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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/22**

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen **February/March 2026**

2 hours

2842285030

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.

KIRAN DESAI: *The Inheritance of Loss*

1 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which Desai presents political concerns in the novel.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which Desai presents the weather in the following passage.

Then, in a flash, it was upon them.

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and the bound volumes of *National Geographic* fell open to pages bruised with flamboyant disease, purple-yellow molds rivaling the bower birds of Papua New Guinea, the residents of New Orleans, and the advertisements – 'It's better in the Bahamas!' – that it showcased.

(*from* Chapter 18)

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from ***Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1***

2 **Either** **(a)** Compare the effects created by one writer's choice of first-person narrator with another writer's choice of third-person narrator. In your answer, you should refer to **two** stories from the selection.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which Evelyn Waugh presents Mr Metcalfe in the following passage from *An Englishman's Home*.

Mr Beverly Metcalfe tapped the barometer in the back hall and noted with satisfaction that it had fallen several points during the night.

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He wanted a home, not a ‘seat’, and he reflected on the irony of that word; he thought of Lord Brakehurst, with whose property he sometimes liked to say that his own ‘marched’ – there was indeed a hundred yards of ha-ha between his paddock and one of Lord Brakehurst’s pastures.

(*from* An Englishman’s Home)

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EVELYN WAUGH: *A Handful of Dust*

3 **Either** **(a)** 'There is an abrupt change of style and tone with the Brazil section of the novel.'

With this comment in mind, discuss ways in which the Brazil section relates to the rest of *A Handful of Dust*.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage, considering ways in which Waugh presents John Andrew's riding lesson.

Ben had got two posts bored for iron pegs, and a whitewashed rail.

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On the way back to the house, he said, 'Can I have my milk in mummy's room?'

(*from* English Gothic – 1, Part 1)

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COLSON WHITEHEAD: *The Underground Railroad*

4 **Either** **(a)** Lumbly tells Cora, 'If you want to see what the nation is all about, ... you have to ride the rails. Look outside as you speed through, and you'll find the true face of America.'

In the light of this comment, discuss some of the ways in which Whitehead presents 'the true face of America'.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on Whitehead's presentation of life in South Carolina in the following passage.

Cora had just finished a splendid meal in her dormitory.

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Despite the comfort brought by their decision to stay, it was a long night for Cora as her thoughts returned to the woman's screams, and the ghosts she called her own.

(*from* South Carolina)

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Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

5 Discuss ways in which the writer presents the exchange between Sir Robert Chiltern and his wife, Lady Gertrude Chiltern, in the following extract.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, dialogue and dramatic methods.

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: [*Biting his lip*] I was mistaken in the view I took. We all may make mistakes.

LADY CHILTERN: But you told me yesterday that you had received the report from the Commission, and that it entirely condemned the whole thing.

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: [*Walking up and down*] I have reasons now to believe that the Commission was prejudiced, or, at any rate, misinformed. Besides, Gertrude, public and private life are different things. They have different laws, and move on different lines.

LADY CHILTERN: They should both represent man at his highest. I see no difference between them.

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: [*Stopping*] In the present case, on a matter of practical politics, I have changed my mind. That is all.

LADY CHILTERN: All!

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: [*Sternly*] Yes!

LADY CHILTERN: Robert! Oh! it is horrible that I should have to ask you such a question – Robert, are you telling me the whole truth?

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: Why do you ask me such a question?

LADY CHILTERN: [*After a pause*] Why do you not answer it?

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: [*Sitting down*] Gertrude, truth is a very complex thing, and politics is a very complex business. There are wheels within wheels. One may be under certain obligations to people that one must pay. Sooner or later in political life one has to compromise. Everyone does.

LADY CHILTERN: Compromise? Robert, why do you talk so differently tonight from the way I have always heard you talk? Why are you changed?

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: I am not changed. But circumstances alter things.

LADY CHILTERN: Circumstances should never alter principles!

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: But if I told you –

LADY CHILTERN: What?

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: That it was necessary, vitally necessary?

LADY CHILTERN: It can never be necessary to do what is not honourable. Or if it be necessary, then what is it

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that I have loved! But it is not, Robert; tell me it is not. Why should it be? What gain would you get? Money? We have no need of that! And money that comes from a tainted source is a degradation. Power? But power is nothing in itself. It is power to do good that is fine – that, and that only. What is it, then? Robert, tell me why you are going to do this dishonourable thing!

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: Gertrude, you have no right to use that word. I told you it was a question of rational compromise. It is no more than that.

LADY CHILTERN: Robert, that is all very well for other men, for men who treat life simply as a sordid speculation; but not for you, Robert, not for you. You are different. All your life you have stood apart from others. You have never let the world soil you. To the world, as to myself, you have been an ideal always. Oh! be that ideal still. That great inheritance throw not away – that tower of ivory do not destroy. Robert, men can love what is beneath them – things unworthy, stained, dishonoured. We women worship when we love; and when we lose our worship, we lose everything. Oh! don't kill my love for you, don't kill that!

SIR ROBERT CHILTERN: Gertrude!

LADY CHILTERN: I know that there are men with horrible secrets in their lives – men who have done some shameful thing, and who in some critical moment have to pay for it, by doing some other act of shame – oh! don't tell me you are such as they are! Robert, is there in your life any secret dishonour or disgrace?

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Or

6 Discuss the presentation of Karungi and her role in the community in the following passage.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, speech and narrative methods.

This type of work, coupled with old traditional wisdom that was passed on from one generation to the next, made Karungi a very well respected woman.

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Would you be happy if you carried such a name around with you for the rest of your life?'

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