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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **0475/42**

Paper 4 Unseen **May/June 2024**

1 hour 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

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INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question: **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 25.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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You are advised to spend about 20 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer.

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Either

1 Read carefully the poem below. The poet thinks back to the night when he and his partner first kissed.

How does the poet memorably describe this moment?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how he describes the scene that night
- how the writing conveys his and his partner's feelings
- how he uses the idea of chance in the poem.

Just By Chance

This is the place we have been coming to since,
this is the hour, and yet just by chance

that the stars were out that first night, and their light, just by chance,
glittering on the Shannon's[1] lurching surface,

a near-full moon suspended over the centre of Thomond Bridge
just by chance of where we were stood on the quay.

And just by chance it was the most brittle silence
with which we had no words to shatter

did I think to remove my coat and place it over your shoulders,
brushed your neck with my fingers just by chance of how they shook.

Then, surely, it was just by chance of the way of the tide
that a pair of swans came floating out from the bridge's far side

towards us, and so I learned that swans mate for life
just by chance you'd read it somewhere once, but couldn't remember where.

As though just by chance you said that did it occur to me then
I may never have a better opportunity

to kiss you than there and then, that average Wednesday
Limerick[2] was the most romantic place ever and just by chance.

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And so gently turning you round to face me,
just by chance of the arbitrary direction of a convenient wind

your russet[3] hair all blown back and so, just by chance,
the whole of your beautiful face staring back at me,

we kissed our first kiss in that unlikeliest of ways
sometimes things happen so perfectly and yet just by chance.

[1]*the Shannon*: a river

[2]*Limerick*: a town

[3]*russet*: reddish-brown

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Or

2 Read carefully the following extract from a novel set in sixteenth-century England. The country has been hit by an epidemic of bubonic plague, a fatal illness. Buboes are swellings which are a sign of bubonic plague. Hamnet, an eleven-year-old boy, is worried about his twin sister, Judith, who has suddenly fallen ill. No one else is at home so he has left to look for help. He arrives at the house of the local physician or doctor.

How does the writer memorably convey the urgency of the situation for Hamnet?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how she conveys Hamnet's emotions when he arrives at the physician's house
- how she portrays the woman and her responses to Hamnet
- how the writing conveys Hamnet's thoughts and feelings as he goes home.

Hamnet arrives at the house of the physician – he has asked directions from the woman with the baby – and he bangs on the door. He registers, momentarily, the shape of his fingers, his nails, and looking at them brings Judith's to mind; he bangs harder. He thuds, he thunders, he shouts.

The door is swung open and the narrow, vexed[1] face of a woman appears around it. 'Whatever are you doing?' she cries, shaking a cloth at him, as if to waft him away, like an insect. 'That's a racket[2] loud enough to wake the dead. Be off with you.'

She goes to shut the door but Hamnet leaps forward. 'No,' he says. 'Please. I'm sorry, madam. I need the physician. We need him. My sister – she is unwell. Can he come to us? Can he come now?'

The woman holds the door firm in her reddened hand but looks at Hamnet with care, with attention, as if reading the seriousness of the problem in his features. 'He's not here,' she says eventually. 'He's with a patient.'

Hamnet has to swallow, hard. 'When will he be back, if you please?'

The pressure on the door is lessening. He steps one foot into the house, leaving the other behind him.

'I couldn't say.' She looks him up and down, at the encroaching foot in her hallway. 'What ails your sister?'

'I don't know.' He tries to think back to Judith, the way she looked as she lay on the blankets, her eyes closed, her skin flushed and yet pale. 'She has a fever. She has taken to her bed.'

The woman frowns. 'A fever? Has she buboes?'

'Buboes?'

'Lumps. Under the skin. On her neck, under her arms.'

Hamnet stares at her, at the small pleat of skin between her brows, at the rim of her cap, how it has rubbed a raw patch beside her ear, at the wiry coils of hair escaping at the back. He thinks of the word 'buboes', its vaguely vegetal overtones, how its bulging sound mimics the thing it describes. A cold fear rinses down through his chest, encasing his heart in an instant, crackling frost.

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The woman's frown deepens. She places her hand in the centre of Hamnet's chest and propels him back, out of her house.

'Go,' she says, her face pinched. 'Go home. Now. Leave.' She goes to close the door but then, through the narrowest crack, says, not unkindly, 'I will ask the physician to call. I know who you are. You're the glover's boy, aren't you? The grandson. From Henley Street. I will ask him to come by your house, when he returns. Go now. Don't stop on the way back.' As an afterthought, she adds, 'God speed to you.'

He runs back. The world seems more glaring, the people louder, the streets longer, the colour of the sky an invasive, glancing blue. The horse still stands at its cart; the dog is now curled up on a doorstep. Buboes, he thinks again. He has heard the word before. He knows what it means, what it denotes.

Surely not, he is thinking, as he turns into his street. It cannot be. It cannot. That – he will not name it, he will not allow the word to form, even inside his head – hasn't been known in this town for years.

Someone will be home, he knows, by the time he gets to the front door. By the time he opens it. By the time he crosses the threshold. By the time he calls out, to someone, anyone. There will be an answer. Someone will be there.

[1]*vexed*: annoyed

[2]*racket*: loud noise

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