



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
January 2010

English Literature (Specification A)

LTA1A

Unit 1 Texts in Context

Option A: Victorian Literature

Monday 18 January 2010 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm

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 ‘White Slavery in London’, an article written by the activist Annie Besant in 1888 for the workers’ newspaper *Link*. Here Besant describes the working conditions at the Bryant and May match factory in London and calls for a consumer boycott in support of the women employed there.

How does the writer present her 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)

A very bitter memory survives in the factory. Mr. Theodore Bryant, to show his admiration of Mr. Gladstone and the greatness of his own public spirit, bethought him to erect a statue to that eminent statesman. In order that his workgirls might have the privilege of contributing, he stopped 1s. each out of their wages, and further deprived them of half-a-day’s work by closing the factory, “giving them a holiday.” (“We don’t want no holidays,” said one of the girls pathetically, for – needless to say – the poorer employees of such a firm lose their wages when a holiday is “given.”) So furious were the girls at this cruel plundering, that many went to the unveiling of the statue with stones and bricks in their pockets, and I was conscious of a wish that some of those bricks had made an impression on Mr. Bryant’s conscience. Later on they surrounded the statue – “we paid for it” they cried savagely – shouting and yelling, and a gruesome story is told that some cut their arms and let their blood trickle on the marble paid for, in very truth, by their blood ...

Such is a bald account of one form of white slavery as it exists in London. With chattel slaves Mr. Bryant could not have made his huge fortune, for he could not have fed, clothed, and housed them for 4s. a week each, and they would have had a definite money value which would have served as a protection. But who cares for the fate of these white wage slaves? Born in slums, driven to work while still children, undersized because underfed, oppressed because helpless, flung aside as soon as worked out, who cares if they die or go on the streets, provided only that the Bryant and May shareholders get their 23 per cent, and Mr. Theodore Bryant can erect statues and buy parks? Oh if we had but a people’s Dante, to make a special circle in the Inferno for those who live on this misery, and suck wealth out of the starvation of helpless girls.

Failing a poet to hold up their conduct to the execration of posterity, enshrined in deathless verse, let us strive to touch their consciences, *i.e.* their pockets, and let us at least avoid being “partakers of their sins,” by abstaining from using their commodities.

SECTION B: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

EITHER*Selected Poems – John Clare*

- 2 Another poet of Clare’s time felt that “the description too much prevailed over the sentiment” in Clare’s poetry.

How far do you agree that Clare’s feelings are obscured by his descriptive writing?

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 ‘To be Placed at the Back of his Portrait’ is one of John Clare’s last poems.

How far do you feel that this poem would form an effective conclusion 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 This selection’s editor writes of the Brontës’ “solemnity and lack of humour”.

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 Remind yourself of Emily Brontë’s poem ‘To Imagination’.

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)

Turn over ►

OR

Selected Poems – Thomas Hardy

- 6 A critic has written of Hardy's "compassion and humanity".

To what extent does Hardy's poetry show his pity for the sufferings of others?

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 Thomas Hardy placed 'The Going' at the beginning of his collection *Poems of 1912–13*.

How far do you feel that this poem would form an appropriate introduction to the selection of Hardy's poetry that you have studied?

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

END OF QUESTIONS

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