



**ANDERSON JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 Preliminary Examination 2015**

**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**  
**Higher 1**

**9748/01**

**Paper 1 Reading Literature**

**17 September 2015**  
**3 hours**

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, class and subject tutor's 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.

**NAME :** \_\_\_\_\_

**PDG :** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT TUTOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Question No.</b>	<b>Marks</b>
Question *1a / 1b	
Question *2a / 2b	
Question *3a / 3b	

*\*Please delete accordingly.*

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## Section A

1

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

8

If someone had said you passed away  
 this evening at 8, when my watch was still  
 an hour behind, on a few minutes to seven,  
 I'd be round for rituals with your loved ones.  
 We'd sip the last of your lemon tea, taking 5  
 turns to embrace you with private words.  
 Some would simply freeze you  
 with that wholly unsayable look of love.

In the quickening, we'd fold away your clothes,  
 close the curtains over the awful pouring 10  
 light, but couldn't do a thing for the beep  
 & brake of cars, the low hums of a fast  
 travelling bus as we'd help you to the awkward  
 angle on your bed, how you'd be found,  
 then we'd hold back for the awful way you'd rise 15  
 to the almighty challenge of your punctual

heart-stop.

Making our journeys home  
 we were back in time  
 strangely prepared 20  
 when someone said  
 you passed away  
 this evening at 8.

Daljit Nagra (b.1966)

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

### A MIRACLE FOR BREAKFAST

*(written in 1935)*

At six o'clock we were waiting for coffee,  
 waiting for coffee and the charitable crumb  
 that was going to be served from a certain balcony  
 -- like kings of old, or like a miracle.  
 It was still dark. One foot of the sun  
 steadied itself on a long ripple in the river. 5

The first ferry of the day had just crossed the river.  
 It was so cold we hoped that the coffee  
 would be very hot seeing that the sun  
 was not going to warm us; and that the crumb  
 would be a loaf each, buttered, by a miracle. 10  
 At seven a man stepped out on the balcony.

He stood for a minute alone on the balcony  
 looking over our heads toward the river.  
 A servant handed him the makings of a miracle, 15  
 consisting of one lone cup of coffee  
 and one roll, which he proceeded to crumb,  
 his head, so to speak, in the clouds – along with the sun.

Was the man crazy? What under the sun  
 was he trying to do, up there on his balcony! 20  
 Each man received one rather hard crumb,  
 which some flicked scornfully into the river,  
 and, in a cup, one drop of the coffee.  
 Some of us stood around, waiting for the miracle.

I can tell what I saw next; it was not a miracle. 25  
 A beautiful villa stood in the sun  
 and from its doors came the smell of hot coffee.  
 In front, a baroque white plaster balcony  
 added by birds, who nest along the river,  
 -- I saw it with one eye close to the crumb -- 30

And galleries and marble chambers. My crumb  
 my mansion, made for me by a miracle,  
 through ages, by insects, birds, and the river  
 working the stone. Every day, in the sun,  
 at breakfast time I sit on my balcony 35  
 with my feet up, and drink gallons of coffee.

We licked up the crumb and swallowed the coffee.  
 A window across the river caught the sun  
 as if the miracle were working, on the wrong balcony.

Elizabeth Bishop (1926 – 1995)

## Section B

EDITH WHARTON: *The Age of Innocence*

2

**Either** (a) How far do you agree that the last chapter (chapter 34) of *The Age of Innocence* is a satisfactory ending for the novel?

**Or** (b) Write a critical commentary of the following passage, relating it to the significance of Ned Winsett, here and elsewhere in the novel.

On the subject of "Hearth-fires" (as the paper was called) he was inexhaustibly entertaining; but beneath his fun lurked the sterile bitterness of the still young man who has tried and given up. His conversation always made Archer take the measure of his own life, and feel how little it contained; but Winsett's, after all, contained still less, and though their common fund of intellectual interests and curiosities made their talks exhilarating, their exchange of views usually remained within the limits of a pensive dilettantism.

5

"The fact is, life isn't much a fit for either of us," Winsett had once said. "I'm down and out; nothing to be done about it. I've got only one ware to produce, and there's no market for it here, and won't be in my time. But you're free and you're well-off. Why don't you get into touch? There's only one way to do it: to go into politics."

10

Archer threw his head back and laughed. There one saw at a flash the unbridgeable difference between men like Winsett and the others—Archer's kind. Every one in polite circles knew that, in America, "a gentleman couldn't go into politics." But, since he could hardly put it in that way to Winsett, he answered evasively: "Look at the career of the honest man in American politics! They don't want us."

15

"Who's 'they'? Why don't you all get together and be 'they' yourselves?"

Archer's laugh lingered on his lips in a slightly condescending smile. It was useless to prolong the discussion: everybody knew the melancholy fate of the few gentlemen who had risked their clean linen in municipal or state politics in New York. The day was past when that sort of thing was possible: the country was in possession of the bosses and the emigrant, and decent people had to fall back on sport or culture.

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"Culture! Yes—if we had it! But there are just a few little local patches, dying out here and there for lack of—well, hoeing and cross-fertilising: the last remnants of the old European tradition that your forebears brought with them. But you're in a pitiful little minority: you've got no centre, no competition, no audience. You're like the pictures on the walls of a deserted house: 'The Portrait of a Gentleman.' You'll never amount to anything, any of you, till you roll up your sleeves and get right down into the muck. That, or emigrate ... God! If I could emigrate...."

30

Archer mentally shrugged his shoulders and turned the conversation back to books, where Winsett, if uncertain, was always interesting. Emigrate! As if a gentleman could abandon his own country! One could no more do that than one could roll up one's sleeves and go down into the muck. A gentleman simply stayed at home and abstained. But you couldn't make a man like Winsett see that; and that was why the New York of literary clubs and exotic restaurants, though a first shake made it seem more of a kaleidoscope, turned out, in the end, to be a smaller box, with a more monotonous pattern, than the assembled atoms of Fifth Avenue.

35

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The next morning Archer scoured the town in vain for more yellow roses. In consequence of this search he arrived late at the office, perceived that his doing so made no difference whatever to any one, and was filled with sudden exasperation at the elaborate futility of his life. Why should he not be, at that moment, on the sands of St. Augustine with May Welland? No one was deceived by his pretense of professional activity. In old-fashioned legal firms like that of which Mr. Letterblair was the head, and which were mainly engaged in the management of large estates and "conservative" investments, there were always two or three young men, fairly well-off, and without professional ambition, who, for a certain number of hours of each day, sat at their desks accomplishing trivial tasks, or simply reading the newspapers. Though it was supposed to be proper for them to have an occupation, the crude fact of money-making was still regarded as derogatory, and the law, being a profession, was accounted a more gentlemanly pursuit than business. But none of these young men had much hope of really advancing in his profession, or any earnest desire to do so; and over many of them the green mould of the perfunctory was already perceptibly spreading.

It made Archer shiver to think that it might be spreading over him too. He had, to be sure, other tastes and interests; he spent his vacations in European travel, cultivated the "clever people" May spoke of, and generally tried to "keep up," as he had somewhat wistfully put it to Madame Olenska. But once he was married, what would become of this narrow margin of life in which his real experiences were lived? He had seen enough of other young men who had dreamed his dream, though perhaps less ardently, and who had gradually sunk into the placid and luxurious routine of their elders.

(Book 1, Chapter 14)

## Section C

ARTHER MILLER: *All My Sons*

3

**Either (a)** “The war is over! Didn’t you hear? It’s over!”  
In what ways, and with what effect, does Miller present the aftermath of war in *All My Sons*?

**Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following passage, paying particular attention to the presentation of secrets and perceptions, here and elsewhere in the play.

Sue. And he’s got money. That’s important, you know.  
Ann. It wouldn’t matter to me.  
Sue. You’d be surprised. It makes all the difference. I married an intern. On my salary. And that was bad, because as soon as a woman supports a man he owes her something. You can never owe somebody without resenting them. [Ann laughs.] 5  
That’s true, you know.  
Ann. Underneath, I think the doctor is very devoted.  
Sue. Oh, certainly. But it’s bad when a man always sees the bars in front of him. Jim thinks he’s in jail all the time.  
Ann. Oh... 10  
Sue. That’s why I’ve been intending to ask you a small favour, 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.  
Ann. Are you fooling? 15  
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?  
Ann. Well, isn’t that good? 20  
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. 25  
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 year. He meets a man and makes a statue out of him. 30  
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 –  
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. 35  
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.

Sue. You're surprised at me! 40  
He'd never take five cents out of that plant if there was anything wrong with it.

Ann. You know that.

Sue. I know it. I resent everything you've said.

Ann. *[moving towards her]* You know what I resent, dear?

Sue. Please, I don't want to argue. 45

Ann. I resent living next door to the Holy Family. It makes me look like a bum, you

Sue. understand?  
I can't do anything about that.

Ann. Who is he to ruin a man's life? Everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out

Sue. of jail. 50  
That's not true!

Ann. Then why don't you go out and talk to people? Go on, talk to them. There's not a

Sue. person on the block who doesn't know the truth.  
That's a lie. People come here all the time for cards and –

Ann. So what? They give him credit for being smart. I do, too, I've got nothing against 55

Sue. Joe. But if Chris wants people to put on the hair shirt let him take off his  
broadcloth. He's driving my husband crazy with that phony idealism of his, and  
I'm at the end of my rope on it! **[Chris enters on porch, wearing shirt and tie now.**  
*She turns quickly, hearing. With a smile.*] Hello, darling. How's Mother?

(Act 2)

END OF PAPER