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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/32**

Paper 3 Poetry and Prose **October/November 2020**

2 hours

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You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:
  - Section A: answer **one** question.
  - Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

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Section A: Poetry

ROBERT FROST: *Selected Poems*

1 **Either** **(a)** Referring to **two** poems, discuss ways in which Frost explores the differences between nature and humankind.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following extract from 'The Ax-Helve', focusing on the presentation of Baptiste and his skills.

Needlessly soon he had his ax-helves out,

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'See how she's cock her head!'

from *The Ax-Helve*

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OWEN SHEERS: *Skirrid Hill*

2 **Either** **(a)** By discussing the writing and effects of **two** poems, discuss ways in which Sheers presents change.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the presentation of photography in the following poem.

Happy Accidents

And Robert Capa, how was he to know?
As the ramps were lowered and the air turned lead
and the marines before him dropped into the water,

that those photographs he took –
no time to set aperture or exposure, just shoot and shoot –
would be printed by some lad, barely sixteen in *Life*'s office.

That he'd overheat the negative strips, blister the silver,
melt the emulsion, until their frozen fires caught
and smoked from under the dark room door.

That of the two rolls taken only seven would remain,
their skies heat-blurred, given starbursts of light
and their surfaces grazed to describe so perfectly

the confusion of that day, when a generation's men
stepped out on Europe's shores
to fall headlong through the trapdoor of war.

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Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2

3 **Either** **(a)** With reference to **two** poems, compare ways in which poets present ageing.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the presentation of love in the following poem.

Song

Love a child is ever crying;
Please him, and he straight is flying;
Give him he the more is craving,
Never satisfied with having.

His desires have no measure;
Endless folly is his treasure;
What he promiseth he breaketh.
Trust not one word that he speaketh.

He vows nothing but false matter,
And to cozen you he'll flatter.
Let him gain the hand, he'll leave you,
And still glory to deceive you.

He will triumph in your wailing,
And yet cause be of your failing.
These his virtues are, and slighter
Are his gifts, his favours lighter.

Feathers are as firm in staying,
Wolves no fiercer in their preying.
As a child then leave him crying,
Nor seek him so given to flying.

Lady Mary Wroth

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Turn over for Section B.

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Section B: Prose

E M FORSTER: *Howards End*

4 **Either** **(a)** Helen says of Henry Wilcox: 'I definitely dislike him…'

In the light of Helen's comment, discuss ways in which Forster shapes your response to Henry Wilcox.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage, considering its presentation of Leonard and his home.

The sitting-room contained, besides the armchair, two other chairs, a piano, a three-legged table, and a cosy corner. Of the walls, one was occupied by the window, the other by a draped mantelshelf bristling with Cupids. Opposite the window was the door, and beside the door a bookcase, while over the piano there extended one of the masterpieces of Maud Goodman. It was an amorous and not unpleasant little hole when the curtains were drawn, and the lights turned on, and the gas-stove unlit. But it struck that shallow makeshift note that is so often heard in the modern dwelling-place. It had been too easily gained, and could be relinquished too easily.

As Leonard was kicking off his boots he jarred the three-legged table, and a photograph frame, honourably poised upon it, slid sideways, fell off into the fireplace, and smashed. He swore in a colourless sort of way, and picked the photograph up. It represented a young lady called Jacky, and had been taken at the time when young ladies called Jacky were often photographed with their mouths open. Teeth of dazzling whiteness extended along either of Jacky's jaws, and positively weighed her head sideways, so large were they and so numerous. Take my word for it, that smile was simply stunning, and it is only you and I who will be fastidious, and complain that true joy begins in the eyes, and that the eyes of Jacky did not accord with her smile, but were anxious and hungry.

Leonard tried to pull out the fragments of glass, and cut his fingers and swore again. A drop of blood fell on the frame, another followed, spilling over on to the exposed photograph. He swore more vigorously, and dashed into the kitchen, where he bathed his hands. The kitchen was the same size as the sitting-room; through it was a bedroom. This completed his home. He was renting the flat furnished; of all the objects that encumbered it none were his own except the photograph frame, the Cupids, and the books.

"Damn, damn, damnation!" he murmured, together with such other words as he had learnt from older men. Then he raised his hand to his forehead and said, "Oh, damn it all—" which meant something different. He pulled himself together. He drank a little tea, black and silent, that still survived upon an upper shelf. He swallowed some dusty crumbs of a cake. Then he went back to the sitting-room, settled himself anew, and began to read a volume of Ruskin.

"Seven miles to the north of Venice—"

How perfectly the famous chapter opens! How supreme its command of admonition and of poetry! The rich man is speaking to us from his gondola.

"Seven miles to the north of Venice the banks of sand which nearer the city rise little above low-water mark attain by degrees a higher level, and knit themselves at last into fields of salt morass, raised here and there into shapeless mounds, and intercepted by narrow creeks of sea."

Leonard was trying to form his style on Ruskin; he understood him to be the greatest master of English Prose. He read forward steadily, occasionally making a few notes.

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"Let us consider a little each of these characters in succession, and first (for of the shafts enough has been said already), what is very peculiar to this church—its luminousness."

Was there anything to be learnt from this fine sentence? Could he adapt it to the needs of daily life? Could he introduce it, with modifications, when he next wrote a letter to his brother, the lay-reader? For example—

"Let us consider a little each of these characters in succession, and first (for of the absence of ventilation enough has been said already), what is very peculiar to this flat—its obscurity."

Something told him that the modifications would not do; and that something, had he known it, was the spirit of English Prose. "My flat is dark as well as stuffy." Those were the words for him.

Chapter 6

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ANDREA LEVY: *Small Island*

5 Either (a) Discuss ways in which Levy presents immigrants' work and search for work in the novel.

Or (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following passage presents the birth of Queenie's baby.

It was with politeness and – it would be wrong to say otherwise – reluctance, that I asked her, 'Please could you open your legs a little wider, Mrs Bligh?'

'Call me blinking Queenie, for Christ's sake,' she shouted, just before she started to cry.

'Okay,' I told her, 'I will call you Queenie, Mrs Bligh. There is no need for tears.'

'I'm crying 'cause it bloody hurts!' she screamed.

I was learning that Englishwomen can behave in a peculiar fashion. And this one was conspiring to be the oddest one I had ever met. Suddenly she was smiling again, 'Oh, what's happening, Hortense? Tell me,' and seeming to all the world like she was pleased to be having this baby.

So I looked. What a thing was this! A wondrous sight perhaps – for there was the round head complete with curly dark hair matted in blood pushing out from within her. A new life for this world. But it was quite the ugliest sight I had ever beheld. Only a few days before this pretty white woman was going about her business – collecting her shopping, hanging washing on a line, passing the time of day with neighbours – now, prostrated by nature, she was simply the vessel for the Lord to do His work. This woman's private parts had lost all notion of being of the human kind. Surely they could not stretch wide enough to let the creature pass. Cha, all this straining, squeezing and screaming. I would not presume to tell the Lord His business but, come, the laying of an egg by a hen was, without doubt, the more civilised method of creation. Every tissue in my body was tingling with repulsion. But for the sake of this woman's well-being, not even an actor on a stage could have held a gaze of rapt wonder more steadily.

'The baby is on its way,' I told her. 'The head is there.'

'It's crowning,' she said. 'Can you see it?' The noise she then created brought to mind the relieving of constipation. I was wearing my good white wedding dress. What consternation befell me as I realised I would have no chance to cover myself. For this baby, like an erupting pustule, was squeezing further and further out. Soon its eyes were blinking into the dim light. I tenderly held my fingers to its warm, slippery head.

'You must push, Mrs Bligh,' I said.

And with one venomous yell of 'Queenie, call me bloody Queenie,' the head of the baby popped full out.

'I have the head,' I told her. For there it was, cradled in my hand, in this obscene resting place. Crumpled as discarded paper. Dark hair, nose with two nostrils and lips that waved in a perfect bow. Suddenly that fresh mouth sprang open to deliver forth a mighty shrill scream.

I lifted my head to tell her, 'One more push, Mrs Bligh.'

This baby's head then began to twist round – turning without aid from me. No further injunction was necessary before, in one slippery rush, I found myself holding the whole baby.

'It's here,' I said. 'I have it. I have it here.' But she had fallen back upon her pillows. 'It is born, Mrs Bligh – it is here.'

I lifted the baby carefully so she might see. She held out her arms. The slimy purple pink of a robust earthworm, with skin smeared in blood and wrinkled as the day it would die, and yet still Mrs Bligh's eyes alighted on this grumpy-faced child

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and saw it as someone she could love. This was truly the miracle to behold. Leaning forward she enclosed this baby in two grateful hands. 'Oh, my God, oh, my God.' And luckily my dress had remained clean.

Chapter 53

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Stories of Ourselves

6 Either (a) Referring to **two** stories from your selection, compare ways in which the writers present characters to make an impact on the reader.

Or (b) Comment closely on the presentation of Isabella in the following passage from *The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection*.

Isabella did not wish to be known – but she should no longer escape. It was absurd, it was monstrous. If she concealed so much and knew so much one must prize her open with the first tool that came to hand – the imagination. One must fix one's mind upon her at that very moment. One must fasten her down there. One must refuse to be put off any longer with sayings and doings such as the moment brought forth – with dinners and visits and polite conversations. One must put oneself in her shoes. If one took the phrase literally, it was easy to see the shoes in which she stood, down in the lower garden, at this moment. They were very narrow and long and fashionable – they were made of the softest and most flexible leather. Like everything she wore, they were exquisite. And she would be standing under the high hedge in the lower part of the garden, raising the scissors that were tied to her waist to cut some dead flower, some overgrown branch. The sun would beat down on her face, into her eyes; but no, at the critical moment a veil of cloud covered the sun, making the expression of her eyes doubtful – was it mocking or tender, brilliant or dull? One could only see the indeterminate outline of her rather faded, fine face looking at the sky. She was thinking, perhaps, that she must order a new net for the strawberries; that she must send flowers to Johnson's widow; that it was time she drove over to see the Hippesleys in their new house. Those were the things she talked about at dinner certainly. But one was tired of the things that she talked about at dinner. It was her profounder state of being that one wanted to catch and turn to words, the state that is to the mind what breathing is to the body, what one calls happiness or unhappiness. At the mention of those words it became obvious, surely, that she must be happy. She was rich; she was distinguished; she had many friends; she travelled – she bought rugs in Turkey and blue pots in Persia. Avenues of pleasure radiated this way and that from where she stood with her scissors raised to cut the trembling branches while the lacy clouds veiled her face.

Here with a quick movement of her scissors she snipped the spray of traveller's joy and it fell to the ground. As it fell, surely some light came in too, surely one could penetrate a little farther into her being. Her mind then was filled with tenderness and regret … To cut an overgrown branch saddened her because it had once lived, and life was dear to her. Yes, and at the same time the fall of the branch would suggest to her how she must die herself and all the futility and evanescence of things. And then again quickly catching this thought up, with her instant good sense, she thought life had treated her well; even if fall she must, it was to lie on the earth and moulder sweetly into the roots of violets. So she stood thinking. Without making any thought precise – for she was one of those reticent people whose minds hold their thoughts enmeshed in clouds of silence – she was filled with thoughts. Her mind was like her room, in which lights advanced and retreated, came pirouetting and stepping delicately, spread their tails, pecked their way; and then her whole being was suffused, like the room again, with a cloud of some profound knowledge, some unspoken regret, and then she was full of locked drawers, stuffed with letters, like her cabinets. To talk of 'prizing her open' as if she were an oyster, to use any but the finest and subtlest and most pliable tools upon her was impious and absurd. One must imagine – here was she in the looking-glass. It made one start.

She was so far off at first that one could not see her clearly. She came lingering and pausing, here straightening a rose, there lifting a pink to smell it, but she never stopped; and all the time she became larger and larger in the looking-glass, more

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and more completely the person into whose mind one had been trying to penetrate. One verified her by degrees – fitted the qualities one had discovered into this visible body. There were her grey-green dress, and her long shoes, her basket, and something sparkling at her throat. She came so gradually that she did not seem to derange the pattern in the glass, but only to bring in some new element which gently moved and altered the other objects as if asking them, courteously, to make room for her.

The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection

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