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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/21**

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen **October/November 2023**

2 hours

4762349261

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.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

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

This document has **12** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Section A: Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

IAN McEWAN: *Atonement*

1 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which the act of writing is made important in the novel.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on McEwan's presentation of Paul Marshall and the Quincey children in the following passage.

He came towards them and extended his hand.

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She thought a game was being played which she did not understand, but she was certain there had been an impropriety, or even an insult.

(*from* Chapter 5)

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NGŨGĨ WA THIONG'O: *Petals of Blood*

2 **Either** **(a)** Discuss the importance of characters sharing stories with each other in the novel.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage, considering Ngũgĩ's presentation of Munira's family and his past.

One woman Munira always remembered: although she never went to church she stood out as holier than all the others and more sincere in her splendid withdrawal and isolation in her hut surrounded by five cypress trees.

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You should know that this world is not our home and we should be preparing them and ourselves for the next one.'

(*from* Chapter 2)

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Stories of Ourselves, Volume 2

3 **Either** **(a)** Discuss the presentation of relationships between male characters in **two** stories.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on Ambrose Bierce's presentation of the man about to be hanged in the following passage from *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*.

A man stood upon a railroad bridge in northern Alabama, looking down into the swift water twenty feet below. The man's hands were behind his back, the wrists bound with a cord. A rope closely encircled his neck. It was attached to a stout cross-timber above his head and the slack fell to the level of his knees. Some loose boards laid upon the sleepers supporting the metals of the railway supplied a footing for him and his executioners – two private soldiers of the Federal army, directed by a sergeant who in civil life may have been a deputy sheriff. At a short remove upon the same temporary platform was an officer in the uniform of his rank, armed. He was a captain. A sentinel at each end of the bridge stood with his rifle in the position known as 'support,' that is to say, vertical in front of the left shoulder, the hammer resting on the forearm thrown straight across the chest – a formal and unnatural position, enforcing an erect carriage of the body. It did not appear to be the duty of these two men to know what was occurring at the centre of the bridge; they merely blockaded the two ends of the foot planking that traversed it.

Beyond one of the sentinels nobody was in sight; the railroad ran straight away into a forest for a hundred yards, then, curving, was lost to view. Doubtless there was an outpost farther along. The other bank of the stream was open ground – a gentle acclivity topped with a stockade of vertical tree trunks, loopholed for rifles, with a single embrasure through which protruded the muzzle of a brass cannon commanding the bridge. Midway of the slope between bridge and fort were the spectators – a single company of infantry in line, at 'parade rest,' the butts of the rifles on the ground, the barrels inclining slightly backward against the right shoulder, the hands crossed upon the stock. A lieutenant stood at the right of the line, the point of his sword upon the ground, his left hand resting upon his right. Excepting the group of four at the centre of the bridge, not a man moved. The company faced the bridge, staring stonily, motionless. The sentinels, facing the banks of the stream, might have been statues to adorn the bridge. The captain stood with folded arms, silent, observing the work of his subordinates, but making no sign. Death is a dignitary who when he comes announced is to be received with formal manifestations of respect, even by those most familiar with him. In the code of military etiquette silence and fixity are forms of deference.

The man who was engaged in being hanged was apparently about thirty-five years of age. He was a civilian, if one might judge from his habit, which was that of a planter. His features were good – a straight nose, firm mouth, broad forehead, from which his long, dark hair was combed straight back, falling behind his ears to the collar of his well-fitting frock-coat. He wore a mustache and pointed beard, but no whiskers; his eyes were large and dark gray, and had a kindly expression which one would hardly have expected in one whose neck was in the hemp. Evidently this was no vulgar assassin. The liberal military code makes provision for hanging many kinds of persons, and gentlemen are not excluded.

The preparations being complete, the two private soldiers stepped aside and each drew away the plank upon which he had been standing. The sergeant turned to the captain, saluted and placed himself immediately behind that officer, who in turn moved apart one pace. These movements left the condemned man and the sergeant standing on the two ends of the same plank, which spanned three of the cross-ties of the bridge. The end upon which the civilian stood almost, but not quite, reached a fourth. This plank had been held in place by the weight of the captain; it was now held by that of the sergeant. At a signal from the former the latter would

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step aside, the plank would tilt and the condemned man go down between two ties. The arrangement commended itself to his judgment as simple and effective. His face had not been covered nor his eyes bandaged. He looked a moment at his 'unsteadfast footing,' then let his gaze wander to the swirling water of the stream racing madly beneath his feet. A piece of dancing driftwood caught his attention and his eyes followed it down the current. How slowly it appeared to move! What a sluggish stream!

(from *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*)

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MARK TWAIN: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

4 **Either** **(a)** Discuss ways in which Twain presents punishment for wrongdoing in the novel.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which Twain establishes Huck's character in the following passage, the beginning of the novel.

You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied, one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. Aunt Polly – Tom's Aunt Polly, she is – and Mary, and the Widow Douglas, is all told about in that book – which is mostly a true book; with some stretchers, as I said before.

Now the way that the book winds up, is this: Tom and me found the money that the robbers hid in the cave, and it made us rich. We got six thousand dollars apiece – all gold. It was an awful sight of money when it was piled up. Well, Judge Thatcher, he took it and put it out at interest, and it fetched us a dollar a day apiece, all the year round – more than a body could tell what to do with. The Widow Douglas, she took me for her son, and allowed she would sivilize me; but it was rough living in the house all the time, considering how dismal regular and decent the widow was in all her ways; and so when I couldn't stand it no longer, I lit out. I got into my old rags, and my sugar-hogshead again, and was free and satisfied. But Tom Sawyer, he hunted me up and said he was going to start a band of robbers, and I might join if I would go back to the widow and be respectable. So I went back.

The widow she cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and she called me a lot of other names, too, but she never meant no harm by it. She put me in them new clothes again, and I couldn't do nothing but sweat and sweat, and feel all cramped up. Well, then, the old thing commenced again. The widow rung a bell for supper, and you had to come to time. When you got to the table you couldn't go right to eating, but you had to wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the victuals, though there warn't really anything the matter with them. That is, nothing only everything was cooked by itself. In a barrel of odds and ends it is different; things get mixed up, and the juice kind of swaps around, and the things go better.

After supper she got out her book and learned me about Moses and the Bulrushers; and I was in a sweat to find out all about him; but by-and-by she let it out that Moses had been dead a considerable long time; so then I didn't care no more about him; because I don't take no stock in dead people.

Pretty soon I wanted to smoke, and asked the widow to let me. But she wouldn't. She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must try to not do it any more. That is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it. Here she was a bothering about Moses, which was no kin to her, and no use to anybody, being gone, you see, yet finding a power of fault with me for doing a thing that had some good in it. And she took snuff too; of course that was all right, because she done it herself.

(*from* Chapter 1)

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TURN OVER FOR SECTION B.

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Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

5 Discuss the presentation of the two characters and their conversation in the following passage.

Consider the writer's choice of language, dialogue and narrative methods in your answer.

I looked at him in astonishment. If ever I saw a man hopelessly hard-up it was the man in front of me. He was ragged and he was dirty, unshaven and unkempt; he looked as though he had been left in a dust-bin for a week. And he was talking to *me* of the irksome worries of a large business. I almost laughed outright. Either he was mad or playing a sorry jest on his own poverty.

'If high aims and high positions,' said I, 'have their drawbacks of hard work and anxiety, they have their compensations. Influence, the power of doing good, of assisting those weaker and poorer than ourselves; and there is even a certain gratification in display …'

My banter[1] under the circumstances was in very vile taste. I spoke on the spur of the contrast of his appearance and speech. I was sorry even while I was speaking.

He turned a haggard but very composed face upon me. Said he: 'I forget myself. Of course you would not understand.'

He measured me for a moment. 'No doubt it is very absurd. You will not believe me even when I tell you, so that it is fairly safe to tell you. And it will be a comfort to tell someone. I really have a big business in hand, a very big business. But there are troubles just now. The fact is … I make diamonds.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'you are out of work just at present?'

'I am sick of being disbelieved,' he said impatiently, and suddenly unbuttoning his wretched coat he pulled out a little canvas bag that was hanging by a cord round his neck. From this he produced a brown pebble. 'I wonder if you know enough to know what that is?' He handed it to me.

Now, a year or so ago, I had occupied my leisure in taking a London science degree, so that I have a smattering of physics and mineralogy. The thing was not unlike an uncut diamond of the darker sort, though far too large, being almost as big as the top of my thumb. I took it, and saw it had the form of a regular octahedron, with the carved faces peculiar to the most precious of minerals. I took out my penknife and tried to scratch it – vainly. Leaning forward towards the gas-lamp, I tried the thing on my watch-glass, and scored a white line across that with the greatest ease.

I looked at my interlocutor[2] with rising curiosity. 'It certainly is rather like a diamond. But, if so, it is a Behemoth[3] of diamonds. Where did you get it?'

'I tell you I made it,' he said. 'Give it back to me.'

He replaced it hastily and buttoned his jacket. 'I will sell it you for one hundred pounds,' he suddenly whispered eagerly. With that my suspicions returned. The thing might, after all, be merely a lump of that almost equally hard substance, corundum, with an accidental resemblance in shape to the diamond. Or if it was a diamond, how came he by it, and why should he offer it at a hundred pounds?

We looked into one another's eyes. He seemed eager, but honestly eager. At that moment I believed it was a diamond he was trying to sell. Yet I am a poor man, a hundred pounds would leave a visible gap in my fortunes and no sane man would buy a diamond by gaslight from a ragged tramp on his personal warranty only. Still, a diamond that size conjured up a vision of many thousands of pounds. Then, thought I, such a stone could scarcely exist without being mentioned in every

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book on gems. I put the question of purchase on one side. *45*

'How did you get it?' said I.

'I made it.'

1 *banter*: joking remarks
2 *interlocutor*: participant in a conversation
3 *Behemoth*: giant

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Or

6 Comment closely on the presentation of the differing attitudes of Rosaline and Petruchio in the following passage.

Consider the writer's choice of language, dialogue and dramatic methods in your answer.

[*A cymbal crash.*
Blackout.
Bright candlelight.
ROSALINE*, dressed in a man's clothes, unrolls her bundle. Swords clank out and lie gleaming dully in the night.*]

Petruchio: Illegal weapons?

Rosaline: What do you bring, Petruchio?

Petruchio: This is an election.

Rosaline: It precedes a war.

Petruchio: It precedes a peace.

Rosaline: So you say.

Petruchio: Your clothes don't make a man of you.

Rosaline: I wear the clothes to fight more easily.
I have no wish to be a man.

Petruchio: Are you challenging me?

Rosaline: There is nothing says a woman cannot be leader.
We've had women before.

Petruchio: A social role.

Rosaline: Our laws do not define the position by gender.
Prince or Princess they state.

Petruchio: Why, Rosaline?

Rosaline: Do the Montagues allow peace?
Helena tell him.
I don't want peace.

Petruchio: I do.

Rosaline: Why?
Why?
Look at us.
Without weapons
What will we become?

Petruchio: I'd like to see.

Rosaline: And when you've seen
When you've seen
And we are all ordinary
And we have no purpose.
What then? It'll be too late to turn back.
We'll be out of the fighting way.
What tales then will we tell our children?
We'll have no more heroes,
We'll die old and wrinkled in our beds.
Love will be less sharp.

Petruchio: It wasn't one of us you loved.

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Rosaline: I don't want to see our race decline.
Where will our poetry come from,
Hate ironed out of our souls,
Our fighting days done?
Blossom is more sweet today
If death comes tomorrow.

Petruchio: I want to watch the blossom bud;
I want to watch it flower;
I want to watch it fall;
A snow shower of petals on the ground;
And see the buds break next year too.
And the next.
And the next.
And taste the wine
From vines yet to be planted.

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