



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/61

Paper 6 20th Century Writing

May/June 2010

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.



This document consists of **12** printed pages and **4** blank pages.



MARGARET ATWOOD: *Cat's Eye*

- 1 **Either** (a) 'The fact is that I hate this city. I've hated it so long I can hardly remember feeling any other way about it.'

Discuss the effectiveness and importance of the settings in *Cat's Eye*.

- Or** (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following passage, considering ways in which Atwood's descriptive writing conveys the concerns of the novel.

Shortly after this I became nine. I can remember my other birthdays, later and earlier ones, but not this one. There must have been a party, my first real one, because who would have come to the others? There must have been a cake, with candles and wishes and a quarter and a dime wrapped in wax paper hidden between the layers for someone to chip a tooth on, and presents. Cordelia would have been there, and Grace and Carol. These things must have occurred, but the only trace they've left on me has been a vague horror of birthday parties, not other people's, my own. I think of pastel icing, pink candles burning in the pale November afternoon light, and there is a sense of shame and failure. 5

I close my eyes, wait for pictures. I need to fill in the black square of time, go back to see what's in it. It's as if I vanish at that moment and reappear later, but different, not knowing why I have been changed. If I could even see the undersides of the boards above my head it might help. I close my eyes, wait for pictures. 10

At first there's nothing; just a receding darkness, like a tunnel. But after a while something begins to form: a thicket of dark-green leaves with purple blossoms, dark purple, a sad rich colour, and clusters of red berries, translucent as water. The vines are intergrown, so tangled over the other plants they're like a hedge. A smell of loam and another, pungent scent rises from among the leaves, a smell of old things; dense and heavy, forgotten. There's no wind but the leaves are in motion, there's a ripple, as of unseen cats, or as if the leaves are moving by themselves. 15 20

Nightshade, I think. It's a dark word. There is no nightshade in November. The nightshade is a common weed. You pull it out of the garden and throw it away. The nightshade plant is related to the potato, which accounts for the similar shape of the flowers. Potatoes too can be poisonous, if left in the sun to turn green. This is the sort of thing it's my habit to know. 25

I can tell it's the wrong memory. But the flowers, the smell, the movement of the leaves persist, rich, mesmerizing, desolating, infused with grief.

Chapter 20

- 2 **Either** (a) After Susila's death Krishna makes the following diary entry: 'Her presence was unmistakably there. I could sense it.'

Discuss how Narayan makes Susila significant to the novel as a whole.

- Or** (b) Discuss the narrative and descriptive methods in this passage, showing the extent to which they are characteristic of the novel as a whole.

I returned to my room. The postman had slipped through the door two letters for me.

We never got over the feeling that this ink was not real ink – perhaps because of its pale greenish tinge, but my father seemed to appreciate it for that very reason declaring that you couldn't buy that elegant shade even if you paid a fortune for it.

Chapter 1

LES MURRAY: from *Selected Poems*

- 3 **Either** (a) With close reference to **three** poems, explore ways in which Murray presents pioneers and their achievements.
- Or** (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following poem, showing how far you think its methods and concerns are characteristic of Murray's poems in this selection.

The Drugs of War

On vinegar and sour fish sauce Rome's legions stemmed avalanches
of whirling golden warriors whose lands furnished veterans' ranches;
when the warriors broke through at last, they'd invented sour mash
but they took to sugared wines and failed to hold the lands of hash.

By beat of drum in the wars of rum flogged peasant boys faced front 5
and their warrior chiefs conversed coolly, attired for the hunt
and tobacco came in, in a pipe of peace, but joined the pipes of war
as an after-smoke of battle, or over the maps before.

All alcohols, all spirits lost strength in the trenches, that belt-fed country
then morphine summoned warrior dreams in ruined and would-be gentry; 10
stewed tea and vodka and benzedrine helped quell that mechanized fury –
the side that won by half a head then provided judge and jury.

In the acid war the word was Score; rising helicopters cried Smack-Smack!
Boys laid a napalm trip on earth and tried to take it back
but the pot boiled over in the rear; fighters tripped on their lines of force 15
and victory went to the supple hard side, eaters of fish sauce.

The perennial war drugs are made in ourselves: sex and adrenalin,
blood, and the endomorphias that transmute defeat and pain
and others hardly less chemical: eagles, justice, loyalty, edge,
the Judas face of every idea, and the fish that ferments in the brain. 20

Turn to page 8 for Question 4.

CARYL CHURCHILL: *Top Girls*

- 4 **Either** (a) Discuss the ways in which Churchill uses humour to explore the issues of the play and create dramatic effects in *Top Girls*.
- Or** (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following passage, commenting on its dramatic effects and the way its concerns relate to the play as a whole.

MRS KIDD *comes in.*

MRS KIDD: Excuse me.

MARLENE: Yes.

MRS KIDD: Excuse me.

MARLENE: Can I help you? 5

MRS KIDD: Excuse me bursting in on you like this but I have to talk to you.

MARLENE: I am engaged at the moment. / If you could go to reception –

MRS KIDD: I'm Rosemary Kidd, Howard's wife, you don't recognise me but we did meet, I remember you of course / but you wouldn't –

MARLENE: Yes of course, Mrs Kidd, I'm sorry, we did meet. Howard's about 10
somewhere I expect, have you looked in his office?

MRS KIDD: Howard's not about, no. I'm afraid it's you I've come to see if I could have a minute or two.

MARLENE: I do have an appointment in five minutes.

MRS KIDD: This won't take five minutes. I'm very sorry. It is a matter of some 15
urgency.

MARLENE: Well of course. What can I do for you?

MRS KIDD: I just wanted a chat, an informal chat. It's not something I can simply
– I'm sorry if I'm interrupting your work. I know office work isn't like 20
housework / which is all interruptions.

MARLENE: No no, this is my niece. Angie. Mrs Kidd.

MRS KIDD: Very pleased to meet you.

ANGIE: Very well thank you.

MRS KIDD: Howard's not in today.

MARLENE: Isn't he? 25

MRS KIDD: He's feeling poorly.

MARLENE: I didn't know. I'm sorry to hear that.

MRS KIDD: The fact is he's in a state of shock. About what's happened.

MARLENE: What has happened?

MRS KIDD: You should know if anyone. I'm referring to you being appointed 30
managing director instead of Howard. He hasn't been at all well all weekend. He hasn't slept for three nights. I haven't slept.

MARLENE: I'm sorry to hear that, Mrs Kidd. Has he thought of taking sleeping pills?

MRS KIDD: It's very hard when someone has worked all these years. 35

MARLENE: Business life is full of little setbacks. I'm sure Howard knows that. He'll bounce back in a day or two. We all bounce back.

MRS KIDD: If you could see him you'd know what I'm talking about. What's it going to do to him working for a woman? I think if it was a man he'd get over it as something normal. 40

MARLENE: I think he's going to have to get over it.

MRS KIDD: It's me that bears the brunt. I'm not the one that's been promoted. I put him first every inch of the way. And now what do I get? You women this, you women that. It's not my fault. You're going to have to be very careful how you handle him. He's very hurt. 45

MARLENE: Naturally I'll be tactful and pleasant to him, you don't start pushing someone round. I'll consult him over any decisions affecting his

department. But that's no different, Mrs Kidd, from any of my other colleagues.

MRS KIDD: I think it is different, because he's a man.

50

MARLENE: I'm not quite sure why you came to see me.

MRS KIDD: I had to do something.

Act 2, Scene 3

HAROLD PINTER: *The Homecoming*

5 **Either** (a) 'The comedy in *The Homecoming* arises out of the characters' need to defend or wound.'

How far would you agree with this statement?

Or (b) Paying close attention to language and tone, discuss the presentation and significance of Lenny in the following passage and in the play as a whole.

Silence.

LENNY: You and my brother are newly-weds, are you?

RUTH: It's not in my way.

Act 1

T. S. ELIOT: *Prufrock and Other Observations*, *The Waste Land*, and *The Hollow Men*

- 6 **Either** (a) Discuss Eliot's presentation of urban life. Refer to at least **two** poems from this selection.
- Or** (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following extract from 'The Hollow Men', considering in particular Eliot's use of imagery here and elsewhere in the poem.

IV

The eyes are not here
 There are no eyes here
 In this valley of dying stars
 In this hollow valley
 This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms 5

In this last of meeting places
 We grope together
 And avoid speech
 Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless 10
 The eyes reappear
 As the perpetual star
 Multifoliate rose
 Of death's twilight kingdom

The hope only 15
 Of empty men.

WOLE SOYINKA: *Death and the King's Horseman*

7 **Either** (a) Discuss the effects created by Soyinka's use of different styles of language to present the Yorubans and the British.

Or (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following passage, paying particular attention to Soyinka's presentation of the relationship between Elesin and Iyaloja.

- IYALOJA: How boldly the lizard struts before the pigeon when it was the eagle itself he promised us he would confront.
- ELESIN: I don't ask you to take pity on me Iyaloja. You have a message for me or you would not have come. Even if it is the curses of the world, I shall listen. 5
- IYALOJA: You made so bold with the servant of the white king who took your side against death. I must tell your brother chiefs when I return how bravely you waged war against him. Especially with words.
- ELESIN: I more than deserve your scorn.
- IYALOJA: (*with sudden anger*) I warned you, if you must leave a seed behind, be sure it is not tainted with the curses of the world. Who are you to open a new life when you dared not open the door to a new existence? I say who are you to make so bold? (*The BRIDE sobs and IYALOJA notices her. Her contempt noticeably increases as she turns back to ELESIN.*) Oh you self-vaunted stem of the plantain, how hollow it all proves. The pith is gone in the parent stem, so how will it prove with the new shoot? How will it go with that earth that bears it? Who are you to bring this abomination on us! 10 15
- ELESIN: My powers deserted me. My charms, my spells, even my voice lacked strength when I made to summon the powers that would lead me over the last measure of earth into the land of the fleshless. You saw it, Iyaloja. You saw me struggle to retrieve my will from the power of the stranger whose shadow fell across the doorway and left me floundering and blundering in a maze I had never before encountered. My senses were numbed when the touch of cold iron came upon my wrists. I could do nothing to save myself. 20 25
- IYALOJA: You have betrayed us. We fed you sweetmeats such as we hoped awaited you on the other side. But you said No, I must eat the world's left-overs. We said you were the hunter who brought the quarry down; to you belonged the vital portions of the game. No, you said, I am the hunter's dog and I shall eat the entrails of the game and the faeces of the hunter. We said you were the hunter returning home in triumph, a slain buffalo pressing down on his neck; you said Wait, I first must turn up this cricket hole with my toes. We said yours was the doorway at which we first spy the tapper when he comes down from the tree, yours was the blessing of the twilight wine, the purl that brings night spirits out of doors to steal their portion before the light of day. We said yours was the body of wine whose burden shakes the tapper like a sudden gust on his perch. You said, No, I am content to lick the dregs from each calabash when the drinkers are done. We said, the dew on earth's surface was for you to wash your feet along the slopes of honour. You said No, I shall step in the vomit of cats and the droppings of mice; I shall fight them for the left-overs of the world. 30 35 40
- ELESIN: Enough Iyaloja, enough. 45
- IYALOJA: We called you leader and oh, how you led us on. What we have no intention of eating should not be held to the nose.
- ELESIN: Enough, enough. My shame is heavy enough.

IYALOJA: Wait. I came with a burden.
ELESIN: You have more than discharged it. 50
IYALOJA: I wish I could pity you.
ELESIN: I need neither pity nor the pity of the world. I need understanding. Even
I need to understand. You were present at my defeat. You were part of
the beginnings. You brought about the renewal of my tie to earth, you
helped in the binding of the cord. 55
IYALOJA: I gave you warning. The river which fills up before our eyes does not
sweep us away in its flood.

Scene 5

VIRGINIA WOOLF: *To the Lighthouse*

- 8 **Either** (a) Discuss the presentation of Mrs Ramsay and Lily Briscoe and the relationship between them.
- Or** (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following passage, considering its effectiveness as the conclusion to the novel.

'He must have reached it,' said Lily Briscoe aloud, feeling suddenly completely tired out. For the Lighthouse had become almost invisible, had melted away into a blue haze, and the effort of looking at it and the effort of thinking of him landing there, which both seemed to be one and the same effort, had stretched her body and mind to the utmost. Ah, but she was relieved. What-ever she had wanted to give him, when he left her that morning, she had given him at last. 5

'He has landed,' she said aloud. 'It is finished.' Then, surging up, puffing slightly, old Mr. Carmichael stood beside her, looking like an old pagan god, shaggy, with weeds in his hair and the trident (it was only a French novel) in his hand. He stood by her on the edge of the lawn, swaying a little in his bulk, and said, shading his eyes with his hand: 'They will have landed,' and she felt that she had been right. They had not needed to speak. They had been thinking the same things and he had answered her without her asking him anything. He stood there spreading his hands over all the weakness and suffering of mankind; she thought he was surveying, tolerantly, compassionately, their final destiny. Now he has crowned the occasion, she thought, when his hand slowly fell, as if she had seen him let fall from his great height a wreath of violets and asphodels which, fluttering slowly, lay at length upon the earth. 10 15

Quickly, as if she were recalled by something over there, she turned to her canvas. There it was – her picture. Yes, with all its greens and blues, its lines running up and across, its attempt at something. It would be hung in the attics, she thought; it would be destroyed. But what did that matter? she asked herself, taking up her brush again. She looked at the steps; they were empty; she looked at her canvas; it was blurred. With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision. 20 25

Chapter 13

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