and out with your heartbeat,
 their response and your performance twinned. 10
 The jokes over the phone. The memories packed
 In the rapid-access file. The whole act.
 Who will do it again? That's it: no one;
 imitators and descendants aren't the same.

John Updike (1932 - 2009)

¹ to grow pale from shock, fear or other emotions

- Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following poem, considering in detail ways in which language, style and form contribute to the poet's portrayal of rejection.

HAVISHAM²

Beloved sweetheart bastard. Not a day since then
I haven't wished him dead. Prayed for it
so hard I've dark green pebbles for eyes,
ropes on the back of my hands I could strangle with.

Spinster. I stink and remember. Whole days
in bed cawing Nooooo at the wall; the dress
yellowing, trembling if I open the wardrobe;
the slewed mirror, full-length, her, myself, who did this

5

to me? Puce³ curses that are sounds not words.
Some nights better, the lost body over me,
my fluent tongue in its mouth in its ear
then down till I suddenly bite awake. Love's

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hate behind a white veil; a red balloon bursting
in my face. Bang. I stabbed at a wedding cake.
Give me a male corpse for a long slow honeymoon.
Don't think it's only the heart that b-b-b-breaks.

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Carol Ann Duffy (born 1955)

² A fictional character from *Great Expectations* who, abandoned by her lover on her wedding day, remains in her mansion for the rest of her life

³ of a dark red or purple-brown colour

Section B

EDITH WHARTON: *The Age of Innocence*

2

Either (a) 'Ellen, for all her extravagances and eccentricities, is a realist.'

How far would you agree with this comment?

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the portrayal of Archer's awareness of his social environment here and elsewhere in the novel.

The talk swept past Archer like some senseless river running and running because it did not know enough to stop. He saw, on the faces about him, expressions of interest, amusement and even mirth. He listened to the younger men's laughter, and to the praise of the Archer Madeira, which Mr. van der Luyden and Mr. Merry were thoughtfully celebrating. Through it all he was dimly aware of a general attitude of friendliness toward himself, as if the guard of the prisoner he felt himself to be were trying to soften his captivity; and the perception increased his passionate determination to be free.

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In the drawing-room, where they presently joined the ladies, he met May's triumphant eyes, and read in them the conviction that everything had 'gone off' beautifully. She rose from Madame Olenska's side, and immediately Mrs. van der Luyden beckoned the latter to a seat on the gilt sofa where she throned. Mrs. Selfridge Merry bore across the room to join them, and it became clear to Archer that here also a conspiracy of rehabilitation and obliteration was going on. The silent organisation which held his little world together was determined to put itself on record as never for a moment having questioned the propriety of Madame Olenska's conduct, or the completeness of Archer's domestic felicity. All these amiable and inexorable persons were resolutely engaged in pretending to each other that they had never heard of, suspected, or even conceived possible, the least hint to the contrary; and from this tissue of elaborate mutual dissimulation Archer once more disengaged the fact that New York believed him to be Madame Olenska's lover. He caught the glitter of victory in his wife's eyes, and for the first time understood that she shared the belief. The discovery roused a laughter of inner devils that reverberated through all his efforts to discuss the Martha Washington ball with Mrs. Reggie Chivers and little Mrs. Newland; and so the evening swept on, running and running like a senseless river that did not know how to stop.

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At length he saw that Madame Olenska had risen and was saying good-bye. He understood that in a moment she would be gone, and tried to remember what he had said to her at dinner; but he could not recall a single word they had exchanged.

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She went up to May, the rest of the company making a circle about her as she advanced. The two young women clasped hands; then May bent forward and kissed her cousin.

'Certainly our hostess is much the handsomer of the two,' Archer heard Reggie Chivers say in an undertone to young Mrs. Newland; and he remembered Beaufort's coarse sneer at May's ineffectual beauty.

35

A moment later he was in the hall, putting Madame Olenska's cloak about her shoulders.

Through all his confusion of mind he had held fast to the resolve to say nothing that might startle or disturb her. Convinced that no power could now turn him from his purpose he had found strength to let events shape themselves as they would. But as he followed Madame Olenska into the hall he thought with a sudden hunger of being for a moment alone with her at the door of her carriage.

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'Is your carriage here?' he asked; and at that moment Mrs. van der Luyden, who was being majestically inserted into her sables, said gently: 'We are driving dear Ellen home.'

Archer's heart gave a jerk, and Madame Olenska, clasping her cloak and fan with one hand, held out the other to him. 'Good-bye,' she said.

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'Good-bye—but I shall see you soon in Paris,' he answered aloud—it seemed to him that he had shouted it.

'Oh,' she murmured, 'if you and May could come—!'

Mr. van der Luyden advanced to give her his arm, and Archer turned to Mrs. van der Luyden. For a moment, in the billowy darkness inside the big landau, he caught the dim oval of a face, eyes shining steadily—and she was gone.

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As he went up the steps he crossed Lawrence Lefferts coming down with his wife. Lefferts caught his host by the sleeve, drawing back to let Gertrude pass.

60

'I say, old chap: do you mind just letting it be understood that I'm dining with you at the club tomorrow night? Thanks so much, you old brick! Good-night.'

Chapter 33

Section C

ARTHUR MILLER: *All My Sons*

3

Either (a) 'The play is about the destructive effects of self-interest.'How far do you agree with this comment on *All My Sons*?**Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the presentation of Chris Keller here and elsewhere in the play.

Chris enters from the driveway. He seems exhausted.

Chris: What's the matter — ?

Ann: Where were you? ... You're all perspired. (*Mother doesn't move*) where were you?

Chris: Just drove around a little. I thought you'd be gone. 5

Ann: Where do I go? I have nowhere to go.

Chris: (*to Mother*) Where's Dad?

Ann: Inside lying down.

Chris: Sit down, both of you. I'll say what there is to say.

Mother: I didn't hear the car... 10

Chris: I left it in the garage.

Mother: Jim is out looking for you.

Chris: Mother... I'm going away. There are a couple of firms in Cleveland, I think I can get a place. I mean, I'm going away for good. (*To Ann alone*) I know what you're thinking, Annie. It's true. I'm yellow. I was made yellow in this house because I suspected my father and I did nothing about it, but if I know that night when I came home what I know now, he'd be in the district attorney's office by this time, and I'd have brought him there. Now if I look at him, all I'm able to do is cry. 15 20

Mother: What are you talking about? What else can you do?

Chris: I could jail him! I could jail him, if I were human any more. But I'm like everybody else now. I'm practical now. You made me practical.

Mother: But you have to be.

Chris: The cats in that alley are practical, the bums who ran away when we were fighting were practical. Only the dead ones weren't practical. But now I'm practical, and I spit on myself. I'm going away. I'm going now. 25

Ann: (*going up to him*) I'm coming with you.

Chris: No, Ann. 30

Ann: Chris, I don't ask you to do anything about Joe.

Chris: You do, you do.

Ann: I swear I never will.

Chris: In your heart you always will.

Ann: Then do what you have to do! 35

Chris: Do what? What is there to do? I've looked all night for a reason to make him suffer.

Ann: There's reason, there's reason!

Chris: What? Do I raise the dead when I put him behind bars? Then what'll I do it for? We used to shoot a man who acted like a dog, but honor was real there, you were protecting something. But here? This is the land of the great big dogs, you don't love a man here, you eat him! That's the principle; the only one we live by — it just happened to kill a few people this time, that's all. The world's that way, how can I take it out on him? What sense does that make? 40 45

This is a zoo, a zoo!

Ann: (to Mother) You know what he's got to do! Tell him!
Mother: Let him go.
Ann: I won't let him go. You'll tell him what he's got to do... 50
Mother: Annie!
Ann: Then I will!
Keller enters from house. Chris sees him, goes down near arbor.
Keller: What's the matter with you? I want to talk to you!
Chris: (pulling violently away from him) Don't do that, Dad. I'm going to 55
hurt you if you do that. There's nothing to say, so say it quick.
Keller: Exactly what's the matter? What's the matter? You got too much
money? Is that what bothers you?
Chris: (with an edge of sarcasm) It bothers me.
Keller: If you can't get used to it, then throw it away. You hear me? Take 60
every cent and give it to charity, throw it in the sewer. Does that
settle it? In the sewer, that's all. You think I'm kidding? I'm tellin'
you what to do, if it's dirty then burn it. It's your money, that's not
my money. I'm a dead man, I'm an old dead man, nothing's mine.
Well, talk to me! What do you want to do.
Chris: It's not what I want to do. It's what you want to do. 65

Act Three

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