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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/12**

Paper 1 Drama and Poetry **May/June 2026**

2 hours

6553384157

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 **16** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Section A: Drama

Answer **one** question from this section.

EDWARD ALBEE: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

1 Either (a) Discuss some of the ways in which Albee makes families significant in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Or (b) Discuss Albee's presentation of George in the following extract from the play. In your answer, you should pay close attention to dramatic methods and their effects.

NICK: [*Looks at* GEORGE *a minute, his expression a little sick*.] You know, I almost think you're serious.

GEORGE: [*Toasting him*] No, baby … *you* almost think you're serious, and it scares the hell out of you.

NICK: [*Exploding in disbelief*] ME!

GEORGE: [*Quietly*] Yes … you.

NICK: You're kidding!

GEORGE: [*Like a father*] I wish I were … I'll give you some good advice if you want me to …

NICK: Good advice! From you? Oh boy! [*Starts to laugh.*]

GEORGE: You haven't learned yet … Take it wherever you can get it … Listen to me, now.

NICK: Come off it!

GEORGE: I'm giving you good advice, now.

NICK: Good God … !

GEORGE: There's quicksand here, and you'll be dragged down, just as …

NICK: Oh boy … !

GEORGE: … before you know it … sucked down …

[NICK *laughs derisively.*]

You disgust me on principle, and you're a smug son of a bitch personally, but I'm trying to give you a survival kit. DO YOU HEAR ME?

NICK: [*Still laughing*] I hear you. You come in loud.

GEORGE: ALL RIGHT!

NICK: Hey, Honey.

GEORGE: [*Silence. Then quietly*] All right … OK. You want to play it by ear, right? Everything's going to work out anyway, because the time-table's history, right?

NICK: Right … right. You just tend to your knitting, grandma … . I'll be OK.

GEORGE: [*After a silence*] I've tried to … tried to reach you … to …

NICK: [*Contemptuously*] … make contact?

GEORGE: Yes.

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NICK: [*Still*] … communicate?

GEORGE: Yes. Exactly.

NICK: Aw … that *is* touching … that is … downright moving … that's what it is. [*With sudden vehemence*] UP YOURS!

GEORGE: [*Brief pause*] Hm?

NICK: [*Threatening*] You heard me!

GEORGE: [*At* NICK*, not to him*] You take the trouble to construct a civilization … to … to build a society, based on the principles of … of principle … you endeavour to make communicable sense out of natural order, morality out of the unnatural disorder of man's mind … you make government and art, and realize that they are, must be, both the same … you bring things to the saddest of all points … to the point where there *is* something to lose … then all at once, through all the music, through all the sensible sounds of men building, attempting, comes the *Dies Irae*. And what is it? What does the trumpet sound? Up yours. I suppose there's justice to it, after all the years … Up yours.

NICK: [*Brief pause … then applauding*] Ha, ha! Bravo! Ha, ha! [*Laughs on.*]

(*from* Act 2 – Walpurgisnacht)

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ERROL JOHN: *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl*

2 **Either** **(a)** Paying close attention to dramatic methods, discuss some of the ways in which John explores desire and its effects in *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl*.

Or **(b)** Discuss some of the ways in which John creates tension in the following extract from the play. In your answer, you should pay close attention to dramatic methods and their effects.

[*It is evening.*

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do is come home.

The least she could

(*from* Act 3, Scene 2)

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *The Tempest*

3 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which Shakespeare presents Miranda through her different relationships.

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to dramatic methods and their effects, analyse Shakespeare's presentation of Alonso (the King of Naples) and his companions in the following extract.

GONZALO: Sir, we were talking that our garments seem now as fresh as when we were at Tunis at the marriage of your daughter, who is now Queen.

ANTONIO: And the rarest that e'er came there.

SEBASTIAN: Bate, I beseech you, widow Dido.

ANTONIO: O, widow Dido! Ay, widow Dido.

GONZALO: Is not, sir, my doublet as fresh as the first day I wore it? I mean, in a sort.

ANTONIO: That 'sort' was well fish'd for.

GONZALO: When I wore it at your daughter's marriage?

ALONSO: You cram these words into mine ears against
The stomach of my sense. Would I had never
Married my daughter there; for, coming thence,
My son is lost; and, in my rate, she too,
Who is so far from Italy removed
I ne'er again shall see her. O thou mine heir
Of Naples and of Milan, what strange fish
Hath made his meal on thee?

FRANCISCO: Sir, he may live;
I saw him beat the surges under him,
And ride upon their backs; he trod the water,
Whose enmity he flung aside, and breasted
The surge most swoln that met him; his bold head
'Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oared
Himself with his good arms in lusty stroke
To th' shore, that o'er his wave-worn basis bowed,
As stooping to relieve him. I not doubt
He came alive to land.

ALONSO: No, no, he's gone.

SEBASTIAN: Sir, you may thank yourself for this great loss,
That would not bless our Europe with your daughter,
But rather lose her to an African;
Where she, at least, is banish'd from your eye,
Who hath cause to wet the grief on't.

ALONSO: Prithee, peace.

SEBASTIAN: You were kneel'd to, and importun'd otherwise
By all of us; and the fair soul herself
Weigh'd between loathness and obedience at
Which end o' th' beam should bow. We have lost your son,
I fear, for ever. Milan and Naples have

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Moe widows in them of this business' making,
Than we bring men to comfort them;
The fault's your own.

ALONSO: So is the dear'st o' th' loss.

GONZALO: My lord Sebastian,
The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness,
And time to speak it in; you rub the sore,
When you should bring the plaster.

SEBASTIAN: Very well.

ANTONIO: And most chirurgeonly.

GONZALO: It is foul weather in us all, good sir,
When you are cloudy.

SEBASTIAN: Fowl weather?

ANTONIO: Very foul.

GONZALO: Had I plantation of this isle, my lord –

ANTONIO: He'd sow 't with nettle-seed.

SEBASTIAN: Or docks, or mallows.

GONZALO: And were the king on't, what would I do?

SEBASTIAN: Scape being drunk for want of wine.

(*from* Act 2, Scene 1)

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JOHN WEBSTER: *The Duchess of Malfi*

4 **Either** **(a)** In what ways and with what dramatic effects does Webster present different kinds of conflict in the play?

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to dramatic methods, discuss Webster's presentation of the relationship between Bosola and Ferdinand in the following extract.

DUCHESS: But, sir, I am to have private conference with you
About a scandalous report is spread
Touching mine honour.

FERDINAND: Let me be ever deaf to't:
One of Pasquil's paper bullets, court-calumny,
A pestilent air which princes' palaces
Are seldom purg'd of. Yet, say that it were true,
I pour it in your bosom, my fixed love
Would strongly excuse, extenuate, nay, deny
Faults, were they apparent in you. Go, be safe
In your own innocency.

DUCHESS: O bless'd comfort!
This deadly air is purg'd.

[*Exeunt all except* FERDINAND.]

FERDINAND: Her guilt treads on
Hot-burning coulters.

[*Enter* BOSOLA.]

Now, Bosola,
How thrives our intelligence?

BOSOLA: Sir, uncertainly.
'Tis rumoured she hath had three bastards, but
By whom, we may go read i'th' stars.

FERDINAND: Why, some
Hold opinion all things are written there.

BOSOLA: Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them.
I do suspect there hath been some sorcery
Used on the Duchess.

FERDINAND: Sorcery, to what purpose?

BOSOLA: To make her dote on some desertless fellow
She shames to acknowledge.

FERDINAND: Can your faith give way
To think there's power in potions, or in charms,
To make us love, whether we will or no?

BOSOLA: Most certainly.

FERDINAND: Away, these are mere gulleries, horrid things
Invented by some cheating mountebanks
To abuse us. Do you think that herbs or charms
Can force the will? Some trials have been made
In this foolish practice; but the ingredients
Were lenitive poisons, such as are of force

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To make the patient mad; and straight the witch
Swears, by equivocation, they are in love.
The witchcraft lies in her rank blood. This night
I will force confession from her. You told me
You had got, within these two days, a false key
Into her bedchamber.

BOSOLA: I have.

FERDINAND: As I would wish.

BOSOLA: What do you intend to do?

FERDINAND: Can you guess?

BOSOLA: No.

FERDINAND: Do not ask then.
He that can compass me, and know my drifts,
May say he hath put a girdle 'bout the world
And sounded all her quicksands.

BOSOLA: I do not
Think so.

FERDINAND: What do you think then, pray?

BOSOLA: That you
Are your own chronicle too much, and grossly
Flatter yourself.

FERDINAND: Give me thy hand; I thank thee.
I never gave pension but to flatterers,
Till I entertained thee. Farewell;
That friend a great man's ruin strongly checks,
Who rails into his belief all his defects.

[*Exeunt*.]

(*from* Act 3, Scene 1)

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Section B: Poetry

Answer **one** question from this section.

MAYA ANGELOU: *And Still I Rise*

5 **Either** **(a)** Compare some of the ways in which Angelou presents the natural world in **two** poems from the selection.

Or **(b)** Analyse Angelou's presentation of attitudes to work in the following poem.

One More Round

There ain't no pay beneath the sun

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And let's heave it down.

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from **WILLIAM BLAKE:** ***Songs of Innocence and of Experience***

6 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which Blake presents social injustice in **two** poems from the selection.

Or **(b)** Paying close attention to poetic methods and effects, discuss Blake's presentation of the situation in the following poem.

A Little Boy Lost

Nought loves another as itself
Nor venerates another so.
Nor is it possible to Thought
A greater than itself to know:

And Father, how can I love you,
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door.

The Priest sat by and heard the child.
In trembling zeal he siez'd his hair:
He led him by his little coat:
And all admir'd the Priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,
Lo what a fiend is here! said he:
One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy Mystery.

The weeping child could not be heard.
The weeping parents wept in vain:
They strip'd him to his little shirt.
And bound him in an iron chain.

And burn'd him in a holy place,
Where many had been burn'd before:
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albions shore.

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from **SYLVIA PLATH:** ***Ariel***

7 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the effects created by Plath's choice of settings. In your answer, you should refer to **two** poems from the selection.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on some of the ways in which Plath presents the journey in the following extract from *Getting There*. In your answer, you should pay careful attention to poetic methods and effects.

from *Getting There*

How far is it?

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Ready to roll, like a devil's.

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from ***Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2***

8 **Either** **(a)** In what ways and with what effects do **two** poems from the selection explore journeys?

Or **(b)** Discuss the writing and effects in the following extract from *Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold*, analysing ways in which Edward Taylor presents the wasp.

from *Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold*

The Bear that breathes the Northern blast
Did numb, Torpedo like, a Wasp
Whose stiffend limbs encrampt, lay bathing
In Sol's warm breath and shine as saving,
Which with her hands she chafes and stands
Rubbing her Legs, Shanks, Thighs, and hands.
Her petty toes, and fingers' ends
Nipt with this breath, she out extends
Unto the Sun, in greate desire
To warm her digits at that fire.
Doth hold her Temples in this state
Where pulse doth beate, and head doth ake.
Doth turn, and stretch her body small,
Doth Comb her velvet Capitall.
As if her little brain pan were
A Volume of Choice precepts cleare.
As if her sattin jacket hot
Contained Apothecaries Shop
Of Natures recepts, that prevails
To remedy all her sad ailes,
As if her velvet helmet high
Did turret rationality.
She fans her wing up to the Winde
As if her Pettycoate were lin'de,
With reasons fleece, and hoises sails
And hu'ming flies in thankfull gails
Unto her dun Curld palace Hall
Her warm thanks offering for all.

(Edward Taylor)

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