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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/41**

Paper 4 Pre- and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose **October/November 2025**

2 hours

4133978286

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total. You must answer **one** poetry question and **one** prose question.
  - 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 **24** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Section A: Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

JANE AUSTEN: *Pride and Prejudice*

1 Either (a) In what ways and with what effects does Austen present different attitudes to money and wealth in *Pride and Prejudice*?

Or (b) Paying close attention to language, tone and narrative methods, discuss the following passage, showing what it adds to Austen's presentation of Elizabeth's relationship with Darcy here and elsewhere in the novel.

Mr Darcy was punctual in his return, and as Lydia informed you, attended the wedding. He dined with us the next day, and was to leave town again on Wednesday or Thursday. Will you be very angry with me, my dear Lizzy, if I take this opportunity of saying (what I was never bold enough to say before) how much I like him. His behaviour to us has, in every respect, been as pleasing as when we were in Derbyshire. His understanding and opinions all please me; he wants nothing but a little more liveliness, and *that*, if he marry *prudently*, his wife may teach him. I thought him very sly; – he hardly ever mentioned your name. But slyness seems the fashion. Pray forgive me, if I have been very presuming, or at least do not punish me so far, as to exclude me from P. I shall never be quite happy till I have been all round the park. A low phaeton, with a nice little pair of ponies, would be the very thing. But I must write no more. The children have been wanting me this half hour.

Your's, very sincerely,

'M. GARDINER.'

The contents of this letter threw Elizabeth into a flutter of spirits, in which it was difficult to determine whether pleasure or pain bore the greatest share. The vague and unsettled suspicions which uncertainty had produced of what Mr Darcy might have been doing to forward her sister's match, which she had feared to encourage, as an exertion of goodness too great to be probable, and at the same time dreaded to be just, from the pain of obligation, were proved beyond their greatest extent to be true! He had followed them purposely to town, he had taken on himself all the trouble and mortification attendant on such a research; in which supplication had been necessary to a woman whom he must abominate and despise, and where he was reduced to meet, frequently meet, reason with, persuade, and finally bribe, the man whom he always most wished to avoid, and whose very name it was punishment to him to pronounce. He had done all this for a girl whom he could neither regard nor esteem. Her heart did whisper, that he had done it for her. But it was a hope shortly checked by other considerations, and she soon felt that even her vanity was insufficient, when required to depend on his affection for her, for a woman who had already refused him, as able to overcome a sentiment so natural as abhorrence against relationship with Wickham. Brother in law of Wickham! Every kind of pride must revolt from the connection. He had to be sure done much. She was ashamed to think how much. But he had given a reason for his interference, which asked no extraordinary stretch of belief. It was reasonable that he should feel he had been wrong; he had liberality, and he had the means of exercising it; and though she would not place herself as his principal inducement, she could, perhaps, believe,

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that remaining partiality for her, might assist his endeavours in a cause where her peace of mind must be materially concerned. It was painful, exceedingly painful, to know that they were under obligations to a person who could never receive a return. They owed the restoration of Lydia, her character, every thing to him. Oh! how heartily did she grieve over every ungracious sensation she had ever encouraged, every saucy speech she had ever directed towards him. For herself she was humbled; but she was proud of him. Proud that in a cause of compassion and honour, he had been able to get the better of himself. She read over her aunt's commendation of him again and again. It was hardly enough; but it pleased her. She was even sensible of some pleasure, though mixed with regret, on finding how stedfastly both she and her uncle had been persuaded that affection and confidence subsisted between Mr Darcy and herself.

(*from* Chapter 52)

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GEOFFREY CHAUCER: *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*

2 **Either** **(a)** In what ways and with what effects does Chaucer present different kinds of conflict in *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*?

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to poetic methods, analyse the following extract, showing what it adds to Chaucer's characterisation of Januarie.

'Wel,' quod this Januarie, 'and hastow ysayd?
Straw for thy Senek, and for thy proverbes!
I counte nat a panyer ful of herbes
Of scole-termes. Wyser men than thow,
As thou hast herd, assenteden right now
To my purpos. Placebo, what sey ye?'
'I seye it is a cursed man,' quod he,
'That letteth matrimoigne, sikerly.'
And with that word they rysen sodeynly,
And been assented fully that he sholde
Be wedded whanne hym liste and where he wolde.
Heigh fantasye and curious bisynesse
Fro day to day gan in the soule impresse
Of Januarie aboute his mariage.
Many fair shap and many a fair visage
Ther passeth thurgh his herte nyght by nyght,
As whoso tooke a mirour, polisshed bryght,
And sette it in a commune market-place,
Thanne sholde he se ful many a figure pace
By his mirour; and in the same wyse
Gan Januarie inwith his thoght devyse
Of maydens whiche that dwelten hym bisyde.
He wiste nat wher that he myghte abyde.
For if that oon have beaute in hir face,
Another stant so in the peples grace
For hire sadnesse and hire benyngnytee
That of the peple grettest voys hath she;
And somme were riche and hadden badde name.
But nathelees, bitwixe ernest and game,
He atte laste apoynted hym on oon,
And leet alle othere from his herte goon,
And chees hire of his owene auctoritee;
For love is blynd alday, and may nat see.
And whan that he was in his bed ybroght,
He purtreyed in his herte and in his thoght
Hir fresshe beautee and hir age tendre,
Hir myddel smal, hire armes longe and sklendre,
Hir wise governaunce, hir gentillesse,
Hir wommanly berynge, and hire sadnesse.
And whan that he on hire was condescended,
Hym thoughte his choys myghte nat ben amended.
For whan that he hymself concluded hadde,
Hym thoughte ech oother mannes wit so badde
That inpossible it were to repplye
Agayn his choys; this was his fantasye.

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TURN OVER FOR QUESTION 3.

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JOHN DONNE: Selected Poems

3 **Either** **(a)** 'The tension between the needs of the body and of the soul is central to Donne's poetry.'

How far and in what ways do you agree with this comment? You should refer to **three** poems in your answer.

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to poetic methods in the following poem, discuss Donne's presentation of love here and elsewhere in the selection.

The Canonization

For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love,
Or chide my palsy, or my gout,
My five grey hairs, or ruined fortune flout,
With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve,
Take you a course, get you a place,
Observe his Honour, or his Grace,
Or the King's real, or his stamped face
Contemplate; what you will, approve,
So you will let me love.

Alas, alas, who's injured by my love?
What merchant's ships have my sighs drowned?
Who says my tears have overflowed his ground?
When did my colds a forward spring remove?
When did the heats which my veins fill
Add one more to the plaguy bill?
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
Litigious men, which quarrels move,
Though she and I do love.

Call us what you will, we are made such by love;
Call her one, me another fly,
We are tapers too, and at our own cost die,
And we in us find the eagle and the dove,
The phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us; we two being one, are it.
So to one neutral thing both sexes fit
We die and rise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tombs and hearse
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;
And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;
As well a well wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs,
And by these hymns, all shall approve
Us canonized for love:

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And thus invoke us; ‘You whom reverend love
Made one another’s hermitage;
You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage;
Who did the whole world’s soul contract, and drove
Into the glasses of your eyes
(So made such mirrors, and such spies,
That they did all to you epitomize,)
Countries, towns, courts: beg from above
A pattern of your love!’

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GEORGE ELIOT: *Middlemarch*

4 Either (a) Discuss some of the ways in which Eliot shapes a reader's response to Mr Bulstrode in the novel.

Or (b) Analyse the effects of the writing in the following passage, considering ways in which it is characteristic of Eliot's narrative methods and concerns.

Even those neighbours who had called Peter Featherstone an old fox, had never accused him of being insincerely polite, and his sister was quite used to the peculiar absence of ceremony with which he marked his sense of blood-relationship. Indeed, she herself was accustomed to think that entire freedom from the necessity of behaving agreeably was included in the Almighty's intentions about families. She rose slowly without any sign of resentment, and said in her usual muffled monotone, 'Brother, I hope the new doctor will be able to do something for you. Solomon says there's great talk of his cleverness. I'm sure it's my wish you should be spared. And there's none more ready to nurse you than your own sister and your own nieces, if you'd only say the word. There's Rebecca, and Joanna, and Elizabeth, you know.'

'Ay, ay, I remember – you'll see I've remembered 'em all – all dark and ugly. They'd need some money, eh? There never was any beauty in the women of our family; but the Featherstones have always had some money, and the Waules too. Waule had money too. A warm man was Waule. Ay, ay; money's a good egg; and if you've got money to leave behind you, lay it in a warm nest. Good-bye, Mrs Waule.'

Here Mr Featherstone pulled at both sides of his wig as if he wanted to deafen himself, and his sister went away ruminating on this oracular speech of his. Notwithstanding her jealousy of the Vincys and of Mary Garth, there remained as the nethermost sediment in her mental shallows a persuasion that her brother Peter Featherstone could never leave his chief property away from his blood-relations: – else, why had the Almighty carried off his two wives both childless, after he had gained so much by manganese and things, turning up when nobody expected it? – and why was there a Lowick parish church, and the Waules and Powderells all sitting in the same pew for generations, and the Featherstone pew next to them, if, the Sunday after her brother Peter's death, everybody was to know that the property was gone out of the family? The human mind has at no period accepted a moral chaos; and so preposterous a result was not strictly conceivable. But we are frightened at much that is not strictly conceivable.

When Fred came in the old man eyed him with a peculiar twinkle, which the younger had often had reason to interpret as pride in the satisfactory details of his appearance.

'You two misses go away,' said Mr Featherstone. 'I want to speak to Fred.'

'Come into my room, Rosamond, you will not mind the cold for a little while,' said Mary. The two girls had not only known each other in childhood, but had been at the same provincial school together (Mary as an articled pupil), so that they had many memories in common, and liked very well to talk in private. Indeed, this *tête-à-tête* was one of Rosamond's objects in coming to Stone Court.

Old Featherstone would not begin the dialogue till the door had been closed. He continued to look at Fred with the same twinkle and with one of his habitual grimaces, alternately screwing and widening his mouth; and

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when he spoke, it was in a low tone, which might be taken for that of an informer ready to be bought off, rather than for the tone of an offended senior. He was not a man to feel any strong moral indignation even on account of trespasses against himself. It was natural that others should want to get an advantage over him, but then, he was a little too cunning for them.

(*from* Chapter 12)

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THOMAS HARDY: *Far from the Madding Crowd*

5 Either (a) In what ways and with what effects does Hardy present different attitudes to work in *Far from the Madding Crowd*?

Or (b) Analyse the following passage, showing what it adds to your understanding of Hardy's methods of characterisation both here and elsewhere in the novel.

Boldwood came close and bid her good morning with such constraint that she could not but think he had stepped across to the washing for its own sake, hoping not to find her there: more, she fancied his brow severe and his eye slighting. Bathsheba immediately contrived to withdraw, and glided along by the river till she was a stone's throw off. She heard footsteps brushing the grass, and had a consciousness that love was encircling her like a perfume. Instead of turning or waiting Bathsheba went further among the high sedges, but Boldwood seemed determined and pressed on, till they were completely past the bend of the river. Here, without being seen they could still hear the splashing and shouts of the washers above.

'Miss Everdene!' said the farmer.

She trembled, turned and said 'Good morning.' His tone was so utterly removed from all she had expected as a beginning. It was lowness and quiet accented: an emphasis of deep meanings, their form at the same time being scarcely expressed. Silence has sometimes a remarkable power of showing itself as the disembodied soul of feeling wandering without its carcase, and it is then more emphatic than speech. In the same way to say a little is often to tell more than to say a great deal. Boldwood told everything in that word.

As the consciousness expands on learning that what was fancied to be the rumble of wheels is the reverberation of thunder so did Bathsheba's at her intuitive conviction.

'I feel – almost – too much – to think,' he said with a solemn simplicity. 'I have come to speak to you without preface. My life is not my own since I have beheld you clearly. Miss Everdene – I come to make you an offer of marriage.'

Bathsheba tried to preserve an absolutely neutral countenance, and all the motion she made was that of closing her lips, which had previously been a little parted.

'I am now forty one years old,' he went on. 'I may have been called a confirmed bachelor, and I was a confirmed bachelor. I had never any views of myself as a husband in my earlier days, nor have I made any calculation on the subject since I have been older. But we all change, and my change, in this matter, came with seeing you. I have felt lately, more and more, that my present way of living is bad in every respect. Beyond all things, I want you as my wife.'

'I feel, Mr Boldwood, that, though I respect you much, I do not feel – what would justify me to – in accepting your offer,' she stammered.

This giving back of dignity for dignity seemed to open the sluices of feeling that Boldwood had as yet kept closed. 'My life is a burden without you,' he exclaimed in a low voice – 'I want you – I want you to let me say I love you again and again!'

Bathsheba answered nothing, and the horse upon her arm seemed so impressed that instead of cropping the herbage it looked up.

'I think and hope you care enough for me to listen to what I have to tell!'

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Bathsheba's momentary impulse at hearing this was to ask why he thought that, till she remembered that, far from being a conceited assumption on Boldwood's part, it was but the natural conclusion of serious reflection based on deceptive premisses of her own offering.

'I wish I could say courteous flatteries to you,' the farmer continued in an easier tone, 'and put my rugged feeling into a graceful shape; but I have neither power nor patience to learn such things. I want you for my wife – so wildly that no other feeling can abide in me; but I should not have spoken out had I not been led to hope.'

'The valentine again! O that valentine!' she said to herself, but not a word to him.

'If you can love me, say so, Miss Everdene. If not – don't say no.'

'Mr Boldwood, it is painful to have to say I am surprised, so that I don't know how to answer you with propriety and respect – but am only just able to speak out my feeling – I mean my meaning; that I am afraid I can't marry you, much as I respect you. You are too dignified for me to suit you, Sir.'

(*from* Chapter 18)

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WALT WHITMAN: Selected Poems from *Leaves of Grass*

6 **Either** **(a)** In what ways and with what effects does Whitman present human relationships? You should refer to **three** poems in your answer.

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to poetic methods, discuss the following poem, showing in what ways it is characteristic of Whitman's concerns in the selection.

In Paths Untrodden

In paths untrodden,
In the growth by margins of pond-waters,
Escaped from the life that exhibits itself,
From all the standards hitherto publish'd, from the pleasures, profits, conformities,
Which too long I was offering to feed my soul,
Clear to me now standards not yet publish'd, clear to me that my soul,
That the soul of the man I speak for rejoices in comrades,
Here by myself away from the clank of the world,
Tallying and talk'd to here by tongues aromatic,
No longer abash'd, (for in this secluded spot I can respond as I would not dare elsewhere,)
Strong upon me the life that does not exhibit itself, yet contains all the rest,
Resolv'd to sing no songs to-day but those of manly attachment,
Projecting them along that substantial life,
Bequeathing hence types of athletic love,
Afternoon this delicious Ninth-month in my forty-first year,
I proceed for all who are or have been young men,
To tell the secret of my nights and days,
To celebrate the need of comrades.

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Section B: Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

LOUISE GLÜCK: Selected Poems from *The Wild Iris*

7 **Either** **(a)** In what ways and with what effects does Glück explore different kinds of fear? In your answer, you should refer to **three** poems from the selection.

Or **(b)** Write a critical appreciation of the following poem, considering in what ways it is characteristic of Glück's poetic methods and concerns.

September Twilight

I gathered you together,
I can dispense with you –

I'm tired of you, chaos
of the living world –
I can only extend myself
for so long to a living thing.

I summoned you into existence
by opening my mouth, by lifting
my little finger, shimmering

blues of the wild
aster, blossom
of the lily, immense,
gold-veined –

you come and go; eventually
I forget your names.

You come and go, every one of you
flawed in some way,
in some way compromised: you are worth
one life, no more than that.

I gathered you together;
I can erase you
as though you were a draft to be thrown away,
an exercise

because I've finished you, vision
of deepest mourning.

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JAMES JOYCE: *Dubliners*

8 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which Joyce presents unhappiness in *Dubliners*. In your answer, you should refer to at least **two** stories.

Or **(b)** Analyse the effects of the writing in the following passage, considering Joyce's methods of characterisation here and elsewhere in *Dubliners*.

THE matron had given her leave to go out as soon as the women's tea was over and Maria looked forward to her evening out. The kitchen was spick and span: the cook said you could see yourself in the big copper boilers. The fire was nice and bright and on one of the side-tables were four very big barmbracks. These barmbracks seemed uncut; but if you went closer you would see that they had been cut into long thick even slices and were ready to be handed round at tea. Maria had cut them herself.

Maria was a very, very small person indeed but she had a very long nose and a very long chin. She talked a little through her nose, always soothingly: *Yes, my dear*, and *No, my dear.* She was always sent for when the women quarrelled over their tubs and always succeeded in making peace. One day the matron had said to her:

– Maria, you are a veritable peace-maker!

And the sub-matron and two of the Board ladies had heard the compliment. And Ginger Mooney was always saying what she wouldn't do to the dummy who had charge of the irons if it wasn't for Maria. Every one was so fond of Maria.

The women would have their tea at six o'clock and she would be able to get away before seven. From Ballsbridge to the Pillar, twenty minutes; from the Pillar to Drumcondra, twenty minutes; and twenty minutes to buy the things. She would be there before eight. She took out her purse with the silver clasps and read again the words *A Present from Belfast*. She was very fond of that purse because Joe had brought it to her five years before when he and Alphy had gone to Belfast on a Whit-Monday trip. In the purse were two half-crowns and some coppers. She would have five shillings clear after paying tram fare. What a nice evening they would have, all the children singing! Only she hoped that Joe wouldn't come in drunk. He was so different when he took any drink.

Often he had wanted her to go and live with them; but she would have felt herself in the way (though Joe's wife was ever so nice with her) and she had become accustomed to the life of the laundry. Joe was a good fellow. She had nursed him and Alphy too; and Joe used often say:

– Mamma is mamma but Maria is my proper mother.

After the break-up at home the boys had got her that position in the *Dublin by Lamplight* laundry, and she liked it. She used to have such a bad opinion of Protestants but now she thought they were very nice people, a little quiet and serious, but still very nice people to live with. Then she had her plants in the conservatory and she liked looking after them. She had lovely ferns and wax-plants and, whenever anyone came to visit her, she always gave the visitor one or two slips from her conservatory. There was one thing she didn't like and that was the tracts on the walls; but the matron was such a nice person to deal with, so genteel.

When the cook told her everything was ready she went into the women's room and began to pull the big bell. In a few minutes the women began to come in by twos and threes, wiping their steaming hands in their petticoats and pulling down the sleeves of their blouses over their red steaming arms. They settled down before their huge mugs which the cook

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and the dummy filled up with hot tea, already mixed with milk and sugar in huge tin cans. Maria superintended the distribution of the barmbrack and saw that every woman got her four slices. There was a great deal of laughing and joking during the meal. Lizzie Fleming said Maria was sure to get the ring and, though Fleming had said that for so many Hallow Eves, Maria had to laugh and say she didn't want any ring or man either; and when she laughed her grey-green eyes sparkled with disappointed shyness and the tip of her nose nearly met the tip of her chin. Then Ginger Mooney lifted up her mug of tea and proposed Maria's health while all the other women clattered with their mugs on the table, and said she was sorry she hadn't a sup of porter to drink it in. And Maria laughed again till the tip of her nose nearly met the tip of her chin and till her minute body nearly shook itself asunder because she knew that Mooney meant well though, of course, she had the notions of a common woman.

(*from* Clay)

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TONI MORRISON: *Beloved*

9 Either (a) Discuss the role and characterisation of Baby Suggs in the novel *Beloved*.

Or (b) Analyse the effects of the writing in the following passage, considering in what ways it is characteristic of Morrison's narrative methods and concerns.

Poorly fed, thought Sethe, and younger than her clothes suggested – good lace at the throat, and a rich woman's hat.

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She looked at this sleepy beauty and wanted more.

(*from* Part 1)

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GABRIEL OKARA: Selected Poems from *Collected Poems*

10 Either (a) In what ways and with what effects does Okara's poetry explore attitudes to identity? In your answer, you should refer to **three** poems from the selection.

Or (b) Analyse the following poem, considering in what ways it is characteristic of Okara's poetic methods and concerns in the selection.

Suddenly the Air Cracks

Suddenly the air cracks

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become memorials of this day.

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JEAN RHYS: *Wide Sargasso Sea*

11 Either (a) What, in your view, does the parallel story of Antoinette's mother contribute to the novel's meaning and effects?

Or (b) Analyse the effects of the writing in the following passage, considering Rhys's presentation of Daniel Cosway here and elsewhere in the novel.

He look at me like I was dirt and I get angry too.

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To me
it's my life.'

(*from* Part 2)

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NATASHA TRETHEWEY: *Native Guard*

12 Either (a) In what ways and with what effects does Trethewey explore feelings of anger? In your answer, you should refer to **three** poems from the collection, which could include individual poems from longer sequences.

Or (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following poem, considering in what ways it is characteristic of Trethewey's poetic methods and concerns in the collection.

Incident

We tell the story every year –

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We tell the story every year.

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