



**DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL**  
**General Certificate of Education Advanced Level**  
**Higher 1**

**YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS**

CANDIDATE  
NAME

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CLASS

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INDEX  
NUMBER

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**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

**8811/01**

Paper 1 Reading Literature

**17 September 2015**

**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.

**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) Write a critical commentary on the following poem, paying close attention to ways in which your response is shaped by the poet's language, style and form.

The Portrait of a Sentenced Library

So these bricks will be torn down  
And books will still not have learnt  
To spread their feathers and fly  
Like pigeons from a shaken tree

So this balustrade will be dismantled 5  
Perhaps reassembled somewhere else –  
A conch paperweight by my head is a beach.  
Each hour from a postcard Big Ben chimes.

This is the logic of nostalgia –  
This is what I mean when I say 10  
That my memory is selfish.  
Who can guarantee that roaming

Through a tunnel I will find again  
The Children's Section, where a boy walked  
With 'the Little Prince' in his hands, 15  
His smile the first line of a novel

Neither of us had read before?  
One cymbal left in Chinatown.  
Blueprints and forums and rhetoric ensure  
That a firecracker makes no sound. 20

So the shattered glass of Van Klee Aquarium  
Still magnifies the eyelashes of students.  
So the ragged screen of Capitol Cinema  
Still shudders as a Pontianak drips black blood.

Only in dreams. Under separate stars. 25  
I had one last night; of sitting at S-11<sup>1</sup>  
With the usual bunch of affectionate liars,  
Skinny artists, red-eyed dreamers,

When suddenly a book appeared in the sky  
Like a carrier pigeon that had escaped 30  
From the ruins of the library.  
It landed, without a murmur,

On my shoulder. I opened that book,  
Expecting a cry for help, a refugee's plea.  
What I found instead was this poem 35  
That did not know how to end. Only when.

Alfian Sa'at

<sup>1</sup> S-11: A local chain of coffee shops.

- Or b) Write a critical commentary on the following poem, paying close attention to ways in which your response is shaped by the poet's language, style and form.

Warning to Children

Children, if you dare to think Of the greatness, rareness, muchness Fewness of this precious only Endless world in which you say You live, you think of things like this:	5
Blocks of slate enclosing dappled Red and green, enclosing tawny Yellow nets, enclosing white And black acres of dominoes, Where a neat brown paper parcel Tempts you to untie the string.	10
In the parcel a small island, On the island a large tree, On the tree a husky fruit. Strip the husk and pare the rind off: In the kernel you will see Blocks of slate enclosed by dappled Red and green, enclosed by tawny Yellow nets, enclosed by white And black acres of dominoes,	15 20
Where the same brown paper parcel - Children, leave the string alone! For who dares undo the parcel Finds himself at once inside it, On the island, in the fruit, Blocks of slate about his head, Finds himself enclosed by dappled Green and red, enclosed by yellow Tawny nets, enclosed by black And white acres of dominoes, With the same brown paper parcel Still untied upon his knee.	25 30
And, if he then should dare to think Of the fewness, muchness, rareness, Greatness of this endless only Precious world in which he says he lives - he then unties the string.	35

Robert Graves

## SECTION B

KAZUO ISHIGURO: *The Remains of the Day*

2

- Either (a)** "Can it be that our Mr Stevens is flesh and blood after all and cannot fully trust himself?"  
How significant is this quote in the portrayal of Stevens?
- Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following passage, commenting on Stevens's handling of relationships here and elsewhere in the novel.

The fact is, I have tended increasingly of late to indulge myself in such recollections. And ever since the prospect of seeing Miss Kenton again first arose some weeks ago, I suppose I have tended to spend much time pondering just why it was our relationship underwent such a change. For change it certainly did, around 1935 or 1936, after many years in which we had steadily achieved a fine professional understanding. In fact, by the end, we had even abandoned our routine of meeting over a cup of cocoa at the end of each day. But as to what really caused such changes, just what particular chain of events was really responsible, I have never quite been able to decide. 5

In thinking about this recently, it seems possible that that odd incident the evening Miss Kenton came into my pantry uninvited may have marked a crucial turning point. Why it was she came to my pantry I cannot remember with certainty. I have a feeling she may have come bearing a vase of flowers 'to brighten things up', but then again, I may be getting confused with the time she attempted the same thing years earlier at the start of our acquaintanceship. I know for a fact she tried to introduce flowers to my pantry on at least three occasions over the years, but perhaps I am confused in believing this to have been what brought her that particular evening. I might emphasize, in any case, that notwithstanding our years of good working relations, I had never allowed the situation to slip to one in which the housekeeper was coming and going from my pantry all day. The butler's pantry, as far as I am concerned, is a crucial office, the heart of the house's operations; not unlike a general's headquarters during a battle, and it is imperative that all things in it are ordered - and left ordered - in precisely the way I wish them to be. I have never been that sort of butler who allows all sorts of people to wander in and out - with their queries and grumbles. If operations are to be conducted in a smoothly co-ordinated way, it is surely obvious that the butler's pantry must be the one place in the house where privacy and solitude are guaranteed. 10 15 20 25

As it happened, when she entered my pantry that evening, I was not in fact engaged in professional matters. That is to say, it was towards the end of the day during a quiet week and I had been enjoying a rare hour or so off duty. As I say, I am not certain if Miss Kenton entered with her vase of flowers, but I certainly do recall her saying:

"Mr Stevens, your room looks even less accommodating at night than it does in the day. That electric bulb is too dim, surely, for you to be reading by." 30

"It is perfectly adequate, thank you, Miss Kenton."

"Really, Mr Stevens, this room resembles a prison cell. All one needs is a small bed in the corner and one could well imagine condemned men spending their last hours here."

Perhaps I said something to this, I do not know. In any case, I did not look up from my reading, and a few moments passed during which I waited for Miss Kenton to excuse herself and leave. But then I heard her say: 35

"Now I wonder what it could be you are reading there, Mr Stevens."

"Simply a book, Miss Kenton."

"I can see that, Mr Stevens. But what sort of book - that is what interests me." 40

I looked up to see Miss Kenton advancing towards me. I shut the book, and clutching it to my person, rose to my feet.

"Really, Miss Kenton," I said, "I must ask you to respect my privacy."

"But why are you so shy about your book, Mr Stevens? I rather suspect it may be something rather racy." 45

"It is quite out of the question, Miss Kenton, that anything 'racy', as you put it, should be found on his lordship's shelves."

"I have heard it said that many learned books contain the most racy of passages, but I have never had the nerve to look. Now, Mr Stevens, do please allow me to see what it is you are reading." 50

"Miss Kenton, I must ask you to leave me alone. It is quite impossible that you should persist in pursuing me like this during the very few moments of spare time I have to myself."

But Miss Kenton was continuing to advance and I must say it was a little difficult to assess what my best course of action would be. I was tempted to thrust the book into the drawer of my desk and lock it, but this seemed absurdly dramatic. I took a few paces back, the book still held to my chest. 55

"Please show me the volume you are holding, Mr Stevens," Miss Kenton said, continuing her advance, "and I will leave you to the pleasures of your reading. What on earth can it be you are so anxious to hide?" 60

"Miss Kenton, whether or not you discover the title of this volume is in itself not of the slightest importance to me. But as a matter of principle, I object to your appearing like this and invading my private moments."

"I wonder, is it a perfectly respectable volume, Mr Stevens, or are you in fact protecting me from its shocking influences?" 65

Then she was standing before me, and suddenly the atmosphere underwent a peculiar change almost as though the two of us had been suddenly thrust on to some other plane of being altogether. I am afraid it is not easy to describe clearly what I mean here. All I can say is that everything around us suddenly became very still; it was my impression that Miss Kenton's manner also underwent a sudden change; there was a strange seriousness 70 in her expression, and it struck me she seemed almost frightened.

## SECTION C

JOHN WEBSTER: *The Duchess of Malfi*

3

**Either (a)** 'The real tragedy if the play lies not in the evil that abounds but in the incompetence of virtue.'

Critically discuss *The Duchess of Malfi* in light of this statement.

**Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following passage, considering the dramatic significance of the following extract in relation to the play.

Duchess	Bring me the casket hither, and the glass. You get no lodging here to-night, my lord!	
Antonio	Indeed, I must persuade one.	
Duchess	Very good. I hope in time 'twill grow into a custom That noblemen shall come with cap and knee To purchase a night's lodging of their wives.	5
Antonio	I must lie here.	
Duchess	Must? You are a Lord of Misrule.	
Antonio	Indeed, my rule is only in the night.	10
Duchess	To what use will you put me?	
Antonio	We'll sleep together.	
Duchess	Alas, what pleasure can two lovers find in sleep/	
Cariola	My lord, I lie with her often and I know She'll much disquiet you –	15
Antonio	See you are complained of!	
Cariola	- For she's the sprawlingest bedfellow!	
Antonio	I shall like her better for that.	
Cariola	Sir, shall I ask you a question?	
Antonio	I pray thee, Cariola.	20
Duchess	Wherefore still when you lie with my lady	
Cariola	Do you rise so early?	
Antonio	Labouring men Count the clock oftenest, Cariola – Are glad when their task's ended.	25
Duchess	I'll stop your mouth. [Kisses him.]	
Antonio	Nay, that's but one. Venus had two soft doves To draw her chariot; I must have another. [Kisses her.] When wilt thou marry, Cariola?	
Cariola	Never, my lord.	30
Antonio	O, fie upon this single life! Forgo it. We read how Daphne, for her peevish slight, Became a fruitless bay-tree; Syrinx turned To the pale, empty reed; Anaxarete Was frozen into marble; whereas those Which married, or proved kind unto their friends, Were by a gracious influence transshaped Into the olive, pomegranate, mulberry – Became flowers, precious stones, or eminent stars.	35
Cariola	This is a vain poetry: but I pray you, tell me, If there were proposed me wisdom, riches, and beauty, In three several young men, which should I choose?	40

Antonio	'Tis a hard question. This was Paris' case, And he was blind in 't; and there was a great cause: For how was 't possible he could judge right, Having three amorous goddesses in view, And they stark naked? 'Twas a motion Were able to benight the apprehension Of the severest counsellor of Europe. Now I look on both your faces so well form'd, It puts me in mind of a question I would ask.	45 50
Cariola	What is 't?	
Antonio	I do wonder why hard-favoured ladies, For the most part, keep worse-favoured waiting-women To attend them, and cannot endure fair ones.	55
Duchess	O, that's soon answered. Did you ever in your life know an ill painter Desire to have his dwelling next door to the shop Of an excellent picture-maker? 'Twould disgrace His face-making, and undo him. I prithee, When were we so merry? My hair tangles.	60
Antonio	Pray thee, Cariola, let 's steal forth the room, And let her talk to herself: I have divers times Serv'd her the like, when she hath chaf'd extremely. I love to see her angry. Softly, Cariola.	65
	<i>Exeunt [Antonio and Cariola.]</i>	
Duchess	Doth not the colour of my hair 'gin to change? When I wax gray, I shall have all the court Powder their hair with arras, to be like me. You have cause to love me; I ent'red you into my heart <i>[Enter Ferdinand unseen]</i> Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys. We shall one day have my brothers take you napping. Methinks his presence, being now in court, Should make you keep your own bed; but you 'll say Love mix'd with fear is sweetest. I 'll assure you, You shall get no more children till my brothers Consent to be your gossips. Have you lost your tongue? <i>Ferdinand [shows himself and] gives her a poniard.</i> 'Tis welcome: For know, whether I am doom'd to live or die, I can do both like a prince.	70 75 80

Act 3, Scene 2

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*Copyright Acknowledgements*

Question 1a © Alfian Sa'at; *Portrait of a Sentenced Library*, taken from *A History of Amnesia*, Ethos Books, 2001.

Question 1b © Robert Graves; *Warning to Children*; taken from *The Complete Poems*, Penguin Books Ltd., 2003.

Question 2 © Kazuo Ishiguro; *The Remains of the Day*; *Vintage* International Edition; 1993.

Question 3 © John Webster; *The Duchess of Malfi*; Arden Early Modern Drama; Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2009.