



LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

8811/01

Paper 1 Reading Literature

3 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

Set texts may be taken into the examination room. They may bear underlining or highlighting. Any kind of folding or flagging of pages in text (e.g. use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, class and question number on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.
Write your answer to each question on a fresh sheet of paper.
Do not use paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid on your work.

Answer **three** questions, one from each of Sections A, B and C.
You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

At the end of the examination, fasten each of your answers **securely together**.
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

Section A

1

- Either (a)** Write a critical commentary on the following poem, considering in detail ways in which your response is shaped by the poet's use of language, style and form.

WARNING TO CHILDREN

Children, if you dare to think
 Of the greatness, rareness, muchness
 Fewness of this precious only
 Endless world in which you say
 You live, you think of things like this: 5
 Blocks of slate enclosing dappled
 Red and green, enclosing tawny
 Yellow nets, enclosing white
 And black acres of dominoes,
 Where a neat brown paper parcel 10
 Tempts you to untie the string.
 In the parcel a small island,
 On the island a large tree,
 On the tree a husky fruit.
 Strip the husk and pare the rind off: 15
 In the kernel you will see
 Blocks of slate enclosed by dappled
 Red and green, enclosed by tawny
 Yellow nets, enclosed by white
 And black acres of dominoes, 20
 Where the same brown paper parcel -
 Children, leave the string alone!
 For who dares undo the parcel
 Finds himself at once inside it,
 On the island, in the fruit, 25
 Blocks of slate about his head,
 Finds himself enclosed by dappled
 Green and red, enclosed by yellow
 Tawny nets, enclosed by black
 And white acres of dominoes, 30
 With the same brown paper parcel
 Still untied upon his knee.
 And, if he then should dare to think
 Of the fewness, muchness, rareness,
 Greatness of this endless only 35
 Precious world in which he says
 he lives - he then unties the string.

Robert Graves (1895 - 1985)

- Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following poem, considering in detail ways in which your response is shaped by the poet's use of language, style and form.

8

If someone had said you passed away
 this evening at 8, when my watch was still
 an hour behind, on a few minutes to seven,
 I'd be round for rituals with your loved ones.
 We'd sip the last of your lemon tea, taking 5
 turns to embrace you with private words.
 Some would simply freeze you
 with that wholly unsayable look of love.

In the quickening, we'd fold away your clothes,
 close the curtains over the awful pouring 10
 light, but couldn't do a thing for the beep
 & brake of cars, the low hums of a fast
 travelling bus as we'd help you to the awkward
 angle on your bed, how you'd be found,
 then we'd hold back for the awful way you'd rise 15
 to the almighty challenge of your punctual

heart-stop.

Making our journeys home
 we were back in time
 strangely prepared 20
 when someone said
 you passed away
 this evening at 8.

Daljit Nagra (born 1966)

Section B

EDITH WHARTON: *The Age of Innocence*

2

Either (a) 'The novel presents a society obsessed with keeping up appearances.'

How far do you agree with this comment?

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the significance of literature here and elsewhere in the novel.

Thus, with a painful impartiality, did the young man make out the case for Beaufort, and for Beaufort's victim. A longing to enlighten her was strong in him; and there were moments when he imagined that all she asked was to be enlightened.

That evening he unpacked his books from London. The box was full of things he had been waiting for impatiently; a new volume of Herbert Spencer, another collection of the prolific Alphonse Daudet's brilliant tales, and a novel called 'Middlemarch,' as to which there had lately been interesting things said in the reviews. He had declined three dinner invitations in favour of this feast; but though he turned the pages with the sensuous joy of the book-lover, he did not know what he was reading, and one book after another dropped from his hand. Suddenly, among them, he lit on a small volume of verse which he had ordered because the name had attracted him: 'The House of Life.' He took it up, and found himself plunged in an atmosphere unlike any he had ever breathed in books; so warm, so rich, and yet so ineffably tender, that it gave a new and haunting beauty to the most elementary of human passions. All through the night he pursued through those enchanted pages the vision of a woman who had the face of Ellen Olenska; but when he woke the next morning, and looked out at the brownstone houses across the street, and thought of his desk in Mr. Letterblair's office, and the family pew in Grace Church, his hour in the park of Skuytercliff became as far outside the pale of probability as the visions of the night.

'Mercy, how pale you look, Newland!' Janey commented over the coffee-cups at breakfast; and his mother added: 'Newland, dear, I've noticed lately that you've been coughing; I do hope you're not letting yourself be overworked?' For it was the conviction of both ladies that, under the iron despotism of his senior partners, the young man's life was spent in the most exhausting professional labours—and he had never thought it necessary to undeceive them.

The next two or three days dragged by heavily. The taste of the usual was like cinders in his mouth, and there were moments when he felt as if he were being buried alive under his future. He heard nothing of the Countess Olenska, or of the perfect little house, and though he met Beaufort at the club they merely nodded at each other across the whist-tables. It was not till the fourth evening that he found a note awaiting him on his return home. 'Come late tomorrow: I must explain to you. Ellen.' These were the only words it contained.

The young man, who was dining out, thrust the note into his pocket, smiling a little at the Frenchness of the 'to you.' After dinner he went to a play; and it was not until his return home, after midnight, that he drew Madame Olenska's missive out again and re-read it slowly a number of times. There were several ways of answering it, and he gave considerable thought to each one during the watches of an agitated night. That on which, when morning came, he finally decided was to pitch some clothes into a portmanteau and jump on board a boat that was leaving that very afternoon for St. Augustine.

Section C

ARTHUR MILLER: *All My Sons*

9

Either (a) 'Idealism is an overpowering force in *All My Sons*.'

How far would you agree with this comment?

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the presentation of Joe Keller here and elsewhere in the play.

- Chris:* (to Ann) You ever meet a bigger ignoramus?
- Keller:* Well, somebody's got to make a living.
- Ann:* (as they laugh) That's telling him.
- Keller:* I don't know, everybody's gettin' so goddam educated in this country there'll be nobody to take away the garbage. (They laugh.) 5
It's gettin' so the only dumb ones left are the bosses.
- Ann:* You're not so dumb, Joe.
- Keller:* I know, but you go into our plant, for instance. I got so many lieutenants, majors and colonels that I'm ashamed to ask somebody to sweep the floor. I gotta be careful I'll insult somebody. 10
No kiddin'. It's a tragedy: you stand on the street today and spit, you're gonna hit a college man.
- Chris:* Well, don't spit.
- Keller:* (breaks the apple in half, passing it to Ann and Chris) I mean to say, it's comin' to a pass. (He takes a breath.) I been thinkin', 15
Annie... your brother, George. I been thinkin' about your brother George. When he comes I like you to brooch something to him.
- Chris:* Broach.
- Keller:* What's the matter with brooch?
- Chris:* (smiling) It's not English. 20
- Keller:* When I went to night school it was brooch.
- Ann:* (laughing) Well, in day school it's broach.
- Keller:* Don't surround me, will you? Seriously, Ann... You say he's not well. George, I been thinkin', why should he knock himself out in 25
New York with that cut-throat competition, when I got so many friends here... I'm very friendly with some big lawyers in town. I could set George up here.
- Ann:* That's awfully nice of you, Joe.
- Keller:* No, kid, it ain't nice of me. I want you to understand me. I'm thinking of Chris. (Slight panic.) See... this is what I mean. You get older, 30
you want to feel that you – accomplished something. My only accomplishment is my son. I ain't brainy. That's all I accomplished. Now, a year, eighteen months, your father'll be a free man. Who is he going to come to, Annie? His baby. You. He'll come, old, mad, into your house. 35
- Ann:* That can't matter any more, Joe.
- Keller:* I don't want that to come between us. (Gestures between Chris and himself.)
- Ann:* I can only tell you that that could never happen.
- Keller:* You're in love now, Annie, but believe me, I'm older than you and I know – a daughter is a daughter, and a father is a father. And it 40
could happen. (He pauses.) I like you and George to go to him in prison and tell him... 'Dad, Joe wants to bring you into the business when you get out.'
- Ann:* (surprised, even shocked) You'd have him as a partner? 45

- Keller:* No, no partner. A good job. *(Pause. He sees she is shocked, a little mystified. He gets up, speaks more nervously.)* I want him to know that when he gets out he's got a place waitin' for him. It'll take his bitterness away. To know you got a place... it sweetens you.
- Ann:* Joe, you owe him nothing. 50
- Keller:* I owe him a good kick in the teeth, but he's your father.
- Chris:* Then kick him in the teeth! I don't want him in the plant, so that's that! You understand? And besides, don't talk about him like that. People misunderstand you!
- Keller:* And I don't understand why she has to crucify the man. 55
- Chris:* Well, it's her father if she feels –
- Keller:* No, no.
- Chris:* *(almost angrily)* What's it to you? Why – ?
- Keller:* *(commanding outburst in high nervousness)* A father is a father! *(As though the outburst had revealed him, he looks about, wanting to retract it. His hand goes to his cheek.)* I better – I better shave. *(He turns and a smile is on his face, to Ann.)* I didn't mean to yell at you, Annie. 60
- Ann:* Let's forget the whole thing, Joe.
- Keller:* Right. *(To Chris.)* She's likeable. 65
- Chris:* *(a little peeved at the man's stupidity)* Shave, will you?
- Keller:* Right again.

Act Two

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