



RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL  
General Certificate of Education Advanced level  
YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY 2  
HIGHER 2

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**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

Paper 2 Victorian Literature (1830-1899)

**9748/02**

**September 23 2015**

8.00 -11.00 pm

3 hours

Band Room

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.

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name and class and group on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **THREE** questions, one from Section A, B and C.  
Start each answer on a fresh piece of paper.  
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 carry equal marks

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## Section A

**Answer one question in this section.**

**1**

**Either a)** Read carefully the following extract from *Aurora Leigh* (1857) by Elizabeth Barrett Browning and comment on the attitudes expressed on poets and poetry.

Ay, but every age  
 Appears to souls who live in it, (ask Carlyle)\*      \* a historian  
 Most unheroic. Ours, for instance, ours!  
 The thinkers scout it, and the poets abound  
 Who scorn to touch it with a finger-tip: 5  
 A pewter age,—mixed metal, silver-washed;  
 An age of scum, spooned off the richer past;  
 An age of patches for old gabardines; \*      \*clothes  
 An age of mere transition...  
    Every age, 10  
 Through being beheld too close, is ill-discerned  
 By those who have not lived past it...  
    But poets should  
 Exert a double vision; should have eyes  
 To see near things as comprehensibly 15  
 As if afar they took their point of sight,  
 And distant things, as intimately deep,  
 As if they touched them. Let us strive for this.  
 I do distrust the poet who discerns  
 No character or glory in his times, 20  
 And trundles back his soul five hundred years,  
 Past moat and drawbridge, into a castle-court,  
 Oh not to sing of lizards or of toads  
 Alive i' the ditch there!—'twere excusable;  
 But of some black chief, half knight, half sheep-lifter 25  
 Some beauteous dame, half chattel\* and half queen,      \* peasant or slave  
 As dead as must be, for the greater part,  
 The poems made on their chivalric bones.  
 And that's no wonder: death inherits death.  
  
 Nay, if there's room for poets in the world 30  
 A little overgrown, (I think there is)  
 Their sole work is to represent the age,  
 Their age, not Charlemagne's\*,—this live, throbbing age,      \* a great mediaeval emperor  
 That brawls, cheats, maddens, calculates, aspires,  
 And spends more passion, more heroic heat, 35  
 Betwixt the mirrors of its drawing-rooms,  
 Than Roland\* with his knights, at Roncevalles.      \* a reference to an epic hero and battle

- Or (b) Read carefully the following passage from the novel *Felix Holt the Radical* (1866) by George Eliot and comment on the presentation of two individuals from different backgrounds and what it might suggest about Victorian society.

*Felix's mother has sent a letter to her pastor outlining difficulties she has had with her son over her occupation; she has labelled him troubled and confused. Felix has sought an interview to clarify the situation.*

The minister, accustomed to the respectable air of provincial townsmen, and especially to the sleek well-clipped gravity of his own male congregation, felt a slight shock as his glasses made perfectly clear to him the shaggy-headed, large-eyed, strong-limbed person of this questionable young man, without waistcoat or cravat.

"You will not, I trust, object to open yourself fully to me, as to an aged pastor who has himself had much inward wrestling, and has especially known much temptation from doubt." 5

"As to doubt," said Felix, loudly and brusquely as before, "if it is those absurd medicines and gulling advertisements that my mother has been talking of to you—and I suppose it is—I've no more doubt about them than I have about pocket-picking. I know there's a stage of speculation in which a man may doubt whether a pickpocket is blameworthy—but I'm not one of your subtle fellows who keep looking at the world through their own legs. If I allowed the sale of those medicines to go on, and my mother to live out of the proceeds when I can keep her by the honest labour of my hands, I've not the least doubt that I should be a rascal. I know that the Cathartic Pills are a drastic compound which may be as bad as poison to half the people who swallow them; that the Elixir is an absurd farrago of a dozen incompatible things; and that the Cancer Cure might as well be bottled ditch-water." 10 15

Mr. Lyon rose and walked up and down the room. Presently he asked, in a rapid, low tone, "How long have you known this, young man?" 20

"Well put, sir," said Felix. "I've known it a good deal longer than I have acted upon it, like plenty of other things. But you believe in conversion?"

"Yea, verily."

"So do I. I was converted by six weeks' debauchery."

The minister started. "Young man," he said, solemnly, going up close to Felix and laying a hand on his shoulder, "speak not lightly of the Divine operations, and restrain unseemly words." 25

"I'm not speaking lightly," said Felix. "If I had not seen that I was making a hog of myself very fast, and that pig-wash, even if I could have got plenty of it, was a poor sort of thing. I laughed out loud at last to think that a poor devil like me, in a Scotch garret, with my stockings out at heel and a shilling or two to be dissipated upon, with a smell of raw entrails mounting from below, and old women breathing gin as they passed me on the stairs—wanting to turn my life into easy pleasure. Then I began to see what else it could be turned into. Not much, perhaps. This world is not a very fine place for a good many of the people in it. But I've made up my mind it shan't be the worse for me, if I can help it. That's the upshot of my conversion, Mr. Lyon, if you want to know it." 30 35

"Did you sit under any preacher at Glasgow, young man?"

"No: I heard most of the preachers once, but I never wanted to hear them twice."

The good Rufus was not without a slight rising of resentment at this young man's want of reverence. But the resentful feeling was carefully repressed: a soul in so peculiar a condition must be dealt with delicately.	40
"And now, may I ask," he said, "what course you mean to take, after hindering your mother from making and selling these drugs? I speak no more in their favour after what you have said. God forbid that I should strive to hinder you from seeking whatsoever things are honest and honourable. But your mother is advanced in years; she needs comfortable sustenance."	45
"I shall keep my mother as well—nay, better—than she has kept herself. With my watch and clock cleaning, and teaching one or two little chaps that I've got to come to me, I can earn enough.	50
"But for a young man so well furnished as you, who can questionless write a good hand and keep books, were it not well to seek some higher situation as clerk or assistant?	
"Excuse me, Mr. Lyon; I've had all that out with my mother, and I may as well save you any trouble by telling you that my mind has been made up about that a long while ago. I'll take no employment that obliges me to prop up my chin with a high cravat, and wear straps, and pass the livelong day with a set of fellows who spend their spare money on shirt pins. That sort of work is really lower than many handicrafts; it only happens to be paid out of proportion. That's why I set myself to learn the watchmaking trade. I mean to stick to the class I belong to.	55
	60

## Section B

**Answer one question in this section, using two texts that you have studied.  
The texts used in this section cannot be used in Section C.**

**2**

**Either (a)** With close reference to any **two** of your texts, compare the ways in which they present dreams and ambitions.

**Or (b)** Referring to any **two** of your texts, examine the uses of contrast and similarity.

### Section C

Answer one question in this section, using one text that you have studied.  
The text used in this section cannot be used in Section B.

#### GEORGE BERNARD SHAW: *Mrs Warren's Profession*

3

**Either** (a) 'She may be in the right, but she is a difficult person to like.' Examine the figure of Vivie Warren, and account if you can for the mixed feelings she arouses in many.

**Or** (b) In what ways is the play an attack on Victorian values?

#### CHARLOTTE BRONTË: *Jane Eyre*

4

**Either** (a) 'The difference between sanity and insanity is merely that which is between enactment or containment of desire.' With detailed reference to the novel, examine the nature of madness in *Jane Eyre*.

**Or** (b) 'Charlotte Brontë reserves her most scathing contempt for the rich.' With this in mind, discuss the novel as a novel of social criticism.

#### OSCAR WILDE: *Lady Windermere's Fan*

5

**Either** (a) Consider the nature of the ending of the play, whether it is satisfactory or not, and whether justice has been achieved and moral issues resolved.

**Or** (b) 'The severest criticism Wilde manages is of the institution of marriage.' Is this a fair comment?

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