



INNOVA JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC2 Preliminary Examinations 2017

in preparation for General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
Higher 2

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9748/03

Paper 3: The Individual and Society in Literature

12 September 2017

Additional Materials: Answer 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 **6** printed pages and **0** blank pages.



Section A

Answer one question from this section.

1

Either (a) The following extract is taken from *In a Strange Room* (published 2010) a novel by Damon Galgut. Write a critical appreciation of the extract, discussing ways in which it explores the topic of the individual and society in literature.

A few years later he is wandering in Zimbabwe. No particular reason or intention has brought him here. He decides on impulse one morning to leave, he buys a ticket in the afternoon, he gets on a bus that night. He has it in mind to travel around for two weeks and then go back.

What is he looking for, he himself doesn't know. At this remove, his thoughts are lost to me now, and yet I can explain him better than my present self, he is buried under my skin. His life is unweighted and centreless, so that he feels he could blow away at any time. He still has not made a home for himself. All his few belongings are in storage again and he has spent months in that old state of his, wandering around from one spare room to another. It has begun to feel as if he's never lived in any other way, nor will he ever settle down. Something in him has changed, he can't seem to connect properly with the world. He feels this not as a failure of the world but as a massive failing in himself, he would like to change it but doesn't know how. In his clearest moments he thinks that he has lost the ability to love, people or places or things, most of all the person and place and thing that he is. Without love nothing has value, nothing can be made to matter very much.

In this state travel isn't celebration but a kind of mourning, a way of dissipating yourself. He moves from one place to another, not driven by curiosity but by the bored anguish of staying still. He spends a few days in Harare, then goes down to Bulawayo. He does the obligatory things required of visitors, he goes to the Matopos and sees the grave of Cecil John Rhodes¹, but he can't produce the necessary awe or ideological disdain, he would rather be somewhere else. If I was with somebody, he thinks, with somebody I loved, then I could love the place and even the grave too, I would be happy to be here.

He takes the overnight train to Victoria Falls. He lies in his bunk, hearing the breathing of strangers stacked above and below him, and through the window sees villages and sidings flow in out of the dark, the outlines of people and cattle and leaves stamped out in silhouette against the lonely light, then flowing backward again, out of sight into the past. Why is he happiest in moments like these, the watcher hiding in the dark. He doesn't want the sun to rise or this particular journey to end.

In the morning they come to the end of the line. He gets out with his single back and walks to the campsite. Even early in the day the air is heavy and humid, green leaves burn with a brilliant glow. There are other travelers all around, most are younger than himself. He pitches his tent in the middle of the camp and goes down to look at the falls.

It is incredible to see the volume and power of so much water endlessly dropping into the abyss, but part of him is elsewhere, somewhere higher up and to the right, looking down at an angle not only on the falls but on himself there, among the crowds. This part of him, the part that watches, has been here for a while now, and it never quite goes away, over the next few days it looks at him keeping busy, strolling through the streets from one curio-shop to another, going for long walks in the surrounding bush, it observes with amazement when he goes white-water rafting on the river, it sees him lying in the open next to his tent to keep cool at night, staring up into the shattered windscreen of the sky. And though he seems content, though he talks to people and smiles, the part that watches isn't fooled, it knows he wants to move on.

On the third or fourth day he goes for a swim at one of the hotel pools. Afterwards he sits at a table near the bar to have a drink and his attention is slowly drawn to a group of young people nearby. They all have their rucksacks with them, they are about to depart. They're a strange mixture, a bit uneasy with each other, a plump Englishman with his girlfriend, a blond Danish man, two younger dark girls who sit close together, not speaking. He recognizes a burly Irish woman who went rafting with him two days ago, and goes over

to speak to her. Where are you all off to.

Malawi. We're going through Zambia. Maybe she sees something in my face, because 50
after a moment she asks, do you want to come along.

He sits thinking for a few moments, then says, I'll be right back.

He runs madly from the hotel to the campsite and takes down his tent. When he gets 55
back he sits among his new companions, panting, feeling edgy with doubt. Soon
afterwards the man they're waiting for, an Australian called Richard, arrives, and they all
stir themselves to leave. He has gathered already that these people don't know each other
well, they have banded together by chance to make this journey safely. Hence the unease.
He doesn't mind, in fact the general mood suits him, he doesn't feel a pressure to fit in.
With the others he loads his bag onto the back of an open van and climbs up. They have
paid somebody to drive them to the other side of the border. 60

It's getting dark when they arrive at the station. They are late and the queue for tickets
is long, they can only get third-class seats, sitting amongst a crowd in an open carriage in
which all the lights are broken. Almost before they can find a place the train lurches and
starts to move.

There is a moment when any real journey begins. Sometimes it happens as you leave 65
your house, sometimes it's a long way from home.

Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902): British businessman, mining magnate and politician in South Africa who served as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony from 1890 to 1896. Rhodes was an ardent believer in British imperialism, and founded the southern African territory of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia) with his British South Africa Company.

OR (b) The following extract is taken from *'Night, Mother* by Marsha Norman, which depicts the exchange between Jessie and her mother (Mama) when Jessie reveals her intention to commit suicide. The exchange takes place in Mama's house, where Jessie has been staying ever since her divorce.

Comment critically on the playwright's presentation of the mother and daughter, relating it to the theme of the individual and society.

MAMA: How can I let you go?
 JESSIE: You can because you have to. It's what you've always done.
 MAMA: You are my child!
 JESSIE: I am what became of your child. (*MAMA cannot answer*) I found an old baby picture of me. And it was somebody else, not me. It was somebody pink and fat who never heard of sick or lonely, somebody who cried and got fed, and reached up and got held and kicked but didn't hurt anybody, and slept whenever she wanted to, just by closing her eyes. Somebody who mainly just laid there and laughed at the colours waving around over her head and chewed on a polka-dot whale and woke up knowing some new trick nearly every day, and rolled over and drooled on the sheet and felt your hand pulling my quilt back up over me. That's who I started out and this is who is left. (*There is no self-pity here*) That's what this is about. It's somebody I lost, all right, it's my own self. Who I never was. Or who I tried to be and never got there. Somebody I waited for who never came. And never will. So, see, it doesn't much matter what else happens in the world or in this house, even. I'm what was worth waiting for and I didn't make it. Me... who might have made a difference to me... I'm not going to show up, so there's no reason to stay, except to keep you company, and that's ... not reason enough because I'm not ... very good company. (*Pause*) Am I. 5
 MAMA (*Knowing she must tell the truth*): No. And neither am I. 10
 JESSIE: I had this strange little thought, well, maybe it's not so strange. Anyway, after Christmas, after I decided to do this, I would wonder, sometimes, what might keep me here, what might be worth staying for, and you know what it was? It was maybe if there was something I really liked, like maybe if I really liked rice pudding or cornflakes for breakfast or something, that might be enough. 15
 MAMA: Rice pudding is good.
 JESSIE: Not to me.
 MAMA: And you're not afraid?
 JESSIE: Afraid of what? 20
 MAMA: I'm afraid of it, for me, I mean. When my time comes. I know it's coming, but ...
 JESSIE: You don't know when. Like in a scary movie.
 MAMA: Yeah, sneaking up on me like some killer on the loose, hiding out in the back yard just waiting for me to have my hands full someday and how am I supposed to protect myself anyhow when I don't know how he sounds coming up behind me like that or if it will hurt or take very long or what I don't get done before it happens. 25
 JESSIE: You've got plenty of time left.
 MAMA: I forget what for, right now. 30
 JESSIE: For whatever happens, I don't know. For the rest of your life. For Agnes burning down one more house or Dawson losing his hair or ...
 MAMA (*Quickly*): Jessie. I can't just sit here and say O.K.;, kill yourself if you want to.
 JESSIE: Sure you can. You just did. Say it again.
 MAMA (*Really startled*): Jessie! (*Quiet horror*) How dare you! (*Furious*) How dare you! 35
 You think you can just leave whenever you want, like you're watching television here? No you can't Jessie. You make me feel like a fool for being alive, child, and you are so wrong! I like it here, and I will stay here until they make me go, until they drag me screaming and I mean screeching into my 40
 45

grave, and you're real smart to get away before then, because, I mean, honey, you've never heard noise like that in your life. (*JESSIE turns away*) 50
Who am I talking to? You're gone already, aren't you? I'm looking right through you! I can't stop you because you're already gone!

Section B

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

2

Either (a) 'The strong are allowed to thrive while the weak are sacrificed.'

In light of the statement above, discuss the ways in which **two** texts present society's treatment of individuals.

Or (b) 'Freedom has too high a price.'

Making close reference to any **two** texts you have studied, compare the ways in which their writers present individuals' quest for autonomy.

Section C

**Answer one question in this section, using ONE text 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) How, and with what effects on an audience, does Soyinka present displacement and alienation in the play in relation to ideas about the individual and society?.

OR (b) 'Simon Pilkings' meddling merely deepens the tragedy.'

How far do you agree with this comment in relation to *Death and the King's Horseman*?

END OF PAPER