



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
January 2009

English Literature (Specification A)

LTA1A

Unit 1 Texts in Context

Option A: Victorian Literature

Wednesday 14 January 2009 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.

SECTION A: CONTEXTUAL LINKING**Answer Question 1.**

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.

- 1 Read the following extract carefully. It is taken from Nathaniel Hawthorne's memoir *Our Old Home*, published in 1863. Hawthorne was an American novelist who worked as a representative of the U.S. government in Liverpool between 1853 and 1857. Here he describes the poverty he saw in the working class districts of the city.

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.

(45 marks)

The population of these dismal abodes appeared to consider the sidewalks and middle of the street as their common hall. In a drama of low life, the unity of place might be arranged rigidly according to the classic rule, and the street be the one locality in which every scene and incident should occur. Courtship, quarrels, plot and counterplot, conspiracies for robbery and murder, family difficulties or agreements, – all such matters, I doubt not, are constantly discussed or transacted in this sky-roofed saloon, so regally hung with its sombre canopy of coal-smoke. Whatever the disadvantages of the English climate, the only comfortable or wholesome part of life, for the city poor, must be spent in the open air. The stifled and squalid rooms where they lie down at night, whole families and neighborhoods together, or sulkily elbow one another in the daytime, when a settled rain drives them within doors, are worse horrors than it is worth while (without a practical object in view) to admit into one's imagination. No wonder that they creep forth from the foul mystery of their interiors, stumble down from their garrets, or scramble up out of their cellars, on the upper step of which you may see the grimy housewife, before the shower is ended, letting the raindrops gutter down her visage; while her children (an impish progeny of cavernous recesses below the common sphere of humanity) swarm into the daylight and attain all that they know of personal purification in the nearest mud-puddle ... And how difficult to believe that anything so precious as a germ of immortal growth can have been buried under this dirt-heap, plunged into this cesspool of misery and vice! As often as I beheld the scene, it affected me with surprise and loathsome interest, much resembling, though in a far intenser degree, the feeling with which, when a boy, I used to turn over a plank or an old log that had long lain on the damp ground, and found a vivacious multitude of unclean and devilish-looking insects scampering to and fro beneath it.

SECTION B: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

EITHER*Selected Poems – John Clare*

- 2 A biographer has written that Clare’s poetry is “haunted by memories of his childhood”.

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

- 3 ‘The Foddering Boy’ is one of John Clare’s earliest poems.

To what extent do you feel that this poem would form an appropriate introduction to a selection of Clare’s writing?

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

OR*Selected Poems – The Brontës*

- 4 “The Brontës lived in a fantasy world: they didn’t write about real life.”

How far do you agree with this view of the Brontës’ poetry?

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

- 5 ‘The Arbour’ is one of Anne Brontë’s last poems.

To what extent do you feel that this poem would form an effective conclusion to a selection of the Brontës’ writing?

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

Turn over ►

OR*Selected Poems – Thomas Hardy*

- 6 A Victorian critic wrote that Hardy's poetry is "harsh and full of strange words".

How far do you agree with this claim?

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

- 7 Remind yourself of 'Wessex Heights'.

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COPYRIGHT-HOLDERS AND PUBLISHERS

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases, efforts to contact copyright-holders have been unsuccessful and AQA will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements in future papers if notified.

Copyright © 2009 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.