



**SERANGOON JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2016**

**ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**HIGHER 2                      9748/03**  
**PAPER 3:                      The Individual and Society**

**MONDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**3 HOURS**

**TIME:        1300 - 1600**

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. the use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Write your name, civics group on every answer sheet.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams or graphs.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Write your answers on the separate answer paper provided.

Answer **three** questions.

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.

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**This question paper consists of 7 printed pages and 1 blank page. [Turn over]**

**Section A**  
**Answer one question in this section**

1

- Either**      **(a)** Write a critical commentary on the following poem by Langston Hughes, paying attention to the speaker's assertion of selfhood in relation to society.

**The Negro Mother**

Children, I come back today To tell you a story of the long dark way That I had to climb, that I had to know In order that the race might live and grow. Look at my face -- dark as the night --	5
Yet shining like the sun with love's true light. I am the dark girl who crossed the red sea Carrying in my body the seed of the free. I am the woman who worked in the field Bringing the cotton and the corn to yield.	10
I am the one who labored as a slave, Beaten and mistreated for the work that I gave -- Children sold away from me, I'm husband sold, too. No safety, no love, no respect was I due.	
Three hundred years in the deepest South: But God put a song and a prayer in my mouth. God put a dream like steel in my soul. Now, through my children, I'm reaching the goal.	15
Now, through my children, young and free, I realized the blessing deed to me. I couldn't read then. I couldn't write. I had nothing, back there in the night. Sometimes, the valley was filled with tears, But I kept trudging on through the lonely years.	20
Sometimes, the road was hot with the sun, But I had to keep on till my work was done: I had to keep on! No stopping for me -- I was the seed of the coming Free. I nourished the dream that nothing could smother Deep in my breast -- the Negro mother.	25 30
I had only hope then, but now through you, Dark ones of today, my dreams must come true: All you dark children in the world out there, Remember my sweat, my pain, my despair. Remember my years, heavy with sorrow -- And make of those years a torch for tomorrow.	35
Make of my pass a road to the light Out of the darkness, the ignorance, the night. Lift high my banner out of the dust. Stand like free men supporting my trust. Believe in the right, let none push you back.	40

Remember the whip and the slaver's track.  
Remember how the strong in struggle and strife  
Still bar you the way, and deny you life --  
But march ever forward, breaking down bars. 45  
Look ever upward at the sun and the stars.  
Oh, my dark children, may my dreams and my prayers  
Impel you forever up the great stairs --  
For I will be with you till no white brother  
Dares keep down the children of the Negro Mother. 50

- Or (b) The following extract is taken from George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1913). Professor Higgins, an esteemed linguist, has made a bet to transform Liza (a girl selling flowers on the streets of London) into a woman worthy of high society. This scene takes place in Higgins' bachelor's establishment at midnight when they return from Liza's successful debut at several society events.

Write a critical appreciation of the passage, considering ways in which it relates to the theme of the individual and society.

**HIGGINS.** *[a genial afterthought occurring to him]* I daresay my mother could find some chap or other who would do very well.

**LIZA.** We were above that at the corner of Tottenham Court Road.

**HIGGINS.** *[waking up]* What do you mean? 5

**LIZA.** I sold flowers. I didn't sell myself. Now you've made a lady of me I'm not fit to sell anything else. I wish you'd left me where you found me.

**HIGGINS.** *[slinging the core of the apple decisively into the grate]* Tosh, Eliza. Don't you insult human relations by dragging all this cant about buying and selling into it. You needn't marry the fellow if you don't like him. 10

**LIZA.** What else am I to do?

**HIGGINS.** Oh, lots of things. What about your old idea of a florist's shop? Pickering could set you up in one: he's lots of money. *[Chuckling]* He'll have to pay for all those togs you have been wearing today; and that, with the hire of the jewellery, will make a big hole in two hundred pounds. Why, six months ago you would have thought it the millennium to have a flower shop of your own. Come! You'll be all right. I must clear off to bed: I'm devilish sleepy. By the way, I came down for something: I forget what it was. 15 20

**LIZA.** Your slippers.

**HIGGINS.** Oh yes, of course. You shied them at me. *[He picks them up, and is going out when she rises and speaks to him]*

**LIZA.** Before you go, sir--

**HIGGINS.** *[dropping the slippers in his surprise at her calling him Sir]* Eh? 25

**LIZA.** Do my clothes belong to me or to Colonel Pickering?

**HIGGINS.** *[coming back into the room as if her question were the very climax of unreason]* What the devil use would they be to Pickering?

**LIZA.** He might want them for the next girl you pick up to experiment on. 30

**HIGGINS.** *[shocked and hurt]* Is that the way you feel towards us?

**LIZA.** I don't want to hear anything more about that. All I want to know is whether anything belongs to me. My own clothes were burnt.

**HIGGINS.** But what does it matter? Why need you start bothering about that in the middle of the night? 35

**LIZA.** I want to know what I may take away with me. I don't want to be accused of stealing.

**HIGGINS.** *[now deeply wounded]* Stealing! You shouldn't have said that, Eliza. That shews a want of feeling. 40

**LIZA.** I'm sorry. I'm only a common ignorant girl; and in my station I have to be careful. There can't be any feelings between the like of you and the like of me. Please will you tell me what belongs to me and what doesn't?

**HIGGINS.** *[very sulky]* You may take the whole damned houseful if you like. Except the jewels. They're hired. Will that satisfy you? *[He turns on his heel and is about to go in extreme dudgeon]* 45

**LIZA.** *[drinking in his emotion like nectar, and nagging him to provoke a further supply]* Stop, please. *[She takes off her jewels]* Will you take these to your room and keep them safe? I don't want to run the risk of their being

missing. 50

**HIGGINS.** *[furious]* Hand them over. *[She puts them into his hands]* If these belonged to me instead of to the jeweler, I'd ram them down your ungrateful throat. *[He perfunctorily thrusts them into his pockets, unconsciously decorating himself with the protruding ends of the chains]*

**LIZA.** *[taking a ring off]* This ring isn't the jeweler's: it's the one you bought me in Brighton. I don't want it now. *[Higgins dashes the ring violently into the fireplace, and turns on her so threateningly that she crouches over the piano with her hands over her face, and exclaims]* Don't you hit me. 55

**HIGGINS.** Hit you! You infamous creature, how dare you accuse me of such a thing? It is you who have hit me. You have wounded me to the heart. 60

**LIZA.** *[thrilling with hidden joy]* I'm glad. I've got a little of my own back, anyhow.

**HIGGINS.** *[with dignity, in his finest professional style]* You have caused me to lose my temper: a thing that has hardly ever happened to me before. I prefer to say nothing more tonight. I am going to bed. 65

**LIZA.** *[pertly]* You'd better leave a note for Mrs. Pearce about the coffee; for she won't be told by me. 70

**HIGGINS.** *[formally]* Damn Mrs. Pearce; and damn the coffee; and damn you; and damn my own folly in having lavished hard-earned knowledge and the treasure of my regard and intimacy on a heartless guttersnipe. *[He goes out with impressive decorum, and spoils it by slamming the door savagely]*

*[Eliza smiles for the first time; expresses her feelings by a wild pantomime in which an imitation of Higgins's exit is confused with her own triumph; and finally goes down on her knees on the hearthrug to look for the ring.]*

**Section B**

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

**2**

- Either**      **(a)**    Compare the ways in which any two of your three texts explore the tension between the individual and their social environments.
- Or**            **(b)**    Compare the ways in which two texts you have studied present morality and its impact on the dynamics between the individual and society.

### Section C

Answer one question in this section.

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON: *THE WOMAN WARRIOR*

3

**Either** (a) 'History, imagined or real, plays an integral role in Maxine's growth.'

In light of the above quotation, discuss the role of history in the construction of the self in *The Woman Warrior*.

**Or** (b) In what ways, and with what effects, does Kingston construct cultural identity in the novel?

PHILIP LARKIN: From *Collected Poems*

3

**Either** (a) 'Larkin's poetry is bogged down by despair, and the desire for oblivion.'

Do you agree with this assessment of Larkin's poetry?

**Or** (b) Comment on the presentation of social rituals and obligations in Larkin's poetry.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

3

**Either** (a) '*Othello* is the tragedy of the marginalised.' Discuss.

**Or** (b) Comment on the ways in which social class shapes the relationship between the individual and society.

END OF PAPER