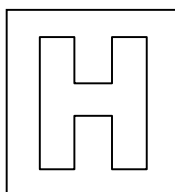


Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class	Adm No



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## 2015 Promotional Examination II Pre-University 2

**Literature in English  
Higher 1**

**8811/01**

Paper 1: Reading Literature

1 September 2015

3 hours

Additional Materials: Foolscap 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.

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, class and index number 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**.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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

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**This question paper consists of 7 printed pages.**

**[Turn over]**

## Section A

1

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

## LULLABY

My mother's an expert in one thing:  
 sending people she loves into the other world.  
 The little ones, the babies--these  
 she rocks, whispering or singing quietly. I can't say  
 what she did for my father; 5  
 whatever it was, I'm sure it was right.

It's the same thing, really, preparing a person  
 for sleep, for death. The lullabies--they all say  
 don't be afraid, that's how they paraphrase  
 the heartbeat of the mother. 10  
 So the living grow slowly calm; it's only  
 the dying who can't, who refuse.

The dying are like tops, like gyroscopes--  
 they spin so rapidly they seem to be still.  
 Then they fly apart: in my mother's arms, 15  
 my sister was a cloud of atoms, of particles--that's the difference.  
 When a child's asleep, it's still whole.

My mother's seen death; she doesn't talk about the soul's integrity.  
 She's held an infant, an old man, as by comparison the dark grew  
 solid around them, finally changing to earth. 20

The soul's like all matter:  
 why would it stay intact, stay faithful to its one form,  
 when it could be free?

Louise Gluck (1943 - )

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

### STILL I RISE

You may write me down in history With your bitter, twisted lies, You may tread me in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise.	
Does my sassiness upset you? Why are you beset with gloom? 'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells Pumping in my living room.	5
Just like moons and like suns, With the certainty of tides, Just like hopes springing high, Still I'll rise.	10
Did you want to see me broken? Bowed head and lowered eyes? Shoulders falling down like teardrops. Weakened by my soulful cries.	15
Does my haughtiness offend you? Don't you take it awful hard 'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines Diggin' in my own back yard.	20
You may shoot me with your words, You may cut me with your eyes, You may kill me with your hatefulness, But still, like air, I'll rise.	
Does my sexiness upset you? Does it come as a surprise That I dance like I've got diamonds At the meeting of my thighs?	25
Out of the huts of history's shame I rise Up from a past that's rooted in pain I rise I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide, Welling and swelling I bear in the tide. Leaving behind nights of terror and fear I rise Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear I rise Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave. I rise I rise I rise.	30  35  40

Maya Angelou (1928 - 2014)

[Turn over]

## Section B

EDITH WHARTON: *The Age of Innocence*

2

- Either (a)** "Newland is the architect of his own unhappiness." How far would you agree with this comment?
- Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the portrayal of Newland's relationship with Ellen, here and elsewhere in the novel.

"Don't be afraid of me: you needn't squeeze yourself back into your corner like that. A stolen kiss isn't what I want. Look: I'm not even trying to touch the sleeve of your jacket. Don't suppose that I don't understand your reasons for not wanting to let this feeling between us dwindle into an ordinary hole-and-corner love-affair. I couldn't have spoken like this yesterday, because when we've been apart, and I'm looking forward to seeing you, every thought is burnt up in a great flame. But then you come; and you're so much more than I remembered, and what I want of you is so much more than an hour or two every now and then, with wastes of thirsty waiting between, that I can sit perfectly still beside you, like this, with that other vision in my mind, just quietly trusting to it to come true." 5

For a moment she made no reply; then she asked, hardly above a whisper: "What do you mean by trusting to it to come true?" 10

"Why—you know it will, don't you?"

"Your vision of you and me together?" She burst into a sudden hard laugh. "You choose your place well to put it to me!" 15

"Do you mean because we're in my wife's brougham? Shall we get out and walk, then? I don't suppose you mind a little snow?"

She laughed again, more gently. "No; I shan't get out and walk, because my business is to get to Granny's as quickly as I can. And you'll sit beside me, and we'll look, not at visions, but at realities." 20

"I don't know what you mean by realities. The only reality to me is this."

She met the words with a long silence, during which the carriage rolled down an obscure side-street and then turned into the searching illumination of Fifth Avenue. 25

"Is it your idea, then, that I should live with you as your mistress—since I can't be your wife?" she asked.

The crudeness of the question startled him: the word was one that women of his class fought shy of, even when their talk flitted closest about the topic. He noticed that Madame Olenska pronounced it as if it had a recognised place in her vocabulary, and he wondered if it had been used familiarly in her presence in the horrible life she had fled from. Her question pulled him up with a jerk, and he floundered. 30

"I want—I want somehow to get away with you into a world where words like that—categories like that—won't exist. Where we shall be simply two human beings who love each other, who are the whole of life to each other; and nothing else on earth will matter." 35

She drew a deep sigh that ended in another laugh. "Oh, my dear—where is that country? Have you ever been there?" she asked; and as he remained sullenly dumb she went on: "I know so many who've tried to find it; and, believe me, they all got out by mistake at wayside stations: at places 40

like Boulogne, or Pisa, or Monte Carlo—and it wasn't at all different from the old world they'd left, but only rather smaller and dingier and more promiscuous."

He had never heard her speak in such a tone, and he remembered the phrase she had used a little while before. 45

"Yes, the Gorgon *has* dried your tears," he said.

"Well, she opened my eyes too; it's a delusion to say that she blinds people. What she does is just the contrary—she fastens their eyelids open, so that they're never again in the blessed darkness. Isn't there a Chinese torture like that? There ought to be. Ah, believe me, it's a miserable little country!" 50

Chapter 29

[Turn over]

## Section C

ARTHUR MILLER: *All My Sons*

3

**Either (a)** To what extent do you agree that Miller presents Joe Keller as a sympathetic character despite the enormity of his crime?

**Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the presentation of idealism, here and elsewhere in the play.

Sue: That's why I've been intending to ask you a small favor, Ann. It's something very important to me.

Ann: Certainly, if I can do it.

Sue: You can. When you take up housekeeping, try to find a place away from here. 5

Ann: Are you fooling?

Sue: I'm very serious. My husband is unhappy with Chris around.

Ann: How is that?

Sue: Jim's a successful doctor. But he's got an idea he'd like to do medical research. Discover things. You see? 10

Ann: Well, isn't that good?

Sue: Research pays twenty five dollars a week minus laundering the hair shirt. You've got to give up your life to go into it.

Ann: How does Chris...

Sue: [*with growing feeling*] Chris makes people want to be better than it's possible to be. He does that to people. 15

Ann: Is that bad?

Sue: My husband has a family, dear. Every time he has a session with Chris he feels as though he's compromising by not giving up everything for research. As though Chris or anybody else isn't compromising. It happens with Jim every couple of years. He meets a man and makes a statue out of him. 20

Ann: Maybe he's right. I don't mean that Chris is a statue, but...

Sue: Now darling, you know he's not right.

Ann: I don't agree with you. Chris... 25

Sue: Let's face it, dear. Chris is working with his father, isn't he? He's taking money out of that business every week in the year.

Ann: What of it?

Sue: You ask me what of it?

Ann: I certainly do. [*She seems about to burst out*] You oughtn't cast aspersions like that, I'm surprised at you. 30

Sue: You're surprised at me!

Ann: He'd never take five cents out of that plant if there was anything wrong with it.

Sue: You know that. 35

Ann: I know it. I resent everything you've said.

Sue: [*moving toward her*] You know what I resent, dear?

Ann: Please, I don't want to argue.

Sue: I resent living next to the Holy Family. It makes me look like a bum, you understand? 40

Ann: I can't do anything about that.

*Sue:* Who is he to ruin a man's life? Everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail.

*Ann:* That's not true!

*Sue:* Then why don't you go out and talk to people? Go on, talk to them. 45  
There's not a person on the block who doesn't know the truth.

*Ann:* That's a lie. People come here all the time for cards and...

*Sue:* So what? They give him credit for being smart. I do, too, I've got 50  
nothing against Joe. But if Chris wants people to put on the hair  
shirt let him take off the broadcloth. He's driving my husband crazy  
with that phony idealism of his and I'm at the end of my rope on it!

Act 2

**8**  
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