

Victorian Certificate of Education 2015

LITERATURE

Written examination

Friday 6 November 2015

Reading time: 11.45 am to 12.00 noon (15 minutes)

Writing time: 12.00 noon to 2.00 pm (2 hours)

TASK BOOK

Structure of book

<i>Task</i>	<i>Marks</i>
1	20
2	20
Total	40

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper, correction fluid/tape and dictionaries.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

Materials supplied

- Task book of 64 pages, including the **Assessment criteria** and a checklist on page 64.
- One or more answer books. All answer books contain unruled (rough work only) pages for making notes, plans and drafts if you wish.

The task

- You are required to complete **two** pieces of writing based on **two texts** selected from the list on pages 2 and 3 of this task book.
- Each text must be chosen from **a different section**.
- Each piece of writing is worth half of the total assessment for the examination.

Instructions

- Write your **student number** in the space provided on the front cover(s) of the answer book(s).
- In your answer book(s), clearly indicate the **text numbers** of your selected texts.
- All written responses must be in English.

At the end of the examination

- Place all other used answer books inside the front cover of one of the used answer books.
- You may keep this task book.

Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

Instructions

Write using black or blue pen.

You are required to complete two pieces of writing based on **two texts** selected from the list on pages 2 and 3.

The list is divided into five sections.

The texts you select must be chosen from different sections. **You must not write on two texts from the same section.** If you answer on two texts from the same section, one of the pieces will be awarded zero marks.

1. Find the texts on which you wish to write.
2. Three passages have been set for every text.
3. The passages are printed in the order in which they appear in the texts.
4. For each of your selected texts, you must use one or more of the passages as the basis for a discussion of that text.
5. In your pieces of writing, refer in detail to the passage or passages and the texts. You may include minor references to other texts.

In your answer book(s), clearly indicate the **text numbers** of your selected texts.

Table of contents

Section A – Novels

Text number			Page
1	Jane Austen	<i>Persuasion</i>	4–5
2	Charlotte Brontë	<i>Jane Eyre</i>	6–7
3	John Fowles	<i>The French Lieutenant's Woman</i>	8–9
4	Miles Franklin	<i>My Brilliant Career</i>	10–11
5	Gabriel García Márquez	<i>Love in the Time of Cholera</i>	12–13
6	Cormac McCarthy	<i>All the Pretty Horses</i>	14–15
7	Michael Ondaatje	<i>The Cat's Table</i>	16–17
8	Kim Scott	<i>That Deadman Dance</i>	18–19
9	Virginia Woolf	<i>Mrs Dalloway</i>	20–21

Section B – Plays

Text number			
10	Aeschylus	<i>Agamemnon</i>	22–23
11	Edward Albee	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>	24–25
12	Henrik Ibsen	<i>A Doll's House</i>	26–27
13	Eugène Ionesco	<i>Rhinoceros</i>	28–29
14	William Shakespeare	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	30–31
15	William Shakespeare	<i>Coriolanus</i>	32–33
16	George Bernard Shaw	<i>Pygmalion</i>	34–35
17	Tom Stoppard	<i>Arcadia</i>	36–37

Section C – Short stories

Text number			Page
18	Peter Carey	<i>Collected Stories</i>	38–39
19	Cate Kennedy	<i>Dark Roots</i>	40–41
20	Annie Proulx	<i>Close Range: Brokeback Mountain and Other Stories</i>	42–43

Section D – Other literature

Text number			
21	Julian Barnes	<i>A History of the World in 10½ Chapters</i>	44–45
22	Truman Capote	<i>In Cold Blood</i>	46–47
23	George Orwell	<i>Down and Out in Paris and London</i>	48–49
24	WEH Stanner	<i>The Dreaming & Other Essays</i>	50–51

Section E – Poetry

Text number			
25	Rosemary Dobson	<i>Collected</i>	52–53
26	TS Eliot	<i>Collected Poems 1909–1962</i>	54–55
27	Seamus Heaney	<i>Opened Ground: Poems 1966–1996</i>	56–57
28	Adrienne Rich	<i>The Fact of a Doorframe: Selected Poems 1950–2001</i>	58–59
29	Christina Rossetti	<i>Selected Poems</i>	60–61
30	Wisława Szymborska	<i>Sounds, Feelings, Thoughts: Seventy Poems by Wisława Szymborska</i>	62–63

Assessment criteria	64
A checklist for planning and revising	64

Note

All passages in this examination are reproduced as they appear in the nominated version of the text.

Section A – Novels

1 Jane Austen: *Persuasion*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Persuasion*.

1.

The evening ended with dancing. On its being proposed, Anne offered her services, as usual, and though her eyes would sometimes fill with tears as she sat at the instrument, she was extremely glad to be employed, and desired nothing in return but to be unobserved.

It was a merry, joyous party, and no one seemed in higher spirits than Captain Wentworth. She felt that he had every thing to elevate him, which general attention and deference, and especially the attention of all the young women could do. The Miss Hayters, the females of the family of cousins already mentioned, were apparently admitted to the honour of being in love with him; and as for Henrietta and Louisa, they both seemed so entirely occupied by him, that nothing but the continued appearance of the most perfect good-will between themselves, could have made it credible that they were not decided rivals. If he were a little spoiled by such universal, such eager admiration, who could wonder?

These were some of the thoughts which occupied Anne, while her fingers were mechanically at work, proceeding for half an hour together, equally without error, and without consciousness. *Once* she felt that he was looking at herself—observing her altered features, perhaps, trying to trace in them the ruins of the face which had once charmed him; and *once* she knew that he must have spoken of her;—she was hardly aware of it, till she heard the answer; but then she was sure of his having asked his partner whether Miss Elliot never danced? The answer was, “Oh! no, never; she has quite given up dancing. She had rather play. She is never tired of playing.” Once, too, he spoke to her. She had left the instrument on the dancing being over, and he had sat down to try to make out an air which he wished to give the Miss Musgroves an idea of. Unintentionally she returned to that part of the room; he saw her, and, instantly rising, said, with studied politeness,

“I beg your pardon, madam, this is your seat;” and though she immediately drew back with a decided negative, he was not to be induced to sit down again.

Anne did not wish for more of such looks and speeches. His cold politeness, his ceremonious grace, were worse than any thing.

* * *

2.

And with a quivering lip he wound up the whole by adding, “Poor Fanny! she would not have forgotten him so soon!”

“No,” replied Anne, in a low feeling voice. “That, I can easily believe.”

“It was not in her nature. She doated on him.”

“It would not be the nature of any woman who truly loved.”

Captain Harville smiled, as much as to say, “Do you claim that for your sex?” and she answered the question, smiling also, “Yes. We certainly do not forget you, so soon as you forget us. It is, perhaps, our fate rather than our merit. We cannot help ourselves. We live at home, quiet, confined, and our feelings prey upon us. You are forced on exertion. You have always a profession, pursuits, business of some sort or other, to take you back into the world immediately, and continual occupation and change soon weaken impressions.”

“Granting your assertion that the world does all this so soon for men, (which, however, I do not think I shall grant) it does not apply to Benwick. He has not been forced upon any exertion. The peace turned him on shore at the very moment, and he has been living with us, in our little family-circle, ever since.”

“True,” said Anne, “very true; I did not recollect; but what shall we say now, Captain Harville? If the change be not from outward circumstances, it must be from within; it must be nature, man’s nature, which has done the business for Captain Benwick.”

“No, no, it is not man’s nature. I will not allow it to be more man’s nature than woman’s to be inconstant and forget those they do love, or have loved. I believe the reverse. I believe in a true analogy between our bodily frames and our mental; and that as our bodies are the strongest, so are our feelings; capable of bearing most rough usage, and riding out the heaviest weather.”

“Your feelings may be the strongest,” replied Anne, “but the same spirit of analogy will authorise me to assert that ours are the most tender. Man is more robust than woman, but he is not longer-lived; which exactly explains my view of the nature of their attachments. Nay, it would be too hard upon you, if it were otherwise. You have difficulties, and privations, and dangers enough to struggle with. You are always labouring and toiling, exposed to every risk and hardship. Your home, country, friends, all quitted. Neither time, nor health, nor life, to be called your own. It would be too hard indeed” (with a faltering voice) “if woman’s feelings were to be added to all this.”

“We shall never agree upon this question”—Captain Harville was beginning to say, when a slight noise called their attention to Captain Wentworth’s hitherto perfectly quiet division of the room.

* * *

Section A – Novels

1 Jane Austen: *Persuasion*

3.

They might in fact have borne down a great deal more than they met with, for there was little to distress them beyond the want of graciousness and warmth.—Sir Walter made no objection, and Elizabeth did nothing worse than look cold and unconcerned. Captain Wentworth, with five-and-twenty thousand pounds, and as high in his profession as merit and activity could place him, was no longer nobody. He was now esteemed quite worthy to address the daughter of a foolish, spendthrift baronet, who had not had principle or sense enough to maintain himself in the situation in which Providence had placed him, and who could give his daughter at present but a small part of the share of ten thousand pounds which must be hers hereafter.

Sir Walter indeed, though he had no affection for Anne, and no vanity flattered, to make him really happy on the occasion, was very far from thinking it a bad match for her. On the contrary, when he saw more of Captain Wentworth, saw him repeatedly by daylight and eyed him well, he was very much struck by his personal claims, and felt that his superiority of appearance might be not unfairly balanced against her superiority of rank; and all this, assisted by his well-sounding name, enabled Sir Walter at last to prepare his pen with a very good grace for the insertion of the marriage in the volume of honour.

The only one among them, whose opposition of feeling could excite any serious anxiety, was Lady Russell. Anne knew that Lady Russell must be suffering some pain in understanding and relinquishing Mr. Elliot, and be making some struggles to become truly acquainted with, and do justice to Captain Wentworth. This however was what Lady Russell had now to do. She must learn to feel that she had been mistaken with regard to both; that she had been unfairly influenced by appearances in each; that because Captain Wentworth's manners had not suited her own ideas, she had been too quick in suspecting them to indicate a character of dangerous impetuosity; and that because Mr. Elliot's manners had precisely pleased her in their propriety and correctness, their general politeness and suavity, she had been too quick in receiving them as the certain result of the most correct opinions and well regulated mind. There was nothing less for Lady Russell to do, than to admit that she had been pretty completely wrong, and to take up a new set of opinions and of hopes.

* * *

Section A – Novels

2 Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Jane Eyre*.

1.

I was a discord in Gateshead Hall; I was like nobody there; I had nothing in harmony with Mrs Reed or her children, or her chosen vassalage. If they did not love me, in fact, as little did I love them. They were not bound to regard with affection a thing that could not sympathise with one amongst them; a heterogeneous thing, opposed to them in temperament, in capacity, in propensities; a useless thing, incapable of serving their interest, or adding to their pleasure; a noxious thing, cherishing the germs of indignation at their treatment, of contempt of their judgment. I know that had I been a sanguine, brilliant, careless, exacting, handsome, romping child – though equally dependent and friendless – Mrs Reed would have endured my presence more complacently; her children would have entertained for me more of the cordiality of fellow-feeling; the servants would have been less prone to make me the scapegoat of the nursery.

Daylight began to forsake the red-room; it was past four o'clock, and the beclouded afternoon was tending to drear twilight. I heard the rain still beating continuously on the staircase window, and the wind howling in the grove behind the hall; I grew by degrees cold as a stone, and then my courage sank. My habitual mood of humiliation, self-doubt, forlorn depression, fell damp on the embers of my decaying ire. All said I was wicked, and perhaps I might be so: what thought had I been but just conceiving of starving myself to death? That certainly was a crime: and was I fit to die? Or was the vault under the chancel of Gateshead Church an inviting bourne? In such vault I had been told did Mr Reed lie buried; and led by this thought to recall his idea, I dwelt on it with gathering dread. I could not remember him; but I knew that he was my own uncle – my mother's brother – that he had taken me when a parentless infant to his house; and that in his last moments he had required a promise of Mrs Reed that she would rear and maintain me as one of her own children. Mrs Reed probably considered she had kept this promise; and so she had, I daresay, as well as her nature would permit her: but how could she really like an interloper, not of her race, and unconnected with her, after her husband's death, by any tie? It must have been most irksome to find herself bound by a hard-wrung pledge to stand in the stead of a parent to a strange child she could not love, and to see an uncongenial alien permanently intruded on her own family group.

* * *

2.

Arraigned at my own bar, Memory having given her evidence of the hopes, wishes, sentiments I had been cherishing since last night – of the general state of mind in which I had indulged for nearly a fortnight past; Reason having come forward and told, in her own quiet way, a plain, unvarnished tale, showing how I had rejected the real, and rabidly devoured the ideal; – I pronounced judgment to this effect: –

That a greater fool than Jane Eyre had never breathed the breath of life: that a more fantastic idiot had never surfeited herself on sweet lies, and swallowed poison as if it were nectar.

'You,' I said, 'a favourite with Mr Rochester? You gifted with the power of pleasing him? You of importance to him in any way? Go! your folly sickens me. And you have derived pleasure from occasional tokens of preference – equivocal tokens shown by a gentleman of family and a man of the world to a dependent and a novice. How dared you? Poor stupid dupe! – Could not even self-interest make you wiser? You repeated to yourself this morning the brief scene of last night? – Cover your face and be ashamed! He said something in praise of your eyes, did he? Blind puppy! Open their bleared lids and look on your own accursed senselessness! It does good to no woman to be flattered by her superior, who cannot possibly intend to marry her; and it is madness in all women to let a secret love kindle within them, which, if unreturned and unknown, must devour the life that feeds it; and, if discovered and responded to, must lead, *ignis-fatuus*-like, into miry wilds whence there is no extrication.

'Listen, then, Jane Eyre, to your sentence: to-morrow, place the glass before you, and draw in chalk your own picture, faithfully, without softening one defect; omit no harsh line, smooth away no displeasing irregularity; write under it, "Portrait of a Governess, disconnected, poor, and plain."

'Afterwards, take a piece of smooth ivory – you have one prepared in your drawing-box: take your palette, mix your freshest, finest, clearest tints; choose your most delicate camel-hair pencils; delineate carefully the loveliest face you can imagine; paint it in your softest shades and sweetest hues, according to the description given by Mrs Fairfax of Blanche Ingram: remember the raven ringlets, the oriental eye; – What! you revert to Mr Rochester as a model! Order! No snivel! – no sentiment! – no regret! I will endure only sense and resolution. Recall the august yet harmonious lineaments, the Grecian neck and bust; let the round and dazzling arm be visible, and the delicate hand; omit neither diamond ring nor gold bracelet; portray faithfully the attire, aerial lace and glistening satin, graceful scarf and golden rose: call it, "Blanche, an accomplished lady of rank."

'Whenever, in future, you should chance to fancy Mr Rochester thinks well of you, take out these two pictures and compare them: say, "Mr Rochester might probably win that noble lady's love, if he chose to strive for it; is it likely he would waste a serious thought on this indigent and insignificant plebeian?"'

* * *

Section A – Novels

2 Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre*

3.

‘I was in my own room, and sitting by the window, which was open: it soothed me to feel the balmy night-air; though I could see no stars, and only by a vague, luminous haze, knew the presence of a moon. I longed for thee, Janet! Oh, I longed for thee both with soul and flesh! I asked of God, at once in anguish and humility, if I had not been long enough desolate, afflicted, tormented; and might not soon taste bliss and peace once more. That I merited all I endured, I acknowledged – that I could scarcely endure more, I pleaded; and the alpha and omega of my heart’s wishes broke involuntarily from my lips in the words, “Jane! Jane! Jane!”’

‘Did you speak these words aloud?’

‘I did, Jane. If any listener had heard me, he would have thought me mad, I pronounced them with such frantic energy.’

‘And it was last Monday night, somewhere near midnight?’

‘Yes; but the time is of no consequence: what followed is the strange point. You will think me superstitious – some superstition I have in my blood, and always had: nevertheless, this is true – true at least it is that I heard what I now relate.

‘As I exclaimed “Jane! Jane! Jane!” a voice – I cannot tell whence the voice came, but I know whose voice it was – replied, “I am coming: wait for me;” and a moment after, went whispering on the wind the words, “Where are you?”’

‘I’ll tell you, if I can, the idea, the picture these words opened to my mind: yet it is difficult to express what I want to express. Ferndean is buried, as you see, in a heavy wood, where sound falls dull, and dies unreverberating. “Where are you?” seemed spoken amongst mountains; for I heard a hill-sent echo repeat the words. Cooler and fresher at the moment the gale seemed to visit my brow: I could have deemed that in some wild, lone scene, I and Jane were meeting. In spirit, I believe, we must have met. You no doubt were, at that hour, in unconscious sleep, Jane: perhaps your soul wandered from its cell to comfort mine; for those were your accents, as certain as I live, they were yours!’

* * *

Section A – Novels

3 John Fowles: *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.

1.

Exactly how the ill-named Mrs Fairley ... more Grecian, nickname.

John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*,
Vintage Classics, 2005

pp. 20 and 21

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

He glanced again at Sarah ... 'We must never meet alone again.'

John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*,
Vintage Classics, 2005

pp. 186 and 187

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Section A – Novels

3 John Fowles: *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

3.

And at the gate ... he would recognize Arnold's intent.

John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*,
Vintage Classics, 2005
pp. 468 and 469

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Section A – Novels

4 Miles Franklin: *My Brilliant Career*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *My Brilliant Career*.

1.

My father was a swell in those days—held Bruggabrong, Bin Bin East, and Bin Bin West, which three stations totalled close on 200,000 acres. Father was admitted into sweldom merely by right of his position. His pedigree included nothing beyond a grandfather. My mother, however, was a full-fledged aristocrat. She was one of the Bossiers of Caddagat, who numbered among their ancestry one of the depraved old pirates who pillaged England with William the Conqueror.

“Dick” Melvyn was as renowned for hospitality as joviality, and our comfortable, wide-veranda’ed, irregularly built, slab house in its sheltered nook amid the Timlinbilly Ranges was ever full to overflowing. Doctors, lawyers, squatters, commercial travellers, bankers, journalists, tourists, and men of all kinds and classes crowded our well-spread board; but seldom a female face, except mother’s, was to be seen there, Bruggabrong being a very out-of-the-way place.

I was both the terror and the amusement of the station. Old boundary-riders and drovers inquire after me with interest to this day.

I knew everyone’s business, and was ever in danger of publishing it at an inopportune moment.

In flowery language, selected from slang used by the station hands, and long words picked up from our visitors, I propounded unanswerable questions which brought blushes to the cheeks of even tough old wine-bibbers.

Nothing would induce me to show more respect to an appraiser of the runs than to a boundary-rider, or to a clergyman than a drover. I am the same to this day. My organ of veneration must be flatter than a pancake, because to venerate a person simply for his position I never did or will. To me the Prince of Wales will be no more than a shearer, unless when I meet him he displays some personality apart from his princeship—otherwise he can go hang.

* * *

2.

“Go on the stage! A grand-daughter of mine! Lucy’s eldest child! An actress—a vile, low, brazen hussy! Use the gifts God has given her with which to do good in showing off to a crowd of vile bad men! I would rather see her struck dead at my feet this instant! I would rather see her shear off her hair and enter a convent this very hour. Child, promise you will never be a bold bad actress.”

“I will never be a *bold bad* actress, grannie,” I said, putting great stress on the adjectives, and bringing out the actress very faintly.

“Yes,” she continued, calming down, “I’m sure you have not enough bad in you. You may be boisterous, and not behave with sufficient propriety sometimes, but I don’t think you are wicked enough to ever make an actress.”

Everard attempted to defend his case.

“Look here, gran, that’s a very exploded old notion about the stage being a low profession. It might have been once, but it is quite the reverse nowadays. There are, of course, low people on the stage, as there are in all walks of life. I grant you that; but if people are good they can be good on the stage as well as anywhere else. On account of a little prejudice it would be a sin to rob Sybylla of the brilliant career she might have.”

“Career!” exclaimed his foster-mother, catching at the word. “Career! That is all girls think of now, instead of being good wives and mothers and attending to their homes and doing what God intended. All they think of is gadding about and being fast, and ruining themselves body and soul. And the men are as bad to encourage them,” looking severely at Everard.

“There is a great deal of truth in what you say, gran, I admit. You can apply it to many of our girls, I am sorry to confess, but Sybylla could not be brought under that classification. You must look at her in a different way. If—”

* * *

Section A – Novels

4 Miles Franklin: *My Brilliant Career*

3.

Ah, thou cruel fiend—Ambition! Desire!

*Soul of the leaping flame,
Heart of the scarlet fire,
Spirit that hath for name
Only the name—Desire!*

To hot young hearts beating passionately in strong breasts, the sweetest thing is motion.

No, that part of me went beyond my mother's understanding. On the other hand, there was a part of my mother—her brave cheerfulness, her trust in God, her heroic struggle to keep the home together—which went soaring on beyond my understanding, leaving me a coward weakling, grovelling in the dust.

Would that hot dreary day never close? What advantage when it did? The next and the next and many weeks of others just the same were following hard after.

If the souls of lives were voiced in music, there are some that none but a great organ could express, others the clash of a full orchestra, a few to which nought but the refined and exquisite sadness of a violin could do justice. Many might be likened unto common pianos, jangling and out of tune, and some to the feeble piping of a penny whistle, and mine could be told with a couple of nails in a rusty tin-pot.

Why do I write? For what does any one write? Shall I get a hearing? If so—what then?

I have voiced the things around me, the small-minded thoughts, the sodden round of grinding tasks—a monotonous, purposeless, needless existence. But patience, O heart, surely I can make a purpose! For the present, of my family I am the most suited to wait about common public-houses to look after my father when he is inebriated. It breaks my mother's heart to do it; it is dangerous for my brothers; imagine Gertie in such a position! But me it does not injure, I have the faculty for doing that sort of thing without coming to harm, and if it makes me more bitter and godless, well, what matter?

* * *

Section A – Novels

5 Gabriel García Márquez: *Love in the Time of Cholera*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Love in the Time of Cholera*.

1.

In reality, Fermina Daza knew very little about this taciturn suitor ... but the letter was so explicit that there was no way to avoid it.

Gabriel García Márquez, *Love in the Time of Cholera*,
Edith Grossman (trans.), Penguin, 2007

pp. 66 and 67

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2.

Three days later, in Paris ... the awful consciousness that he was also as mortal.

Gabriel García Márquez, *Love in the Time of Cholera*,
Edith Grossman (trans.), Penguin, 2007

pp. 113 and 114

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Section A – Novels

5 Gabriel García Márquez: *Love in the Time of Cholera*

3.

It was a six-page letter ... but the alpha and omega, an end in itself.

Gabriel García Márquez, *Love in the Time of Cholera*,
Edith Grossman (trans.), Penguin, 2007

pp. 292 and 293

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Section A – Novels

6 Cormac McCarthy: *All the Pretty Horses*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *All the Pretty Horses*.

1.

You cant outride a thunderstorm ... Just settin here, he said.

Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*,
Pan Macmillan, 2010

p. 71

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2.

I had no one to advise me ... I am the one who gets to say.

Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*,
Pan Macmillan, 2010

pp. 140 and 141

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Section A – Novels

6 Cormac McCarthy: *All the Pretty Horses*

3.

He lay in the dark thinking ... but there was no place to go anyway.

Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*,
Pan Macmillan, 2010

pp. 210 and 211

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Section A – Novels

7 Michael Ondaatje: *The Cat's Table*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Cat's Table*.

1.

One afternoon he gathered the three of us ... in the darkness of the hold.

Michael Ondaatje, *The Cat's Table*,
Jonathan Cape, 2011

pp. 50 and 51

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

For what I saw in the paintings ... we were saying to all of them. Goodbye.

Michael Ondaatje, *The Cat's Table*,
Jonathan Cape, 2011

pp. 141–143

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Section A – Novels

7 Michael Ondaatje: *The Cat's Table*

3.

Over the years, confusing fragments ... 'Maybe I did.'

Michael Ondaatje, *The Cat's Table*,
Jonathan Cape, 2011
pp. 274 and 275

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Section A – Novels

8 Kim Scott: *That Deadman Dance*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *That Deadman Dance*.

1.

Now the young men appeared from behind some bushes, standing in a line just like in that dance from over the ocean horizon, that Dead Man Dance. It was very quiet, the wind and the waves hushing them all. Wooral and Bobby were in the middle of the line of dancers, and Bobby the youngest.

Then came the singing.

Emu dance first: the men did it together, sat back and took turns, each man with his arm extended, bent at the wrist, and moving like the neck of an emu. No special dances, and not the Dead Man Dance, though many were thinking of that one, hoping this important friend might lead them in something like that. And after the dance where men show their strength, standing on one leg, almost motionless but for the muscles quivering under their skin, Bobby started playing. He did his shipboard dance: the rise and fall. The boys caught on, bobbing like things floating in the water and the wave moving along them; and Bobby took little steps side to side, like on the deck of a ship. The men lay down, and Bobby walked across their moving bodies, like the boat in the harbour going from ship to shore. Walking on the waves, see? And then he was staggering side to side and mimed lifting a bottle to his lips: that dance the sailors do.

The singers tried hard not to laugh, and sometimes took up the rhythm and sound of some other dance, some safe dance, to get everyone back to a less cheeky repertoire. Time and time again they took the dancers back to the test of strength, one man standing motionless with the muscles quivering under his skin while the others stomped the ground, releasing all their strength into it.

Bobby improvised soon as the singers relented, sang for himself until the Elders took it up, and in his dance was rolling side to side, awash on the deck. Then he was walking, plodding—all the young men joined in, a single line behind, doing the journeys Cross took them on, walking walking walking ever outwards and away. They gathered around Bobby like curious spirits as he plucked flowers and feathers, and turned the pages of a book. Faces turned to Cross, and he did look embarrassed, too. And after each improvisation, everyone still laughing at Bobby and his cheek, the singers brought the dancers back, and again it was Bobby everyone looked at, standing on one leg, his muscles quivering and jumping under the skin. Bobby stayed and stayed and never moved from that one spot until the singers finally released him. All that concentrated power, and he just a boy.

* * *

2.

Someone went down with Menak's spear in their thigh and it was like a storm settling, the wind and sea dying down. Menak's touch yet again, his power, see? Blame was not to be found here. The wounded man lay while his family snapped the spear off, casting resentful glances at Menak and the people around him. They dawdled away muttering, not quite enemies, the lame one half-carried, half-leaning on his brothers.

They would be back, and if not them then one of the other families surrounding them here, this womb of their home. And Menak wondered again if it was wise to allow these other strangers to remain so long, these pale horizon people. True, they chose to camp where Menak or anyone else would not—beside the water in the coldest winds and yet where the sun does not reach until late morning. The water is deepest there, too, but a poor place for spearing fish. They had been there a long time, with the air in their huts growing stale, their food old, and shit spilling from the ground around them. These men, from the ocean horizon or wherever it is they come, they do not leave even when the rains come and that wind blows across the water right into their camp. Yet they would have our women, Menak knows that. Perhaps when the whales and cold again return, perhaps they will leave. Or offer a little more.

He had retrieved most of his spears. Their guns would be good. A fine skill, shooting. And only the quickest can dodge powder and ball. These pale horizon people will help us. Thinking aloud, he said as much to little Bobby.

Yes.

* * *

Section A – Novels

8 Kim Scott: *That Deadman Dance*

3.

Several sheep were missing; Skelly counted once more and confirmed the loss. Was this the same thing as at Close-by-island just starting up? He'd had no news from there, nor from King George Town for how long now? Days? A week or more? Chaine would expect to see signs of progress when he eventually arrived.

Skelly stomped around the pen, looking for a hole or some sort of break in the brush fence but there was nothing, and they'd been counted in last night.

He found Bobby patting the dog at the shed where Skelly had rigged up an anvil and workbench. So much for the guard dog, thought Skelly. Maybe he needed to get a dog like that one Killam gave Menak all those years ago, that barked at everything.

Bobby looked up, surprised. Grinned.

I been see some fellas eating your sheeps, Mr Skelly, he said. And I wanna help you and make friends again too many.

Clearly, the black boy's English was reverting to type, probably because he was spending more and more time with his own kind. But yes, of course Skelly wanted to see such evidence. It'd be even better if he could catch them red-handed. He had Bobby wait a moment while he fetched and loaded his rifle.

Gunna shoot them, then?

If need be.

But just one sheep maybe, when you killing all the kangaroos far as people walk.

Skelly didn't answer.

Bobby showed him where the brush fence had been dismantled and then repaired. He pointed out tracks, though Skelly could see nothing. They from far away, this mob, Bobby reckoned. Well, no surprises in that, thought Skelly. He's not going to blame his own family or friends, is he?

Bobby led the way, barely glancing at the ground.

Will they still be there, Bobby? Did you actually see them with the sheep?

No, I just seen the ashes and the eaten-up sheep.

Not too fast, then.

Skelly had his eyes peeled. Was wary of where he was led. It was a convoluted journey, and an area of Chaine's land that he did not know.

You sure you know where you're going, Bobby?

They found the ashes of a fire, but no sign of sheep.

So they ate it up, bones and all!

Sheep here this morning, Bobby said and pointed to the ground. Someone carrying something away on his shoulder.

Well, what good is this? Will we chase nothing all day?

Okay. *Boorda*.

He was gone, quick as that. Damn.

Bobby!

* * *

Section A – Novels

9 Virginia Woolf: *Mrs Dalloway*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Mrs Dalloway*.

1.

How many million times she had seen her face, and always with the same imperceptible contraction! She pursed her lips when she looked in the glass. It was to give her face point. That was her self – pointed; dartlike; definite. That was her self when some effort, some call on her to be her self, drew the parts together, she alone knew how different, how incompatible and composed so for the world only into one centre, one diamond, one woman who sat in her drawing-room and made a meeting-point, a radiancy no doubt in some dull lives, a refuge for the lonely to come to, perhaps; she had helped young people, who were grateful to her; had tried to be the same always, never showing a sign of all the other sides of her – faults, jealousies, vanities, suspicions, like this of Lady Bruton not asking her to lunch; which, she thought (combing her hair finally), is utterly base! Now, where was her dress?

Her evening dresses hung in the cupboard. Clarissa, plunging her hand into the softness, gently detached the green dress and carried it to the window. She had torn it. Some one had trod on the skirt. She had felt it give at the Embassy party at the top among the folds. By artificial light the green shone, but lost its colour now in the sun. She would mend it. Her maids had too much to do. She would wear it to-night. She would take her silks, her scissors, her – what was it? – her thimble, of course, down into the drawing-room, for she must also write, and see that things generally were more or less in order.

Strange, she thought, pausing on the landing, and assembling that diamond shape, that single person, strange how a mistress knows the very moment, the very temper of her house! Faint sounds rose in spirals up the well of the stairs; the swish of a mop; tapping; knocking; a loudness when the front door opened; a voice repeating a message in the basement; the chink of silver on a tray; clean silver for the party. All was for the party.

(And Lucy, coming into the drawing-room with her tray held out, put the giant candlesticks on the mantel-piece, the silver casket in the middle, turned the crystal dolphin towards the clock. They would come; they would stand; they would talk in the mincing tones which she could imitate, ladies and gentlemen. Of all, her mistress was loveliest – mistress of silver, of linen, of china, for the sun, the silver, doors off their hinges, Rumpelmayer's men, gave her a sense, as she laid the paper-knife on the inlaid table, of something achieved. [...])

* * *

2.

He had never felt so happy in the whole of his life! Without a word they made it up. They walked down to the lake. He had twenty minutes of perfect happiness. Her voice, her laugh, her dress (something floating, white, crimson), her spirit, her adventurousness; she made them all disembark and explore the island; she startled a hen; she laughed; she sang. And all the time, he knew perfectly well, Dalloway was falling in love with her; she was falling in love with Dalloway; but it didn't seem to matter. Nothing mattered. They sat on the ground and talked – he and Clarissa. They went in and out of each other's minds without any effort. And then in a second it was over. He said to himself as they were getting into the boat, 'She will marry that man,' dully, without any resentment; but it was an obvious thing. Dalloway would marry Clarissa.

Dalloway rowed them in. He said nothing. But somehow as they watched him start, jumping on to his bicycle to ride twenty miles through the woods, wobbling off down the drive, waving his hand and disappearing, he obviously did feel, instinctively, tremendously, strongly, all that; the night; the romance; Clarissa. He deserved to have her.

For himself, he was absurd. His demands upon Clarissa (he could see it now) were absurd. He asked impossible things. He made terrible scenes. She would have accepted him still, perhaps, if he had been less absurd. Sally thought so. She wrote him all that summer long letters; how they had talked of him; how she had praised him, how Clarissa burst into tears! It was an extraordinary summer – all letters, scenes, telegrams – arriving at Bourton early in the morning, hanging about till the servants were up; appalling *tête-à-têtes* with old Mr. Parry at breakfast; Aunt Helena formidable but kind; Sally sweeping him off for talks in the vegetable garden; Clarissa in bed with headaches.

* * *

Section A – Novels

9 Virginia Woolf: *Mrs Dalloway*

3.

Burn them! he cried. Now for his writings; how the dead sing behind rhododendron bushes; odes to Time; conversations with Shakespeare; Evans, Evans, Evans – his messages from the dead; do not cut down trees; tell the Prime Minister. Universal love: the meaning of the world. Burn them! he cried.

But Rezia laid her hands on them. Some were very beautiful, she thought. She would tie them up (for she had no envelope) with a piece of silk.

Even if they took him, she said, she would go with him. They could not separate them against their wills, she said.

Shuffling the edges straight, she did up the papers, and tied the parcel almost without looking, sitting close, sitting beside him, he thought, as if all her petals were about her. She was a flowering tree; and through her branches looked out the face of a lawgiver, who had reached a sanctuary where she feared no one; not Holmes; not Bradshaw; a miracle, a triumph, the last and greatest. Staggering he saw her mount the appalling staircase, laden with Holmes and Bradshaw, men who never weighed less than eleven stone six, who sent their wives to Court, men who made ten thousand a year and talked of proportion; who differed in their verdicts (for Holmes said one thing, Bradshaw another), yet judges they were; who mixed the vision and the sideboard; saw nothing clear, yet ruled, yet inflicted. Over them she triumphed.

‘There!’ she said. The papers were tied up. No one should get at them. She would put them away.

And, she said, nothing should separate them. She sat down beside him and called him by the name of that hawk or crow which being malicious and a great destroyer of crops was precisely like him. No one could separate them, she said.

Then she got up to go into the bedroom to pack their things, but hearing voices downstairs and thinking that Dr. Holmes had perhaps called, ran down to prevent him coming up.

Septimus could hear her talking to Holmes on the staircase.

‘My dear lady, I have come as a friend,’ Holmes was saying.

‘No. I will not allow you to see my husband,’ she said.

He could see her, like a little hen, with her wings spread barring his passage. But Holmes persevered.

‘My dear lady, allow me . . .’ Holmes said, putting her aside (Holmes was a powerfully built man).

Holmes was coming upstairs. Holmes would burst open the door. Holmes would say, ‘In a funk, eh?’ Holmes would get him.

* * *

Section B – Plays

10 Aeschylus: *Agamemnon*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Agamemnon*.

1.

CLYTAEMNESTRA: [...] First,
when a woman sits at home and the man is gone,
[...]
O the ecstasy, to flee the yoke of Fate!

Aeschylus, 'Agamemnon', in *The Oresteia*,
Robert Fagles (trans.), Penguin Classics, 1979

pp. 135 and 136

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

CASSANDRA:
[...] Look, you see them nestling at the threshold?
[...]
You will see him dead.

Aeschylus, 'Agamemnon', in *The Oresteia*,
Robert Fagles (trans.), Penguin Classics, 1979

pp. 152 and 153

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Section B – Plays

10 Aeschylus: *Agamemnon*

3.

CLYTAEMNESTRA:

[...] He had no way to flee or fight his destiny –

[...]

name one charge you brought against him then.

Aeschylus, 'Agamemnon', in *The Oresteia*,
Robert Fagles (trans.), Penguin Classics, 1979

pp. 161–163

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Section B – Plays

11 Edward Albee: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.

1.

MARTHA: Hello. C'mon over here and give your mommy a big sloppy kiss.

[...]

GEORGE [...] Just don't start on the bit, that's all.

Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*,
Vintage, 2001

pp. 7 and 8

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

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

[...]

Ha, ha! Bravo! Ha, ha! [*Laughs on.*]

Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*,
Vintage, 2001

pp. 61 and 62

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Section B – Plays

11 Edward Albee: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

3.

MARTHA: YOU CAN'T KILL HIM! YOU CAN'T HAVE HIM DIE!

[...]

HONEY: Amen.

Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*,
Vintage, 2001

pp. 125 and 126

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Section B – Plays

12 Henrik Ibsen: *A Doll's House*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *A Doll's House*.

1.

NORA [*sitting up*]: Is it rash to save your husband's life?

MRS LINDE: I think it's rash to do something without his knowing . . .

NORA: But I couldn't possibly let him know. Good heavens, don't you see? – it would never have done for him to realize how ill he was. It was to *me* that the doctors came; they said that his life was in danger and that the only way to save him was to take him to the south. Do you think I didn't try to wheedle him into it first? I told him how nice it would be for me to have a holiday abroad like all the other young wives. I tried tears and entreaties – I told him that he really ought to think about my condition – that he must be a dear and do what I asked. I hinted that he could easily borrow the money. But then, Kristina, he nearly lost his temper, he told me I was frivolous, and that it was his duty as a husband not to give in to what I believe he called my 'whims and fancies'. 'All right,' I thought, 'but your life must be saved somehow.' And then I thought of a way . . .

MRS LINDE: But surely your father must have told him that the money didn't come from *him*?

NORA: No – it was just then that Papa died. I'd always meant to tell him about it and ask him not to give me away, but he was so ill . . . and I'm afraid in the end there was no need.

MRS LINDE: And *you've* never told your husband?

NORA: Good heavens no, how could I? When he's so strict about that sort of thing. . . . Besides, Torvald has his pride – most men have – he'd be terribly hurt and humiliated if he thought he owed anything to me. It'd spoil everything between us, and our lovely happy home would never be the same again.

MRS LINDE: Aren't you ever going to tell him?

NORA [*thoughtfully, with a little smile*]: Well – one day, perhaps. But not for a long time. When I'm not pretty any more. No, you mustn't laugh. What I mean, of course, is when Torvald isn't as fond of me as he is now – when my dancing and dressing up and reciting don't amuse him any longer. It might be a good thing, then, to have something up my sleeve . . . [*breaking off*]. But that's nonsense – that time'll never come. Well, Kristina, what do you think of my great secret? Am I still no use? What's more, you can take my word for it that it's all been a great worry to me – it hasn't been at all easy to meet all my obligations punctually. In business, you know, there are things called 'quarterly payments' and 'instalments', and they're always dreadfully hard to meet, so you see, I've had to scrape together a little bit here and a little bit there, whenever I could. I couldn't save much out of the housekeeping money, because Torvald has to live properly, and I couldn't have the children looking shabby. I didn't feel I could touch the money that I had for my little darlings.

MRS LINDE: So it all had to come out of your own pocket-money? Poor Nora.

* * *

2.

NORA: All today and all tomorrow, you mustn't think of anything else but me. You mustn't open any letters – you mustn't even open the letter-box.

HELMER: Ah, you're still afraid of that man.

NORA: Oh yes, that as well.

HELMER: Nora, I can see by your face that there's a letter from him already.

NORA: There may be – I don't know. But you mustn't read anything like that now; we won't let anything horrid come between us till this is all over.

RANK [*quietly to HELMER*]: You'd better not upset her.

HELMER [*putting his arm round her*]: My baby shall have her own way. But tomorrow night, after you've danced –

NORA: Then you'll be free.

MAID [*at the door on the right*]: Dinner is served, Madam.

NORA: We'll have champagne, Helena.

MAID: Very good, Madam. [*She goes.*]

HELMER: Well, well – so we're having a banquet!

NORA: A champagne supper – lasting till dawn. [*Calling*]
And some macaroons, Helena – lots and lots, just for once.

HELMER [*taking her hands*]: Now, now, now! You mustn't be so wild and excitable. Be my own little skylark again.

NORA: Oh yes, I will. But go into the dining-room now – and you too, Dr Rank. Kristina, you must help me put my hair straight.

RANK [*quietly as they go*]: There isn't anything . . . ? I mean, she's not expecting . . . ?

HELMER: Oh no, my dear fellow. I've told you – she gets over-excited, like a child.

[*They go out to the right.*]

NORA: Well?

MRS LINDE: He's gone out of town.

NORA: I saw it in your face.

MRS LINDE: He'll be back tomorrow night; I left a note for him.

NORA: You should have let things alone – not tried to stop them.

After all, it's a wonderful thing to be waiting for a miracle.

MRS LINDE: What is it you're expecting?

NORA: You wouldn't understand. Go in and join the others – I'll come in a minute.

[*MRS LINDE goes into the dining-room.*]

NORA [*standing for a moment as if to collect herself, then looking at her watch*]: Seven hours till midnight. Then twenty-four hours till midnight tomorrow. Then the tarantella will be over. Twenty-four and seven . . . thirty-one hours to live.

HELMER [*at the door on the right*]: But where's my little skylark?

NORA [*going to him with arms outstretched*]: Here she is!

* * *

Section B – Plays

12 Henrik Ibsen: *A Doll's House*

3.

NORA: Ah, Torvald, you're not the man to teach me to be a real wife to you –

HELMER: How can you say that?

NORA: – and how am I fitted to bring up the children?

HELMER: Nora!

NORA: Didn't you say yourself, a little while ago, that you daren't trust them to me?

HELMER: That was in a moment of anger – you mustn't pay any attention to that.

NORA: But you were perfectly right – I'm not fit for it. There's another task that I must finish first – I must try to educate myself. And you're not the man to help me with that; I must do it alone. That's why I'm leaving you.

HELMER [*leaping to his feet*]: What's that you say?

NORA: I must stand on my own feet if I'm to get to know myself and the world outside. That's why I can't stay here with you any longer.

HELMER: Nora – Nora . . .!

NORA: I want to go at once. I'm sure Kristina will take me in for the night.

HELMER: You're out of your mind. I won't let you – I forbid it.

NORA: It's no good your forbidding me anything any longer. I shall take the things that belong to me, but I'll take nothing from you – now or later.

HELMER: But this is madness . . .

NORA: Tomorrow I shall go home – to my old home, I mean – it'll be easier for me to find something to do there.

HELMER: Oh, you blind, inexperienced creature . . .!

NORA: I must try to *get* some experience, Torvald.

HELMER: But to leave your home – your husband and your children. . . . You haven't thought of what people will say.

NORA: I can't consider that. All I know is that this is necessary for me.

HELMER: But this is disgraceful. Is this the way you neglect your most sacred duties?

NORA: What do you consider is my most sacred duty?

HELMER: Do I have to tell you that? Isn't it your duty to your husband and children?

NORA: I have another duty, just as sacred.

HELMER: You can't have. What duty do you mean?

NORA: My duty to myself.

* * *

Section B – Plays

13 Eugène Ionesco: *Rhinoceros*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Rhinoceros*.

1.

JEAN: My dear man, everybody has to work.

[...]

each repeating in swift succession: 'Oh, a rhinoceros!']

Eugène Ionesco, 'Rhinoceros', Derek Prouse (trans.),
in *Rhinoceros, The Chairs, The Lesson*,
Penguin Modern Classics, 2000

pp. 12–14

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

DUDARD: It's understandable that you've got a migraine

[...]

a game – who knows?

Eugène Ionesco, 'Rhinoceros', Derek Prouse (trans.),
in *Rhinoceros, The Chairs, The Lesson*,
Penguin Modern Classics, 2000

pp. 86–88

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Section B – Plays

13 Eugène Ionesco: *Rhinoceros*

3.

DAISY [*calming down*]: We must be sensible.

[...]

BERENGER: [...] And the proof is that you understand me when
I speak to you.

Eugène Ionesco, 'Rhinoceros', Derek Prouse (trans.),
in *Rhinoceros, The Chairs, The Lesson*,
Penguin Modern Classics, 2000

pp. 118 and 119

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Section B – Plays

14 William Shakespeare: *Antony and Cleopatra*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Antony and Cleopatra*.

1.

PHILO Nay, but this dotage of our general's
O'erflows the measure. Those his goodly eyes,
That o'er the files and musters of the war
Have glowed like plated Mars, now bend, now turn
The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front. His captain's heart,
Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst
The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper
And is become the bellows and the fan
To cool a gipsy's lust.

*Flourish. Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, her LADIES [CHARMIAN
and IRAS, and] the train, with eunuchs fanning her*

Look where they come.

Take but good note, and you shall see in him
The triple pillar of the world transformed
Into a strumpet's fool. Behold and see.

CLEOPATRA If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

ANTONY There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.

CLEOPATRA I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.

ANTONY Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

Enter a MESSENGER

MESSENGER News, my good lord, from Rome.

ANTONY Grates me! The sum.

CLEOPATRA Nay, hear them, Antony.

Fulvia perchance is angry, or who knows
If the scarce-bearded Caesar have not sent
His powerful mandate to you, 'Do this, or this;
Take in that kingdom and enfranchise that;
Perform't, or else we damn thee.'

ANTONY How, my love?

CLEOPATRA Perchance? Nay, and most like.

You must not stay here longer; your dismissal
Is come from Caesar. Therefore hear it, Antony.
Where's Fulvia's process? – Caesar's I would say. Both?
Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt's queen,
Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
Is Caesar's homager; else so thy cheek pays shame
When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. The messengers!

ANTONY Let Rome in Tiber melt and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space.
Kingdoms are clay; our dungy earth alike
Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life
Is to do thus, when such a mutual pair
And such a twain can do't – in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to weet
We stand up peerless.

CLEOPATRA Excellent falsehood!
Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?
I'll seem the fool I am not. Antony
Will be himself.

* * *

2.

ANTONY Cold-hearted toward me?

CLEOPATRA Ah, dear, if I be so,
From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,
And poison it in the source, and the first stone
Drop in my neck; as it determines, so
Dissolve my life! The next Caesarion smite,
Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
Together with my brave Egyptians all,
By the discandying of this pelleted storm
Lie graveless till the flies and gnats of Nile
Have buried them for prey!

ANTONY I am satisfied.

Caesar sits down in Alexandria, where
I will oppose his fate. Our force by land
Hath nobly held; our severed navy too
Have knit again, and fleet, threat'ning most sea-like.
Where hast thou been, my heart? Dost thou hear, lady?
If from the field I shall return once more
To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood;
I and my sword will earn our chronicle.
There's hope in't yet.

CLEOPATRA That's my brave lord!

ANTONY I will be treble-sinewed, hearted, breathed,
And fight maliciously. For when mine hours
Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives
Of me for jests; but now I'll set my teeth
And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,
Let's have one other gaudy night. Call to me
All my sad captains. Fill our bowls once more;
Let's mock the midnight bell.

CLEOPATRA It is my birthday.
I had thought t'have held it poor; but since my lord
Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra.

ANTONY We will yet do well.

CLEOPATRA [*To Attendants*] Call all his noble captains to my lord.

ANTONY Do so; we'll speak to them, and tonight I'll force
The wine peep through their scars. Come on, my queen,
There's sap in't yet. The next time I do fight
I'll make Death love me, for I will contend
Even with his pestilent scythe.

Exeunt [all but Enobarbus]

ENOBARBUS Now he'll outstare the lightning. To be furious
Is to be frightened out of fear, and in that mood
The dove will peck the estridge; and I see still
A diminution in our captain's brain
Restores his heart. When valour preys on reason,
It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek
Some way to leave him.

Exit

* * *

Section B – Plays

14 William Shakespeare: *Antony and Cleopatra*

3.

CLEOPATRA Give me my robe. Put on my crown. I have
Immortal longings in me. Now no more
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.

[*The women dress her*]

Yare, yare, good Iras; quick. Methinks I hear
Antony call. I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act. I hear him mock
The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men
To excuse their after wrath. Husband, I come!
Now to that name my courage prove my title!
I am fire and air; my other elements
I give to baser life. So, have you done?
Come, then, and take the last warmth of my lips.
Farewell, kind Charmian. Iras, long farewell.

[*She kisses them. Iras falls and dies*]

Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?
If thou and nature can so gently part,
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,
Which hurts, and is desired. Dost thou lie still?
If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world
It is not worth leave-taking.

CHARMIAN Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain, that I may say
The gods themselves do weep!

CLEOPATRA This proves me base.
If she first meet the curlèd Antony,
He'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss
Which is my heaven to have. Come, thou mortal wretch,

[*She applies an asp*]

With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,
Be angry, and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass
Unpolicied!

CHARMIAN O eastern star!

CLEOPATRA Peace, peace!
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep?

CHARMIAN O, break! O, break!

CLEOPATRA As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle –
O Antony! – Nay, I will take thee too.

[*She applies another asp*]

What should I stay –

Dies

CHARMIAN In this wild world? So, fare thee well.
Now boast thee, Death, in thy possession lies
A lass unparalleled. Downy windows, close;
And golden Phoebus never be beheld
Of eyes again so royal! Your crown's awry;
I'll mend it, and then play –

* * *

Section B – Plays

15 William Shakespeare: *Coriolanus*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Coriolanus*.

1.

MENENIUS

The senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members. For examine
Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly
Touching the weal o' th' common, you shall find
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you,
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,
You, the great toe of this assembly?

FIRST CITIZEN

I the great toe! Why the great toe?

MENENIUS

For that, being one o' th' lowest, basest, poorest
Of this most wise rebellion, thou goest foremost.
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,
Lead'st first to win some vantage.
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale.

Enter Caius Martius. Hail, noble Martius!

MARTIUS

Thanks. What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?

FIRST CITIZEN

We have ever your good word.

MARTIUS

He that will give good words to thee will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
That like nor peace nor war? The one affrights you,
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese. You are no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is
To make him worthy whose offense subdues him
And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favors swims with fins of lead
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye?
With every minute you do change a mind,
And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble Senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another? What's their seeking?

* * *

2.

CORIOLANUS

The fires i' th' lowest hell fold in the people!
Call me their traitor, thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutched as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
"Thou liest" unto thee with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.

SICINIUS

Mark you this, people?

ALL

To th' rock, to th' rock with him!

SICINIUS

Peace!

We need not put new matter to his charge.
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
Those whose great power must try him – even this,
So criminal and in such capital kind,
Deserves th' extremest death.

BRUTUS

But since he hath

Served well for Rome –

CORIOLANUS

What do you prate of service?

BRUTUS

I talk of that, that know it.

CORIOLANUS

You?

MENENIUS

Is this the promise that you made your mother?

COMINIUS

Know, I pray you –

CORIOLANUS

I'll know no further.

Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day – I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word;
Nor check my courage for what they can give,
To have't with saying "Good morrow."

SICINIUS

For that he has,

As much as in him lies, from time to time
Envied against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power; as now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That doth distribute it; i' th' name o' th' people
And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
Even from this instant, banish him our city,
In peril of precipitation
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
To enter our Rome gates. I' th' people's name,
I say it shall be so.

ALL

It shall be so! it shall be so! Let him away!
He's banished, and it shall be so!

* * *

Section B – Plays

15 William Shakespeare: *Coriolanus*

3.

CORIOLANUS O mother, mother!
 What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,
 The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
 They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!
 You have won a happy victory to Rome;
 But for your son – believe it, O believe it! –
 Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
 If not most mortal to him. But let it come.
 Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
 I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
 Were you in my stead, would you have heard
 A mother less? Or granted less, Aufidius?

AUFIDIUS
 I was moved withal.

CORIOLANUS I dare be sworn you were!
 And, sir, it is no little thing to make
 Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
 What peace you'll make, advise me. For my part,
 I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray you,
 Stand to me in this cause. O mother! wife!

AUFIDIUS *[Aside]*
 I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy honor
 At difference in thee. Out of that I'll work
 Myself a former fortune.

CORIOLANUS *[To Volumnia]* Ay, by and by.
 But we will drink together; and you shall bear
 A better witness back than words, which we,
 On like conditions, will have counter-sealed.
 Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
 To have a temple built you. All the swords
 In Italy, and her confederate arms,
 Could not have made this peace. *Exeunt.*

* * *

Section B – Plays

16 George Bernard Shaw: *Pygmalion*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Pygmalion*.

1.

MRS PEARCE [*resolutely*] You must be reasonable, Mr Higgins: really you must. You cant walk over everybody like this.

Higgins, thus scolded, subsides. The hurricane is succeeded by a zephyr of amiable surprise.

HIGGINS [*with professional exquisiteness of modulation*] I walk over everybody! My dear Mrs Pearce, my dear Pickering, I never had the slightest intention of walking over anyone. All I propose is that we should be kind to this poor girl. We must help her to prepare and fit herself for her new station in life. If I did not express myself clearly it was because I did not wish to hurt her delicacy, or yours.

Liza, reassured, steals back to her chair.

MRS PEARCE [*to Pickering*] Well, did you ever hear anything like that, sir?

PICKERING [*laughing heartily*] Never, Mrs Pearce: never.

HIGGINS [*patiently*] Whats the matter?

MRS PEARCE. Well, the matter is, sir, that you cant take a girl up like that as if you were picking up a pebble on the beach.

HIGGINS. Why not?

MRS PEARCE. Why not! But you dont know anything about her. What about her parents? She may be married.

LIZA. Garn!

HIGGINS. There! As the girl very properly says, Garn! Married indeed! Dont you know that a woman of that class looks a worn out drudge of fifty a year after she's married?

LIZA. Whood marry me?

HIGGINS [*suddenly resorting to the most thrillingly beautiful low tones in his best elocutionary style*] By George, Eliza, the streets will be strewn with the bodies of men shooting themselves for your sake before Ive done with you.

MRS PEARCE. Nonsense, sir. You mustnt talk like that to her.

LIZA [*rising and squaring herself determinedly*] I'm going away. He's off his chump, he is. I dont want no balmies teaching me.

HIGGINS [*wounded in his tenderest point by her insensibility to his elocution*] Oh, indeed! I'm mad, am I? Very well, Mrs Pearce: you neednt order the new clothes for her. Throw her out.

LIZA [*whimpering*] Nah-ow. You got no right to touch me.

MRS PEARCE. You see now what comes of being saucy.

[*Indicating the door*] This way, please.

LIZA [*almost in tears*] I didnt want no clothes. I wouldnt have taken them [*she throws away the handkerchief*]. I can buy my own clothes.

* * *

2.

HIGGINS [...] You see, Eliza, all men are not confirmed old bachelors like me and the Colonel. Most men are the marrying sort (poor devils!); and youre not bad-looking: it's quite a pleasure to look at you sometimes – not now, of course, because youre crying and looking as ugly as the very devil; but when youre all right and quite yourself, youre what I should call attractive. That is, to the people in the marrying line, you understand. You go to bed and have a good nice rest; and then get up and look at yourself in the glass; and you wont feel so cheap.

Eliza again looks at him, speechless, and does not stir.

The look is quite lost on him: he eats his apple with a dreamy expression of happiness, as it is quite a good one.

HIGGINS [*a genial afterthought occurring to him*] I daresay my mother could find some chap or other who would do very well.

LIZA. We were above that at the corner of Tottenham Court Road.

HIGGINS [*waking up*] What do you mean?

LIZA. I sold flowers. I didnt sell myself. Now youve made a lady of me I'm not fit to sell anything else. I wish youd left me where you found me.

HIGGINS [*slinging the core of the apple decisively into the grate*] Tosh, Eliza. Dont you insult human relations by dragging all this cant about buying and selling into it. You neednt marry the fellow if you dont like him.

LIZA. What else am I to do?

HIGGINS. Oh, lots of things. What about your old idea of a florist's shop? Pickering could set you up in one: he has lots of money. [*Chuckling*] He'll have to pay for all those togs you have been wearing today; and that, with the hire of the jewellery, will make a big hole in two hundred pounds. Why, six months ago you would have thought it the millennium to have a flower shop of your own. Come! youll be all right. I must clear off to bed: I'm devilish sleepy. By the way, I came down for something: I forget what it was.

LIZA. Your slippers.

HIGGINS. Oh yes, of course. You shied them at me. [*He picks them up, and is going out when she rises and speaks to him*].

LIZA. Before you go, sir –

HIGGINS [*dropping the slippers in his surprise at her calling him Sir*] Eh?

LIZA. Do my clothes belong to me or to Colonel Pickering?

HIGGINS [*coming back into the room as if her question were the very climax of unreason*] What the devil use would they be to Pickering?

LIZA. He might want them for the next girl you pick up to experiment on.

* * *

Section B – Plays

16 George Bernard Shaw: *Pygmalion*

3.

DOOLITTLE [...] If I was one of the deserving poor, and had put by a bit, I could chuck it; but then why should I, acause the deserving poor might as well be millionaires for all the happiness they ever has. They dont know what happiness is. But I, as one of the undeserving poor, have nothing between me and the pauper's uniform but this here blasted three thousand a year that shoves me into the middle class. (Excuse the expression, maam; youd use it yourself if you had my provocation.) Theyve got you every way you turn: it's a choice between the Skilly of the workhouse and the Char Bydis of the middle class; and I havnt the nerve for the workhouse. Intimidated: thats what I am. Broke. Bought up. Happier men than me will call for my dust, and touch me for their tip; and I'll look on helpless, and envy them. And thats what your son has brought me to. [*He is overcome by emotion*].

MRS HIGGINS. Well, I'm very glad youre not going to do anything foolish, Mr Doolittle. For this solves the problem of Eliza's future. You can provide for her now.

DOOLITTLE [*with melancholy resignation*] Yes, maam: I'm expected to provide for everyone now, out of three thousand a year.

HIGGINS [*jumping up*] Nonsense! he cant provide for her. He shant provide for her. She doesnt belong to him. I paid him five pounds for her. Doolittle: either youre an honest man or a rogue.

DOOLITTLE [*tolerantly*] A little of both, Henry, like the rest of us: a little of both.

HIGGINS. Well, you took that money for the girl; and you have no right to take her as well.

MRS HIGGINS. Henry: dont be absurd. If you want to know where Eliza is, she is upstairs.

HIGGINS [*amazed*] Upstairs!!! Then I shall jolly soon fetch her downstairs. [*He makes resolutely for the door*].

MRS HIGGINS [*rising and following him*] Be quiet, Henry. Sit down.

HIGGINS. I –

MRS HIGGINS. Sit down, dear; and listen to me.

HIGGINS. Oh very well, very well, very well. [*He throws himself ungraciously on the ottoman, with his face towards the windows*]. But I think you might have told us this half an hour ago.

MRS HIGGINS. Eliza came to me this morning. She told me of the brutal way you two treated her.

HIGGINS [*bouncing up again*] What!

PICKERING [*rising also*] My dear Mrs Higgins, she's been telling you stories. We didnt treat her brutally. We hardly said a word to her; and we parted on particularly good terms. [*Turning on Higgins*] Higgins: did you bully her after I went to bed?

HIGGINS. Just the other way about. She threw my slippers in my face. She behaved in the most outrageous way. I never gave her the slightest provocation. The slippers came bang into my face the moment I entered the room – before I had uttered a word. And used perfectly awful language.

PICKERING [*astonished*] But why? What did we do to her?

* * *

Section B – Plays

17 Tom Stoppard: *Arcadia*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Arcadia*.

1.

Lady Croom Mr Chater, you are a welcome guest at Sidley Park

[...]

He reads the note, folds it and inserts it into the pages of 'The Couch of Eros'.

Tom Stoppard, *Arcadia*,
Faber and Faber, 1993

pp. 20 and 21

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2.

Bernard Where was I?

[...]

Chloë Shut up, Val.

Tom Stoppard, *Arcadia*,
Faber and Faber, 1993

pp. 75 and 76

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Section B – Plays

17 Tom Stoppard: *Arcadia*

3.

Valentine resumes work at his computer:

[...]

Valentine [...] I just pushed her equations through the computer a few million times further than she managed to do with her pencil.

Tom Stoppard, *Arcadia*,
Faber and Faber, 1993

pp. 102 and 103

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Section C – Short stories

18 Peter Carey: *Collected Stories*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Collected Stories*.

1.

‘Concerning the Greek Tyrant’

6.

When the night came ... who no longer found the incident interesting enough to tell.

Peter Carey, *Collected Stories*,
Vintage, 2005

pp. 156 and 157

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2.

‘Conversations with Unicorns’

1.

The unicorns do not understand ... These laws are still strictly observed to this day.

Peter Carey, *Collected Stories*,
Vintage, 2005

pp. 228 and 229

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Section C – Short stories

18 Peter Carey: *Collected Stories*

3.

‘American Dreams’

On Bald Hill there are half a dozen telescopes ... but I can no longer remember how it felt.

Peter Carey, *Collected Stories*,
Vintage, 2005

pp. 244 and 245

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Section C – Short stories

19 Cate Kennedy: *Dark Roots*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Dark Roots*.

1.

‘Cold Snap’

I showed her the top rabbit’s head and her mouth went funny and she said, *Oh dear, oh the poor little things. What did you want to kill them for?*

I said for Mr Bailey. I said they died very quickly and always got the traps right around their necks. She hugged herself with her arms and shook her head and said goodness me, looking at my rabbit-skin hat. I turned my head slowly round so she could see better.

She asked me suddenly if I lived in the house down the hill and I said yes. Then she said what a marvellous location and what a shame the power would cost an arm and a leg to put through, otherwise she would have made an offer, and that this little place she’d picked up was such fun and a goldmine. She said all her friends from the city thought she was quite mad but she’d be the one laughing when property values went up and she’d done all the extensions. I was waiting for her to finish so I could go. I could feel the rabbits stiffening up inside their bag; I could smell them.

What’s your name? she asked me finally and I said Billy.

And do you go to school, Billy?

I looked at her and said you have to. Her eyes went all crinkly and happy again.

And is it a special school, just for special children?

I couldn’t work her out. Maybe she didn’t understand about school. I said not really then my mouth blurted out: *You got hair like a fox.*

She laughed like someone in a movie. *Good heavens*, she said. *You are a character, aren’t you?*

A man in a red dressing-gown came out onto the verandah and the lady said, *Look darling, some local colour.*

Love the hat, said the man to me. I waited for them to tell me their names, but the man just complained that it was bloody freezing, and thank Christ they’d got the central heating in. The lady said yes, the whole place was shaping up well, then she looked out down the track and said, *The only problem is there’s no bloody view of the lake.* Then she said, *Billy, show Roger your bunnies, darling*, and I pulled one out and Roger said, *Good God.*

They both laughed and laughed and Roger said, *Well it looks like the light’s on but there’s no one home.* Which was wrong. They were both there and they’d turned the light off by now.

* * *

2.

‘The Testosterone Club’

I watched the powder dissolving into the vinegar and drifting around the cucumbers, smiling to myself because it reminded me of one of those kid’s souvenirs where snow falls in a little dome on some little landscape; a desert island, say, or—in this case more appropriately—the Big Banana. I shook a jar. The cucumbers, warty and ghostly in their vinegar formaldehyde, bobbed around like specimens. This many pickles were going to take months and months to eat. And suddenly I realised I had no intention of being there.

Barry, after seeing my defection as an admission of guilt, will hold me no conscious grudge—I’ve left him and the boys a huge supply to be going on with. It’ll take them an entire football season to get through what’s left, marinating gently in their dill-flavoured broth. I was generous with the herbs and spices. I was unstinting.

I hum a tune to myself as I pull out of the driveway, hearing the china clink in the back as I hit the tarmac. It’ll be weeks, probably, before any of them notices anything a little ... amiss. But never, never, never would they mention it to each other. And I doubt they’ll think to change their diets. Nothing like a crunchy, firm, green cucumber pickle, thrusting proudly up from your fingers, no bigger than that. Perhaps with a little cheese, a few dry biscuits, a celery stick. I have left the jars in the fridge, lined up as impressively as show exhibits. Pickled cucumbers, dill cucumbers, pickled onions, artichokes, vegetable medley, baby beetroot. Always have them chilled and crisp, advises *The Home Preserver*, and I tend to agree.

They are a delicacy. How shall I put this ...? They are a dish best served cold.

* * *

Section C – Short stories

19 Cate Kennedy: *Dark Roots*

3.

'Angel'

'Let's hear from Mai,' the tutor would say, and everyone would turn, ready to watch my difficulties. Wanting to get the language themselves, this barely comprehensible thing that would allow them their driving licences and jobs in the T-shirt factory in Smith Street or Champion Dimsims in Ascot Vale.

'I like the sea, too,' I would say, the obedient student. My father used to say I was the best student at the school in my town, the family scholar. I learned by keeping quiet, but this is not the way you learned in Australia. When I passed very well in my English class, my tutor looked at me with the same expression as the lady in the shop.

'You don't say much, but you take it all in, don't you?' she said, an accusing finger on my diploma. Why is silence so worthy of suspicion? You can choose to talk or choose to not talk. But take it all in: yes, that part is true. I take everything in, and in bed at night I lie rocking on a tide of it, whole scenes and conversations, faces I will not forget, even if I wanted to. After the boat, there was a child I went on caring for at the camp who didn't speak for a whole five months. I worried that the authorities would think she was a slow learner. That was not the problem. The problem was she was a fast learner; she took it all in. When we got into the harbour we were news, not because of our plight so much as something unusual that had occurred on our boat.

'They want to ask you about the shark attack,' said the interpreter, nervous, and the people with the camera equipment had made a movement, a hopeful, craning movement, towards this child. Whether she spoke or not, I could tell she would be the one they made the story about.

She hadn't spoken since this thing happened, and she didn't speak now. She didn't say a word till three months later, when other authorities came to the camp and news spread around, a whispered, desperate rumour, that they were going to give preference to all the children under six. This child, who was eight, was with me and she suddenly wrenched away and rushed to the table where the men were sitting with their papers and slapped her hand down. She spoke to them in perfect English, the first two words she'd uttered for five months.

'I'm five,' she said.

I, too, broke my silence that day with a lie.

'I am her mother,' I said.

* * *

Section C – Short stories

20 Annie Proulx: *Close Range: Brokeback Mountain and Other Stories*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Close Range: Brokeback Mountain and Other Stories*.

1.

‘The Half-Skinned Steer’

In the long unfurling of his life ... You heard of Down Under Wyoming?

Annie Proulx, *Close Range: Brokeback Mountain and Other Stories*, Harper Perennial, 2006

pp. 19–21

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2.

‘People in Hell Just Want a Drink of Water’

You stand there, braced ... the owner of a slave ship wanted to look over the cargo.

Annie Proulx, *Close Range: Brokeback Mountain and Other Stories*, Harper Perennial, 2006

pp. 107 and 108

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Section C – Short stories

20 Annie Proulx: *Close Range: Brokeback Mountain and Other Stories*

3.

‘A Lonely Coast’

Palma leaned against Elk ... “This’s a miserable place,” she said. “My god it’s miserable.”

Annie Proulx, *Close Range: Brokeback Mountain and Other Stories*, Harper Perennial, 2006

pp. 220–222

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Section D – Other literature

21 Julian Barnes: *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*.

1.

There was strict discipline on the Ark ... My account you can trust.

Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*,
Vintage, 2009

pp. 3 and 4

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2.

On the tenth day several of the men ... Then the ship disappeared from the sea.

Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*,
Vintage, 2009

pp. 120 and 121

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Section D – Other literature

21 Julian Barnes: *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*

3.

[...] the hero of the *Titanic* was ... Years later I have still to discover a better one.

Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*,
Vintage, 2009

pp. 174 and 175

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Section D – Other literature

22 Truman Capote: *In Cold Blood*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *In Cold Blood*.

1.

They stopped at a bar. Dick drank three Orange Blossoms. After the third, he abruptly asked, ‘What about Dad? I feel – oh, Jesus, he’s such a good old guy. And my mother – well, you saw her. What about *them*? Me, I’ll be off in Mexico. Or wherever. But they’ll be right here when those cheques start to bounce. I know Dad. He’ll want to make them good. Like he tried to before. And he can’t – he’s old and he’s sick, he ain’t got anything.’

‘I sympathize with that,’ said Perry truthfully. Without being kind, he was sentimental, and Dick’s affection for his parents, his professed concern for them, did indeed touch him. ‘But hell, Dick. It’s very simple,’ Perry said. ‘We can pay off the cheques. Once we’re in Mexico, once we get started down there, we’ll make money. Lots of it.’

‘How?’

‘How?’ – what could Dick mean? The question dazed Perry. After all, such a rich assortment of ventures had been discussed. Prospecting for gold, skin-diving for sunken treasure – these were but two of the projects Perry had ardently proposed. And there were others. The boat, for instance. They had often talked of a deep-sea-fishing boat, which they would buy, man themselves, and rent to vacationers – this though neither had ever skippered a canoe or hooked a guppy. Then, too, there was quick money to be made chauffeuring stolen cars across South American borders. (‘You get paid five hundred bucks a trip,’ or so Perry had read somewhere.) But of the many replies he might have made, he chose to remind Dick of the fortune awaiting them on Cocos Island, a land speck off the coast of Costa Rica. ‘No fooling, Dick,’ Perry said. ‘This is authentic. I’ve got a map. I’ve got the whole history. It was buried there back in 1821 – Peruvian bullion, jewellery. Sixty million dollars – that’s what they say it’s worth. Even if we didn’t find all of it, even if we found only some of it – Are you with me, Dick?’ Heretofore, Dick had always encouraged him, listened attentively to his talk of maps, tales of treasure, but now – and it had not occurred to him before – he wondered if all along Dick had only been *pretending*, just kidding him.

The thought, acutely painful, passed, for Dick, with a wink and a playful jab, said, ‘Sure, honey. I’m with you. All the way.’

* * *

2.

Dewey lights two cigarettes, one for himself, one for the prisoner. ‘Tell us about it, Perry.’

Smith smokes with closed eyes, and explains, ‘I’m thinking. I want to remember this just the way it was.’ He pauses for quite a while. ‘Well, it all started with a letter I got while I was out in Buhl, Idaho. That was September or October. The letter was from Dick, and he said he was on to a cinch. The perfect score. I didn’t answer him, but he wrote again, urging me to come back to Kansas and go partners with him. He never said what kind of score it was. Just that it was a “sure-fire cinch”. Now, as it happened, I had another reason for wanting to be in Kansas around about that time. A personal matter I’d just as soon keep to myself – it’s got nothing to do with this deal. Only that otherwise I wouldn’t have gone back there. But I did. And Dick met me at the bus station in Kansas City. We drove out to the farm, his parents’ place. But they didn’t want me there. I’m very sensitive; I usually know what people are feeling.

‘Like you.’ He means Dewey, but does not look at him. ‘You hate handing me a butt. That’s your business. I don’t blame you. Any more than I blamed Dick’s mother. The fact is, she’s a very sweet person. But she knew what I was – a friend from The Walls – and she didn’t want me in her house. Christ, I was glad to get out, go to a hotel. Dick took me to a hotel in Olathe. We bought some beer and carried it up to the room, and that’s when Dick outlined what he had in mind. He said after I’d left Lansing he celled with someone who’d once worked for a wealthy wheat grower out in western Kansas. Mr Clutter. Dick drew me a diagram of the Clutter house. He knew where everything was – doors, halls, bedrooms. He said one of the ground-floor rooms was used as an office, and in the office there was a safe – a wall safe. He said Mr Clutter needed it because he always kept on hand large sums of cash. Never less than ten thousand dollars. The plan was to rob the safe, and if we were seen – well, whoever saw us would have to go. Dick must have said it a million times: “No witnesses.”’

Dewey says, ‘How many of these witnesses did he think there might be? I mean, how many people did he expect to find in the Clutter house?’

‘That’s what I wanted to know. But he wasn’t sure. At least four. Probably six. And it was possible the family might have guests. He thought we ought to be ready to handle up to a dozen.’

Dewey groans, Duntz whistles, and Smith, smiling wanly, adds, ‘Me, too. Seemed to me that was a little off. Twelve people. But Dick said it was a cinch. He said, “We’re gonna go in there and splatter those walls with hair.” The mood I was in, I let myself be carried along. But also – I’ll be honest – I had faith in Dick; he struck me as being very practical, the masculine type, and I wanted the money as much as he did. I wanted to get it and go to Mexico. But I hoped we could do it without violence. [...]

* * *

© Truman Capote, 1965

Section D – Other literature

22 Truman Capote: *In Cold Blood*

3.

However, even an attorney of moderate talent can postpone doomsday year after year, for the system of appeals that pervades American jurisprudence amounts to a legalistic wheel of fortune, a game of chance, somewhat fixed in the favour of the criminal, that the participants play interminably, first in the state courts, then through the Federal courts until the ultimate tribunal is reached – the United States Supreme Court. But even defeat there does not signify if petitioner's counsel can discover or invent new grounds for appeal; usually they can, and so once more the wheel turns, and turns until, perhaps some years later, the prisoner arrives back at the nation's highest court, probably only to begin again the slow cruel contest. But at intervals the wheel does pause to declare a winner – or, though with increasing rarity, a loser: Andrews' lawyers fought to the final moment, but their client went to the gallows on Friday, 30 November 1962.

'That was a cold night,' Hickock said, talking to a journalist with whom he corresponded and who was periodically allowed to visit him. 'Cold and wet. It had been raining like a bastard, and the baseball field was mud up to your *cojones*. So when they took Andy out to the warehouse, they had to walk him along the path. We were all at our windows watching – Perry and me, Ronnie York, Jimmy Latham. It was just after midnight, and the warehouse was lit up like a Halloween pumpkin. The doors wide open. We could see the witnesses, a lot of guards, the doctor and the warden – every damn thing but the gallows. It was off at an angle, but we could see its shadow. A shadow on the wall like the shadow of a boxing ring.

'The chaplain and four guards had charge of Andy, and when they got to the door they stopped a second. Andy was looking at the gallows – you could sense he was. His arms were tied in front of him. All of a sudden the chaplain reached out and took off Andy's glasses. Which was kind of pitiful, Andy without his glasses. They led him on inside, and I wondered he could see to climb the steps. It was real quiet, just nothing but this dog barking way off. Some town dog. Then we heard it, the sound, and Jimmy Latham said, "What was that?"; and I *told* him what it was – the trap-door.

* * *

Section D – Other literature

23 George Orwell: *Down and Out in Paris and London*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Down and Out in Paris and London*.

1.

You discover what it is like to be hungry. With bread and margarine in your belly, you go out and look into the shop windows. Everywhere there is food insulting you in huge, wasteful piles; whole dead pigs, baskets of hot loaves, great yellow blocks of butter, strings of sausages, mountains of potatoes, vast Gruyère cheeses like grindstones. A snivelling self-pity comes over you at the sight of so much food. You plan to grab a loaf and run, swallowing it before they catch you; and you refrain, from pure funk.

You discover the boredom which is inseparable from poverty; the times when you have nothing to do and, being underfed, can interest yourself in nothing. For half a day at a time you lie on your bed, feeling like the *jeune squelette* in Baudelaire's poem. Only food could rouse you. You discover that a man who has gone even a week on bread and margarine is not a man any longer, only a belly with a few accessory organs.

This – one could describe it further, but it is all in the same style – is life on six francs a day. Thousands of people in Paris live it – struggling artists and students, prostitutes when their luck is out, out-of-work people of all kinds. It is the suburbs, as it were, of poverty.

I continued in this style for about three weeks. The forty-seven francs were soon gone, and I had to do what I could on thirty-six francs a week from the English lessons. Being inexperienced, I handled the money badly, and sometimes I was a day without food. When this happened I used to sell a few of my clothes, smuggling them out of the hotel in small packets and taking them to a second-hand shop in the Rue de la Montagne St Geneviève. The shopman was a red-haired Jew, an extraordinarily disagreeable man, who used to fall into furious rages at the sight of a client. From his manner one would have supposed that we had done him some injury by coming to him. 'Merde!' he used to shout, 'you here again? What do you think this is? A soup kitchen?' And he paid incredibly low prices. For a hat which I had bought for twenty-five shillings and scarcely worn he gave five francs, for a good pair of shoes five francs, for shirts a franc each. He always preferred to exchange rather than buy, and he had a trick of thrusting some useless article into one's hand and then pretending that one had accepted it. Once I saw him take a good overcoat from an old woman, put two white billiard-balls into her hand, and then push her rapidly out of the shop before she could protest. It would have been a pleasure to flatten the Jew's nose, if only one could have afforded it.

* * *

2.

I stayed in the streets till late at night, keeping on the move all the time. Dressed as I was, I was half afraid that the police might arrest me as a vagabond, and I dared not speak to anyone, imagining that they must notice a disparity between my accent and my clothes. (Later I discovered that this never happened.) My new clothes had put me instantly into a new world. Everyone's demeanour seemed to have changed abruptly. I helped a hawker pick up a barrow that he had upset. 'Thanks, mate,' he said with a grin. No one had called me mate before in my life – it was the clothes that had done it. For the first time I noticed, too, how the attitude of women varies with a man's clothes. When a badly dressed man passes them they shudder away from him with a quite frank movement of disgust, as though he were a dead cat. Clothes are powerful things. Dressed in a tramp's clothes it is very difficult, at any rate for the first day, not to feel that you are genuinely degraded. You might feel the same shame, irrational but very real, your first night in prison.

At about eleven I began looking for a bed. I had read about doss-houses (they are never called doss-houses, by the way), and I supposed that one could get a bed for fourpence or thereabouts. Seeing a man, a navvy or something of the kind, standing on the kerb in the Waterloo Road, I stopped and questioned him. I said that I was stony broke and wanted the cheapest bed I could get.

'Oh,' said he, 'you go to that 'ouse across the street there, with the sign "Good Beds for Single Men". That's a good kip [sleeping place], that is. I bin there myself on and off. You'll find it cheap *and* clean.'

It was a tall, battered-looking house, with dim lights in all the windows, some of which were patched with brown paper. I entered a stone passage-way, and a little etiolated boy with sleepy eyes appeared from a door leading to a cellar. Murmurous sounds came from the cellar, and a wave of hot air and cheese. The boy yawned and held out his hand.

'Want a kip? That'll be a 'og, guv'nor.'

I paid the shilling, and the boy led me up a rickety unlighted staircase to a bedroom. It had a sweetish reek of paregoric and foul linen; the windows seemed to be tight shut, and the air was almost suffocating at first. There was a candle burning, and I saw that the room measured fifteen feet square by eight high, and had eight beds in it. Already six lodgers were in bed, queer lumpy shapes with all their own clothes, even their boots, piled on top of them. Someone was coughing in a loathsome manner in one corner.

* * *

Section D – Other literature

23 George Orwell: *Down and Out in Paris and London*

3.

Yet if one looks closely one sees that there is no *essential* difference between a beggar's livelihood and that of numberless respectable people. Beggars do not work, it is said; but, then, what is *work*? A navvy works by swinging a pick. An accountant works by adding up figures. A beggar works by standing out of doors in all weathers and getting varicose veins, chronic bronchitis, etc. It is a trade like any other; quite useless, of course – but, then, many reputable trades are quite useless. And as a social type a beggar compares well with scores of others. He is honest compared with the sellers of most patent medicines, high-minded compared with a Sunday newspaper proprietor, amiable compared with a hire-purchase tout – in short, a parasite, but a fairly harmless parasite. He seldom extracts more than a bare living from the community, and, what should justify him according to our ethical ideas, he pays for it over and over in suffering. I do not think there is anything about a beggar that sets him in a different class from other people, or gives most modern men the right to despise him.

Then the question arises, Why are beggars despised? – for they are despised, universally. I believe it is for the simple reason that they fail to earn a decent living. In practice nobody cares whether work is useful or useless, productive or parasitic; the sole thing demanded is that it shall be profitable. In all the modern talk about energy, efficiency, social service and the rest of it, what meaning is there except 'Get money, get it legally, and get a lot of it'? Money has become the grand test of virtue. By this test beggars fail, and for this they are despised. If one could earn even ten pounds a week at begging, it would become a respectable profession immediately. A beggar, looked at realistically, is simply a businessman, getting his living, like other businessmen, in the way that comes to hand. He has not, more than most modern people, sold his honour; he has merely made the mistake of choosing a trade at which it is impossible to grow rich.

* * *

Section D – Other literature

24 WEH Stanner: *The Dreaming & Other Essays*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Dreaming & Other Essays*.

1.

The tales are a kind of commentary, or statement, on what is thought to be permanent and ordained at the very basis of the world and life. They are a way of stating the principle which animates things. I would call them a poetic key to Reality. The Aboriginal does not ask himself the philosophical-type questions: What is 'real'? How many 'kinds' of 'reality' are there? What are the 'properties' of 'reality'? How are the properties 'interconnected'? This is the idiom of Western intellectual discourse and the fruit of a certain social history. His tales are, however, a kind of answer to such questions so far as they have been asked at all. They may not be a 'definition', but they are a 'key' to reality, a key to the singleness and the plurality of things set up once-for-all when, in *The Dreaming*, the universe becomes man's universe. The active philosophy of Aboriginal life transforms this 'key', which is expressed in the idiom of poetry, drama, and symbolism, into a principle that *The Dreaming* determines not only what life *is* but also *what it can be*. Life, so to speak, is a one-possibility thing, and what this is, is the 'meaning' of *The Dreaming*.

The tales are also a collation of *what is validly known* about such ordained permanencies. The blacks cite *The Dreaming* as a chapter of absolute validity in answer to all questions of *why* and *how*. In this sense, the tales can be regarded as being, perhaps not a definition, but a 'key' of Truth.

They also state, by their constant recitation of what was done rightly and wrongly in *The Dreaming*, the ways in which good men should, and bad men will, act now. In this sense, they are a 'key' or guide to the norms of conduct, and a prediction of how men will err.

* * *

2.

If the future poets and dramatists of Australia ever learned what a wealth of mythology, rich in its imaginative feeling and with a true ring of human drama about it, has been allowed to die unrecorded with unkempt old men in their squalid camps on the fringe of so many Australian towns, they may well write down Australia's nineteenth century with a narrower halo than it now wears. It may be felt one day that such native stories as that of Dingiri, the tired hunter, who in the beginning of the world sat down on a stone late one afternoon when he had wearied himself in pursuit of a kangaroo, and composed a song which is sung today over a thousand miles of Aboriginal country, are worth their place in an Australian anthology. There are hundreds like the story of Dingiri still taught and sung in the native areas of Australia. In all probability they will never be recorded as that of Dingiri has been.

What other mark have the tribes made on Australia? A minor poet or two, an artist here and there in a century, a scientist allowing his feelings to outweigh his detachment, a few missionaries, and very few others, have been fired (apparently out of their time) by what has seemed to them to be the needless sadness of the tribal extinction. The few things which have been painted or written in this spirit are now barely remembered. The reform movements thus initiated have in most cases tailed away ineffectually. Thought, literature, and culture have in general remained almost innocent of any touch which is of Aboriginal origin or derivation. And meanwhile the blacks have kept on dying in a context of general unawareness and indifference.

They have left behind them a social debris in hundreds of encampments of full-blood and mixed-blood descendants who are enmeshed by appallingly difficult economic and social problems, to the solution of which a negligible proportion of Australia's intellectual activity is directed.

* * *

Section D – Other literature

24 WEH Stanner: *The Dreaming & Other Essays*

3.

I spoke earlier of the need of motives of credibility. This applies to both sides. I wonder what the effect on Aboriginal minds will be when they read some of the observations made in Parliament recently by Senator Little. On several occasions the Senator has sought to persuade Parliament that only the coming of Europeans to Australia saved the Aborigines from extinction. He argued that at the end of the 18th century the Australian continent was ceasing to be capable of sustaining either human or animal life. It would soon, possibly by now, have become a desolate, uninhabited and uninhabitable desert but for the arrival of Europeans with their agricultural and pastoral skills to farm and stock it. That and that alone rescued the Aborigines from the grave. He did concede later that perhaps some Aborigines might have been able to hang on in the more lush areas but, as I followed him in Hansard, he did not shift from his main thesis which, he said, was supported by scientific evidence. I know of no scientific evidence which could imaginably be interpreted in that way. The professional colleagues I have asked cannot suggest any. What evidence there is suggests the opposite of his contention. For several millennia before 1788 much of the continent was becoming more rather than less habitable by man and beast. There had of course been fluctuations but the trend was clear. The Senator's thesis therefore is not history, nor is it myth, because both have some relation to actuality. It is not science; it is not even science-fiction. Perhaps its best place is in a hagiography of Australian saints. It is memorable only for what it says unconsciously. To say to the Aborigines 'we saved you from extinction' is the same as saying 'we are as God to you'. To go on to say 'we alone made Australia what it is' is the same as saying 'anything you have of our Australia is by our gift, grace and favour'. One might as well say: 'you are lucky people to be alive and to have anything at all'. I do not know if that kind of reasoning is at all general. If it is, I do not see how we can hope to carry the Aboriginal people with us in what we try to do for them or to help them do for themselves. What little credibility we have left for them would be gone.

* * *

Section E – Poetry

25 Rosemary Dobson: *Collected*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Rosemary Dobson.

1.

The Ship of Ice

Time is a thief at the end of a road, is a river;
Time is a dream, a life, is contained in a moment –
Well, have it your own way.

For me a world in a moment once – brief understanding
In lazy summer while the blue fly buzzed at the window
And a single raindrop gathered, rounded and fell.
But the miracle passes simply, amazement is wordless,
Discovery silent, stumbling suddenly into
Truth like a landless sea. While the raindrop falls
And the afternoon gilds and lengthens
And everything after becomes a trying to remember.

This was the story of a ship caught in a bottle,
And that bottle was Time – I confuse with another image –
Becalmed in Time and sealed with a cork of ice;
Frozen and still in the bottle, ice on the rigging,
Over the masts and yards, the drops suspended
Frozen for forty years. No water lapping,
No wind to persuade the stiffened sails, to drive them,
And drive them whither in a bottle of glass and ice?
Quiet on the decks, so wordless that one would say,
'This is a vessel of drowned men.' Over the side
Lost to a watery lure. Who knows what magic
Beckoning up through the clear, green, shifting water –
A city under the sea? A drifting mirage?
As if one circled, lost and alone in the desert,
And who can imagine the horror of deserts of ice?
Or else one might say – 'This was a ship of disaster.'
Think of the bodies, splintered and broken, the cabin
With blood on the walls, dried now to a faint inscription,
The thundering fist to the jaw, the lamp sent swinging,
The glasses tumbled – wine dripping over the table –
And all of them killed, you say? What a tale of fury!
But the truth of it is that this is a ship of the living,
Locked in a wall of ice, suspended in Time,
And, listen,
If we could stand on the deck with them we might hear voices.

FIRST VOICE:

Standing here, lad, with a bucket of frozen water
I forget what I hold it for, and so forgetting
Try forty years back to remember. Remember
Anything other than cold that cuts through my thinking,
Freezing the flow of memory, damming it short
Of warmth and fire and light. The lamp in the cabin
Swung from its chain at the cross-beams, shifting, golden.
Moved. I could move once. I turned of a sudden with the bucket
And somebody nailed me still in a shirt of ice [...]

* * *

2.

The Greek Vase

In the garden a Greek vase brimful
of leaves fallen from the grape-vine.
When the wind blows

the leaves spill out like an alphabet. Twisting
tendrils join the letters in phrases.
A sentence

is blown my way – some words perhaps dissevered
from the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*
re-formed by hazard

of wind and season. Treading carefully
among sentences, lines, whole stanzas
on the paving

I think: or are they not inscriptions
for Musa and Erinna, friends of my childhood,
in a cryptic calligraphy.

Beautiful indeed were Musa and Erinna,
their epigraphs are composed in an unfamiliar language
and written in leaves by the wind.

* * *

Section E – Poetry

25 Rosemary Dobson: *Collected*

3.

Poems a Long Way after Basho

I breathe the leaves of the basil
It has news for me –
For all my senses

Old, I strive for wisdom
As the sage bush speaks, clearly,
Many-leaved, grey and silver

Solace for my eyesight
The green leaves of borage
And its gentle blue flowers

* * *

Section E – Poetry

26 TS Eliot: *Collected Poems 1909–1962*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of TS Eliot.

1.

Preludes

I

The winter evening settles down

...

Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

TS Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909–1962*,
Faber and Faber, 2005

pp. 13–15

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Section E – Poetry

26 TS Eliot: *Collected Poems 1909–1962*

2.

I. The Burial of the Dead

April is the cruellest month, breeding

...

Oed'und leer das Meer.

TS Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909–1962*,
Faber and Faber, 2005
pp. 53 and 54

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3.

The Hollow Men

IV

The eyes are not here

...

Not with a bang but a whimper.

TS Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909–1962*,
Faber and Faber, 2005
pp. 81 and 82

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Section E – Poetry

27 Seamus Heaney: *Opened Ground: Poems 1966–1996*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Seamus Heaney.

1.

Death of a Naturalist

All year the flax-dam festered in the heart

...

That if I dipped my hand the spawn would clutch it.

Seamus Heaney, *Opened Ground: Poems 1966–1996*,
Faber and Faber, 2005

pp. 5 and 6

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2.

The Tollund Man

I

Some day I will go to Aarhus

...

Unhappy and at home.

Seamus Heaney, *Opened Ground: Poems 1966–1996*,
Faber and Faber, 2005

p. 56

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Section E – Poetry

27 Seamus Heaney: *Opened Ground: Poems 1966–1996*

3.

The Swing

[...] in the middle ground, the swing itself

...

The give and take of branches in our arms.

Seamus Heaney, *Opened Ground: Poems 1966–1996*,
Faber and Faber, 2005

pp. 428 and 429

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Section E – Poetry

28 Adrienne Rich: *The Fact of a Doorframe: Selected Poems 1950–2001*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Adrienne Rich.

1.

Necessities of Life

Piece by piece I seem

...

to tell their tales.

1962

Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe:*

Selected Poems 1950–2001,

WW Norton and Company, 2002

pp. 29 and 30

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

Jerusalem

In my dream, children

...

and the carob-tree is bare.

Balfour Street

July 1966

Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe:*

Selected Poems 1950–2001,

WW Norton and Company, 2002

pp. 50 and 51

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Section E – Poetry

28 Adrienne Rich: *The Fact of a Doorframe: Selected Poems 1950–2001*

3.

Dreamwood

In the old, scratched, cheap wood of the typing stand

...

and that is the poem and that is the late report.

1987

Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe:*

Selected Poems 1950–2001,

WW Norton and Company, 2002

pp. 224 and 225

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Section E – Poetry

29 Christina Rossetti: *Selected Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Christina Rossetti.

1.

SONG.

When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

* * *

2.

ECHO.

Come to me in the silence of the night;
Come in the speaking silence of a dream;
Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as bright
As sunlight on a stream;
Come back in tears,
O memory, hope, love of finished years.

Oh dream how sweet, too sweet, too bitter sweet,
Whose wakening should have been in Paradise,
Where souls brimfull of love abide and meet;
Where thirsting longing eyes
Watch the slow door
That opening, letting in, lets out no more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I may live
My very life again tho' cold in death:
Come back to me in dreams, that I may give
Pulse for pulse, breath for breath:
Speak low, lean low,
As long ago, my love, how long ago.

* * *

Section E – Poetry

29 Christina Rossetti: *Selected Poems*

3.

MAUDE CLARE.

Out of the church she followed them
 With a lofty step and mien:
 His bride was like a village maid,
 Maude Clare was like a queen.

“Son Thomas,” his lady mother said,
 With smiles, almost with tears:
 “May Nell and you but live as true
 As we have done for years;

“Your father thirty years ago
 Had just your tale to tell;
 But he was not so pale as you,
 Nor I so pale as Nell.”

My lord was pale with inward strife,
 And Nell was pale with pride;
 My lord gazed long on pale Maude Clare
 Or ever he kissed the bride.

“Lo, I have brought my gift, my lord,
 Have brought my gift,” she said:
 “To bless the hearth, to bless the board,
 To bless the marriage-bed.

“Here’s my half of the golden chain
 You wore about your neck,
 That day we waded ankle-deep
 For lilies in the beck:

“Here’s my half of the faded leaves
 We plucked from budding bough,
 With feet amongst the lily leaves,—
 The lilies are budding now.”

He strove to match her scorn with scorn,
 He faltered in his place:
 “Lady,” he said,—“Maude Clare,” he said,—
 “Maude Clare:”—and hid his face.

She turn’d to Nell: “My Lady Nell,
 I have a gift for you;
 Tho’, were it fruit, the bloom were gone,
 Or, were it flowers, the dew.

“Take my share of a fickle heart,
 Mine of a paltry love:
 Take it or leave it as you will,
 I wash my hands thereof.”

“And what you leave,” said Nell, “I’ll take,
 And what you spurn, I’ll wear;
 For he’s my lord for better and worse,
 And him I love, Maude Clare.

“Yea, tho’ you’re taller by the head,
 More wise, and much more fair;
 I’ll love him till he loves me best,
 Me best of all, Maude Clare.”

* * *

Section E – Poetry

30 Wisława Szymborska: *Sounds, Feelings, Thoughts: Seventy Poems by Wisława Szymborska*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Wisława Szymborska.

1.

Two Monkeys by Brueghel

I keep dreaming of my graduation exam:
in a window sit two chained monkeys,
beyond the window floats the sky,
and the sea splashes.

I am taking an exam on the history of mankind:
I stammer and flounder.

One monkey, eyes fixed upon me, listens ironically,
the other seems to be dozing—
and when silence follows a question,
he prompts me
with a soft jingling of the chain.

* * *

2.

The Joy of Writing

Where through the written forest runs that written doe?
Is it to drink from the written water,
which will copy her gentle mouth like carbon paper?
Why does she raise her head, is it something she hears?
Poised on four fragile legs borrowed from truth
she pricks up her ears under my fingers.
Stillness—this word also rustles across the paper
and parts
the branches brought forth by the word “forest.”

Above the blank page lurking, set to spring
are letters that may compose themselves all wrong,
besieging sentences
from which there is no rescue.

In a drop of ink there’s a goodly reserve
of huntsmen with eyes squinting to take aim,
ready to dash down the steep pen,
surround the doe and level their guns.

They forget that this is not real life.
Other laws, black on white, here hold sway.
The twinkling of an eye will last as long as I wish,
will consent to be divided into small eternities
full of bullets stopped in flight.
Forever, if I command it, nothing will happen here.
Against my will no leaf will fall
nor blade of grass bend under the full stop of a hoof.

Is there then such a world
over which I rule sole and absolute?
A time I bind with chains of signs?
An existence perpetuated at my command?

The joy of writing.
The power of preserving.
The revenge of a mortal hand.

* * *

Section E – Poetry

30 Wisława Szymborska: *Sounds, Feelings, Thoughts: Seventy Poems by Wisława Szymborska*

3.

Autotomy

When in danger the sea-cucumber divides itself in two:
one self it surrenders for devouring by the world,
with the second it makes good its escape.

It splits violently into perdition and salvation,
into fine and reward, into what was and what will be.

In the middle of its body there opens up a chasm
with two shores that are immediately alien.

On one shore death, on the other life.
Here despair, there hope.

If a scale exists, the balance does not tip.
If there is justice, here it is.

To die as much as necessary, without going too far.
To grow back as much as needed, from the remnant that survives.

We know how to divide ourselves, how true, we too.
But only into a body and an interrupted whisper.
Into body and poetry.

On one side the throat, laughter on the other,
that's light and quickly dying.

Here a heavy heart, there non omnis moriar,
just three little words like three feathers in ascent.

The chasm does not cut us in two.
The chasm surrounds us.

In memory of Halina Poświatowska

* * *

Assessment criteria

The examination will address all of the criteria. All students will be examined against the following criteria:

- understanding of the text demonstrated in a relevant and plausible interpretation
- ability to write expressively and coherently to present an interpretation
- understanding of how views and values may be suggested in the text
- analysis of how key passages and/or moments in the text contribute to an interpretation
- analysis of the features of a text and how they contribute to an interpretation
- analysis and close reading of textual details to support a coherent and detailed interpretation of the text

A checklist for planning and revising

Have I clearly indicated the text numbers of my chosen texts above each answer in my answer book(s)?

Have I written on texts from two different sections?

Have I demonstrated my knowledge and understanding of the chosen texts?

Have I referred to the chosen texts in detail to illustrate or justify my responses?

Have I discussed at least one set passage for each text in detail?

Have I expressed myself effectively and appropriately?

Have I edited my final version for spelling, punctuation and sentence structure?

Are there places where my handwriting would be difficult to read and should be tidied?

Are any alterations I have made clear to the reader?

END OF TASK BOOK

