



**GCE A level**

1174/01

**ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**LT4: Poetry and Drama 2**

P.M. TUESDAY, 24 January 2012

2 ½ hours

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

In addition to this examination paper, you will need a 12 page answer book.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Use black ink or black ball-point pen.

Answer **two** questions, one from Section A and one from Section B.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

Questions in Section A and Section B carry 40 marks.

In both Section A and Section B you will be assessed on your ability to:

- articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression (AO1)
- demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts (AO2)
- explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers (AO3)
- demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received (AO4).

You are reminded that assessment will take into account the quality of written communication used in your answers.

**Section A**

**Critical Reading of Poetry**

*Answer **one** question from this section.*

*Your response must include:*

- *detailed analysis of your poetry set text, including a consideration of relevant contexts and critical readings;*
- *close reference to any **one** of the unseen extracts of poetry which appear on the following pages.*

**Either,**

1. Examine some of the ways poets present human limitations and/or weaknesses.

**Or,**

2. “Every successful poem reminds us that the whole truth is never to be found on the surface of things.” Discuss this view.

**Or,**

3. “One way or another, poetry always seems to be concerned with love.” How far do you agree with this view?

**Or,**

4. “It is primarily through imagery that poets make clear what cannot easily be expressed.” Consider this view.

**Or,**

5. Explore some of the ways poets make use of irony in their writing.

### Poetry Extracts

1. In this late-seventeenth century poem, the writer considers love and the passage of time.

**Ah, how sweet it is to love!**

AH, how sweet it is to love!  
 Ah, how gay is young Desire!  
 And what pleasing pains we prove  
 When we first approach Love's fire!  
 Pains of love be sweeter far  
 Than all other pleasures are.

Sighs which are from lovers blown  
 Do but gently heave the heart:  
 Ev'n the tears they shed alone  
 Cure, like trickling balm, their smart:  
 Lovers, when they lose their breath,  
 Bleed away in easy death.

Love and Time with reverence use,  
 Treat them like a parting friend;  
 Nor the golden gifts refuse  
 Which in youth sincere they send:  
 For each year their price is more,  
 And they less simple than before.

Love, like spring-tides full and high,  
 Swells in every youthful vein;  
 But each tide does less supply,  
 Till they quite shrink in again:  
 If a flow in age appear,  
 'Tis but rain, and runs not clear.

**John Dryden**

2. In this early-twenty-first century work, the poet meditates upon a relationship.

### **A Soft-edged Reed of Light**

That was the house where you asked me to remain  
 on the eve of my planned departure. Do you remember?  
 The house remembers it – the deal table  
 With the late September sun stretched on its back.  
*As long as you like*, you said, and the chairs, the clock,  
 the diamond leaded lights in the pine-clad alcove  
 of that 1960s breakfast-room were our witnesses.  
 I had only meant to stay for a week  
 but you reached out a hand, the soft white cuff of your shirt  
 open at the wrist, and out in the yard,  
 the walls of the house considered themselves  
 in the murk of the lily-pond, and it was done.

Done. Whatever gods had bent to us then to whisper,  
*Here is your remedy – take it – here, your future*,  
 either they lied or we misheard.  
 How changed we are now, how superior  
 after the end of it – the unborn children,  
 the mornings that came with a soft-edged reed of light  
 over and over, the empty rooms we woke to.  
 And yet if that same dark-haired boy  
 were to lean towards me now, with one shy hand  
 bathed in September sun, as if to say,  
*All things are possible – then why not this?*  
 I'd take it still, praying it might be so.

**Julia Copus**

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3. In this early-twentieth century poem, the writer closely observes life in an urban setting.

### A Side Street

On the warm Sunday afternoons  
 And every evening in the Spring and Summer  
 When the night hurries the late home-comer  
 And the air grows softer, and scraps of tunes  
 Float from the open windows and jar  
 Against the voices of children and the hum of a car;  
 When the city noises commingle and melt  
 With a restless something half-seen, half-felt—  
 I see them always there,  
 Upon the low, smooth wall before the church;  
 That row of little girls who sit and stare  
 Like sparrows on a granite perch.  
 They come in twittering couples or walk alone  
 To their gray bough of stone,  
 Sometimes by twos and threes, sometimes as many as five—  
 But always they sit there on the narrow coping  
 Bright-eyed and solemn, scarcely hoping  
 To see more than what is merely moving and alive. . .  
 They hear the couples pass; the lisp of happy feet  
 Increases and the night grows suddenly sweet. . .  
 Before the quiet church that smells of death  
 They sit.  
 And Life sweeps past them with a rushing breath  
 And reaches out and plucks them by the hand  
 And calls them boldly, whispering to each  
 In some strange speech  
 They tremble to but cannot understand.  
 It thrills and troubles them, as one by one,  
 The days run off like water through a sieve;  
 While, with a gaze as candid as the sun,  
 Poignant and puzzled and inquisitive,  
 They come and sit,—  
 A part of life and yet apart from it.

**Louis Untermeyer**

4. In this middle-twentieth century poem, the writer reflects upon a separation.

**Walking Away**

(for Sean)

It is eighteen years ago, almost to the day –  
 A sunny day with leaves just turning,  
 The touch-lines new-ruled – since I watched you play  
 Your first game of football, then, like a satellite  
 Wrenched from its orbit go drifting away

Behind a scatter of boys. I can see  
 You walking away from me towards the school  
 With the pathos of a half-fledged thing set free  
 Into a wilderness, the gait of one  
 Who finds no path where the path should be.

That hesitant figure, eddying away  
 Like a winged seed loosened from its parent stem,  
 Has something I never quite grasp to convey  
 About nature's give-and-take – the small, the scorching  
 Ordeals which fire one's irresolute clay.

I have had worse partings, but none that so  
 Gnaws at my mind still. Perhaps it is roughly  
 Saying what God alone could perfectly show –  
 How selfhood begins with a walking away,  
 And love is proved in the letting go.

**C. Day Lewis**

5. In this late-nineteenth century work, the poet reflects upon courage and endurance.

**Invictus**

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll.  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

**William Ernest Henley**

**Section B****Shakespeare and related Drama**

Answer **one** question from this section.

Each question in this section tests your knowledge and understanding of both your **core** Shakespeare text (which you have studied in detail) and your **partner** drama text (studied for wider reading). In your discussion of **both** texts, your response must include a consideration of relevant contexts and critical readings.

***King Lear and Oedipus Rex***

**Either,**

6. “In *King Lear*, Shakespeare makes very effective use of the tension between what characters choose to do and what they ought to do.” In the light of this remark, and with comparative reference to *Oedipus Rex*, examine Shakespeare’s presentation of the theme of duty.

**Or,**

7. Examine the presentation and dramatic importance of violence in *King Lear*, showing how your ideas have been illuminated by your reading of *Oedipus Rex*.

***Hamlet and The Revenger’s Tragedy***

**Either,**

8. Explore Shakespeare’s presentation of the theme of justice in *Hamlet* and show how far your understanding and appreciation of this issue have been informed by your reading of *The Revenger’s Tragedy*.

**Or,**

9. “From first to last, there is an overwhelming air of decay.” Examine Shakespeare’s presentation of the theme of decay in *Hamlet* and show how your ideas have been influenced by Middleton’s treatment of the same theme in *The Revenger’s Tragedy*.



***Measure for Measure and The Duchess of Malfi***

**Either,**

10. With comparative reference to *The Duchess of Malfi*, discuss the dramatic importance of religion in *Measure for Measure*.

**Or,**

11. “It is impossible to sympathise fully with any of the characters in *Measure for Measure*.” In the light of this remark, explore Shakespeare’s techniques in shaping our responses to his characters, with comparative reference to Webster’s techniques in *The Duchess of Malfi*.

***The Tempest and Dr Faustus***

**Either,**

12. Examine Shakespeare’s presentation of the theme of obedience in *The Tempest* and show how your reading of *Dr Faustus* has illuminated your ideas.

**Or,**

13. “The conclusion to *The Tempest* might leave any audience with an uncomfortable sense of injustice.” How far do you agree with this view and to what extent has your reading of *Dr Faustus* influenced your ideas?

***Richard II and Edward II***

**Either,**

14. Discuss Shakespeare’s examination of the qualities of kingship in *Richard II*. In the course of your writing, show how Marlowe’s treatment of the theme of kingship in *Edward II* has illuminated your ideas.

**Or,**

15. One critic has asked, “Is it possible, at the end of the play, to believe with any confidence that England is in better hands?” What is your view of Shakespeare’s presentation of Richard’s opponents in the light of this remark, and how far have your ideas been influenced by your reading of *Edward II*?