



B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

1999

**COMPARATIVE
LITERATURE**

DISTINCTION COURSE

(50 Marks)

*Time allowed—Three hours
(Plus 5 minutes reading time)*

DIRECTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Attempt **THREE** questions, **ONE** from each Section.
- Question 1 is **COMPULSORY**.
- All questions are of equal value.
- Do **NOT** use substantially the same material in more than one answer.
- Answer each question in a **SEPARATE** Writing Booklet.
- You may ask for extra Writing Booklets if you need them.

SECTION I

QUESTION 1 This question is COMPULSORY.

The following four passages translate one of the *Odes* of the Latin poet, Horace. Read the FOUR passages below then answer the following question.

Using THREE of the passages, write an essay saying what the principal differences are in the use of language in the three translations you are discussing AND what the effects of these differences are.

TRANSLATION 1

Ode III.9

A Dialogue betwixt Horace and Lydia

Hor. While, Lydia, I was lov'd of thee,
Nor any was preferr'd 'fore me
To hug thy whitest neck: Then I,
The Persian King liv'd not more happily.

Lyd. While thou no other didst affect, 5
Nor Cloe was of more respect;
Then Lydia, far-fam'd Lydia,
I flourish't more then Roman Ilia.

Hor. Now Thracian Cloe governs me,
Skilfull i' th' Harpe, and Melodie: 10
For whose affection, Lydia, I
(So Fate spares her) am well content to die.

Lyd. My heart now set on fire is
By Ornithes sonne, young Calais;
For whose commutual flames here I 15
(To save his life) twice am content to die.

Hor. Say our first loves we sho'd revoke,
And sever'd, joyne in brazen yoke:
Admit I Cloe put away,
And love againe love-cast-off Lydia? 20

Lyd. Though mine be brighter then the Star;
Thou lighter then the Cork by far:
Rough as th' Adratick sea, yet I
Will live with thee, or else for thee will die.

ROBERT HERRICK (pub. 1648)

QUESTION 1 (Continued)

TRANSLATION 2

ODE IX

Reconciliation

‘ While I was dear to thee and no more favoured youth flung his arms about thy dazzling neck, I lived in greater bliss than Persia’s king.’

‘ While thou wast enamoured of no other more than me, and Lydia ranked not after Chloë, in joy of my great fame I, Lydia, lived more glorious than Roman Ilia.’

‘ Me Thracian Chloë now doth sway, skilled in sweet measures and mistress of the lyre; for her I will not fear to die, if the Fates but spare my darling and suffer her to live.’

‘ Me Calais, son of Thurian Ornytus, kindles with mutual flame; for him right willingly I twice will die, if the Fates but spare the lad and suffer him to live.’

‘ What if the old love come back again and join those now estranged beneath her compelling yoke; if fair-haired Chloë be put aside and the door thrown open to rejected Lydia?’

‘ Though he is fairer than the stars, and thou less stable than the tossing cork and stormier than the wanton Adriatic, with thee I fain would live, with thee I’d gladly die.’

C. E. BENNETT, 1914

Please turn over

QUESTION 1 (Continued)

TRANSLATION 3

Ode III.9 An imitation

A Dialogue betwixt God and the Soul

Soul. Whilst my Souls eye beheld no light
 But what stream'd from thy gracious sight
 To me the worlds greatest King,
 Seem'd but some little vulgar thing.

God. Whilst thou prov'dst pure; and that in thee 5
 I could glass all my Deity:
 How glad did I from Heaven depart,
 To find a lodging in thy heart!

Soul. Now Fame and Greatness bear the sway,
 ('Tis they that hold my prisons Key:) 10
 For whom my soul would die, might she
 Leave them her Immortalitie.

God. I, and some few pure Souls conspire,
 And burn both in a mutual fire,
 For whom I'd die once more, ere they 15
 Should miss of Heavens eternal day.

Soul. But Lord! what if I turn again,
 And with an adamantine chain,
 Lock me to thee? What if I chase
 The world away to give thee place? 20

God. Then though these souls in whom I joy
 Are Seraphins, Thou but a toy,
 A foolish toy, yet once more I
 Would with thee live, and for thee die.

ANONYMOUS (pub. 1651)

QUESTION 1 (Continued)

TRANSLATION 4

Ode III.9 An imitation

HE

So long as 'twuz me alone
 An' there wasn't no other chaps,
 I was praoud as a King on 'is throne—
 Happier tu, per'aps.

SHE

So long as 'twuz only I 5
 An' there wasn't no other she
 Yeou cared for so much—surely
 I was glad as could be.

HE

But now I'm in lovv with Jane Pritt—
 She can play the piano, she can; 10
 An' if dyin' 'ud 'elp 'er a bit
 I'd die laike a man.

SHE

Yeou'm like me. I'm in lovv with young Frye—
 Him as lives out tu Appledore Quay;
 An' if dyin' 'ud 'elp 'im I'd die— 15
 Twice ovver for he.

HE

But s'posin' I threwed up Jane
 An' niver went walkin' with she—
 And come back to yeou again—
 How 'ud that be? 20

SHE

Frye's sober. Yeou've allus done badly—
 An' yeou shifts like cut net-floats, yeou du:
 But—I'd throw that young Frye ovver gladly
 An' lovv 'ee right thru!

RUDYARD KIPLING (pub. 1882)

SECTION II

Attempt ONE question.

Answer EITHER on two or three longer works OR on one longer work AND four or five poems or extracts.

Your answer must make reference to works from MORE THAN ONE module.

EITHER

QUESTION 2

‘Literature is at bottom a criticism of life. The greatness of a writer lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to the question: How to live.’

Adapted from MATTHEW ARNOLD, 1888

Would you agree that the most important function of literature is the ‘criticism of life’?

OR

QUESTION 3

Writers write in the context of the preoccupations of their era and culture, which may not be the same as the contexts and preoccupations of the readers’ era and culture.

To what extent might such differences be regarded as barriers in comparative literature studies?

OR

QUESTION 4

‘For a man to be a dramatic critic is as foolish and inartistic as it would be for a man to be a critic of epics or a pastoral critic or a critic of lyrics. All modes of art are one, and the modes of the art that employs words as a medium are quite indivisible.’

OSCAR WILDE, 1885

Do you agree with Wilde that there is no point in distinguishing between drama, poetry and prose fiction as ‘modes of the art that employs words as a medium’?

OR

QUESTION 5

A major function of literature is to demonstrate the ways in which we construct the realities we inhabit.

Examine some of the implications of this statement, using examples drawn from different genres.

OR

QUESTION 6

'In some ways writers are the worst historians . . . but there are other ways in which some of them . . . might turn out to be the best historians of all.'

How might this be? Discuss the issues this suggests to you.

Please turn over

SECTION III

Attempt ONE question.

EITHER

QUESTION 7 The Nineteenth-Century European Novel

The nineteenth-century European novel records ‘the breakdown of order leading towards disintegration’.

Does your reading support this view? Answer with reference to at least TWO novels set for study.

OR

QUESTION 8 The Nineteenth-Century European Novel

Nineteenth-century European novels are not just stories about characters and societies, but experiments with structure and language.

Discuss with reference to at least TWO novels.

OR

QUESTION 9 Poetry and Religious Experience

‘Human beings can know God because they have in them something akin to the eternal which cannot die.’

W. D. ASHCROFT, 1996

Is this a central assumption of religious writing? Discuss with reference to a range of poems and/or other works set for study for this module.

(You should write on EITHER no more than six poems or extracts, OR on *An Imaginary Life* and three poems or extracts.)

OR

QUESTION 10 Poetry and Religious Experience

‘The gods are not quite dead . . . They have entered the age of play. They have abandoned the holy places and taken up residence in fables that require only our amused detachment from disbelief.’

DAVID MALOUF, *An Imaginary Life*

Does play have any part in literature dealing with religious impulse? Answer with reference to a range of poems and/or other works set for study for this module.

OR

QUESTION 11 Satiric Voices

‘Satirists look through a distorting lens; they never look in a mirror. At the heart of all satire is a disturbing complacency, an implied superiority of the satirist to the mess the rest of us make of our lives.’

Do you agree? Answer with reference to TWO major works or ONE major work and several shorter ones, such as fables.

OR

QUESTION 12 Satiric Voices

The implications of satire are that vice is intolerable and folly avoidable: but in fact, every age tolerates and often celebrates vice, and fails to avoid folly.

Is the function of satire then something other than moral reform, or is it little more than the exercise of the satirist’s wit? Answer with reference to TWO major works or ONE major work and several shorter ones.

OR

QUESTION 13 Post-Colonial Voices

‘You have taken away my voice, my place, my self.’

Do post-colonial writers mourn and explore their losses, or do they celebrate new-found voices and rediscovered selves?

Base your answer on TWO works set for study for this module.

OR

QUESTION 14 Post-Colonial Voices

In post-colonial literature the traditional sense of history and politics is replaced with a new sense of geography and economics.

Do you agree? Base your answer on TWO works set for study for this module.

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