

# **TEMASEK JUNIOR COLLEGE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS 2015**

**Higher 1 Literature**

**8811**

**Paper 1      Reading Literature**

**Time          3 hours**

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL CANDIDATES**

Answer **three** questions; one from each of the sections.

## **INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

You are advised to spend an hour on each question.

Please begin each question on a fresh sheet of paper.

Please submit your scripts to each question separately.

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**This paper consists of 8 printed pages**

## SECTION A

1

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

### **The Sun Used to Shine**

The sun used to shine while we two walked  
Slowly together, paused and started  
Again, and sometimes mused, sometimes talked  
As either pleased, and cheerfully parted

Each night. We never disagreed 5  
Which gate to rest on. The to be  
And the late past we gave small heed.  
We turned from men or poetry

To rumours of the war remote  
Only till both stood disinclined 10  
For aught but the yellow flavoured coat  
Of an apple wasps had undermined;

Or a sentry of dark betonies<sup>1</sup>,  
The stateliest of small flowers on earth,  
At the forest verge; or crocuses<sup>2</sup> 15  
Pale purple as if they had their birth

In sunless Hades fields. The war  
Came back to mind with the moonrise  
Which soldiers in the east afar  
Beheld then. Nevertheless, our eyes 20

Could as well imagine the Crusades  
Or Caesar's battles. Everything  
To faintness like those rumours fade—  
Like the brook's water glittering

Under the moonlight—like those walks 25  
Now—like us two that took them, and  
The fallen apples, all the talks  
And silence—like memory's sand

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<sup>1</sup> Reddish purple flowers

<sup>2</sup> Small purple flowers that grow in spring

When the tide covers it late or soon,  
And other men through other flowers  
In those fields under the same moon  
Go talking and have easy hours.

30

Edward Thomas (1878—1917)

- Or (b) Write a critical commentary of the following poem, considering in detail ways in which your response is shaped by the writer's language, style and form.

### The Jaguar

The apes yawn and adore their fleas in the sun.  
The parrots shriek as if they were on fire, or strut  
Like cheap tarts to attract the stroller with the nut.  
Fatigued with indolence, tiger and lion

Lie still as the sun. The boa-constrictor's coil 5  
Is a fossil. Cage after cage seems empty, or  
Stinks of sleepers from the breathing straw.  
It might be painted on a nursery wall.

But who runs like the rest past these arrives  
At a cage where the crowd stands, stares, mesmerized, 10  
As a child at a dream, at a jaguar hurrying enraged  
Through prison darkness after the drills of his eyes

On a short fierce fuse. Not in boredom—  
The eye satisfied to be blind in fire,  
By the bang of blood in the brain deaf the ear— 15  
He spins from the bars, but there's no cage to him

More than to the visionary his cell:  
His stride is wildernesses of freedom:  
The world rolls under the long thrust of his heel.  
Over the cage floor the horizons come. 20

Ted Hughes (1930—1998)

## SECTION B

### 2 EDITH WHARTON: *The Age of Innocence* (Penguin)

- Either (a)** Discuss Wharton's use of mythological and literary allusions in *The Age of Innocence*.
- Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following extract, relating it to the presentation of change here and elsewhere in the novel.

Archer had been wont to smile at these annual vaticinations of his mother's; but this year even he was obliged to acknowledge, as he listened to an enumeration of the changes, that the "trend" was visible.

"The extravagance in dress—" Miss Jackson began. "Sillerton took me to the first night of the Opera, and I can only tell you that Jane Merry's dress was the only one I recognised from last year; and even that had had the front panel changed. Yet I know she got it out from Worth only two years ago, because my seamstress always goes in to make over her Paris dresses before she wears them." 5

"Ah, Jane Merry is one of *us*," said Mrs. Archer sighing, as if it were not such an enviable thing to be in an age when ladies were beginning to flaunt abroad their Paris dresses as soon as they were out of the Custom House, instead of letting them mellow under lock and key, in the manner of Mrs. Archer's contemporaries. 10

"Yes; she's one of the few. In my youth," Miss Jackson rejoined, "it was considered vulgar to dress in the newest fashions; and Amy Sillerton has always told me that in Boston the rule was to put away one's Paris dresses for two years. Old Mrs. Baxter Pennilow, who did everything handsomely, used to import twelve a year, two velvet, two satin, two silk, and the other six of poplin and the finest cashmere. It was a standing order, and as she was ill for two years before she died they found forty-eight Worth dresses that had never been taken out of tissue paper; and when the girls left off their mourning they were able to wear the first lot at the Symphony concerts without looking in advance of the fashion." 15 20

"Ah, well, Boston is more conservative than New York; but I always think it's a safe rule for a lady to lay aside her French dresses for one season," Mrs. Archer conceded. 25

"It was Beaufort who started the new fashion by making his wife clap her new clothes on her back as soon as they arrived: I must say at times it takes all Regina's distinction not to look like ... like ..." Miss Jackson 30

glanced around the table, caught Janey's bulging gaze, and took refuge in an unintelligible murmur.

"Like her rivals," said Mr. Sillerton Jackson, with the air of producing an epigram.

"Oh,—" the ladies murmured; and Mrs. Archer added, partly to distract her daughter's attention from forbidden topics: "Poor Regina! Her Thanksgiving hasn't been a very cheerful one, I'm afraid. Have you heard the rumours about Beaufort's speculations, Sillerton?" 35

Mr. Jackson nodded carelessly. Every one had heard the rumours in question, and he scorned to confirm a tale that was already common property. 40

A gloomy silence fell upon the party. No one really liked Beaufort, and it was not wholly unpleasant to think the worst of his private life; but the idea of his having brought financial dishonour on his wife's family was too shocking to be enjoyed even by his enemies. Archer's New York tolerated hypocrisy in private relations; but in business matters it exacted a limpid and impeccable honesty. It was a long time since any well-known banker had failed discredibly; but every one remembered the social extinction visited on the heads of the firm when the last event of the kind had happened. It would be the same with the Beauforts, in spite of his power and her popularity; not all the leagued strength of the Dallas connection would save poor Regina if there were any truth in the reports of her husband's unlawful speculations. 45 50

The talk took refuge in less ominous topics; but everything they touched on seemed to confirm Mrs. Archer's sense of an accelerated trend. 55

"Of course, Newland, I know you let dear May go to Mrs. Struthers's Sunday evenings—" she began; and May interposed gaily: "Oh, you know, everybody goes to Mrs. Struthers's now; and she was invited to Granny's last reception."

It was thus, Archer reflected, that New York managed its transitions: conspiring to ignore them till they were well over, and then, in all good faith, imagining that they had taken place in a preceding age. There was always a traitor in the citadel; and after he (or generally she) had surrendered the keys, what was the use of pretending that it was impregnable? Once people had tasted of Mrs. Struthers's easy Sunday hospitality they were not likely to sit at home remembering that her champagne was transmuted Shoe-Polish. 60 65

(Chapter 26)

## SECTION C

3

**JOHN WEBSTER: *The Duchess of Malfi***

**Either (a)** Discuss the significance of the pursuit of greatness in *The Duchess of Malfi*.

**Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following extract, paying close attention to the presentation of madness here, and elsewhere in the play.

FERDINAND	I will throttle it. [ <i>Throws himself on the ground</i> ]	
MALATESTES	O, my lord, you are angry with nothing.	
FERDINAND	You are a fool. How is't possible I should catch my shadow, unless I fall upon 't? When I go to hell, I mean to carry a bribe, for look you, good gifts evermore make way for the worst persons.	5
PESCARA	Rise, good my lord.	
FERDINAND	I am studying the art of patience.	
PESCARA	'Tis a noble virtue.	10
FERDINAND	To drive six snails before me, from this town to Moscow—neither use goad nor whip to them, but let them take their own time—the patient'st man i' th' world match me for an experiment---and I'll crawl after like a sheep-biter.	
CARDINAL	Force him up. [ <i>They get FERDINAND to his feet</i> ]	15
FERDINAND	Use me well, you were best: What I have done, I have done, I'll confess nothing.	
DOCTOR	Now let me come to him. Are you mad, my lord? Are you out of your princely wits?	20
FERDINAND	What's he?	
PESCARA	Your doctor.	
FERDINAND	Let me have his beard sawed off, and his eye-brows filed more civil.	
DOCTOR	I must do mad tricks with him, for that's the only way on't. I have brought your grace a salamander's skin to keep you from sun-burning.	25
FERDINAND	I have cruel sore eyes.	
DOCTOR	The white of a cockatrice's egg is present remedy.	
FERDINAND	Let it be a new-laid one, you were best. – Hide me from him. Physicians are like kings, they brook no contradiction.	30
DOCTOR	Now he begins to fear me, now let me alone with him.	
CARDINAL	How now, put off your gown?	
DOCTOR	Let me have some forty urinals filled with rosewater: he	

and I'll go pelt one another with them. Now he begins to 35  
fear me. —Can you fetch a frisk, sir?—Let him go, let him  
go, upon my peril.  
[*They release FERDINAND*]  
I find by his eye he stands in awe of me, I'll make him as  
tame as a dormouse. 40  
[*FERDINAND attacks the DOCTOR*]  
FERDINAND Can you fetch your frisks, sir? I will stamp him into a cullis,  
flay off his skin to cover one of the anatomies this rogue  
hath set i' th' cold yonder—in Barber-Surgeon's hall!  
Hence! Hence! You are all of you like beasts for sacrifice. 45  
There's nothing left of you but tongue and belly, flattery  
and lechery. [*Exit*]  
PESCARA Doctor, he did not fear you thoroughly.  
DOCTOR True, I was somewhat too forward. [*Exit*]  
BOSOLA [*Aside*] Mercy upon me, what a fatal judgment 50  
Hath fall'n upon this Ferdinand!  
PESCARA Knows your grace  
What accident hath brought unto the Prince  
This strange distraction?  
CARDINAL [*Aside*] I must feign somewhat. [*Aloud*] Thus they say it 55  
grew:  
You have heard it rumour'd for these many years,  
None of our family dies but there is seen  
The shape of an old woman, which is given  
By tradition to us, to have been murdered 60  
By her nephews for her riches. Such a figure  
One night, as the Prince sat up late at's book,  
Appeared to him: when crying out for help,  
The gentleman of's chamber found his grace  
All on a cold sweat, altered much in face 65  
And language; since which apparition  
He hath grown worse and worse, and I much fear  
He cannot live.

(ACT 5 SC 2)

END OF PAPER