



INNOVA JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC2 PRELIM 2 2016

in preparation for General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
Higher 2

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9748/03

Paper 3 The Individual and Society in Literature

26 August 2016

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

3 hours

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.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and class 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 **3** questions, one from each of Sections A, B and C.

At the end of the examination, fasten each essay separately.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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

This document consists of 7 printed pages and 1 blank page.



Innova Junior College

[Turn over]

Section A

Answer one question from this section

- 1 (a) The following is an extract from Virginia Woolf's The New Dress (1975), a short story about a woman, Mabel Waring, who attends a fancy party. Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it more generally to your reading on the theme of individual and society.

But in her yellow dress to-night she could not wring out one drop more; she wanted it all, all for herself. She knew (she kept on looking into the glass, dipping into that dreadfully showing-up blue pool) that she was condemned, despised, left like this in a backwater, because of her being like this a feeble, vacillating creature; and it seemed to her that the yellow dress was a penance which she had deserved, and if she had been dressed like Rose Shaw, in lovely, clinging green with a ruffle of swansdown, she would have deserved that; and she thought that there was no escape for her — none whatever. But it was not her fault altogether, after all. It was being one of a family of ten; never having money enough, always skimping and paring; and her mother carrying great cans, and the linoleum worn on the stair edges, and one sordid little domestic tragedy after another — nothing catastrophic, the sheep farm failing, but not utterly; her eldest brother marrying beneath him but not very much — there was no romance, nothing extreme about them all. They petered out respectably in seaside resorts; every watering-place had one of her aunts even now asleep in some lodging with the front windows not quite facing the sea. That was so like them — they had to squint at things always. And she had done the same — she was just like her aunts. For all her dreams of living in India, married to some hero like Sir Henry Lawrence, some empire builder (still the sight of a native in a turban filled her with romance), she had failed utterly. She had married Hubert, with his safe, permanent underling's job in the Law Courts, and they managed tolerably in a smallish house, without proper maids, and hash when she was alone or just bread and butter, but now and then — Mrs. Holman was off, thinking her the most dried-up, unsympathetic twig she had ever met, absurdly dressed, too, and would tell every one about Mabel's fantastic appearance — now and then, thought Mabel Waring, left alone on the blue sofa, punching the cushion in order to look occupied, for she would not join Charles Burt and Rose Shaw, chattering like magpies and perhaps laughing at her by the fireplace — now and then, there did come to her delicious moments, reading the other night in bed, for instance, or down by the sea on the sand in the sun, at Easter — let her recall it — a great tuft of pale sand-grass standing all twisted like a shock of spears against the sky, which was blue like a smooth china egg, so firm, so hard, and then the melody of the waves — “Hush, hush,” they said, and the children's shouts paddling — yes, it was a divine moment, and there she lay, she felt, in the hand of the Goddess who was the world; rather a hard-hearted, but very beautiful Goddess, a little lamb laid on the altar (one did think these silly things, and it didn't matter so long as one never said them). And also with Hubert sometimes she had quite unexpectedly — carving the mutton for Sunday lunch, for no reason, opening a letter, coming into a room — divine moments, when she said to herself (for she would never say this to anybody else), “This is it. This has happened. This is it!” And the other way about it was equally surprising — that is, when everything was arranged — music, weather, holidays, every reason for happiness was there — then nothing happened at all. One wasn't happy. It was flat, just flat, that was all.

Her wretched self again, no doubt! She had always been a fretful, weak, unsatisfactory mother, a wobbly wife, lolling about in a kind of twilight existence with nothing very clear or very bold, or more one thing than another, like all her brothers and sisters, except perhaps Herbert — they were all the same poor water-veined creatures who did nothing. Then in the midst of this creeping, crawling life, suddenly she was on the crest of a wave. That wretched fly — where had she read the story that kept coming into her mind about the fly and the saucer? — struggled out. Yes, she had those moments. But now that she was forty, they might come more and more seldom. By degrees she would cease to struggle any more. But that was

deplorable! That was not to be endured! That made her feel ashamed of herself!

She would go to the London Library to-morrow. She would find some wonderful, helpful, astonishing book, quite by chance, a book by a clergyman, by an American no one had ever heard of; or she would walk down the Strand and drop, accidentally, into a hall where a miner was telling about the life in the pit, and suddenly she would become a new person. She would be absolutely transformed. She would wear a uniform; she would be called Sister Somebody; she would never give a thought to clothes again. And for ever after she would be perfectly clear about Charles Burt and Miss Milan and this room and that room; and it would be always, day after day, as if she were lying in the sun or carving the mutton. It would be it!

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following extract from Ovidia Yu's The Silence of the Kittens (2006), relating it to your reading on the theme of individual and society. In the extract, the cat motif takes on a range of meanings with reference to the family and Singapore.

- D: I took the little cat to a hawker centre where I had seen cats before. I thought if I left her there she would be able to find food for herself. But when I put her down and walked away, she kept trying to follow me. I put her near to another bigger cat and that horrible cat hissed at her. So I bought some chicken rice for her and put it on the ground and when she started to eat I walked away quickly – I had to get home, because I know my father would be angry...[Screeching sound of car brakes – then a thump, cat screech and Hokkien swearing...] 5
- D: It wasn't the driver's fault. He tried to stop his van – [D covers his face with his hands and sobs.]
- B: Gor Gor¹? Can you take me to the farm? 10
- D: What farm?
- B: To see my cat. Please? This weekend?
- D: Your cat's gone. She's dead. Smashed. [D covers his face again.]
- B: Joey! What did you do with my cat! Joey? Joey, I hate you!
[A, watching from the side, stands up and is about to interfere. D shakes his head without uncovering his face. He starts shaking.] 15
- D: It was my fault. She died because she wanted to be with me. [B puts her arms around D and helps him off the stage.]
- A: I realized then that picking up animals can do terrible things to your children.
[C comes on.] 20
- C: Your mother is mad! Can't you do something about her?
- A: What are you talking about?
- C: She and her mad friends! You better go and get her to stop her nonsense!
- A: I don't know what –
- C: They've been vandalizing cat traps. 25
- A: What!
- C: Those crazy old women went around springing all the traps in their area. That's interfering with government property!
- A: I'm sure she just –
- C: They've been told, time and again. Don't feed cats. Why is that so hard to understand? 30
- A: I don't think Ma means to –
- C: And when the men tried to give her a warning, do you know what she said?
- A: Sometimes Ma gets carried away, that's all...Those stray cats mean a lot to her, you know.
- C: She said, one day when you are old and useless, your children will treat you like how you treat these animals! 35
[Lights out on A and C. D comes on stage.]
- D: My father thinks I'm a useless wimp and my sister thinks I'm a cat killer. They're both right. I know it's because of me that Mum just got up and left one day. I went on going to lectures as though everything was fine but I knew that nothing would ever be fine in my life again. 40
[C swaggers on. D looks away, unwelcoming.]
- C: Hey! I've been looking for you!
- D: Hi Jason.
- C: What you doing here by yourself?
- D: Nothing. 45
- C: Hey, I'm sorry I laughed at you during the group counselling. I brought you something – [C

¹ Chinese dialect expression for "elder brother".

takes a plastic bag out of his backpack and shows it to D. C shakes the bag. We hear the sounds of "mew mew mew".]

D: *(upset)* What are you doing!

C: You've got this hang-up about cats, right?

[C shakes bag again. We hear the sounds of "mew mew mew".]

D: Jason! Be careful!

C: Ha – miserable little things...look at them squirming! *(makes growling sounds into bag)* I'm a big dog and I'm going to eat you up! 50

D: *(very quiet)* What are you going to do with them?

C: *(grins)* Toss them out on the expressway and scare people – you should see all the cars swerving and dodging...*(laughs, shakes box)* Too bad only got two...

D: *(still very quiet)* You can't do that. 55

C: Who says? It's fantastic man, you should just see them – *[D tries to snatch box from C. When C holds on to it, D punches C.]*

C: What's wrong with you! You're crazy! They're just stupid cats! *[C falls but D keeps hitting him. C protects his face but doesn't hit D back.]*

C: Look – your Dad's the one telling us to get rid of stray cats – I'm just helping your Dad! *[Lights down on C and D. B comes on in dim light.]* 60

B: St. Francis of Assisi said, "If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men." *[A enters, lights come up.]*

D: I don't know why my mum left. My dad said good riddance. He didn't like cats, he didn't like my mum, I didn't like him. 65

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)** Compare the ways in which two texts you have studied use the journey motif to highlight the relationship between individuals and society.

Or (b) 'Trust is losing ground...and this world has become a severely violent and lonely place, ruled by mistrust and disconnect.'

With this comment in mind, compare ways in which two texts you have studied present trust and disconnection.

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.**

WOLE SOYINKA: *Death and the King's Horseman*

3

Either (a) 'What the end will be, we are not gods to tell.'

In light of this quote, discuss Soyinka's dramatic portrayal of the **Praise Singer** in relation to the character's position in the society of the play.

Or (b) 'In *Death and the King's Horseman*, Soyinka blatantly privileges the religious traditions of the Yoruban people and critiques the secular worldview of the colonials.'

How far do you agree?

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS: *A Streetcar Named Desire*

4

Either (a) "Stanley's the only one of his crowd that's likely to get anywhere." (Scene 3)

Discuss the implications of this statement, and how this illuminates the theme of individual triumph in the social environment of the play.

Or (b) Discuss Williams's treatment of disillusionment in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, considering how this contributes to the depiction of the individual and society in the play.

PHILIP LARKIN: *Collected Poems*

5

Either (a) 'Larkin strips away the romanticized facade and exposes the empty reality of social institutions.'

To what extent do you agree with the above statement? You should refer to at least two poem.

Or (b) 'Beyond all this, the wish to be alone'.

How helpful do you find this comment to your reading of Larkin's poems?

End of Paper