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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/42**

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

2 hours

8046419504

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) Discuss some of the ways in which Austen explores the role and significance of parents 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 Bingley and his sister, Miss Bingley, here and elsewhere in the novel.

When the ladies removed after dinner, Elizabeth ran up to her sister, and seeing her well guarded from cold, attended her into the drawing-room; where she was welcomed by her two friends with many professions of pleasure; and Elizabeth had never seen them so agreeable as they were during the hour which passed before the gentlemen appeared. Their powers of conversation were considerable. They could describe an entertainment with accuracy, relate an anecdote with humour, and laugh at their acquaintance with spirit.

But when the gentlemen entered, Jane was no longer the first object. Miss Bingley's eyes were instantly turned towards Darcy, and she had something to say to him before he had advanced many steps. He addressed himself directly to Miss Bennet, with a polite congratulation; Mr Hurst also made her a slight bow, and said he was 'very glad;' but diffuseness and warmth remained for Bingley's salutation. He was full of joy and attention. The first half hour was spent in piling up the fire, lest she should suffer from the change of room; and she removed at his desire to the other side of the fire-place, that she might be farther from the door. He then sat down by her, and talked scarcely to any one else. Elizabeth, at work in the opposite corner, saw it all with great delight.

When tea was over, Mr Hurst reminded his sister-in-law of the card-table – but in vain. She had obtained private intelligence that Mr Darcy did not wish for cards; and Mr Hurst soon found even his open petition rejected. She assured him that no one intended to play, and the silence of the whole party on the subject, seemed to justify her. Mr Hurst had therefore nothing to do, but to stretch himself on one of the sophas and go to sleep. Darcy took up a book; Miss Bingley did the same; and Mrs Hurst, principally occupied in playing with her bracelets and rings, joined now and then in her brother's conversation with Miss Bennet.

Miss Bingley's attention was quite as much engaged in watching Mr Darcy's progress through *his* book, as in reading her own; and she was perpetually either making some inquiry, or looking at his page. She could not win him, however, to any conversation; he merely answered her question, and read on. At length, quite exhausted by the attempt to be amused with her own book, which she had only chosen because it was the second volume of his, she gave a great yawn and said, 'How pleasant it is to spend an evening in this way! I declare after all there is no enjoyment like reading! How much sooner one tires of any thing than of a book! – When I have a house of my own, I shall be miserable if I have not an excellent library.'

No one made any reply. She then yawned again, threw aside her book, and cast her eyes round the room in quest of some amusement; when hearing her brother mentioning a ball to Miss Bennet, she turned suddenly towards him and said,

'By the bye, Charles, are you really serious in meditating a dance at Netherfield? – I would advise you, before you determine on it, to consult the wishes of the present party; I am much mistaken if there are not some among us to whom a ball would be rather a punishment than a pleasure.'

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'If you mean Darcy,' cried her brother, 'he may go to bed, if he chuses, before it begins – but as for the ball, it is quite a settled thing; and as soon as Nicholls has made white soup enough I shall send round my cards.'

'I should like balls infinitely better,' she replied, 'if they were carried on in a different manner; but there is something insufferably tedious in the usual process of such a meeting. It would surely be much more rational if conversation instead of dancing made the order of the day.'

'Much more rational, my dear Caroline, I dare say, but it would not be near so much like a ball.'

(*from* Chapter 11)

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

2 **Either** **(a)** Discuss Chaucer's presentation of different attitudes to marriage in *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*.

Or **(b)** Discuss the following extract, the ending of the poem, showing in what ways it is characteristic of Chaucer's methods and concerns in *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*.

Up to the tree he caste his eyen two,
And saugh that Damyan his wyf had dressed
In swich manere it may nat been expressed,
But if I wolde speke uncurteisly;
And up he yaf a roryng and a cry,
As dooth the mooder whan the child shal dye:
'Out! Help! Allas! Harrow!' he gan to crye,
'O stronge lady stoore, what dostow?'
And she answerde, 'Sire, what eyleth yow?
Have pacience and resoun in youre mynde.
I have yow holpe on bothe youre eyen blynde.
Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lyen,
As me was taught, to heele with youre eyen,
Was no thyng bet, to make yow to see,
Than strugle with a man upon a tree.
God woot, I dide it in ful good entente.'
'Strugle?' quod he, 'Ye, algate in it wente!
God yeve yow bothe on shames deth to dyen!
He swyved thee; I saugh it with myne yen,
And elles be I hanged by the hals!'
'Thanne is,' quod she, 'my medicyne fals;
For certeinly, if that ye myghte se,
Ye wolde nat seyn thise wordes unto me.
Ye han som glymsyng, and no parfit sighte.'
'I se,' quod he, 'as wel as evere I myghte,
Thonked be God! With bothe myne eyen two,
And by my trouthe, me thoughte he dide thee so.'
'Ye maze, maze, goode sire,' quod she;
'This thank have I for I have maad yow see.
Allas,' quod she, 'that evere I was so kynde!'
'Now, dame,' quod he, 'lat al passe out of mynde.
Com doun, my lief, and if I have myssayd,
God helpe me so, as I am yvele apayd.
But, by my fader soule, I wende han seyn
How that this Damyan hadde by thee leyn,
And that thy smok hadde leyn upon his brest.'
'Ye, sire,' quod she, 'ye may wene as yow lest.
But, sire, a man that waketh out of his sleep,
He may nat sodeynly wel taken keep
Upon a thyng, ne seen it parfitly,
Til that he be adawed verraily.
Right so a man that longe hath blynd ybe,
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel yse,
First whan his sighte is newe come ageyn,
As he that hath a day or two yseyn.
Til that youre sighte ysatled be a while

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Ther may ful many a sighte yow bigile.
Beth war, I prey yow, for by hevene kyng,
Ful many a man weneth to seen a thyng,
And it is al another than it semeth.
He that mysconceyveth, he mysdemeth.'
And with that word she leep doun fro the tree.
This Januarie, who is glad but he?
He kisseth hire and clippeth hire ful ofte,
And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful softe,
And to his palays hoom he hath hire lad.
Now, goode men, I pray yow to be glad.
Thus endeth heere my tale of Januarie;
God blesse us, and his mooder Seinte Marie!

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JOHN DONNE: Selected Poems

3 **Either** **(a)** In what ways does Donne create drama and dramatic effects in his poetry? You should refer to **three** poems in your answer.

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to poetic methods, discuss the following poem, showing what it adds to your understanding of Donne's concerns here and elsewhere in the selection.

Twicknam Garden

Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with tears,
Hither I come to seek the spring,
And at mine eyes, and at mine ears,
Receive such balms, as else cure everything;
But O, self traitor, I do bring
The spider love, which transubstantiates all,
And can convert manna to gall,
And that this place may thoroughly be thought
True paradise, I have the serpent brought.

'Twere wholesomer for me, that winter did
Benight the glory of this place,
And that a grave frost did forbid
These trees to laugh, and mock me to my face;
But that I may not this disgrace
Endure, nor yet leave loving, Love, let me
Some senseless piece of this place be;
Make me a mandrake, so I may groan here,
Or a stone fountain weeping out my year.

Hither with crystal vials, lovers come,
And take my tears, which are love's wine,
And try your mistress' tears at home,
For all are false, that taste not just like mine;
Alas, hearts do not in eyes shine,
Nor can you more judge woman's thoughts by tears,
Than by her shadow, what she wears.
O perverse sex, where none is true but she,
Who's therefore true, because her truth kills me.

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TURN OVER FOR QUESTION 4.

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GEORGE ELIOT: *Middlemarch*

4 **Either** **(a)** 'Pride helps us; and pride is not a bad thing when it only urges us to hide our own hurts – not to hurt others.'

In the light of the narrator's comment, discuss Eliot's presentation of pride in the novel.

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to the details of the writing, discuss the following passage, showing what it adds to your understanding of the relationship between Mr and Mrs Casaubon.

Mr and Mrs Casaubon, returning from their wedding journey, arrived at Lowick Manor in the middle of January. A light snow was falling as they descended at the door, and in the morning, when Dorothea passed from her dressing-room into the blue-green boudoir that we know of, she saw the long avenue of limes lifting their trunks from a white earth, and spreading white branches against the dun and motionless sky. The distant flat shrank in uniform whiteness and low-hanging uniformity of cloud. The very furniture in the room seemed to have shrunk since she saw it before: the stag in the tapestry looked more like a ghost in his ghostly blue-green world; the volumes of polite literature in the bookcase looked more like immovable imitations of books. The bright fire of dry oak-boughs burning on the dogs seemed an incongruous renewal of life and glow – like the figure of Dorothea herself as she entered carrying the red-leather cases containing the cameos for Celia.

She was glowing from her morning toilette as only healthful youth can glow; there was gem-like brightness on her coiled hair and in her hazel eyes; there was warm red life in her lips; her throat had a breathing whiteness above the differing white of the fur which itself seemed to wind about her neck and cling down her blue-grey pelisse with a tenderness gathered from her own, a sentient commingled innocence which kept its loveliness against the crystalline purity of the out-door snow. As she laid the cameo-cases on the table in the bow-window, she unconsciously kept her hands on them, immediately absorbed in looking out on the still, white enclosure which made her visible world.

Mr Casaubon, who had risen early complaining of palpitation, was in the library giving audience to his curate Mr Tucker. By-and-by Celia would come in her quality of bridesmaid as well as sister, and through the next weeks there would be wedding visits received and given; all in continuance of that transitional life understood to correspond with the excitement of bridal felicity, and keeping up the sense of busy ineffectiveness, as of a dream which the dreamer begins to suspect. The duties of her married life, contemplated as so great beforehand, seemed to be shrinking with the furniture and the white vapour-walled landscape. The clear heights where she expected to walk in full communion had become difficult to see even in her imagination; the delicious repose of the soul on a complete superior had been shaken into uneasy effort and alarmed with dim presentiment. When would the days begin of that active wifely devotion which was to strengthen her husband's life and exalt her own? Never perhaps, as she had preconceived them; but somehow – still somehow. In this solemnly pledged union of her life, duty would present itself in some new form of inspiration and give a new meaning to wifely love.

Meanwhile there was the snow and the low arch of dun vapour – there was the stifling oppression of that gentlewoman's world, where everything was done for her and none asked for her aid – where the sense of connection with a manifold pregnant existence had to be kept up painfully as an inward vision, instead of coming from without in claims that would have shaped her energies. – 'What shall I

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do?' 'Whatever you please, my dear': that had been her brief history since she had left off learning morning lessons and practising silly rhythms on the hated piano.

(*from* Chapter 28)

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THOMAS HARDY: *Far from the Madding Crowd*

5 Either (a) In what ways and with what effects does Hardy make chance and coincidence significant in *Far from the Madding Crowd*?

Or (b) Analyse the following passage, showing what it adds to Hardy's presentation of the relationship between Gabriel and Bathsheba in the novel as a whole.

'Well, what is your opinion of my conduct,' she [Bathsheba] said quietly.

'That it is unworthy of any thoughtful and meek and comely woman.'

In an instant Bathsheba's face coloured with the angry crimson of a Danby sunset. But she forbore to utter her feeling, and this reticence of her tongue only made the loquacity of her face the more noticeable.

The next thing Gabriel did was make a mistake.

'Perhaps you don't like the rudeness of my reprimanding you, for I know it is rudeness; but I thought it would do you good.'

She instantly replied, sarcastically: 'On the contrary my opinion of you is so low that I see in your abuse the praise of discerning people.'

'I am glad you don't mind it, for I said it honestly, and with every serious meaning.'

'I see. But unfortunately when you try not to speak in jest you are amusing – just as when you wish to avoid seriousness you sometimes say a sensible word.'

In spite of all this, Bathsheba had unmistakeably lost her temper, and on that account Gabriel had never in his life kept his own better. He said nothing: she then broke out,

'I may ask, I suppose, where in particular my unworthiness lies? In my not marrying you, perhaps!'

'Not by any means,' said Gabriel quietly. 'I have long given up thinking of that matter.'

'Or wishing it, I suppose,' she said, and it was apparent that she expected an unhesitating denial of this supposition.

Whatever Gabriel felt, he coolly echoed her words,

'Or wishing it, either.'

A woman may be treated with a bitterness which is sweet to her, and with a rudeness which is not offensive. Bathsheba would have submitted to an indignant chastisement for her levity had Gabriel protested that he was loving her at the same time: the impetuosity of passion unrequited is bearable, even if it stings and anathematizes; there is a triumph in the humiliation and a tenderness in the strife. This was what she had been expecting, and what she had not got. To be lectured because the lecturer saw her in the cold morning light of open-shuttered disillusion was exasperating. He had not finished either. He continued in a more agitated voice:

'My opinion is (since you ask it) that you are greatly to blame for playing pranks upon a man like Mr Boldwood, merely as a pastime. Leading on a man you don't care for is not a praiseworthy action. And even Miss Everdene if you seriously inclined towards him you might have let him discover it in some way of true loving-kindness, and not by sending him a valentine's letter.'

Bathsheba laid down the shears.

'I cannot allow any man to – to criticise my private conduct!' she exclaimed. 'Nor will I for a minute. So you'll please leave the farm at the end of the week!'

It may have been a peculiarity – at any rate it was a fact – that when Bathsheba was swayed by an emotion of an earthly sort her lower lip trembled: when by a refined emotion her upper or heavenward one. Her nether lip quivered now.

'Very well, so I will,' said Gabriel, calmly. He had been held to her by a beautiful thread which it pained him to spoil by breaking rather than by a chain he could not break. 'I should be even better pleased to go at once,' he added.

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'Go at once then, in Heaven's name!' said she, her eyes flashing at his, though never meeting them. 'Don't let me see your face any more.'

'Very well, Miss Everdene – so it shall be.'

And he took his shears and went away from her in placid dignity, as Moses left the presence of Pharaoh previous to the departure from Egypt.

(*from* Chapter 19)

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WALT WHITMAN: Selected Poems from *Leaves of Grass*

6 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the effects created by Whitman's choice of settings. You should refer to **three** poems in your answer.

Or **(b)** Analyse the following extract from *As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life*, showing what it adds to your understanding of Whitman's methods and concerns in the selection.

from *As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life*

I too Paumanok,
I too have bubbled up, floated the measureless float, and been wash'd on your shores,
I too am but a trail of drift and debris,
I too leave little wrecks upon you, you fish-shaped island.

I throw myself upon your breast my father,
I cling to you so that you cannot unloose me,
I hold you so firm till you answer me something.

Kiss me my father,
Touch me with your lips as I touch those I love,
Breathe to me while I hold you close the secret of the murmuring I envy.

4

Ebb, ocean of life, (the flow will return,)
Cease not your moaning you fierce old mother,
Endlessly cry for your castaways, but fear not, deny not me,
Rustle not up so hoarse and angry against my feet as I touch you or gather from you.

I mean tenderly by you and all,
I gather for myself and for this phantom looking down where we lead, and following me and mine.

Me and mine, loose windrows, little corpses,
Froth, snowy white, and bubbles,
(See, from my dead lips the ooze exuding at last,
See, the prismatic colors glistening and rolling,)
Tufts of straw, sands, fragments,
Buoy'd hither from many moods, one contradicting another,
From the storm, the long calm, the darkness, the swell,
Musing, pondering, a breath, a briny tear, a dab of liquid or soil,
Up just as much out of fathomless workings fermented and thrown,
A limp blossom or two, torn, just as much over waves floating, drifted at random,
Just as much for us that sobbing dirge of Nature,
Just as much whence we come that blare of the cloud-trumpets,
We, capricious, brought hither we know not whence, spread out before you,
You up there walking or sitting,
Whoever you are, we too lie in drifts at your feet.

TURN OVER FOR SECTION B.

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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)** Discuss some of the ways in which Glück presents religious experience. In your answer, you should refer to **three** poems from the selection.

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to poetic methods, analyse the following poem, showing what it adds to your understanding of Glück's concerns in the selection.

Witchgrass

Something
comes into the world unwelcome
calling disorder, disorder –

If you hate me so much
don't bother to give me
a name: do you need
one more slur
in your language, another
way to blame
one tribe for everything –

as we both know,
if you worship
one god, you only need
one enemy –

I'm not the enemy.
Only a ruse to ignore
what you see happening
right here in this bed,
a little paradigm
of failure. One of your precious flowers
dies here almost every day
and you can't rest until
you attack the cause, meaning
whatever is left, whatever
happens to be sturdier
than your personal passion –

It was not meant
to last forever in the real world.
But why admit that, when you can go on
doing what you always do,
mourning and laying blame,
always the two together.

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I don’t need your praise
to survive. I was here first,
before you were here, before
you ever planted a garden.
And I’ll be here when only the sun and moon
are left, and the sea, and the wide field.

I will constitute the field.

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JAMES JOYCE: *Dubliners*

8 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which Joyce explores the lives of women 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 how far it is characteristic of Joyce's narrative methods and concerns in *Dubliners*.

He turned to the right towards Capel Street. Ignatius Gallaher on the London Press! Who would have thought it possible eight years before? Still, now that he reviewed the past, Little Chandler could remember many signs of future greatness in his friend. People used to say that Ignatius Gallaher was wild. Of course, he did mix with a rakish set of fellows at that time, drank freely and borrowed money on all sides. In the end he had got mixed up in some shady affair, some money transaction: at least, that was one version of his flight. But nobody denied him talent. There was always a certain … something in Ignatius Gallaher that impressed you in spite of yourself. Even when he was out at elbows and at his wits' end for money he kept up a bold face. Little Chandler remembered (and the remembrance brought a slight flush of pride to his cheek) one of Ignatius Gallaher's sayings when he was in a tight corner:

– Half time, now, boys, he used to say light-heartedly. Where's my considering cap?

That was Ignatius Gallaher all out; and, damn it, you couldn't but admire him for it.

Little Chandler quickened his pace. For the first time in his life he felt himself superior to the people he passed. For the first time his soul revolted against the dull inelegance of Capel Street. There was no doubt about it: if you wanted to succeed you had to go away. You could do nothing in Dublin. As he crossed Grattan Bridge he looked down the river towards the lower quays and pitied the poor stunted houses. They seemed to him a band of tramps, huddled together along the river-banks, their old coats covered with dust and soot, stupefied by the panorama of sunset and waiting for the first chill of night to bid them arise, shake themselves and begone. He wondered whether he could write a poem to express his idea. Perhaps Gallaher might be able to get it into some London paper for him. Could he write something original? He was not sure what idea he wished to express but the thought that a poetic moment had touched him took life within him like an infant hope. He stepped onward bravely.

Every step brought him nearer to London, farther from his own sober inartistic life. A light began to tremble on the horizon of his mind. He was not so old – thirty-two. His temperament might be said to be just at the point of maturity. There were so many different moods and impressions that he wished to express in verse. He felt them within him. He tried to weigh his soul to see if it was a poet's soul. Melancholy was the dominant note of his temperament, he thought, but it was a melancholy tempered by recurrences of faith and resignation and simple joy. If he could give expression to it in a book of poems perhaps men would listen. He would never be popular: he saw that. He could not sway the crowd but he might appeal to a little circle of kindred minds. The English critics, perhaps, would recognize him as one of the Celtic school by reason of the melancholy tone of his poems; besides that, he would put in allusions. He began to invent sentences and phrases from the notices which his book would get. *Mr Chandler has the gift of easy and graceful verse … A wistful sadness pervades these poems … The Celtic note.* It was a pity his name was not more Irish-looking. Perhaps it would be better to insert his mother's name before the surname: Thomas Malone Chandler, or better still: T. Malone Chandler. He would speak to Gallaher about it.

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He pursued his revery so ardently that he passed his street and had to turn back. As he came near Corless's his former agitation began to overmaster him and he halted before the door in indecision. Finally he opened the door and entered.

(*from* A Little Cloud)

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TONI MORRISON: *Beloved*

9 Either (a) 'Freedom means different things to different people in the novel.'

Discuss some of the ways Morrison presents attitudes to freedom in the light of this comment.

Or (b) Analyse the effects of the writing in the following passage, considering in what ways it is characteristic of Morrison's presentation of Sethe here and elsewhere in the novel.

Beloved, she my daughter.

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Funny how you lose sight of some things and memory others.

(*from* Part 2)

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GABRIEL OKARA: Selected Poems from *Collected Poems*

10 Either (a) Discuss the presentation and significance of dreams in Okara's poetry. In your answer you should refer to **three** poems from the selection.

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

Piano and Drums

When at break of day at a riverside

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of jungle drums and the concerto.

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JEAN RHYS: *Wide Sargasso Sea*

11 Either **(a)** In what ways and with what effects does Rhys explore the lasting impacts of slavery in the novel?

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to language, tone and narrative point of view, discuss the following passage, considering its significance to the novel as a whole.

The road climbed upward.

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‘And here is Christophine who was my da, my nurse long ago.’

(*from* Part 2)

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NATASHA TRETHEWEY: *Native Guard*

12 Either (a) In what ways and with what effects does Trethewey present the bond between mother and daughter? 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 extract from the sequence *Native Guard*, considering how far it is characteristic of Trethewey's poetic methods and concerns in the collection.

Native Guard

If this war is to be forgotten, I ask in the name of all
things sacred what shall men remember?
– FREDERICK DOUGLASS

November 1862
Truth be told, I do not want to forget

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his story intersecting with my own.

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