

General Certificate of Education
June 2007
Advanced Level Examination



ENGLISH LITERATURE (SPECIFICATION B)
Unit 6 Exploring Texts

LTB6

Tuesday 19 June 2007 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book
- your copy of the Pre-Release Material.

Time allowed: 3 hours (including 30 minutes' reading time)

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or 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 LTB6.
- Answer **both** questions.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- There are 40 marks for each question.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You should divide your time equally between both questions.

There are no questions printed on this page

The Historical Novel

Answer **both** questions.

30 minutes are allocated in the examination to the reading and consideration of the material for this paper.

You may make notes during this time if you wish.

In Question 1 you will be tested on your ability to:

- respond with knowledge and understanding to literary texts of different types and periods, exploring and commenting on relationships and comparisons between literary texts
- show detailed understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings.

- 1 Compare and contrast the ways in which Rose Tremain, in the extract from *Restoration*, and Thomas Keneally, in the extract from *Schindler's Ark*, recreate history.

(40 marks)

In Question 2 you will be tested on your ability to:

- communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent written expression
- articulate independent opinions and judgements, informed by different interpretations of literary texts by other readers
- evaluate the significance of cultural, historical and other contextual influences upon literary texts and study.

- 2 Write about:

- which of the views given in Items Two, Three and Four seem to you applicable to the opening of Tremain's novel, *Restoration*
- whether any of the prose fiction you have read or studied might be regarded in any way as historical fiction.

(40 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

Turn over ►

The following is the opening of the novel *Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally. It was published in 1982 and is based on the true story of Oskar Schindler, who risked his life to protect Jews from German persecution in Nazi-occupied Poland during World War II.

Prologue *Autumn 1943*

In Poland's deepest autumn, a tall young man in an expensive overcoat, double-breasted dinner jacket beneath it and – in the lapel of the dinner jacket – a large ornamental gold-on-black enamel swastika, emerged from a fashionable apartment block in Straszewskiego Street on the edge of the ancient centre of Cracow, and saw his chauffeur waiting with fuming breath by the open door of an enormous and, even in this blackened world, lustrous Adler limousine.

“Watch the pavement, Herr Schindler,” said the chauffeur. “It's icy like a widow's heart.”

In observing this small winter scene, we are on safe ground. The tall young man would to the end of his days wear double-breasted suits, would, being something of an engineer, always be gratified by large dazzling vehicles, would, though a German and at this point in history a German of some influence, always be the sort of man with whom a Polish chauffeur could safely crack a lame, comradely joke.

But it will not be possible to see the whole story under such easy character headings. For this is the story of the pragmatic triumph of good over evil, a triumph in eminently measurable, statistical, unobtrusive terms. When you work from the other end of the beast, when you chronicle the predictable and measurable success evil generally achieves, it is easy to be wise, wry, piercing, to avoid bathos. It is easy to show the inevitability by which evil acquires all of what you could call the *real estate* of the story, even though good might finish up with a few imponderables like dignity and self-knowledge. Fatal human malice is the staple of narrators, original sin the mother-fluid of historians. But it is a risky enterprise to have to write of virtue.

In fact *virtue* is such a dangerous word that we have to rush to explain; Herr Oskar Schindler, chancing his glimmering shoes on the icy pavement in this old and elegant quarter of Cracow, was not a virtuous young man in the customary sense. In this city he kept house with his German mistress and maintained a long affair with his Polish secretary. His wife Emilie chose to live most of the time at home in Moravia, though she sometimes came to Poland to visit him. There's this to be said for him, that to all his women he was a well-mannered and generous lover. But under the normal interpretation of *virtue* that's no excuse.

Likewise he was a drinker. Some of the time he drank for the pure glow of it, at other times with associates, bureaucrats, SS men for more palpable results. Like few others, he was capable of staying canny while drinking, of keeping his head. That again, though, under the narrow interpretation of morality, has never been an excuse for carousing. And although Herr Schindler's merit is well documented, it is a feature of his ambiguity that he worked within or, at least, on the strength of, a corrupt and savage scheme; one which filled Europe with camps of varying but consistent inhumanity and created a submerged, unspoken-of nation of prisoners. The best thing, therefore, may be to begin with a tentative instance of Herr Schindler's strange virtue and of the places and associates to which it brought him.

At the end of Straszewskiego Street, the car moved beneath the black bulk of Wawel Castle, from which the National Socialist Party's darling lawyer Hans Frank ruled the Government General of Poland. As from the palace of any evil giant, no light showed. Neither Herr Schindler nor the driver glanced up at the ramparts as the car turned south-east towards the river. At the Podgórze Bridge, the guards, placed above the freezing Vistula to prevent the transit of partisans and other curfew-breakers between Podgórze and Cracow, were used to the vehicle, to Herr Schindler's face, to the Passierschein presented by the chauffeur. Herr Schindler passed this check-point frequently, travelling either from his factory (where he also had an apartment) to the city on business, or else from his Straszewskiego Street apartment to his works in the suburb of Zablocie. They were used to seeing him after dark, too, attired formally or semi-formally, passing one way or another to a dinner, a party, a bedroom; perhaps, as was the case tonight, on his way ten kilometres out of town to the forced labour camp at Plaszów, to dine there with SS Hauptsturmführer Amon Goeth, that highly placed sensualist. Herr Schindler had a reputation for being generous with gifts of drink at Christmas, and so the car was permitted to pass over into the suburb of Podgórze without much delay.

It is certain that by this stage of his history, in spite of his liking for good food and wine, Herr Schindler approached tonight's dinner at Commandant Goeth's more with loathing than with anticipation. There had in fact never been a time when to sit and drink with Amon had not been a repellent business. Yet the revulsion Herr Schindler felt was of a piquant kind, an ancient exultant sense of abomination such as, in a medieval painting, the just show for the damned. An emotion, that is, which stung Oskar rather than unmanned him.

In the black leather interior of the Adler as it raced along the tramtracks in what was until recently the Jewish ghetto, Herr Schindler chain smoked, as ever. But it was composed chain smoking. There was never tension in the hands; he was stylish. His manner implied that he knew where the next cigarette was coming from and the next bottle of cognac. Only he could have told us whether he had to succour himself from a flask as he passed by the mute, black village of Prokocim and saw, on the railway line to Lwów, a string of stalled cattle wagons, which might hold infantry or prisoners or even – though the odds on this were long – cattle.

Out in the countryside, perhaps ten kilometres from the centre of town, the Adler turned right at a street named – by an irony – Jerozolimska. This night of sharp frosty outlines, Herr Schindler saw beneath the hill first a ruined synagogue, and then the bare shapes of what passed these days as the city of Jerusalem, Forced Labour Camp Plaszów, barrack town of twenty thousand unquiet Jews, Polacks and Gypsies. The Ukrainian and Waffen SS men on the gate greeted Herr Schindler courteously, for he was known at least as well here as on the Podgórze Bridge.

END OF EXTRACT

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