



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination  
June 2011

# English Literature (Specification A)

## LTA1A

Unit 1      Texts in Context

Option A: Victorian Literature

Monday 23 May 2011    9.00 am to 11.00 am

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book.

### Time allowed

- 2 hours

### Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is AQA. The **Paper Reference** is LTA1A.
- Answer **two** questions.
- You must answer:
  - the **compulsory** question in **Section A**: Contextual Linking
  - **one** question from **Section B**: Poetry.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.

### Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 90.
- The poetry texts prescribed for this paper **may** be taken into the examination room. Texts taken into the examination must be clean: that is, free from annotation.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
  - use good English
  - organise information clearly
  - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

### Advice

- You are advised to spend about 1 hour on each question.

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**Section A: Contextual Linking****Answer Question 1.**

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In your response to this section of the paper you must refer to your wider reading across all three genres (prose, poetry and drama). You may also refer to your AS coursework texts.

**Question 1**

0	1
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Read the following extract carefully. It is taken from Sir Edmund Gosse's autobiography *Father and Son*, published in 1907. Gosse's father was an eminent naturalist who struggled to reconcile his Christian faith with the scientific theories of evolution developed by Lyell and Darwin. Here Gosse recalls the year 1857 when his father published *Omphalos*, the book in which he claimed that fossils had never been living creatures but were created by God as fossils.

How does the writer present his thoughts and feelings about aspects of Victorian life?

How far is the extract similar to and different from your wider reading in Victorian literature? You should consider the writers' choices of form, structure and language, as well as subject matter.

(45 marks)

My Father's attitude towards the theory of natural selection was critical in his career, and oddly enough, it exercised an immense influence on my own experience as a child. Let it be admitted at once, mournful as the admission is, that every instinct in his intelligence went out at first to greet the new light. It had hardly done so, when a recollection of the opening chapter of 'Genesis'<sup>1</sup> checked it at the outset.

My Father, after long reflection, prepared a theory of his own, which, as he fondly hoped, would take the wind out of Lyell's sails, and justify geology to godly readers of 'Genesis'. It was, very briefly, that there had been no gradual modification of the surface of the earth, or slow development of organic forms, but that when the catastrophic act of creation took place, the world presented, instantly, the structural appearance of a planet on which life had long existed.

The theory, coarsely enough, and to my Father's great indignation, was defined by a hasty press as being this – that God hid the fossils in the rocks in order to tempt geologists into infidelity.

Never was a book cast upon the waters with greater anticipations of success than was this curious, this obstinate, this fanatical volume. My Father lived in a fever of suspense, waiting for the tremendous issue. This 'Omphalos' of his, he thought, was to bring all the turmoil of scientific speculation to a close, fling geology into the arms of Scripture, and make the lion eat grass with the lamb. It was not surprising, he admitted, that there had been experienced an ever-increasing discord between the facts which geology brings to light and the direct statements of the early chapters of 'Genesis'. Nobody was

to blame for that. My Father, and my Father alone, possessed the secret of the enigma; he alone held the key which could smoothly open the lock of geological mystery. He offered it, with a glowing gesture, to atheists and Christians alike. This was to be the universal panacea; this the system of intellectual therapeutics which could not but heal all the maladies of the age. But, alas! atheists and Christians alike looked at it, and laughed, and threw it away.

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<sup>1</sup> The first book in *The Bible*, which describes God's creation of the Earth in six days.

**Turn over for Section B**

**Turn over ►**

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**Section B: Poetry**

Answer **one** question from this section.

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***Selected Poems – John Clare*****EITHER****Question 2**

0	2
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The editor of an anthology published fifty years ago described John Clare as ‘only a minor nature poet’.

To what extent do you agree with this view?

In your answer you should **either** refer to **two** or **three** poems in detail **or** range more widely through the whole selection. (45 marks)

**OR****Question 3**

0	3
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‘I Am’ is one of the last poems John Clare wrote.

How far do you feel that ‘I Am’ would form an appropriate conclusion to this selection of Clare’s poetry?

In your answer you should consider form, structure and language, as well as subject matter. (45 marks)

***Selected Poems – The Brontës*****OR****Question 4**

0	4
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An 1846 review of the Brontës’ first published collection suggested that “these poems may not prove attractive; they too much violate the conventionalities of poetry”.

To what extent do you agree with the view that the Brontës’ poetry is unattractive and unconventional?

In your answer you should **either** refer to **two** or **three** poems in detail **or** range more widely through the whole selection. (45 marks)

**OR****Question 5**

0	5
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Remind yourself of ‘Retrospection’, the first poem in this selection.

To what extent do you feel that this poem forms an effective introduction to the selection?

In your answer you should consider form, structure and language, as well as subject matter. (45 marks)

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**Selected Poems – Thomas Hardy****OR****Question 6**

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A biographer claims that Hardy's poetry shows a "capacity for happiness and a buoyant sense of humour".

To what extent do you agree with this view?

In your answer you should **either** refer to **two** or **three** poems in detail **or** range more widely through the whole selection. *(45 marks)*

**OR****Question 7**

0	7
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Remind yourself of the poem 'The Photograph'.

To what extent do you agree with the view that this poem is the key to the whole selection?

In your answer you should consider form, structure and language, as well as subject matter. *(45 marks)*

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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