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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

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Paper 6 1900 to the Present

May/June 2017

2 hours

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer **two** questions.

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

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **14** printed pages, **2** blank pages and **1** insert.

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE: *Americanah*

- 1 **Either** (a) By what means, and with what effects, does Adichie present relationships between men and women?
- Or** (b) With close attention to detail, analyse the effects of the writing in the following passage and consider ways in which it is characteristic of Adichie's methods and concerns.

The ice-cream-eating man sat beside her on the train and, to discourage conversation, she stared fixedly at a brown stain near her feet, a spilled frozen Frappuccino, until they arrived at Trenton. The platform was crowded with black people, many of them fat, in short, flimsy clothes. It still startled her, what a difference a few minutes of train travel made. During her first year in America, when she took New Jersey Transit to Penn Station and then the subway to visit Aunt Uju in Flatlands, she was struck by how mostly slim white people got off at the stops in Manhattan and, as the train went further into Brooklyn, the people left were mostly black and fat. She had not thought of them as “fat”, though. She had thought of them as “big”, because one of the first things her friend Ginika told her was that “fat” in America was a bad word, heaving with moral judgement like “stupid” or “bastard”, and not a mere description like “short” or “tall”. So she had banished “fat” from her vocabulary. But “fat” came back to her last winter, after almost thirteen years, when a man in line behind her at the supermarket muttered, “Fat people don’t need to be eating that shit,” as she paid for her giant bag of Tostitos. She glanced at him, surprised, mildly offended, and thought it a perfect blog post, how this stranger had decided she was fat. She would file the post under the tag “race, gender and body size”. But back home, as she stood and faced the mirror’s truth, she realized that she had ignored, for too long, the new tightness of her clothes, the rubbing together of her inner thighs, the softer, rounder parts of her that shook when she moved. She was fat.

She said the word “fat” slowly, funnelling it back and forward, and thought about all the other things she had learned not to say aloud in America. She was fat. She was not curvy or big-boned; she was fat, it was the only word that felt true. And she had ignored, too, the cement in her soul. Her blog was doing well, with thousands of unique visitors each month, and she was earning good speaking fees, and she had a fellowship at Princeton and a relationship with Blaine—“You are the absolute love of my life,” he’d written in her last birthday card—and yet there was cement in her soul. It had been there for a while, an early morning disease of fatigue, a bleakness and borderlessness. It brought with it amorphous longings, shapeless desires, brief imaginary glints of other lives she could be living, that over the months melded into a piercing homesickness. She scoured Nigerian websites, Nigerian profiles on Facebook, Nigerian blogs, and each click brought yet another story of a young person who had recently moved back home, clothed in American or British degrees, to start an investment company, a music production business, a fashion label, a magazine, a fast-food franchise. She looked at photographs of these men and women and felt the dull ache of loss, as though they had prised open her hand and taken something of hers. They were living her life. Nigeria became where she was supposed to be, the only place she could sink her roots in without the constant urge to tug them out and shake off the soil. And, of course, there was also Obinze. Her first love, her first lover, the only person with whom she had never felt the need to explain herself. He was now a husband and father, and they had not been in touch in years, yet she could not pretend that he was not a part of her homesickness, or that she did not often think of him, sifting through their past, looking for portents of what she could not name.

The rude stranger was in the supermarket—who knew what problems *he* was

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wrestling with, haggard and thin-lipped as he was— had intended to offend her but had instead prodded her awake.

She began to plan and to dream, to apply for jobs in Lagos. She did not tell Blaine at first, because she wanted to finish her fellowship at Princeton, and then 50 after her fellowship ended, she did not tell him because she wanted to give herself time to be sure. But as the weeks passed, she knew she would never be sure. So she told him that she was moving back home, and she added, “I have to,” knowing he would hear in her words the sound of an ending.

Chapter 1

ARAVIND ADIGA: *The White Tiger*

- 2 **Either** (a) By what means, and with what effects, does Adiga present economic success in the novel?
- Or** (b) Discuss the effects of the writing in the following passage and consider how far it is characteristic of Adiga's narrative methods and concerns in the novel.

That evening I had to drive him to the mall again. I stayed inside the car after he got out; I did not mix with any of the other drivers.

Even at night, the construction work goes on in Gurgaon – big lights shine down from towers, and dust rises from pits, scaffolding is being erected, and men and animals, both shaken from their sleep and bleary and insomniac, go around and around carrying concrete rubble or bricks. 5

A man from one of these construction sites was leading an ass; it wore a bright red saddle, and on this saddle were two metal troughs, filled to the brim with rubble. Behind this ass, two smaller ones, of the same colour, were also saddled with metal troughs full of rubble. These smaller asses were walking slower, and the lead ass stopped often and turned to them, in a way that made you think it was their mother. 10

At once I knew what was troubling me.

I did not want to obey Kusum. She was blackmailing me; I understood why she had sent that letter through the Mongoose. If I refused, she would blow the whistle on me – tell Mr Ashok I hadn't been sending money home. 15

Now, it had been a long time since I had dipped my beak into anything, sir, and the pressure had built up. The girl would be so young – seventeen or eighteen – and you know what girls taste like at that age, like watermelons. Any diseases, of body or mind, get cured when you penetrate a virgin. These are known facts. And then there was the dowry that Kusum would screw out of the girl's family. All that twenty-four-carat gold, all that cash fresh from the bank. At least some of it I'd keep for myself. All these were sound arguments in favour of marriage. 20

But on the other hand.

See, I was like that ass now. And all I would do, if I had children, was teach them to be asses like me, and carry rubble around for the rich. 25

I put my hands on the steering wheel, and my fingers tightened into a strangling grip.

The way I had rushed to press Mr Ashok's feet, the moment I saw them, even though he hadn't asked me to! Why did I feel that I had to go close to his feet, touch them and press them and make them feel good – why? Because the desire to be a servant had been bred into me: hammered into my skull, nail after nail, and poured into my blood, the way sewage and industrial poison are poured into Mother Ganga. 30

I had a vision of a pale stiff foot pushing through a fire.

'No,' I said.

I pulled my feet up onto the seat, got into the lotus position, and said, 'Om', over and over again. How long I sat that evening in the car with my eyes closed and legs crossed like the Buddha I don't know, but the giggling and scratching noise made me open my eyes. All the other drivers had gathered around me – one of them was scratching the glass with his fingernails. Someone had seen me in the lotus position inside the locked car. They were gaping at me as if I were something in a zoo. 40

I scrambled out of the lotus position at once. I put a big grin on my face – I got out of the car to a volley of thumps and blows and shrieks of laughter, all of which I meekly accepted, while murmuring, 'Just trying it out, yoga – they show it on TV all the time, don't they?'

The Rooster Coop was doing its work. Servants have to keep other servants from becoming innovators, experimenters, or entrepreneurs. 45

Yes, that's the sad truth, Mr Premier.

5

The coop is guarded from the inside.

Mr Premier, you must excuse me – the phone is ringing. I'll be back in a minute.

*

Alas: I'll have to stop this story for a while. It's only 1:32 in the morning, but we'll 50
have to break off here. Something has come up, sir – an emergency. I'll be back,
trust me.

The Fifth Night

ELEANOR CATTON: *The Rehearsal*

- 3 Either (a)** The saxophone teacher says youth 'is a rehearsal for everything that comes after.'

In the light of this quotation discuss Catton's presentation of at least **two** characters in the novel.

- Or (b)** Analyse the effects of the writing in the following passage and consider how far it is characteristic of Catton's narrative methods and concerns.

'This is an exercise in the Theatre of Cruelty,' the masked boy called out above the rising sound of the music. 'This exercise is a challenge.'

He moved behind his volunteer. The boy stood and smiled uncertainly at them all, waiting for his instructions, listening for sounds of the masked boy's movement behind him, and rocking back and forth self-consciously on his heels. Then the masked boy knocked him to the ground. As he fell forward on to his knees, the boy's head was flung painfully backward, his expression hurt and bewildered by the split-second impact but still half-smiling his nervous defensive smile. Swiftly the masked boy darted forward and hit him again, and the boy fell flat on to his stomach, jarring his chin on the floor. In an instant the masked boy was kneeling on his back, pinning him flat on the ground and twisting the boy's wrists around behind his back so he couldn't move. 5 10

Somebody ran forward with a water-trough, a wide, flat basin filled with slopping water, and shoved it roughly down on to the floor. The attacker grabbed a fistful of his volunteer's hair, reared up, and plunged him head-first into the water. He held his own breath as he struggled to keep the volunteer's head submerged, looking at his writhing victim down the length of his stiff veined arms and pinching his lips together in concentration. The victim began to thrash out in desperation and fear, his legs kicking out on the floorboards, panicked and flopping like a bloody gutted fish dying on the edge of a pier. 15 20

From where Stanley sat cross-legged in the audience, the pinioned drowning boy looked headless. Stanley could see only his damp collar and the last white knob of his spine over the lip of the water-trough as he tried in vain to struggle free. He watched as the boy slapped the floorboards and writhed and the water slopped and thrashed and the accordion kept playing its jolly provincial tune. After almost twenty seconds the audience began to shift and mutter, and someone shouted, 'Let him go!' The masked boy looked up with a jerk, as if jolted out of a reverie. He released his victim immediately, jumping up and stepping backwards in a nimble little leap, and the volunteer reared his dripping head, coughing and spitting and taking great savage lungfuls of air. His eyes were streaming and pink-rimmed and his face was white. He sat for a moment in hurt bewilderment, quivering and gasping weakly in the middle of the stage. 25 30

The audience watched him regain his breath in silence. They met his gaze with a kind of wary suspicion, all of them thinking that he was probably a plant, a prearranged assistant who any moment now was going to leap up and laugh and cuff them on the shoulder and say, 'I got you good.' They regarded him doubtfully. They were not yet convinced. A few of the students looked around to measure the approval or affirmation of the tutor, but the Head of Acting had gone and they were alone, a baffled motley patch of black in the middle of the gymnasium floor. 35 40

On stage the masked boy was standing impassively, his legs apart, his hands together behind his back. Then in one fluid motion he raised his arm, and two other masked boys ran forward, grabbed the gasping volunteer by his arms, and hauled him to his feet. The first boy ran forward and there was a flurried snipping shoving movement, and then the volunteer boy was shoved to his knees once more and slapped hard across his face. The two boys who were holding him began to tug at 45

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his shirt, and Stanley realised that the boy's clothes had been cut off him, sliced from the hem to the collar up the length of his spine. The masked boys tore away the ragged shirt and jumper, and then darted back, leaving him pale and shirtless and shivering in the middle of the floor.

The masked boy looked directly at the audience now, as if in challenge. The first-years looked back in bewilderment. 50

'That sucks, man,' the volunteer boy said suddenly, looking at the torn remains of his jersey and his shirt wadded in a ragged pile in front of him. His voice was thin. 'That's my favourite shirt.'

The masked boy didn't flinch. He kept looking at the audience, as if waiting for somebody to speak. Nobody did. 55

Chapter 6

8

ATHOL FUGARD: *My Children! My Africa!* and *The Road to Mecca*

4 **Either** (a) ‘Thami and Elsa are more than just rebels.’

In the light of this comment, discuss Fugard’s presentation of these two characters in **both** of the plays.

Or (b) Paying close attention to language and tone, analyse the following extract, showing how far it is characteristic of Fugard’s dramatic methods and concerns.

Mr M: You’ve become good friends, haven’t you?

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myself.

I'll find time to have a word with him

My Children! My Africa! Act 1, Scene 5

10

LIZ LOCHHEAD: *Selected Poems*

- 5 **Either** (a) In what ways, and with what effects, does Lochhead consider various art forms in her poetry? In your answer you should refer to **three** poems from your selection.
- Or** (b) Paying close attention to language and tone, write a critical appreciation of the following poem and consider ways in which it is characteristic of Lochhead's methods and concerns.

After a Warrant Sale

I watched her go,
 Ann-next-door
 (dry-eyed,
 as dignified
 as could be expected) 5
 the day after they came,
 sheriff court men
 with the politeness of strangers
 impersonally
 to rip her home apart – 10
 to tear her life along the dotted line
 officially.

On the sideboard that went for fifteen bob,
 a photograph. 15
 Wedding-day Walter and
 Ann: her hair was lightened,
 and her heart, with hopes.
 No one really knows
 when it began to show –
 trouble, dark roots. 20

It was common knowledge
 there were faults on both sides,
 and the blame –
 whether it was over drink
 or debt no one seems to know, 25
 or what was owing to exactly whom.
 Just in the end the warrant sale
 and Ann's leaving.

But what seemed strange:
 I wondered why, 30
 having stayed long past the death of love
 and the ashes of hope,
 why pack it up and go
 over some sticks of furniture
 and the loss of one's only partially 35
 paid-for washing machine?

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Those who are older tell me,
after a married year or two
the comforts start to matter
more than the comforting.
But I am very young,
expecting not too much of love –
just that it should completely solve me.
And I can't understand.

40

12

ARTHUR MILLER: *Death of a Salesman*

- 6 **Either** (a) How far and in what ways does Miller depict Willy as a tragic hero in the play?
- Or** (b) Paying attention to language and tone, analyse the dramatic effects in the following extract and consider how Miller shapes an audience's response to Biff and Happy here and elsewhere in the play.

Happy: Where's the old confidence, Biff?

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Happy: Dad is never so happy as when he's looking forward to something!

Act 2

14

W.B.YEATS: *Selected Poems*

- 7 **Either** (a) 'Yeats's poetry is often inspired by actual events.'

Discuss Yeats's poetic methods and their effects in the light of this observation. In your answer you should consider at least **two** poems from your selection.

- Or** (b) Paying close attention to language, tone and imagery, write a critical appreciation of the following poem and consider in what ways it is characteristic of Yeats's poetic methods and concerns.

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
 Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere 5
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
 Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
 Surely the Second Coming is at hand. 10

The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
 When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
 Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
 A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
 A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun, 15
 Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
 Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again; but now I know
 That twenty centuries of stony sleep
 Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle, 20
 And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
 Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

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