



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level Examination
June 2015

Creative Writing

CREW3

Unit 3 From Reading to Writing

Monday 8 June 2015 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 16-page answer book.

Time allowed

- 3 hours

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book.
The **Paper Reference** is CREW3.
- Answer **both** questions.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- There are 30 marks for each question.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Please read this advice carefully before you turn to the material.

Instructions

- Answer **both** questions.
- You must make it clear in your answer book which text you are responding to.
- In Question 1 you must respond to the instruction given in the writing prompt provided.
- Your creative writing response does not need to be in the same form as the source text.
- In Question 2, you should pay equal attention to the published work that you have chosen as a stimulus and your own writing.

Advice

- You are advised to spend 30 minutes reading the stimulus material before you begin your writing.
- It is recommended that you then spend **at least 1 hour** on each question.

Answer **both** questions.

Texts A – E are published creative texts. Each text is accompanied by a prompt for your own writing. Choose one text as a stimulus for the two questions below.

Question 1

0 1 Use your chosen text and accompanying prompt as a stimulus for your own piece of creative writing.

[30 marks]

Question 2

0 2 Write a commentary on the writing that you have produced in Question 1.

Your commentary should:

- explore aspects of the author's craft in the text that you have selected as a stimulus
- reflect on the ways in which you have drawn on the author's text to inspire your own piece of writing
- pay equal attention to the published work that you have chosen as a stimulus and your own writing.

[30 marks]

Turn over for Texts A–E

Text A

The following text is a poem by Sharon Olds, published in the collection *The Unswept Room* in 2003.

In this text, the poet writes from the point of view of a newborn baby.

Write a text in which you adopt an unusual point of view.

First Hour

That hour, I was most myself. I had shrugged
my mother slowly off, I lay there
taking my first breaths, as if
the air of the room was blowing me
like a bubble. All I had to do
was go out along the line of my gaze and back,
feeling gravity, silk, the
pressure of the air a caress, smelling on
myself her creamy blood. The air
was softly touching my skin and mouth,
entering me and drawing forth the little
sighs I did not know as mine.
I was not afraid. I lay in the quiet
and looked, and did the wordless thought,
my mind was getting its oxygen
direct, the rich mix by mouth.
I hated no one. I gazed and gazed,
and everything was interesting, I was
free, not yet in love, I did not
belong to anyone, I had drunk
no milk yet – – no one had
my heart. I was not very human. I did not
know there was anyone else. I lay
like a god, for an hour, then they came for me
and took me to my mother.

Sharon Olds

Text B

The following text is an article written by Eva Wiseman and published in the *Observer Magazine* on 20 October 2013.

In this text, the author imagines the lives and relationships of two strangers she observes in a supermarket.

Write a text in which you imagine the lives of people you have observed in an everyday context.

Supermarket Romance

Around 7.30 pm during the week, the new Tesco Express at the end of my road is a pulsing heart. It throbs with students and their pasta sauces. I stood in the self-checkout queue on Thursday behind a boy in a leather jacket and saw his face the moment he made eye contact with a girl six people ahead. She looked up when a child screamed, and they saw each other, and then they looked away, and then they looked back.

It was the first day of winter, and you could feel it in your teeth. Nobody was ready for this blue-tinted wind, and the queue was alternately shivering and sweating. Behind me the line was getting longer, and there was an air of war. Except in front of me, where time had sort of...stopped. The girl, her body half turned towards the window and half towards us, had black-dyed hair and eyeliner she'd smudged into little peaks. When she glanced at the boy again I noticed a quick blush that reached almost to her mascara.

Beside me, he shuffled his shopping with the self-conscious air of somebody whose basket describes them far too easily.

A woman was making a fuss over a leek, and the manager was called. The boy risked a smile then, at the girl, raising his eyebrows imperceptibly. She responded with a small but dramatic expulsion of air, then looked away. He gazed at his feet, hiding a grin. He could love her, he thought. He loved her. The way she rubbed his back in the night. The way she raised their child. She sighed deeply as she began to swipe her shopping, and I saw how the combination of her spaghetti and eggs, and his bacon and cream would make a perfect carbonara. His foot was tapping faster now, now that she was close to the end.

She paused, briefly, and the till shouted at her. "Unexpected item in the bagging area," it said, and, flustered she turned towards the boy as if under attack. For a moment I thought he was going to run to her and push past the pale teenager with his headphones leaking and go to her, and remove her purse from the bagging area where it was confusing the technology, and take her away from here, take her home.

But then the queue moved, and her card was accepted, and she walked slowly out of Tesco leaving the romance, her glamour, and a paper receipt. And this boy, whose shoulders slumped. I knew, then, why Tesco Express floods with students, taking their time over the milk. Supermarkets are permanent points in their lives, the same in London and Liverpool. Far away from home, their comfort calms.

Turn over for the next text

Text C

The following text is an extract from the play *Equus* by Peter Shaffer, first published in 1973.

In this extract, Dysart, a psychiatrist, is meeting his patient, Alan, for the first time. Here the playwright uses questions and answers to present their relationship.

The songs Alan is singing are all famous advertising jingles from the 1970s that an audience of the time would recognise.

Write a text where you use questions and answers to present a relationship.

Nurse goes out and back to her place. Dysart sits, opening a file.

DYSART So: did you have a good journey? I hope they gave you lunch at least. Not that there's much to choose between a British Rail meal and one here.

Alan stands staring at him.

DYSART Won't you sit down?

Pause. He does not. Dysart consults his file.

Is this your full name? Alan Strang?

Silence.

And you're seventeen. Is that right? Seventeen? Well?

ALAN (*singing low*) Double your pleasure
Double your fun
With Doublemint, Doublemint
Doublemint gum.

DYSART (*unperturbed*) Now, let's see. You work in an electrical shop during the week. You live with your parents, and your father's a printer. What sort of things does he print?

ALAN (*singing louder*) Double your pleasure
Double your fun
With Doublemint, Doublemint
Doublemint gum.

DYSART I mean does he do leaflets and calendars? Things like that?

The boy approaches him, hostile.

ALAN (*singing*) Try the taste of Martini
The most beautiful drink in the world.
It's the right one –
The bright one –
That's Martini!

DYSART I wish you'd sit down, if you're going to sing. Don't you think you'd be more comfortable?

Pause.

ALAN (*singing*) There's only one T in Typhoo!
In packets and in teabags too.
Any way you make it, you'll find it's true:
There's only one T in Typhoo!

DYSART (*appreciatively*) Now that's a good song. I like it better than the other two. Can I hear that one again?
Alan starts away from him, and sits on the upstage bench.

ALAN (*singing*) Double your pleasure
Double your fun
With Doublemint, Doublemint
Doublemint gum.

DYSART (*smiling*) You know I was wrong. I really do think that one's better. It's got such a catchy tune. Please do that one again.

Turn over for the next text

Text D

The following text is the opening of the novel *Small Holdings* by Nicola Barker, first published in 1995.

In this text, the author introduces the character, Doug, through the use of imagery.

Write a text where you use imagery to present a character.

SOME PEOPLE OPEN UP like flowers; slowly, painstakingly, each petal unfurling, reacting, affirming. Responding, simply, to warmth and to tending.

Other people can be peeled; like a fruit – like an orange or a pomelo – the skin comes off, and underneath is something full and ripe, perfectly segmented, waiting to be apportioned by deft and inquisitive fingers.

Doug was like an egg. A boiled egg. Hard-boiled. He was knocked once, twice, many times, and his shell cracked, and it crumbled, and underneath was something slippery and rubbery and not especially digestible.

If he hadn't been hard-boiled, he would have dropped from his shell, moist, sloppy, just a mess. In certain respects, in retrospect, that might have been preferable.

I'd been wrong about Doug all along. I'd thought he was an oyster: barnacle hard outside, abrasive even, but with a vulnerable interior, maybe a pearl in there somewhere, hidden, precious, protected. I also considered at certain points that he might be a beetle. Beetles, it seems, like some other insects, have a skeleton on the outside and the flesh, the soft bits, inside. People are traditionally soft on the outside and the bones, the frame, the supports are hidden away within layers of skin and fat and muscle. That's exactly how I am. Soft and yielding, like tripe to the touch.

Well Doug, Doug was a boiled egg, hard-boiled with a bluish pallor – white turned blue – a pale yellow yolk (his heart, not soft either), and he was extremely entrenched, obscenely contained and mystifyingly, ridiculously, maybe even *deceptively*, proud of himself.

Text E

The following article was published in *The Guardian* in 2008. In it, the writer tries to establish the virtues of a supposedly unpopular vegetable, broccoli.

Write a text where you try to establish the virtues of something which is often seen as unpopular.

In praise of ... broccoli

To say that broccoli is a maligned vegetable is an understatement. The problem is not so much bad press as – for many of us – bad memories. Among other vegetables, only brussels sprouts seem to revive more unpleasant recollections of the family dinner table. Refusing to eat broccoli can provide belated liberation from the culinary oppression of childhood; George Bush the elder was not alone when he declared his hatred of the vegetable during a presidential press conference in 1990. Few foods have endured such ignominy, but broccoli may soon gain favour, and for no shortage of reasons. A recent survey reveals that broccoli is one of the few foods in Britain's shopping baskets to have fallen in price – down some 27% from last September. But broccoli is good for the body as well as for the wallet. High in phytochemicals, it has cancer-busting properties. It can reduce the risk of a heart attack. It is a good source of betacarotene, vitamin C and folic acid. And (a plus, given our climate) broccoli requires little sunlight to flourish. The trouble is the British habit of boiling it to a mush and swamping it in white sauce, rather than steaming it gently (perhaps dressing with olive oil, anchovy and chopped coriander) or lightly stir-frying with a little garlic and soy sauce. Highly versatile, florets of broccoli are an equally good accompaniment to meats and to other vegetables. Still not convinced? We recommend an open mind – and, for the brave, Bill Clinton's personal recipe for chicken broccoli enchilada.

END OF TEXTS

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