



MERIDIAN JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 Preliminary Examination
Higher 1

H1 LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

8811/01

Paper 1: Reading Literature

15 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 papers in texts (e.g. use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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.

This document consists of 8 printed pages and 1 blank page.

<i>Candidates must fill in this section</i>		<i>Examiner's Use only</i>	
<i>Name</i>		<i>Question No.</i>	<i>Total Score</i>
		1 ()	25
		2 ()	25
<i>Registration No.</i>	<i>Class</i>	3 ()	25
		TOTAL:	75

SECTION A

UNSEEN POETRY

Answer one question in this section.

1

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

A Hermitage

It's true there were times when it was too much
and I slipped off in the first light or its last hour
and drove up through the crooked way of the valley

and swam out to those ruins on an island.
Blackbirds were the only music in the spruces, 5
and the stars, as they faded out, offered themselves to me

like glasses of water ringing by the empty linens of the dead.
When Delilah watched the dark hair of her lover
tumble, she did not shatter. When Abraham

relented, he did not relent. 10
Still, I would tell you of the humbling and the waking.
I would tell you of the wild hours of surrender,

when the river stripped the cove's stones
from the margin and the blackbirds built
their strict songs in the high 15

pinetrees, when the great nests swayed the lattice
of the branches, the moon's brute music
touching them with fire.

And you, there, stranger in the sway
of it, what would you have done 20
there, in the ruins, when they rose

from you, when the burning wings
ascended, when the old ghosts
shook the music from your branches and the great lie

of your one sweet life was lifted? 25

Joseph Fasano (1982 –)

OR

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

B Loveliest Grotesque

I kept the little ruin near me, I stowed it in the kitchen,	5
it sat in the pantry, like a jar of reddest jam,	
it sang me songs of seafaring, it said the "weather being fine,"	
I listened to it breathe, shiver brokenly in time,	
I believed a multitude stood between us, four seasons,	
the meaningless physical world, and a grammar primer,	10
you could see how I found it necessary,	
with its immodest appeals, its constant state of <i>déshabillé</i> , ¹	
it is small for its age, it is too wide-awake,	
so my sewing came undone with the years,	
I stalked myself to the open door, the unlatched gate,	15
<i>ma petite</i> ² is a world sold of charms, it loves a new act,	
has a leer for a mouth, has indecorous energy,	
I ran from the spring glee of it, I radioed ahead,	
oh I unplanned a lifetime, turned my gaze to the west,	
but then it said it would make something of us both,	20
the sound of it touched me, fat in its cracked sadness,	
it was homemade all along, it was oddly necessary,	
I looked back like Lot's wife ³ , like the exhausted mirage	
that I was, and the loveliest salt taste was whelming us,	
both awash in a light of knives, and the wind it was shifting like this—	25

Sandra Lim (1974 –)

[Turn over

¹ *Déshabillé* : the state of being only partly or scantily clothed

² *Ma petite*: Literally "my little"; dear (in French)

³ Lot's wife: Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt when she looked behind her despite being warned by God through Lot against doing so.

Section B

EDITH WHARTON: *The Age of Innocence*

2

EITHER (a) 'The novel's ending suggests the triumph of Newland Archer as a realist.' Discuss.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, paying particular attention to Wharton's presentation of honour here and elsewhere in the novel.

The stroke had clearly been a slight one, for she was able to articulate and to make her wishes known; and soon after the doctor's first visit she had begun to regain control of her facial muscles. But the alarm had been great; and proportionately great was the indignation when it was gathered from Mrs. Mingott's fragmentary phrases that Regina Beaufort had come to ask her-- 5
incredible effrontery!--to back up her husband, see them through--not to "desert" them, as she called it--in fact to induce the whole family to cover and condone their monstrous dishonour.

"I said to her: 'Honour's always been honour, and honesty honesty, in Manson Mingott's house, and will be till I'm carried out of it feet first,'" the old woman had 10
stammered into her daughter's ear, in the thick voice of the partly paralysed. "And when she said: 'But my name, Auntie--my name's Regina Dallas,' I said: 'It was Beaufort when he covered you with jewels, and it's got to stay Beaufort now that he's covered you with shame.'"

So much, with tears and gasps of horror, Mrs. Welland imparted, blanched and 15
demolished by the unwonted obligation of having at last to fix her eyes on the unpleasant and the discreditable. "If only I could keep it from your father-in-law: he always says: 'Augusta, for pity's sake, don't destroy my last illusions' --and how am I to prevent his knowing these horrors?" the poor lady wailed.

"After all, Mamma, he won't have SEEN them," her daughter suggested; and Mrs. 20
Welland sighed: "Ah, no; thank heaven he's safe in bed. And Dr. Bencomb has promised to keep him there till poor Mamma is better, and Regina has been got away somewhere."

Archer had seated himself near the window and was gazing out blankly at the 25
deserted thoroughfare. It was evident that he had been summoned rather for the moral support of the stricken ladies than because of any specific aid that he could render. Mr. Lovell Mingott had been telegraphed for, and messages were being despatched by hand to the members of the family living in New York; and meanwhile there was nothing to do but to discuss in hushed tones the consequences of Beaufort's dishonour and of his wife's unjustifiable action.

Mrs. Lovell Mingott, who had been in another room writing notes, presently 30
reappeared, and added her voice to the discussion. In THEIR day, the elder ladies agreed, the wife of a man who had done anything disgraceful in business

had only one idea: to efface herself, to disappear with him. "There was the case of poor Grandmamma Spicer; your great-grandmother, May. Of course," Mrs. Welland hastened to add, "your great-grandfather's money difficulties were private--losses at cards, or signing a note for somebody--I never quite knew, because Mamma would never speak of it. But she was brought up in the country because her mother had to leave New York after the disgrace, whatever it was: they lived up the Hudson alone, winter and summer, till Mamma was sixteen. It would never have occurred to Grandmamma Spicer to ask the family to `countenance' her, as I understand Regina calls it; though a private disgrace is nothing compared to the scandal of ruining hundreds of innocent people." 35 40

"Yes, it would be more becoming in Regina to hide her own countenance than to talk about other people's," Mrs. Lovell Mingott agreed. "I understand that the emerald necklace she wore at the Opera last Friday had been sent on approval from Ball and Black's in the afternoon. I wonder if they'll ever get it back?" 45

Archer listened unmoved to the relentless chorus. The idea of absolute financial probity as the first law of a gentleman's code was too deeply ingrained in him for sentimental considerations to weaken it. An adventurer like Lemuel Struthers might build up the millions of his Shoe Polish on any number of shady dealings; but unblemished honesty was the noblesse oblige of old financial New York. Nor did Mrs. Beaufort's fate greatly move Archer. 50

Chapter 37

Section C

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

3

EITHER (a) Examine the portrayal of authority in the play.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage relating it to the portrayal of masculinity here and elsewhere in the play.

SIR TOBY BELCH

I'll make the motion: stand here, make a good show
on't: this shall end without the perdition of souls.

Aside

Marry, I'll ride your horse as well as I ride you.

Re-enter FABIAN and VIOLA

To FABIAN

I have his horse to take up the quarrel:
I have persuaded him the youth's a devil.

5

FABIAN

He is as horribly conceited of him; and pants and
looks pale, as if a bear were at his heels.

SIR TOBY BELCH

[To VIOLA] There's no remedy, sir; he will fight
with you for's oath sake: marry, he hath better
bethought him of his quarrel, and he finds that now
scarce to be worth talking of: therefore draw, for
the supportance of his vow; he protests he will not hurt you.

10

VIOLA

[Aside] Pray God defend me! A little thing would
make me tell them how much I lack of a man.

FABIAN

Give ground, if you see him furious.

15

SIR TOBY BELCH

Come, Sir Andrew, there's no remedy; the gentleman will, for his honour's sake, have one bout with you; he cannot by the duello avoid it: but he has promised me, as he is a gentleman and a soldier, he will not hurt you. Come on; to't.

20

SIR ANDREW

Pray God, he keep his oath!

VIOLA

I do assure you, 'tis against my will.

They draw

Enter ANTONIO

ANTONIO

Put up your sword. If this young gentleman Have done offence, I take the fault on me: If you offend him, I for him defy you.

25

SIR TOBY BELCH

You, sir! why, what are you?

ANTONIO

One, sir, that for his love dares yet do more Than you have heard him brag to you he will.

SIR TOBY BELCH

Nay, if you be an undertaker, I am for you.

They draw

Enter Officers

FABIAN

O good Sir Toby, hold! here come the officers.

30

SIR TOBY BELCH

I'll be with you anon.

VIOLA

Pray, sir, put your sword up, if you please.

SIR ANDREW

Marry, will I, sir; and, for that I promised you,
I'll be as good as my word: he will bear you easily
and reins well.

35

FIRST OFFICER

This is the man; do thy office.

SECOND OFFICER

Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit of Count Orsino.

ANTONIO

You do mistake me, sir.

Act 3 Sc 4

End of Paper

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