

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE
General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

8693/1

PAPER 1 Passages for Comment

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER SESSION 2001

2 hours

Additional materials:
Answer paper

TIME 2 hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your name, Centre number and candidate number in the spaces provided on the answer paper/answer booklet.

Answer **two** questions.

Write your answers on the separate answer paper provided.

If you use more than one sheet of paper, fasten the sheets together.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

All questions in this paper carry equal marks. Marks available for parts of each question are given in square brackets [].

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

This question paper consists of 6 printed pages and 2 blank pages.

Answer two questions

1 Read the passage below in which the writer offers her own strong thoughts and feelings about the American novelist Henry Miller and his writing.

(a) Comment on the writer's style and use of language. [15]

(b) In the style of the original passage, describe a well-known person or celebrity and their work. [10]

I first saw Henry Miller when I was fourteen. It was in Kensington Gardens, and he was playing baseball for a United States Army team. Whenever the ball was scooped up really high, Henry Miller would run to where he thought it was going to descend, stretch up his hands (he wore enormous gauntlets like a knight in armour) and scream 'I got it, I got it, I got it'. The other players cleared a holy circle round him. In the sky – that sharp blue wartime sky – the ball seemed to halt for solid minutes. Henry Miller started screaming he had got it long before he could, let alone did, have it, and he did not stop until it actually fell – sometimes wide of him, sometimes plumb on his gauntlets. Not once, wherever it fell, did he catch it. Not once was he abashed by the failure. It seemed that in his mental world to assert he had the ball was as good – was the same – as having it. With hindsight I suspect some of the other players were deceived into inhabiting Henry Miller's world: after the game they remembered only his assertion, and forgot whether it tallied with the facts. Probably Henry Miller had a reputation for catching – perhaps even among men who themselves sometimes caught the ball.

In other words, Henry Miller is THE (not the typical but the noticeable) American in Europe: quintessentially, the American in Paris. When he turns writer (the character called Henry Miller is a writer, too – the books in which he is a character are his work), he wants to epitomize his emotions towards Paris. His emotions can be described as warm, human and from the guts. He does not believe in the discipline of art but writes in a near-automatic state, as though taking down dictation from his guts. He is confident the results will be valuable, because he has a deep faith in his originality. In his creative trance, he rolls the paper into the machine and, convinced no one else has ever brought forth any such idea, types.

Now and then a phrase splashes up (in the sheer gush it could scarcely, on the law of averages, help it) which does lodge in the mind – or, rather, which would, if it were not unfeelingly pounded out again by the next noisy phrase. As a tactician with words, Henry Miller is so clumsy as repeatedly to get himself into a rhythm which serves no artistic purpose in the first place and which he then cannot get out of: 'the fumbling fingers, the fox-trotting fleas, the lie-a-bed lice, the scum on his tongue, the drop in his eye, the limp in his throat, the drink in his pottlé, the itch in his palm, the wail of his wind ...', ti tum ti ti tum, etc. etc. (I've quoted only about a third) – I've known a train be more subtle. There might be a childish point if Henry Miller were evoking a train. But he's not. Still, just as it's possible to be a famous catcher without being able to hold the ball, it's possible to make a reputation by writing like a train, provided you do it loudly enough.

2 The speech below was delivered in 1948 by Jawaharlal Nehru, prime minister of India. In it, he describes how the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, one of the founders of a modern and independent India, has affected the country.

(a) Comment on the language and techniques that the speaker uses. [15]

(b) In the style of the original passage, write the opening of a speech (around 120 words) in response to a recent loss or disaster. [10]

Friends and comrades, the light has gone out of our lives and there is darkness everywhere. I do not know what to tell you and how to say it. Our beloved leader, Bapu as we called him, the father of the nation, is no more. Perhaps I am wrong to say that. Nevertheless, we will not see him again as we have seen him for these many years. We will not run to him for advice and seek solace from him, and that is a terrible blow, not to me only, but to millions and millions in this country, and it is a little difficult to soften the blow by any other advice that I or anyone else can give you.

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The light has gone out, I said, and yet I was wrong. For the light that shone in this country was no ordinary light. The light that has illumined this country for these many years will illumine this country for many more years, and a thousand years later that light will still be seen in this country and the world will see it and it will give solace to innumerable hearts. For that light represented the living truth ... the eternal truths, reminding us of the right path, drawing us from error, taking this ancient country to freedom.

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All this has happened when there was so much more for him to do. We could never think that he was unnecessary or that he had done his task. But now, particularly, when we are faced with so many difficulties, his not being with us is a blow most terrible to bear.

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A madman has put an end to his life, for I can only call him mad who did it, and yet there has been enough of poison spread in this country during the past years and months, and this poison has had effect on people's minds. We must face this poison, we must root out this poison, and we must face all the perils that encompass us and face them not madly or badly but rather in the way that our beloved teacher taught us to face them. The first thing to remember now is that no one of us dare misbehave because we are angry. We have to behave like strong and determined people, determined to face all the perils that surround us, determined to carry out the mandate that our great teacher and our great leader has given us, remembering always that if, as I believe, his spirit looks upon us and sees us, nothing would displease his soul so much as to see that we have indulged in any small behaviour or any violence.

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So we must not do that. But that does not mean that we should be weak, but rather that we should in strength and in unity face all the troubles that are in front of us. We must hold together, and all our petty troubles and difficulties and conflicts must be ended in the face of this great disaster. A great disaster is a symbol to us to remember all the big things of life and forget the small things, of which we have thought too much.

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3 The passage below describes a royal visit to a large city.

- (a) In the style of the original passage, write a description of a visit of a famous person (for example, a politician, a film star or pop star) to a major town or city in your country. [10]
- (b) Compare your style and use of language to those of the original passage. [15]

I saw them in the morning, rushing up one of the main streets in an open car, with outriders on motor cycles, and a ripple of applause coming from the people, fading before it had begun; the car was gone so quickly. The royal car was followed by a succession of big American cars with nameless people in them, all moving at a breathtaking pace. The policemen relaxed, an officer took his hand away from his cap, and the people turned to one another with reluctant, drawn faces, like sleepers awakened from a dream. People began picking up their folding chairs, children ran across the street where the cars had passed, the crowds on both sides of the street broke up, wavered, walked towards the station or the tram termini, carrying the little flags they had hardly had time to wave. I do not know what the people had been expecting, for I had not been among them before the convoy of cars had come past, and had, indeed, been taken by surprise by the tired, known faces rushing past, and the quick, too-late applause. The people dispersed with no exaltation or disappointment: they were strange to see at that moment, as though one were in a thousand bedrooms as day returned and the sleepers reluctantly admitted the light between their lids. 5

In the evening the emotions were different. With night, with darkness, with the thousands of coloured lights, the crowds were awake and wild. All over the city there were huge throngs of people, walking, yelling; the bars were full and noisy; one caught the feel of violence in the dark streets with their buildings towering on either side. The liveliness of the streets that are usually empty of pedestrians after nightfall had something terrifying about it: the city was alive, bristling like an animal. And the passion that filled the people, that drove them to walk up and down the pavements, and in and out of bars, that made them wait on street corners, and change their places repeatedly on the stands, was elemental and powerful. It was curiosity. 20

I have never known anything like it. There was a huge animal passion of curiosity among the people, that was like a hunger, and was later to become a rage. They walked and waited and talked, with an anticipation so intense one might have thought something without which they could not live was about to be shown to them. It seemed to be some final, lasting knowledge that they were seeking; a spectacle which would satisfy them forever. And all the night was tedious and tense, until that moment would come. 30

We hunched, waiting for their coming. Then – a bright glow of car headlights, and a shout from the people farther down the road, the shout coming nearer, not yet really loud, and then it was upon us – a glimpse, a vision of pale glittering faces in a black car that was past us, again, before we could really shout, before we could really do anything. And now it was gone. There was nothing now, except the receding tail light of a motor-car and some motor cycles. 35

Nothing had been given us. As in the morning, there was a momentary silence, a kind of numbness. Then the animal awoke – not begrudgingly, as in the morning, but with a full throat. A roar went up from the crowd, a huge animal yell that rang in the streets. All along the road people were shouting, in a great, cheated roar. No answer had been given to them. And the yell died into silence as suddenly as it started. 40

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A moment later the mob broke and began running down the road. The police were unable to stop them. Jackets and dresses were flying loose, hundreds of feet were beating on the tar, hundreds of voices were screaming at the night, at nothing. A woman fell, and people jumped over her, or side-stepped to get away from what was just an obstruction in their path, and not a crying woman on the pavement. But no sooner had she been helped to her feet than she jerked away from her helpers and ran on screaming like all the others. 50

The princesses apparently had entered the City Hall through the door facing the Cenotaph, for our mob ran straight into another huge crowd gathered there. In the blaze of floodlights, people were pushing and screaming, and waving their hands though there was nothing to wave at, for the princesses had already gone inside. The crowd was possessed; in a rage, a frenzy, its passion unabated. Something had to be given to them – glimpses of two shining girls could not slake this thirst. So their passion focused itself on the nearest thing to hand: the car the princesses had arrived in. The car became their target – to see the car, to touch it, to hold it, to destroy it perhaps. But no, they did not want to destroy it. They just had to touch the car. 55 60

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