



HWA CHONG INSTITUTION
JC 2 Preliminary Examination
Higher 2

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 3 The Individual and Society in Literature

9748/03

15 September 2016

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 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.

DO NOT WRITE IN ANY BARCODES.

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 your work securely together.

Submit your answer to each question separately.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

Section A
Answer one question in this section

Either

- 1 (a)** Write a critical appreciation of the following passage from Chinua Achebe's "Dead Men's Path" (1953), paying particular attention to the ways in which the relationship between the individual and society is presented.

Michael Obi is the new headmaster of Ndume Central School sent by the Mission authorities. He accepted this responsibility with enthusiasm and has many wonderful ideas that he wants to put into practice.

Ndume School was backward in every sense of the word. Mr. Obi put his whole life into the work, and his wife hers too. He had two aims. A high standard of teaching was insisted upon, and the school compound was to be turned into a place of beauty. Nancy's dream-gardens came to life with the coming of the rains, and blossomed. Beautiful hibiscus and allamanda hedges in brilliant red and yellow marked out the carefully tended school compound from the rank neighbourhood bushes. 5

One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalized to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flowerbed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school compound to the bush on the other side. 10

"It amazes me," said Obi to one of his teachers who had been three years in the school, "that you people allowed the villagers to make use of this footpath. It is simply incredible." He shook his head.

"The path," said the teacher apologetically, "appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial." 15

"And what has that got to do with the school?" asked the headmaster.

"Well, I don't know," replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders. "But I remember there was a big row some time ago when we attempted to close it."

"That was some time ago. But it will not be used now," said Obi as he walked away. "What will the Government Education Officer think of this when he comes to inspect the school next week? The villagers might, for all I know, decide to use the schoolroom for a pagan ritual during the inspection." 20

Heavy sticks were planted closely across the path at the two places where it entered and left the school premises. These were further strengthened with barbed wire. Three days later the village priest of Ani called on the headmaster. He was an old man and walked with a slight stoop. He carried a stout walking-stick which he usually tapped on the floor, by way of emphasis, each time he made a new point in his argument. 25

"I have heard," he said after the usual exchange of cordialities, "that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed . . ."

"Yes," replied Mr. Obi. "We cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound." 30

"Look here, my son," said the priest bringing down his walking-stick, "this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born . . ."

Mr. Obi listened with a satisfied smile on his face.

"The whole purpose of our school," he said finally, "is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas." 35

"What you say may be true," replied the priest, "but we follow the practices of our fathers. If you reopen the path we shall have nothing to quarrel about. What I always say is: let the hawk 40

perch and let the eagle perch." He rose to go.

"I am sorry," said the young headmaster. "But the school compound cannot be a thoroughfare. It is against our regulations. I would suggest your constructing another path, skirting our premises. We can even get our boys to help in building it. I don't suppose the ancestors will find the little detour too burdensome."

45

"I have no more words to say," said the old priest, already outside.

Two days later a young woman in the village died in childbed. A diviner was immediately consulted and he prescribed heavy sacrifices to propitiate ancestors insulted by the fence.

Obi woke up next morning among the ruins of his work. The beautiful hedges were torn up not just near the path but right round the school, the flowers trampled to death and one of the school buildings pulled down . . . That day, the white Supervisor came to inspect the school and wrote a nasty report on the state of the premises but more seriously about the "tribal-war situation developing between the school and the village, arising in part from the misguided zeal of the new headmaster."

50

55

Or (b) The extract below is adapted from the play *Mrs Warren's Profession*, by George Bernard Shaw (written in 1894 and first performed in 1902).

Vivie Warren, a well-educated young woman, discovers that her mother attained her present status and affluence by rising from poverty through prostitution and that she now has financial interests in several brothels throughout Europe. Sir George Crofts is an aristocratic friend of the family and has been Mrs. Warren's business partner.

Write a critical analysis of the extract, relating its themes and style to the topic of the individual and society.

- VIVIE : *[sharply]* My no is final. I won't go back from it.
- [Crofts is not impressed. He grins; leans forward with his elbows on his knees to prod with his stick at some unfortunate insect in the grass; and looks cunningly at her. She turns away impatiently.]*
- CROFTS : I'm a good deal older than you. Twenty-five years: quarter of a century. I shan't live for ever; and I'll take care that you shall be well off when I'm gone. 5
- VIVIE : I am proof against even that inducement, Sir George. Don't you think you'd better take your answer? There is not the slightest chance of my altering it.
- CROFTS : *[rising, after a final slash at a daisy, and coming nearer to her]* Well, no matter. I could tell you some things that would change your mind fast enough; but I won't, because I'd rather win you by honest affection. I was a good friend to your mother: ask her whether I wasn't. She'd never have made the money that paid for your education if it hadn't been for my advice and help, not to mention the money I advanced her. There are not many men who would have stood by her as I have. I put not less than forty thousand pounds into it, from first to last. 10 15
- VIVIE : *[staring at him]* Do you mean to say that you were my mother's business partner?
- CROFTS : Yes. Now just think of all the trouble and the explanations it would save if we were to keep the whole thing in the family, so to speak. Ask your mother whether she'd like to have to explain all her affairs to a perfect stranger.
- VIVIE : I see no difficulty, since I understand that the business is wound up, and the money invested. 20
- CROFTS : *[stopping short, amazed]* Wound up! Wind up a business that's paying 35 per cent in the worst years! Not likely. Who told you that?
- VIVIE : *[her colour quite gone]* Do you mean that it is still—? *[She stops abruptly, and puts her hand on the sundial to support herself. Then she gets quickly to the iron chair and sits down].* What business are you talking about? 25
- CROFTS : Well, the fact is it's not what would considered exactly a high-class business in my set—the country set, you know—our set it will be if you think better of my offer. Not that there's any mystery about it: don't think that. Of course you know by your mother's being in it that it's perfectly straight and honest. I've known her for many years; and I can say of her that she'd cut off her hands sooner than touch anything that was not what it ought to be. I'll tell you all about it if you like. I don't know whether you've found in travelling how hard it is to find a really comfortable private hotel. 30

- VIVIE : *[sickened, averting her face]* Yes: go on
- CROFTS : Well, that's all it is. Your mother has got a genius for managing such things. We've got two in Brussels, one in Ostend, one in Vienna, and two in Budapest. Of course there are others besides ourselves in it; but we hold most of the capital; and your mother's indispensable as managing director. You've noticed, I daresay, that she travels a good deal. But you see you can't mention such things in society. Once let out the word hotel and everybody thinks you keep a public-house. You wouldn't like people to say that of your mother, would you? That's why we're so reserved about it. By the way, you'll keep it to yourself, won't you? Since it's been a secret so long, it had better remain so. 35 40
- VIVIE : And this is the business you invite me to join you in?
- CROFTS : Oh no. My wife shan't be troubled with business. You'll not be in it more than you've always been. 45
- VIVIE : *I* always been! What do you mean?
- CROFTS : Only that you've always lived on it. It paid for your education and the dress you have on your back. Don't turn up your nose at business, Miss Vivie: where would your Newnhams and Girtons be without it?
- VIVIE : *[rising, almost beside herself]* Take care. I know what this business is. 50
- CROFTS : She ought to have had more consideration for you. I'd never have told you.
- VIVIE : I think you would probably have told me when we were married: it would have been a convenient weapon to break me in with. 60
- CROFTS : *[quite sincerely]* I never intended that. On my word as a gentleman I didn't.
- VIVIE : My mother was a very poor woman who had no reasonable choice but to do as she did. You were a rich gentleman; and you did the same for the sake of 35 per cent. You are a pretty common sort of scoundrel, I think. That is my opinion of you.
- CROFTS : *[after a stare: not at all displeased, and much more at his ease on these frank terms than on their former ceremonious ones]* Ha! ha! ha! ha! Go it, little missie, go it: it doesn't hurt me and it amuses you. Why the devil shouldn't I invest my money that way? I take the interest on my capital like other people: I hope you don't think I dirty my own hands with the work. Come! You wouldn't refuse the acquaintance of my mother's cousin the Duke of Belgravia because some of the rents he gets are earned in queer ways. You wouldn't cut the Archbishop of Canterbury, I suppose, because the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have a few publicans and sinners among their tenants. Do you remember your Crofts scholarship at Newnham? Well, that was founded by my brother the M.P. He gets his 22 per cent out of a factory with 600 girls in it, and not one of them getting wages enough to live on. How d'ye suppose they manage when they have no family to fall back on? Ask your mother. And do you expect me to turn my back on 35 per cent when all the rest are pocketing what they can, like sensible men? No such fool! If you're going to pick and choose your acquaintances on moral principles, you'd better clear out of this country, unless you want to cut yourself out of all decent society. 65 70 75 80

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** of the texts you have studied present the characters' personal growth through interaction with their respective social worlds.

Or (b) 'Needs and necessities make man social.'

With this comment in mind, compare the ways in which **two** of the texts you have studied present characters as being socialised.

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.**

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE: *The Scarlet Letter*

3

- Either (a)** Comment critically on how *The Scarlet Letter* explores the concept of government and its impact on both the individual and society.
- Or (b)** In what ways, and with what effects, does the novel explore New England's society attitudes to 'the outcast woman'?

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD: *The Great Gatsby*

4

- Either (a)** 'A man is known by the company he keeps.'
- Discuss Fitzgerald's presentation of the individual's relationship with society in light of this comment.
- Or (b)** How, in your view, does Fitzgerald use the motif of dreams to explore the relationship between the individual and society?

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON: *The Woman Warrior*

5

- Either (a)** Discuss the significance of Moon Orchid's experiences in the city in relation to ideas about the individual and society.
- Or (b)** In relation to ideas about the individual and society, explore Kingston's presentation of the narrator's relationship with her mother in *The Woman Warrior*.

PHILIP LARKIN: *Selected Poems*

6

- Either (a)** In relation to the theme of the individual and society, discuss Larkin's presentation of himself as an outsider in your selection. You should refer to at least two poems from your selection.
- Or (b)** What use does Larkin make use of social events in order to explore the link between the individual and society? You should refer to at least two poems from your selection.

MARGARET ATWOOD: *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*

7

- Either (a)** 'The poems explore the feelings of an individual joining a well-established, hostile society.'
- Discuss *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* in the light of this comment.
- Or (b)** Explore Atwood's presentation of the experience of deaths and their effects on the individual's relationship with society in *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*. You should refer to at least two poems from your selection.

BOEY KIM CHENG: *Another Place*

8

- Either (a)** How, and with effects, does Boey Kim Cheng present poverty in his exploration of the relationship between an individual and society?
- Or (b)** How, and with what effects, do Boey Kim Cheng's poems explore his evolving feelings about the individual and society?

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS: *A Streetcar Named Desire*

9

- Either (a)** Discuss how, and with what effects, William's presentation of the past life of his characters shows tension in their relationships with society?
- Or (b)** 'Blanche's tragedy is that she is a victim of society and its expectations.'
- Discuss.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello***10**

Either (a) Discuss how Shakespeare's use of the concept of warfare contributes to the audience's appreciation of *Othello* in relation to ideas about the individual and society.

Or (b) 'For if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,
I have no judgement in an honest face.' (Desdemona: Act 3, Scene 3)

Consider the significance of erring in *Othello* in dramatising the relationship between the individual and society.

WOLE SOYINKA: *Death and the King's Horseman***11**

Either (a) In what ways, and with what effects, does Soyinka present cultural misunderstandings in the play?

Or (b) In what ways, and with what effects, does Soyinka use Olunde's situation to dramatise the relationship between the individual and society?

END