

**MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2010 question paper
for the guidance of teachers**

9779 PRINCIPAL COURSE FRENCH

9779/04

Paper 4 (Topics and Texts), maximum raw mark 60

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

- CIE will not enter into discussions or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

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Part I: Topics

Candidates are to attempt one question from Part I: Topics and will write their answers in the Target Language as these texts/films are to be studied primarily in cultural context (be it historical, political, social) as well as a literary/cinematic one.

Answers are to be marked out of 30 according to the criteria below:

- 20 for Content [AO3: 10 marks, AO4: 10 marks]
- 10 for Language [AO2]

This paper is intended to test candidates' knowledge and understanding of a topic and their ability to use this knowledge to answer questions in a clear and focused manner. A sophisticated literary approach is not expected (although at the highest levels it is sometimes seen), but great value is placed on evidence of a firsthand response and thoughtful, personal evaluation of what candidates have studied. Candidates may have been encouraged to depend closely on prepared notes and quotations: quotation for its own sake is not useful, though it will not be undervalued if used appropriately to illustrate a point in the answer. This applies to films as well as literary texts. Texts and notes may not be taken into the examination.

Candidates will not tend to show **all** the qualities or faults described in any one mark-band. Examiners will attempt to weigh all these up at every borderline, in order to see whether the work can be considered for the category above.

Examiners will take a positive and flexible approach and, even when there are obvious flaws in an answer, reward evidence of knowledge and especially any signs of understanding and careful organisation. In the marking of these questions, specific guidelines will be given for each question, agreed by the examination team.

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Part I: Topics – Content

18–20	<i>Excellent</i>	Excellent ability to organise material in relation to the question. Comprehensive knowledge of both texts/films. Ability to look beyond the immediate material and to show good understanding of underlying themes.
15–17	<i>Very good</i>	A thoughtful and well argued response to the question. Thorough knowledge of both texts/films. Detailed understanding and illustration of thematic and comparative issues.
12–14	<i>Good</i>	A well argued response to the question. Equally sound knowledge of both texts/films. Good understanding and illustration of the thematic and comparative issues.
9–11	<i>Satisfactory</i>	A mainly relevant response to the question. Shows fair knowledge of texts/films. Some understanding and illustration of the thematic and comparative issues AND/OR good understanding of texts/films, but lacking detail. Stronger on one text/film than the other.
5–8	<i>Weak</i>	An uneven OR basic response to the question. Shows some knowledge and understanding of the texts/films. Includes some relevant points, but development and illustration are limited. Contains padding AND/OR has some obvious omissions OR is largely narrative.
1–4	<i>Poor</i>	Little attempt to answer the question. Poor knowledge and understanding of the texts/films. Insubstantial with very little relevance.
0		No rewardable content.

Part I: Topics – Language

10	<i>Excellent</i>	Almost flawless. Excellent range of vocabulary and complex sentence patterns. Good sense of idiom.
8–9	<i>Very good</i>	Highly accurate. Wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence patterns. Some sense of idiom.
6–7	<i>Good</i>	Generally accurate. Good range of vocabulary and some complex sentence patterns.
4–5	<i>Satisfactory</i>	Predominantly simple patterns correctly used and/or some complex language attempted, but with variable success. Adequate range of vocabulary, but some repetition.
2–3	<i>Weak</i>	Persistent errors. Simple and repetitive sentence patterns. Limited vocabulary.
1	<i>Poor</i>	Little evidence of grammatical awareness. Very limited vocabulary.
0		No rewardable language.

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Indicative Content

Questions are open to interpretation and, therefore, the following notes are not intended to be prescriptive but to give an indication of some of the points which could be made in response to each question. They are by no means exhaustive.

1 L'enfance et l'adolescence

A Analysez le rôle de la femme ou de la jeune fille dans les ouvrages.

La Vie devant soi: Mme Rosa, despite the moral ambiguity of her professional past, is presented as a substitute mother for Momo, the guarantor of his well-being, and is the person for whom he develops the deepest emotional ties. Rosa is the pivotal figure through which much of the social comment, satire, humour and Momo's emotional commitment are refracted. Through the character of the steadily declining Rosa the novel deals not only with the challenges and lessons of life but also with death. Other female figures are sketched very briefly, e.g. Nadine, the actress, like the other female figures is emotionally warm and always welcoming, and becomes a second foster mother. Lola, the transsexual, brings help and money into the household when necessary. The female thus allows Momo to survive the poverty and moral turpitude of his environment.

Toto le héros: the female figure marks significant stages in Toto's development, and the emotional side, love and friendship, become associated with despair, tragedy and even death. His mother's theft of meat and subsequent embarrassment fires Thomas's hatred of Kant. His sister, whom he holds in deep admiration, disappoints him by her friendship for Kant, but is willing to sacrifice her friendship for Thomas by the arson attack. Her death marks him deeply with feelings of guilt. Evelyne becomes the mirror image of his sister in Thomas's mind. She is the object of desire, becomes his mistress, and is prepared to leave her husband (Kant), but Thomas behaves in an impetuous and cowardly manner, and runs away. Thomas's assessment of his life is a collection of disappointments associated with girls and women, with the leitmotif of Kant running throughout. Even in old age when he meets Evelyne, he is reminded of the love that might have been and of the wasted opportunity.

Le Blé en herbe: Two major female figures are Vinca and Mme Dalleray, who to some extent have complementary rôles. Vinca has been a childhood friend and is expected to be Phil's wife. She is at ease with her adolescence; happy to play, sing, fish etc without showing the impetuosity of Phil, and despite the age difference in his favour, comes across as the more mature. Not fully shaped as a woman, she exerts a charm of her own (*à l'espèce d'exaltation que l'on voue au style pur*). Interestingly, Vinca is described in ambiguous terms, coming across at times as (almost) androgynous. Mme Dalleray, like all adults in the book, is referred to distantly to begin with, (*la dame en blanc*). She is the catalyst of his change from boyhood to manhood. She initiates him into the physical aspects of love, but also shows up his emotional fragility/immaturity. Air of mystery about her which plays on Phil's mind; the liaison provokes feelings of guilt in him and self-questioning about his future with Mme Dalleray and Vinca.

B Les personnages principaux sont-ils plus contents ou plus angoissés à la fin de l'histoire ? Quelles conclusions en tirez-vous ?

La Vie devant soi: The theme of young people's painful incomprehension of life alluded to in the title is developed in the novel through Momo. Momo is born into the harsh world of demimondaine Parisian life where he fights for the attention of Mme Rosa amongst the other children she has adopted. He experiences tantrums, disappointments and unfolding mystery

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of life in his development as a child. His attachment to things and people (Arthur the umbrella, the people he meets) is both a cause of (child-like) happiness, and, when things go awry (e.g. conversations with Doctor about Rosa's deteriorating mental state), a cause of anguish and concern. The false naiveté of the character allows for a steep learning curve of serious themes and challenges which do not present a cause for alarm in Momo's mind. The social comment and themes evoked range from ethical issues (euthanasia, abortion), to social issues (poverty, immigration, unemployment, racism) and religion, to the universal (love, respect for others,): potentially the stuff of anxiety and concern. His own happiness is inextricably linked to Rosa's health, and he is panicked when she falls seriously ill. It is the overwhelming emotion of love for Rosa which allows Momo to care for her in her dying days and to confront death with courage. Despite all the challenges of being brought up as an Arab in the ghetto, the reader leaves Momo without Rosa, but prepared for the challenges ahead. Gary saw humour and particularly laughter as an antidote to anxiety in the lightening of the weight of misfortune; he describes it as '*une hygiène mentale*'. It also serves as a mechanism of self-defence; in disarming reality, laughter constitutes a response to adversity and enables a form of victory over it. Arguably an uplifting work which seeks to come to terms with childhood and adolescence with humour, friendship and love.

Toto le héros: Thomas' life is one of short-lived happiness in childhood followed by disappointment, guilt and anger (e.g. flashbacks of relationship with his sister, teasing of himself and disabled brother, and latterly his liaison and shoplifting adventures with Evelyne), a sense of unfulfilled destiny in his love life and his jealousy of Kant. Relief can only be gained by tying together the strands of the narrative (Kant, Evelyne, Toto le héros) and ultimately giving of himself in death to achieve a degree of satisfaction and therefore contentment: his post mortem laughter is an acidic commentary on his life.

Le Blé en herbe: Phil is relatively happy at the beginning of the book, spending his leisurely holidays with Vinca, mostly swimming, fishing. Some dissatisfaction about waiting to be an adult, he wants time to leap forward so that he can be 25 years old and be in a position to marry. His feelings of dissatisfaction turn to guilt, soul-searching and teenage egotism after his initiation by Mme Dallaway. Book ends with self-knowledge that he has not developed into an adult emotionally (*trop novice pour l'analyse*), and the reader is struck by his lack of emotion (*et contempla sa propre petitesse, sa chute, sa benignité*). He remains an unfinished product, in turn surprised and displeased with himself. The female characters in contrast come across as more mature, self-aware and confident.

2 La France pendant la guerre (1939–45)

A Quelle est l'importance de l'amour et de l'amitié dans ces ouvrages?

Le Silence de la mer: an idealistic, naive and mistaken love is what motivates von Ebrennac in his soldier's duty. His romantic love of French culture fares no better than his love for a former girlfriend. The woman once destined to be his wife turned out to be too cruel for his liking (for insects), and this disappointed love is echoed by the disappointed friendship with hard-nosed soldiers in Paris. His burgeoning love for the niece is also doomed to failure, as the niece does not offer the comfort of dialogue. The niece, too, shows increasing love for the German, as the uncle realises. This is never made overt, but can be discerned by her tempo of knitting, by the shaking of her hands, and ultimately by the sweat on her neck. The call of duty and the abnegation of friendship determine von Ebrennac's departure. Love, though, does not withstand the onslaught of war. Patriotic love is all that remains for French and Germans alike. The uncle's view of the officer remains respectful, but not friendly. For the French, there is no place for sentimentality, love nor friendship where the occupying force is concerned.

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Au Revoir les enfants: The central plank of the film is the friendship between Quentin and Bonnet. Also important is the Christian love or compassion of the priests (especially le Père Jean) who continue children's education and, despite prohibition to do so, shelter Jewish children in the school. The boys' friendship is key to developing a bulwark of civilisation against the tide of anti-semitism, insecurity and chaos of war in the outside world. Quentin is initially rather supercilious about the new arrival, and is intrigued by, rather than drawn to, Bonnet. Bonnet's differences (parents do not come to visit, does not study Greek, does not take communion etc) could be exploited by Quentin, but the latter comes to appreciate Bonnet's character, courage and talents. The invitation to lunch with Julien's mother demonstrates the strength of friendship between Quentin and Bonnet. Bonnet's steadfastness contrasts with the weak-willed Joseph who seeks to exploit others and seeks revenge when he is sacked. The treasure-hunt in the woods is a firm test of friendship and solidarity in the face of danger when they are picked up by German soldiers and returned to the school. All in all, friendship and love are the forces which can fire solidarity and strength through this period of extreme adversity.

Tanguy: Through his many sufferings, Tanguy is buoyed up by his love for his mother. Circumstances also provide opportune friendships to develop (e.g. Gunther). It is the friendships he develops (e.g. with Firmin or Sebastiana) which not only help him through the difficult circumstances of the immediate, but are essential in him not despairing, even for the future (*Son monde à lui était ici et maintenant. Il y avait des Sebastiana, des Firmin, des Père Pardo, et peut-être un autre Gunther. Tant qu'il y aurait des êtres de cette sorte, il se sentirait chez lui sur la terre.*) It is this faith in humanity which carries him through his Calvary. The natural points of love and affection, ie his parents, turn out to be a disappointment: the father is shallow, snobbish, and admits betraying Tanguy to the police; his mother, whom he so looks forward to seeing, only appears after thirteen years; the two have grown apart and do not understand each other.

B Comment la population a-t-elle fait face à la guerre et à l'occupation ? Quelles conclusions en tirez-vous ?

Not appropriate to talk about any overwhelming tendency, but response dependent upon circumstances, age and events.

Le Silence de la mer: important to remember that story was written during the occupation, it was distributed secretly, and part of its message is to give hope (through resistance to the German soldiers) to readers. Both French characters decide to live their lives as normally as possible; *D'un accord tacite nous avons décidé de ne rien changer à notre vie, fût-ce le moindre détail*. Silence is their response to their lodger; dialogue would be seen as submission, or at least engagement. (*une demoiselle silencieuse. Il faudra vaincre ce silence. Il faudra vaincre le silence de la France.*) Silence is a form of resistance, an intransigent posture. This is no easy decision ; the effect on niece is clear: *je sentais l'âme de ma nièce s'agiter dans cette prison qu'elle avait elle-même construite*. Thus the uncle and his niece show stoical resolve to maintain pride and their position. Their careful listening to von Ebrennac's musings reveals that culture and civilised values would be downtrodden by ideology and soldiering. Yet the narrator does not wish to be seen as impolite. Thus both their stances reveal resolve and determination not to offer warmth of hospitality or any communication.

Au Revoir les enfants: A complex world portrayed in the school environment. Parents have sent their children out of the city to protect them as much as possible from the effects of war. Everything outside the school is portrayed as threatening. The priests attempt to preserve education and to protect Jewish children, a defiant posture towards the Nazis. Within school there is a semblance of normality (e.g. rivalry between Quentin & Bonnet). Julien's growing

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friendship with Bonnet underlines acceptance of him and his differences. Against that, elements of the black market (Joseph), the *milice* and widespread anti-Semitism reveal the seamier side of wartime life in France.

Tanguy: The boy is buffeted by events and responds to a catalogue of misfortune and changing circumstances by clinging to hope and holding faith with his mother. Some of the other characters are helpful and charitable to Tanguy e.g. the Puigellivol couple, despite the climate of repression; even in the convoy to the camp there is support (e.g. old man giving him bread and water); others take advantage of the situation, including his own father who denounces him. The precariousness of the situation could be symbolised by Frère Marcel and Frère Albert who both work in the college: one is naturally warm, welcoming and charitable, the other concerned with finance. It was natural for people (especially Jews) to seek sanctuary and escape persecution (e.g. the Cohen family), though Mr Cohen could not stand the pressure of being hunted, and goes mad. The picture painted reflects the many sides of human nature, and how survival often depends on a stroke of good fortune.

3 Regards sur la guerre d'Algérie

A La violence n'est pas le pire élément de la guerre. Êtes-vous d'accord ?

The Algerian war brings together a large number of elements which reflect badly on both the behaviour of individuals and the actions of the French administration and the FLN, violence being one of the most obvious. Consideration of the disproportionate response to the FLN-organised demonstration on 17 Oct 1961 in Paris and subsequent investigation; verbal and physical violence (Daeninckx), the repression, fighting and torture by soldiers in Algiers (Pontecorvo), Camus' passionate arguments for a stop to violence, e.g. after the massacre at Philippeville, to allow a political solution to take place. Reasons behind violence include the Algerian nationalists' political frustration and determination to achieve their goal (*la lutte par tous les moyens*), the French government's reasoning that repression was the best response e.g. Guy Mollet's pacification policy; the French response to Algerian terrorist attacks was torture and executions; the paras adopted a hard-line approach, especially in 1957 (Pontecorvo). Daeninckx' story places murder and violence at the centre of a series of abominable actions by Veillut, which could broaden issues to discuss e.g. responsibility, morality, extremism, racism and, more subtly, how the French deal with the past. Mention might also be made that the book is anchored in history, and that Veillut is a thinly-disguised cipher for Papon.

Camus' analyses of poverty, malnutrition and poor education of Algerians offer a backdrop for not only understanding the FLN's attacks (*La longue violence colonialiste explique celle de la rébellion*), but also give a moral imperative for the French state to live up to its responsibility towards its own people (French, *pieds-noirs* and Algerians alike). The continuing failure to show political leadership (for a number of reasons) is reflected in the likely toll of bloodshed which Camus foretold: *Bientôt l'Algérie ne sera peuplée que de meurtriers et de victimes. Bientôt les morts seuls y seront innocents*. How violence compares to other (moral) issues will be for candidates to decide.

B « L'intention de ces ouvrages avant tout, c'est de créer de la sympathie pour les victimes de la guerre d'Algérie. » Commentez cette affirmation.

There is no doubt that war creates many victims, and, in the case of this war, Algerian independence was achieved at a very high human cost. Each of the works makes a poignant case for those who died, soldiers and civilians on both sides of the conflict, and for the *pieds noirs*, who lost the country they adopted and had the feeling of being abandoned by the

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French state. Camus argues for a just solution and deplors the senseless violence and loss of life on both sides. He points out that the Arab population have been harshly treated by the colonisers and that sympathy for their plight has been obscured by the vortex of violence after 1954: *il faut cesser de considérer en bloc les Arabes d'Algérie comme un peuple de massacreurs. La grande masse d'entre eux, exposée à tous les coups, souffre d'une douleur que personne n'exprime pour elle.* He acknowledges that it is difficult to maintain objectivity in the conflict, but the native population is on his conscience: *C'est à eux...qu'il faudrait donner enfin une voix et un avenir libéré de la peur et de la faim.* As the violent conflict continues, he has thoughts not only for the tormented and the dead, but also underlines the tragedy for the rest of the population, the moral imperative which might have been forgotten: *Les représailles contre les populations civiles et les pratiques de tortures sont des crimes dont nous sommes tous solidaires. Que ces faits aient pu se faire parmi nous, c'est une humiliation à quoi il faudra désormais faire face.*

The political and military decisions of 1957 which are at the heart of the film are designed by the hard-hitting realism and images of violence, torture, and the impact on the lives of both Arabs and pieds-noirs to underline their plight and anguish. The military are depicted as bent on suppression of the FLN by whatever means necessary; the FLN are equally determined to achieve their aims, even though this means bombing the civilian population (e.g. La Pointe's attacks, the bombing of the Milk Bar). Terrorism breeds a dirty war which promotes extremist attitudes, racism and moral bankruptcy.

Daeninckx' book demonstrates by its gradual uncovering of repression and assassination that those who have been imprisoned and killed have been the victims of excessive use of force and violence. Whilst sympathy for the victims is clear, Cadin is disturbed by the behaviour of the state: the blanket amnesty covering French actions during the Algerian war, the cloak of secrecy surrounding assassinations, and the ambivalence of the French memory towards acts of moral outrage.

4 La Ville francophone

A Analysez le thème de la rébellion dans les films.

La Haine: Rebellion features on a number of levels throughout the film. In the background is the street battle of police and local youths in this deprived suburban area (clear in the sequence before the titles). The urban rebellion permeates the background of the film.

Much of the film follows the three central characters, Vinz, Said and Hubert, who are representative of the racially mixed *banlieue* in which they live. Their lives interweave with the root causes of social and political unrest, yet they are also portrayed as showing solidarity and compassion to friends and family, thus not just one-dimensional 'rebels' who have been alienated from mainstream society.

The tension surrounding Abdel's medical condition mounts: if he dies, Vinz promises to shoot a policeman in revenge. The plot, on one level, follows Vinz' actions and reactions to having a revolver. Initially emboldened by the powerful possibilities at his disposal, he is ultimately sickened by the prospect of shooting a skinhead in Paris. In learning of Abdel's death, Vinz rejects this ultimate level of violence by giving the gun to Hubert. The alarming ending of the film suggests that the relatively even-tempered Hubert is driven to using the gun after witnessing Vinz' killing by a policeman, a comment perhaps on widely reported police brutality, and the inevitable reaction to it: violence breeds violence.

Rebellion against the established order is also visible in figures such as the DJ who mixes Piaf and NTM through enormous speakers in a tower block; this lends intensity to a violence which is at times overt, at others just brooding.

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The portrayal of violent rebellion in the media is thematic: the film itself resembles a documentary format, there are clips from TV (images of the riot) and sound extracts, presenting suburban violence to the wider world. From this emerges a questioning of image, techniques of presentation and the deformation of events by the media.

C.R.A.Z.Y. Zach spends much of his childhood coming to terms with himself. He desperately wants to not be different, but fate marks him out early on as having a special gift (of healing). His rebellion is both an inner one, fighting against himself, fighting against his father, and against a wider social unit, the school. As a teenager he embraces atheism, thereby rejecting the Catholic Church, smokes (his brother's) cannabis, rejecting the house rules, and prays that he does not become homosexual. His battle or refusal not to accept himself severely tests his friendship with Michelle, leads to a frenzied brawl at school in the belief that by beating up Toto he could purge himself of 'otherness', and generates arguments with his conservative father. In trying to 'find himself' he travels to Jerusalem and nearly dies in the desert. His rebellion evaporates when his spiritual and psychological search is ended; he accepts himself as he is and makes peace with his father.

La Vie est un long fleuve tranquille: The two children whose families were swapped at birth, Maurice and Bernadette, cannot fully accept the truth of their past nor the idea that their lives have changed; this is the cause of their rebellion. Maurice seemingly integrates into the Du Quesnoy family, but rebels against his new 'family': he insists on visiting the Groseilles, which the parents find difficult, he steals family artefacts (e.g. silverware) to sell on via his friends. He introduces his new found siblings to a side of life they had hitherto been sheltered from, thus undermining the careful (bourgeois) environment which the parents had striven to create. Thus they go swimming in the local river, they sniff glue in the garage, the older boy rejects the church-sponsored kayaking holiday in favour of carnal pursuits with his girlfriend. Bernadette runs away from home, rejects her original family during questioning by the police, goes on hunger strike and develops a cleanliness fetish; all these factors show her psychological stress and reaction to the news that she is really a Groseille. The du Quesnoy siblings take to forbidden pleasures, rebel against their upbringing with alacrity. The urban tensions seen at the beginning of the film on a TV report spread to the bourgeois family which thinks it is immune from them. At the end of the film, rebellion against their upbringing and rejection of parents' guidelines show no sign of dissipating in any of the children.

B La vie en ville, est-ce seulement une concentration de problèmes sociaux ? Qu'est-ce que vous en pensez ?

La Haine: The story is set against a background of urban unrest and to a large extent the film highlights social, economic and racial problems. The focus on three young men who neither go to school nor work, and exist on petty crime and drug-dealing, necessarily brings social problems to the fore. The film is shot in ZAC de la Noé, a high-rise estate in the suburbs of Paris, an area of high unemployment and one of the centres of tension between police and locals, leading to violent clashes. The film shows Vinz, Said and Hubert in arguments with reporters, in confrontations with police, dealings with drug-pushers, clashing with National Front skinheads.

Yet they show respect and great solidarity for each other, a sense of community with other locals, and respect and normality in the family environment. Vinz is berated by his grandmother, and goes shopping for her. His relative poverty is handled with humour at the grocer's, where he cannot afford the right peppers. Hubert has worked to transform a disused supermarket into a boxing gym for locals, but this project is destroyed in the riot. He hands money made from drug trading to his mother to pay the electricity bill. Most, if not all of the positives are reduced by violence, confrontation and crime to the hopelessness of a vicious circle of life on the estate.

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The picture painted is a complex one, an authentic image of modern-day problems.

C.R.A.Z.Y.: Whilst the major focus of the film is on Zach's personal development, there is some treatment of social problems in Canadian society. The family is typical in showing the problems of children growing up, reacting to social pressures and fashions. Raymond, the hippie drug taker, highlights the dangers of cannabis smoking and other drug taking: isolation and exclusion from the family, aimlessness in life. The maintenance of family cohesion and family values is tested by young people's urge to assert their independence (e.g. Brigitte leaving school at 15). The generation gap is amply illustrated by the conflict and misunderstandings between the fashion-conscious Zach and the arch-conservative Gervais. The family reflects some of the social problems of the modern urban environment, but the film uses these problems to show how father and son overcome their personal challenges; it is as much a journey of self-knowledge as a mirror to social issues.

La Vie est un long fleuve tranquille : The town is large enough to have a bourgeois quarter and a rougher part, the scene of disturbances shown on television. Much of the story, and the humour, concentrate on the exploitation of the conflict and friction between the two parts of town, exemplified by the two families. The story is a microcosm of social problems, presented in concentrated form and always with humour.

Petty crime, theft, fencing stolen goods is a way of life for the Groseille family. The parents are unemployed; defraud the electricity company to save money. The daughter supplements her income by offering sexual favours, and latterly seduces Jean. The du Quesnoy children are introduced to underage drinking and substance abuse (glue sniffing) by Maurice and his friends. Their behaviour deteriorates. Bernadette is an unwitting victim of identity dislocation by being swapped at birth, and suffers psychological trauma. The du Quesnoy parents show a moral decline in the face of their children's behavioural changes. In short, the film paints some real issues of social concern, but through the stereotypical depiction of two contrasting families, holds a mirror to the audience's own prejudices and mind-set.

5 Les années 1990

A « Les ouvrages démontrent une obsession du passé et une peur de l'avenir. » Commentez cette affirmation.

Un Héros très discret: Albert is haunted by the memory of his father's legend and the persona constructed around an historical event (WW1). His own life uses the past, albeit a fictitious past, to build up an identity. He lives for the present, on a false reputation built in the past, with little thought for the future, though afraid that at some time in the future his past will be uncovered. Resolution comes when, in order to face the future with a clean conscience, he denounces himself and his fictitious CV.

Rouge: The judge has become isolated in his own world; he is fixated by past events (his mistaken judgment in a trial, the woman who cheated on him). His retirement is spent in judgement of local community through telephone tapping (as if psychologically he had never left the court room). This character is contrasted with the vivacious, natural Valentine, who helps him come to terms with the past. The sailor he acquitted, whose case is analysed in conversation, becomes a form of redemption for the man, and this helps overcome the disappointment at not upholding 'truth'. The cinematographic double in Auguste is a parallel to the judge's younger self (relationship with a blonde woman, her infidelity, the coincidence of the *Droit pénal* falling open at the exact page which answers his exam question) and reinforces the memory and importance of the past. His self-denunciation breaks with the past and helps him to show compassion and love for Valentine (the fraternity of the final part of the trilogy). The judge's dream points to a happy future for Valentine, in the same way that

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the same frame which shows Valentine and Auguste together after the ferry disaster points to a possibility of future love. To some extent the judge was afraid of the future, but his fear has been dissipated by the arrival of Valentine.

Saga: Each of the scriptwriters aware of their past and trying to recreate elements in their scripts. The script itself alludes to the past throughout, through allusions to well known films, TV episodes, to underline that the art of storytelling never varies, or perhaps that modern entertainment rehashes the past – badly: the material is platitudinous and empty. The future has little resonance for the characters; most of their efforts are spent in constructing the present through work on the script. Once they have earned significant sums of money, they do not need to worry about the future. The future (in terms of careers) is evoked at the end, when the cynicism of diplomacy is cast as rewriting scripts.

B Quelle est l'importance de l'image et de l'opinion des autres dans les ouvrages ?

One of the themes linking the three works is the use of perception, whether self-perception or perception by others.

Un Héros très discret : Albert's disappointment and disillusionment about his father's 'legend' is the starting-point for the film's investigation into the power of persuasion, the manipulation of memory and the desire for success, both in the eyes of others and on a personal level, through reconstructed identity. Albert sets about repeating the illusion of wartime success, not through family story-telling but through his own myth making. Dionnet encourages him to play roles; Albert's success is that he is taken for a lieutenant, and thence he becomes accepted as a member of the FFI. He is keen to impress others and to be seen as a 'hero'. There is a stark contrast between the reality of Albert's life and the image he forges for himself through a mixture of luck, ability and plain nerve. The obsession is his, yet the film evokes a wider question of the rôle of image and memory, particularly with regard to national memory of war.

Rouge: The image of the judge is one of a person who upholds truth and the law, and is seen to do so. The judge himself seems to live out this image, even in retirement: he eavesdrops on telephone conversations of his neighbours. His condemnation (in court and in the press) allows him to break out of his self-imposed prison and engage with Valentine about the past and what might have been. Valentine is interested in presenting a commercial image (chewing bubble gum) for financial gain. The red of the photo background links to a theme of red throughout the film, underlining the interconnectedness of seemingly disparate objects and events; red is present also in the title. Kieslowski's structuring of the film fixes image and perception, through mass-media (advertising, television) as well as through reflecting surfaces, as an important theme in characters' structuring identity. It is a film about endings and the desire to reconsider one's life, a retrospection on image, self-image and identity.

Saga: The four scriptwriters have a shared interest in others' positive assessment of their work (Louis with cinematic work with Maestro, Mathilde with publishing fame, Durietz, whose 'Deathfighter' idea was stolen and who is desperate for recognition, and Marco who is in search of glory). Image is the very stuff of advertising, and the publicity world is satirised, for example by descriptions of the studio next door to the writers (e.g. the absurdity of ten Noiret lookalikes).

The series grows from nothing to become something of national importance. The writers begin with no fixed plans, and write with no clear plans. As the popularity of the programme increases, and with it its commercial value, there is more editorial interference from Séguret along with a more serious assessment of the creative process, as public image/perception are key. Marco becomes obsessed with the series, can no longer distance himself from the storylines in his real life. Similarly, in its obsessiveness the public models itself on the

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image(s) of characters the series, in their conversations and in their shopping habits (e.g. buying the Saga music, Evelyn's dresses, Saga for men bathroom kit). Séguret views the series in terms of audience support, and because of its huge commercial success, plans a second series.

Marco becomes the victim of a hate campaign as a result of the gloom and nihilism of the last programme in which the team forget public sentiment and try to 'kill off' the series. The mass disappointment is satirised by the dumping of televisions outside his flat (*mausolée cathodique*), insults and hate mail. *Personne ne peut soupçonner l'impact que peuvent avoir des personnages de fiction dans l'esprit des gens*. A volunteer at SOS Amitié reprimanded Marco for his inattention to the importance of image and his bursting of the bubble of popular illusion : *Vous avez fait exploser l'espoir que vous aviez fait naître chez ceux qui en avaient le plus grand besoin*. Image and illusion remain key to people's lives.

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Part II: Texts

Candidates are to attempt **one** question from Part II: Texts and will write their answers in English as these texts are to be studied primarily from a literary point of view.

Answers are to be marked out of 30 according to the criteria below:

- 25 for content [AO3: 10 marks, AO4: 15 marks]
- 5 for structure [AO3]

Examiners will look for a candidate's ability to engage with literary texts and to produce answers which show knowledge, understanding and close analysis of the text. A more sophisticated literary approach is expected than for answers to Part I. Great value is placed on detailed knowledge and understanding of the text; on the construction of an argument which engages the terms of the question and on a close and sophisticated analysis of sections of the text pertinent to the terms of the question. Candidates may have been encouraged to depend closely on prepared notes and quotation: quotation for its own sake is not useful, although it will gain credit if used appropriately to illustrate a point in the answer. Texts and notes may not be taken into the examination.

Candidates will not tend to show **all** the qualities or faults described in any one mark-band. Examiners will attempt to weigh all these up at every borderline, in order to see whether the work can be considered in the category above.

Examiners will take a positive and flexible approach and, even when there are obvious flaws in an answer, reward evidence of knowledge and understanding and especially any signs of analysis and organisation.

In the marking of these questions, specific guidelines will be given for each essay, agreed by the examination team.

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Part II: Texts – Content

23–25	<i>Excellent</i>	Excellent ability to organise material in relation to the question. Comprehensive response with an extensive number of relevant points targeting the terms of the question with precision. Displays detailed knowledge and sustained analysis.
19–22	<i>Very good</i>	A thoughtful and well argued response to the question. Includes a large number of relevant points, well illustrated. Displays thorough knowledge, good understanding and analysis of the text.
15–18	<i>Good</i>	A well argued response to the question. Includes a good number of relevant points, most of which are developed and illustrated. Some limitations of insight, but a coherent approach.
11–14	<i>Satisfactory</i>	A mainly relevant response to the question. Shows fair knowledge and understanding of the text. Includes a fair number of relevant points not always linked and/or developed.
6–10	<i>Weak</i>	An uneven OR basic response to the question. Shows some knowledge and understanding of the text. Includes some relevant points, but development and illustration are limited. Contains padding AND/OR has some obvious omissions OR is largely narrative.
1–5	<i>Poor</i>	Little attempt to answer the question. Only elementary knowledge and understanding of the text. Makes very few relevant points and even these are largely undeveloped and unsubstantiated. OR a response which makes hardly any attempt to address the terms of the question but which displays a basic general knowledge of the text.
0		No rewardable content.

Part II: Texts – Structure

5	<i>Very Good</i>	A well structured and coherent piece of writing, with ideas and arguments clearly linked throughout. All paragraphs well constructed. Includes a comprehensive introduction and conclusion.
4	<i>Good</i>	A clear structure, with logical presentation of ideas. Most paragraphs well constructed. Includes an adequate introduction and conclusion.
3	<i>Satisfactory</i>	Some success in organising material and ideas into a structured piece of writing. A reasonable attempt to paragraph but weakness in introduction and conclusion.
2	<i>Weak</i>	Some attempt to organise material and ideas into a structured piece of writing. Many single-sentence paragraphs or no attempt at paragraphing. Organisation of ideas not always logical.
1	<i>Poor</i>	No attempt to organise material and ideas into a structured piece of writing. Incoherent. Ideas introduced in no apparent order.
0		No rewardable structure.

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Indicative Content

Questions are open to interpretation and, therefore, the following notes are not intended to be prescriptive but to give an indication of some of the points which could be made in response to each question. They are by no means exhaustive.

6 Racine, *Andromaque*

- A Write a commentary on the following passage. Explain the implications for both Andromaque and Pyrrhus himself of what he is trying to achieve in this speech. Comment on any other features which you consider important.**

The commentary should include some background on the circumstances which brought Andromaque and Astyanax to Pyrrhus's court after the Trojan War. His role in defeating the Trojans in a siege which brought about the death of Andromaque's husband has become an insurmountable barrier between himself and Andromaque, whom he loves.

Pyrrhus admits that his actions in battle have caused Andromaque to hate him. He is seeking, in this speech, to make her realise that her coldness towards him has caused him at least as much pain as he has inflicted upon her. The dramatic revelation which he makes here is that he is prepared to turn against his own kith and kin if Andromaque will give him some grounds for hope that her feelings for him might soften. The implications of his offer are immense and are meant to show how desperate he is for a change in her attitude. Good answers should include observations on the epic nature of the effect on national events of violent personal emotion.

- B Discuss the importance given to the past in *Andromaque*.**

Answers should convey awareness that in Racine, most of the elements of the tragic *dénouement* are there at the beginning of Act I. The purpose of the exposition is to explain these.

The focus of Orestes's speeches in the first scene is his obsession with Hermione, rooted in the past, which was earlier frustrated by her engagement to Pyrrhus, whom she loves passionately. The Trojan War should be cited as the reason for the problems faced by the characters now. The women-folk of the defeated Trojans were distributed among the victors, and Andromaque became the prisoner of Pyrrhus. Also, the Greeks want to capture Astyanax, son of the hero Hector and of Andromaque, for fear that he will become another Hector and seek to avenge his father's death. Pyrrhus has a duty to co-operate with the Greeks' request but is prepared to ignore it if Andromaque will agree to marry him.

The past is thus crucial in weighing on Andromaque's refusal to marry Pyrrhus, a refusal which provokes Pyrrhus into threatening to give Astyanax up to the Greeks. It is memorably evoked in her account of the battle in which Hector was killed.

For Hermione, daughter of Helen and Menelaus, the idea that Pyrrhus should betray her love in favour of the enemy's widow adds to her sense of injustice.

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- C 'Each reaction of a character affects immediately the situation of all the other characters.' Discuss the dramatic structure of *Andromaque* in the light of this observation.**

Candidates are expected to discuss the psychological mechanism of the play rather than just recounting the sequence of events. The pivotal decision, required by the objective of Oreste's mission on behalf of the Greeks, is that of Andromaque. If she agrees to marry Pyrrhus in order to save Astyanax, Hermione's betrothal to Pyrrhus will be abandoned and her jealousy enflamed, and Oreste could succeed in persuading her to leave with him. In the reverse scenario, Hermione triumphs and Oreste's desires continue to be frustrated. Hermione's taunting of Andromaque to seek once more to charm Pyrrhus and persuade him to spare Astyanax might be seen as the key to sustaining the dramatic tension. Andromaque's decision to marry Pyrrhus and then to die (for reasons which could usefully be explained) precipitates Hermione's command to Oreste and thus the death of Pyrrhus, her own suicide, and the madness of Oreste. The best answers might include observations about the urgency of all these decisions and the terrifying responsibilities which hang upon them.

7 Molière, *Les Femmes savantes*

- A Write a commentary on the following passage. Analyse what it reveals about the characters, and in what ways it is comic. Comment on any other features which you consider important.**

Answers can usefully include observations about all the characters in this scene. Henriette tries to escape the poetry reading because she does not share her mother's and sister's devotion to literature, and also because she does not wish to be involved in the inevitable expressions of admiration for Trissotin, who has designs on her which she is anxious not to encourage. Philaminte shows her usual single-mindedness and overbearing manner in insisting that Henriette should stay, not least because the 'secret' which she intends to reveal to Henriette afterwards is her intention to make the latter marry Trissotin (for reasons which might be explained and related to other Molière plays in which a forced marriage reflects the main character's need to get everything to revolve around his/her obsession). Philaminte's impatience with the servant who falls over the chair is characteristic of her absurd design to require her staff to learn about science, grammar, etc. Armande and Bélise merely echo Philaminte, as is their wont. Trissotin's remark to Henriette suggests that he is more interested in her charms than in the cultural agenda. The comic features here are the inappropriateness of lecturing the servant about physics, and his cheeky 'common sense' reply, together with the imagery used to announce the poem which is to be read – comparing it to a meal, a new born baby. In the former case, an analogy may be made with Philaminte's 'unnatural' rage at Martine's 'natural' solecisms. Armande's laughably admiring response to Trissotin's feeble joke presages the superlatives to be heaped upon his pathetic poem.

- B To what extent is the play a satire of 17th century life which can only be fully appreciated with a knowledge of the historical and social background ?**

The best answers will show knowledge of the social and literary background to the play. That said, much credit can be obtained through an awareness of Molière's ability to depict human types which transcend the historical context. It could be pointed out that the feminism displayed by certain characters is, as well as being a perversion of *préciosité*, a timeless comment on a human foible: Armande's claim to despise marriage and physical love is comically undermined by her jealousy of the relationship between Henriette and Clitandre, and her spiteful attempt to undermine their intention to get married is not defined by any specific context. The antics of the pseudo-intellectual women can be illustrated as being

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about a timeless comic discrepancy between aspiration and limitation. Chrysale is the sempiternal hen-pecked husband who never has the courage of his convictions, and who is laughable by force of contrast with his wife and by his predictability. Whilst there are many references to contemporary characters whom Molière wished to embarrass for their pretentiousness, the latter feature is made entertaining in any age by the same comic technique which Molière applied to the *femmes savantes*.

C 'There are times when the play comes close to tragedy, but a tragic outcome can at no point be envisaged.' Discuss.

Molière's plays generally have at their centre a character who is driven by a blind determination to impose his perception of the world on those around him. That which is central in importance to him must be central in importance to those over whom he has control. The character thus displays a form of tyrannical behaviour which is potentially disruptive to the lives of others, who are required to conform in an unnatural way to a fantasy which the main character sees as reality. A parent's authority over his/her daughter is used to reinforce the fantasy: daughters are forced to abandon their nice young suitors for grotesquely unsuitable men who happen to conform to the obsessive vision of the parent. In this play there are two potentially tragic situations: the dismissal of Martine for failing to live up to Philaminte's standards in her use of the French language, and the marriage of Henriette to Trissotin. These crises are theatrical devices to show firstly the extremes to which the main character(s) will go in pursuit of their obsession, and secondly the vulnerability of the said characters which undermines any true sense of pathos or menace. Their extreme obsessiveness is comic in its overstatement, predictability and inflexibility. It is not menacing, because the rational characters can easily work out how to get one step ahead and force the central character to face his/her own self-delusion, in this case the true nature of Trissotin's agenda. Pathos and potential tragedy in Molière's plays are fleetingly present but always deflated by something laughable, and consistently undermined by the good sense of a servant and a brother-in-law or two, who can take advantage of the incompetence of those who seek to frustrate the course of nature by perpetuating their own self-delusion.

8 Voltaire, *Candide*

A Write a commentary on the following passage. Explain what light it throws on the characters, and its significance in the story as a whole. Comment on any other features which you consider important.

Some explanation might be offered as to the baron's presence in South America, and the fact that he is now a Jesuit 'missionary'. The main issue is the absurd snobbery of the petty German nobility, a theme which runs through the story and is comically incongruous, given the circumstances of this meeting, let alone the Baron's supposed vow of humility. The baron's mechanical response indicates his inability to put things in perspective. Candide's argument reflects his continuing reliance on Pangloss's teaching (again inadequate in the face of reality), and his honest belief that he is doing, and has done, the right thing by Cunégonde. The scene is comically echoed in the penultimate chapter, when the baron describes the notion of his sister marrying Candide as *une infamie*. Candide kills the baron in self-defence, and is instantly filled with remorse, as his nature is to be decent to people. The fact that he has been obliged to kill three people is a matter of distress to him, not least because he still wants to believe that decency can prevail without violence and that all is for the best. The episode shows that his resolve to be reunited with Cunégonde and to marry her continues to inspire him to hope for the best outcome of his adventures.

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B The ending of *Candide* has been described as offering no solutions to the problems raised by the story. Explain and discuss this view.

The problems raised by the story are summed up in the conclusion: the three great ills being physical suffering, moral evil and boredom. The point of view expressed by Pangloss, i.e. that all things reflect a greater good, has been systematically discredited. That held by Martin, i.e. that a malign force controls the universe, is perceived to be extreme, in that it is dismissive of the good which exists in the world, and sterile, in that it has no place for human aspiration. Eldorado is, by definition, a figment of the imagination. In the last chapter, Candide visits a dervish and meets an elderly Turk. The former counsels an end to metaphysical speculation, the latter extols the virtue of ignoring the antics of society and living peacefully and simply on the fruits of his garden. The conclusion by the group of friends that the Turk's way of life is better than that of the kings with whom Candide has dined does not, of course, offer a solution to the existence of *le mal physique* or *le mal moral*. Candidates may reasonably take the view that this is inevitable, and that individuals or social groups would simply do well to heed the message that happiness is more likely to be achieved by eschewing the search for power or wealth and settling for productive labour and a simple life. They may also, not unreasonably (at their age!), share the view of some critics that this conclusion is unsatisfactory in that it asserts only the mediocrity of life and the futility of worldly ambition.

C 'Voltaire's narrative is intended to mirror the incoherence of the world.' Do you agree?

Voltaire sought in his narrative to challenge the Optimists' view of a world ordered by pre-established harmony. Candidates may give details of the chaos caused by conflict, religious fanaticism and so on, but the focus should be on the nature of the story-line. In contrast to the perception that all reality reflects a kind of cosmic harmony, the narrative is random and chaotic. Examples could be given of the ludicrous coincidences which bring about meetings and reunions. The rapid sequence of misadventures can be described as unrealistic, but only in a context of deliberate parody and caricature. Credit will then be awarded in relation to the amount of relevant detail provided to demonstrate the point that the whole thing is an elaborate joke against the idea of a structured and coherent universe.

9 Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*

A Write a commentary on the following passage. Explain Emma's state of mind and behaviour, and the implications of this passage for her future. Comment on any other features which you consider important.

The essence of this passage is anti-climax. After the ball, Emma returns to her unsophisticated husband and the deadly boredom of daily life. An analysis of Emma's experience of the ball at La Vaubyessard will largely answer the question. Reference might usefully be made to the Romantic novels which Emma used to read, in that this occasion brings to life the characters and environment which she sees as her natural habitat. Champagne, elegance, music, romantic intrigue, flirtations, and her sense of fitting into this tableau effortlessly and successfully, might be mentioned. Perceptive answers will draw attention to the moment at which she sees the peasants outside with their noses pressed against the window, whereupon her past life seems utterly remote and she wishes to suspend time and herself in this dream come true. The implication for her future is that she will seek, by one means or another, to rekindle the stimulus provided by the ball, and will indulge in reckless behaviour so to do. La Vauyessard is what she needs in perpetuity, and her subsequent attempts to recreate what is essentially a fantasy world will ultimately destroy her.

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B « Il vient de recevoir la croix d'honneur. » Comment on Flaubert's depiction of Homais in the light of this statement.

This is about the triumph of self-confident mediocrity in a society characterised by complacency. Flaubert makes it clear from the description of Homais's shop that self-advertisement is his principal talent. The man himself is presented as having a face which « n'exprimait rien que la satisfaction de soi-même » and with the hallmarks of a vain and pretentious fool. He dishonestly prides himself on being a member of several intellectual societies and boasts about his scientific publications. It is made clear that his scientific talents are very limited, and it is only the ignorance and gullibility of the inhabitants that sustain his reputation. He has no difficulty in blinding the locals with elementary science, sporting his Greek hat to reinforce his use of classical names for medical conditions and treatments. His work as a journalist is similarly perceived by his readers to be eloquent and by Flaubert's readers to be cliché-ridden and pompous, like his discourse. His anti-clerical stance derives from a superficial reading of Voltaire. His professed indifference to death is at variance with his fear of dying. He is obsequious to those whom he wishes to manipulate, and loses no opportunity to attack, behind their backs, those who might stand in his way. He ruthlessly exploits Charles's disarray after the death of Emma, and ruthlessly disposes of competition in the form of new doctors. His *arrivisme* and realism are successful where idealism and Romanticism are not. Flaubert's commentary is essentially aimed at a society which fails to see through pretentiousness and self-interest. Homais is successful because he knows how to exploit the stupidity of the *bourgeoisie*.

C « C'est la faute de la fatalité. » How far do you agree with Charles's assessment of the turn of events in this novel?

It could be said that Charles, to the last, will blame anyone or anything rather than his wife, for the ruin of his marriage and his career. It would be possible to take a censorious line here and convict Emma for capricious, unfaithful and reckless behaviour. On the other hand some might similarly berate Charles for his lack of perception, over-indulgence of Emma, indecisiveness, or plain ineptitude. A more appropriate judgement would involve a balance between these views. Emma and Charles are fundamentally incompatible, are thrown together by fate, and neither is culpable in this regard. That said, a candidate might reasonably argue that there is some merit in Charles's statement. The couple met when he was a widower and she was bored and desperate for a better life. He could not possibly have realised the extent of her lack of realism about the future, and she had led such a sheltered life that Romantic fantasy seemed the only alternative to the prosaic world of a farmer's daughter. She might have settled down to her life with Charles but for the ball at La Vaubyessard, which rekindled all her Romantic dreams. Both Rodolphe and Léon came in to (or back in to) her life at times when she felt particularly isolated. Lheureux was the worst possible person to be available to someone with fantasies to indulge, Bournisien the most incompetent pastor imaginable. All these approaches are viable, given appropriate illustration from the text.

10 Maupassant, *Boule de Suif et autres contes de la guerre*

A Write a commentary on the following passage. Analyse the effect Maupassant seeks to achieve in his description of the behaviour of the characters at this point. Comment on any other features which you consider important.

The journey is about to resume, after Boule de Suif has satisfied the demands of the Prussian officer. Her stupefaction at the beginning of this extract is caused by the instant rejection of her by the other travellers. She is the last to emerge from the hostelry, and every

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one of them turns away as she approaches. It should be noted that the attitude of the characters towards Boule de Suif changes with the twists of the narrative. They were friendly and encouraging when they needed her co-operation, and now, after their demands have been met, their snobbery and moral posturing returns to the surface. They are seen to revert to their instinctive preoccupations: society gossip, business, card games, prayer, and silent cogitation respectively. Maupassant aims to highlight their selfishness and their indifference towards the personal sacrifice made by Boule de Suif in their interest. The reader is invited to share the latter's indignation at their hypocrisy. Candidates might usefully mention that the scene evolves, after Loiseau's observation at the end of this extract, into the painful spectacle of the travellers consuming their food without offering anything to Boule de Suif, who generously shared her supplies with the others during the first part of the journey.

B 'The stories suggest that war is not entirely devoid of comedy.' Discuss and illustrate this comment.

Answers should focus on the humour derived from war, rather than offering a general appreciation of Maupassant's wit and irony. On the borderline between these two areas would be the satirical portraits of the various social classes in *Boule de Suif*, which are relevant insofar as the characters' attitudes and behaviour are shown for what they are by the particular circumstances of their journey. A recurrent feature of the stories is the comic depiction of ordinary Frenchmen pressed into military service, unfit, inept, ordered around by self-important officers with more bluster than military skill. The most appropriate story to examine in detail is *Un Coup d'État*. Maupassant sets a clear agenda in the opening paragraphs, with the images of make-believe soldiers convinced of their calling to play « un grand rôle militaire ». The antics of the mayor and his *milice rurale* and those of Dr Massarel and his acolytes offer substantial opportunities for illustrating Maupassant's exploitation of ridiculous self-aggrandisement, made particularly comic in this case by the mute incomprehension and astonishment of the local people.

C Compare the effect on the reader of the death of La Mère Sauvage and of that of Les Deux Amis.

In both stories the characters can be seen as heroic, but the *deux amis* are innocent victims, whereas the story of La Mère Sauvage is one of murderous revenge and voluntary self-sacrifice to that end. Whilst it might be said that the two friends' incursion into dangerous territory demonstrates almost culpable complacency or foolishness, the focus should be on their unhesitating refusal to betray their countrymen by revealing the required password, and the quiet dignity with which they accept death and seal their friendship. The reader is left in shock at their summary execution and the nonchalant behaviour of the Prussian officer. La Mère Sauvage evokes more complex feelings in that Maupassant makes the point that these ordinary young Prussians are human beings who are appreciative and helpful. The war, which is beyond the comprehension of simple folk, wrecks their lives to no apparent purpose. La Mère Sauvage is driven to her act of *héroïsme atroce* by the destructive force unleashed by *les grands*.

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11 Mauriac, *Le Nœud de vipères*

- A Write a commentary on the following passage. Discuss the state of Louis's relationship with Isa at this point and the feelings he expresses here. Comment on any other features which you consider important.**

Louis and Isa are staying with Louis's mother after their return from honeymoon. (The plan had been to stay with Isa's parents, but the latter made an excuse to put them off.) Louis has just evoked the night during which he was tortured by the imagined presence of Rodolphe. At dawn, he had got up and looked at himself in the mirror. What he saw was « l'homme qu'on n'avait pas aimé ». This explains his highly emotional state in this extract. Typically, he cannot bring himself to communicate his feelings to his mother. The description of the church tower emerging through the mist symbolises the incipient spiritual awareness which Louis persistently represses until the end of his life. His feeling that he could have sought the meaning of life through religion, and that this search might have brought him and Isa back together, recurs at several points in the novel. It prepares the reader for his change of heart towards the end, his greater willingness to explore his own spirituality. In this circumstance, the sense that he is not Isa's first choice brings to the surface his instinctive lack of self-worth. He is emotionally crippled by the feeling that Isa married him out of desperation, and that he was a fool to believe that she loved him. The sense of grievance which he feels at this point turns to bitterness and hatred as he sees Isa at the window, and his response is to destroy the handkerchief which had wiped her tears in Superbagnères, tears which he had wrongly interpreted as being shed out of intense love, but which he now realises were shed because she missed Rodolphe. Candidates may wish to offer a value judgement on the haste with which Louis concludes that their marriage is, as a consequence of her abandonment by Rodolphe, a sham, or on the way in which the Fondaugèges exploit his attraction to Isa in order to resolve a family problem.

- B Discuss the significance of Mauriac's depiction of the bourgeoisie in this novel.**

A distinction should be made between the family background of Louis and that of Isa. Louis was from peasant stock, and his first experience of the bourgeoisie was at the Faculty of Law. Whilst he envied these *fils de famille* their social graces, he regarded them as intellectually inferior, and he despised their Catholicism, nurtured by a Jesuit education. His initial acquaintance with Isa's respected bourgeois family is recalled in terms of the *univers si borné* which made Mme Fondaudège's conversation limited and tedious to a degree. He recalls the feeling that Isa's relatives were dubious as to whether he was *sortable*, and scornful of his mother because of her peasant origins. Similarly, Isa spoke of Louis's mother to her friends as a kind of rustic curiosity. Following Isa's abandonment by Rodolphe (or rather by his parents), the Fondaudèges were terrified that she might remain a spinster. Better, it is implied, for the bourgeoisie to marry into wealthy peasant stock than face the humiliation of having an unmarried daughter. Further analysis of the bourgeoisie will emerge from Isa's inculcation of the values of her social class into her own children. Examples may be given of their lack of sensitivity, their materialism, their ostentatious Catholicism contrasted with a breathtaking lack of understanding of basic Christian principles, their obsession with reputation. Above all, they would stop at nothing to get hold of Louis's money. Some may conclude that Mauriac's manifest dislike of these people leaves little to the reader's imagination. The main point of the question is to bring out the snobbery, philistinism, hypocrisy and false values which, in Mauriac's view, characterised the middle classes in and around Bordeaux.

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C Analyse the importance of what we learn about the childhood and adolescence of Louis.

Louis was brought up by his mother, the widow of a *modeste fonctionnaire*. She owned land which she had inherited and converted from grazing pasture into profitable forest. A frugal life-style had enabled her to save enough to buy Calèse. Louis was taught to be careful with money. The other principal detail about his early life is his assertion that reminiscence, in his case, is a far cry from the idealisation of childhood indulged in by most people. He recalls his *haineuse rivalité* with other pupils, and his instinct to *repousser toute sympathie*. As for the oppressive attentions of his mother during his serious illness, he evokes the irony of the fact that he resented it, whereas during his long illness in old age, he resents the profound indifference which surrounds him. His youth, he says, was of no benefit to him. His lack of charm put people off. He was incapable of spontaneous enjoyment, of anything which might be called typical adolescent behaviour. He made fun of others' weaknesses. He was unattractive to women because he talked down to them and failed to pay them any compliments. He held his mother responsible for his social ineptitude, and was cruel to her. In old age he feels that he is suffering in atonement for that cruelty. The portrait is thus of a youth who is emotionally stunted, aggressive because lacking in self-confidence, and unable to open up to anyone. The brief experience, then, of feeling completely different because somebody loved him, followed by the destruction of that feeling, accounts for the violence of his reaction to the account of Isa's relationship with Rodolphe. A further issue could be addressed with regard to Louis's dislike of his middle-class, Catholic-educated peers, and the implications of his anti-Catholic views for his relationship with Isa and the children, also his reaction to the snobbery of Isa's family. The opening chapters provide the essential features of Louis's character: a resentful introvert, an unlovable teenager, briefly loved and then made to feel second-best, and an instinctive anti-clerical who loathed snobbery and pretentiousness.

12 Bazin, Vipère au poing

A Write a commentary on the following passage. Explain the situation, and analyse what the passage tells us about the characters and the relationships between them. Comment on any other features which you consider important.

Mme Rezeau recently discovered a hiding-place in Frédie's bedroom, which contained items of food, keys and some cash. Her verdict : « Tout cela est très grave et mérite une punition exemplaire. » Unusually, she did not express any suspicion that Brasse-Bouillon had been a party to this crime, and had resolved to pin all the blame on her eldest son. His punishment was to be flogged by the latest tutor-priest, to whom she apologises for the fact that her husband is too busy, and she herself feels unable to flog a boy of Frédie's age. The latter was also to be confined to his room for a month, allowed out only to attend Mass. The others were forbidden to communicate with him. Although Brasse-Bouillon has been overruled by his two brothers in terms of sharing the blame, he cannot resist the urge to confront his father with the unfairness and severity of the punishment. (His further agenda is to convince his father that boarding school is the solution.) He knows that his father will do anything to avoid confrontation with his Folcoche. His contemptuous description of the middle-class morality which motivates his father is backed up by an awareness of the need to place the latter in a position whereby he feels that he has made a decision himself, rather than having it presented to him by his son. Brasse-Bouillon gives him the opportunity to express disapproval of the brothers' failure to own up to their involvement in the crime, but also takes the opportunity to point out that the aim of Folcoche was to generate a sense of grievance in Frédie to cause disunity. The severity of his portrayal of his weak father, terrified by the possibility that his wife might catch him talking in private to his own son, is constantly justified by the latter's behaviour. The excuse he comes up with for lifting the punishment is, as

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Brasse-Bouillon calculated, the face-saving possibility of an indulgence granted on his own Saint's day. His protestations about the constant disturbance to his life focus, absurdly, on his children's behaviour rather than that of his wife.

B Discuss the social attitudes of the Rezeau family and the effects of these attitudes on their behaviour.

The Rezeau are class-conscious. M. Rezeau occasionally boasts about his aristocratic ancestry, but the family's status was preserved, in the face of mounting financial difficulties, by his marriage to Paule Pluvignec, grand-daughter of an illustrious banker and provider of a very substantial dowry. The Rezeau have always been staunchly royalist as well as Catholic, and have no time for the working classes, let alone left-wing sympathisers. They are conservative Catholics and deeply disapprove of any form of radical thinking. They are the last in an economically ailing line of landed gentry, in an isolated region little touched by social (or any other) development, maintaining, without much fear of opposition, an almost feudal life-style. They are unfailingly sycophantic in their dealings with the upper classes and with representatives of the Church. Their annual reception is of immense importance in regard to their need to keep up appearances. Candidates may provide details of the privations visited upon the children to this end. The local pharmacist is the absolute limit, in social rank, of their tolerance of the middle classes. There are plenty of examples of their parsimonious and condescending treatment of the servants. Charitable work in the interests of the poor is perhaps no more than a part of their religious charade, as they manifestly disdain the working classes whom they suspect of revolutionary tendencies.

C To what extent does the author encourage the reader to take a critical view of Brasse-Bouillon's version of events?

It might be appropriate to deal first with Brasse-Bouillon's unattractive characteristics, and then to point out that most (or all) of them can be ascribed to his upbringing. The first-person narrator inevitably seeks to engage the reader's sympathy, but the ironical perspective of the mature author cannot fail to see some excess in his youthful behaviour, or even in the savagery of tone of part of his reminiscences. On the behavioural level, candidates could cite Brasse-Bouillon's impertinence and his constant desire to undermine authority. In his attitudes, he relishes any discomfort or misfortune visited upon those he hates, and this hatred, together with the visceral contempt he expresses for many of the characters, can be seen on occasion to vitiate his personality. More seriously, perhaps, his terminology when referring to religious matters or using religious symbolism could be described as blasphemous. His treatment of Madeleine is barely excusable with reference to his stunted emotional development. For the most part, the narrator succeeds in relating his excesses to his treatment at the hands of his mother and tutors. His aggression can thus be seen as legitimate. He describes his own behaviour when living with his grandmother as saintly. The characteristics which he admits to sharing with his mother are brought out by contact with her. It is the application of Folcoche's hypocritical religious discipline which generates his rebelliousness and, one might say, his intractability. On balance, it can reasonably be said that the damaged human being who writes the concluding invective deserves our sympathy more than our disapproval.

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13 Tournier, *Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique*

- A Write a commentary on the following passage. Analyse Robinson's perception of the significance of the explosion and its effect on his relationships with the island and with Vendredi. Comment on any other features which you consider important.**

In the period before the explosion, Robinson had become increasingly angry about Vendredi's failure to fulfil the role of obedient slave willing to accept European values and practices. His rage had overflowed into physical violence. He had relied on the highly ordered nature of his regime for protection against the threat of moral degeneration, a slope down which he had slipped after his attempt to escape by boat had failed. It is to his surprise, as well as to the reader's, that the complete destruction of his ordered world by Vendredi's disobedience and carelessness is seen as a release rather than a disaster. When constructing his ordered world, a calendar and a clock had been essential to give him a sense of control over his own life. Now they are seen as undesirable constraints. Without them, his days « s'affirment fièrement dans leur valeur intrinsèque. » He has, after the explosion, addressed the sun in a prayer to make him like Vendredi, to assume his lightness and cheerful acceptance of what each day has to offer. His relationship with Vendredi will now be one of brotherhood. He is full of admiration for Vendredi's ability to go naked with confidence, to commune with nature. He can now acknowledge that Vendredi has taken him on a journey towards metamorphosis. The vestiges of the Puritan within him are scared by the change, but it is as fruitful as it is irrevocable.

- B Analyse the importance of religion for Robinson and the way in which this evolves.**

Robinson was brought up a Quaker. His puritan parents have instilled into him a belief in the value of hard work and prayer. He has an extensive knowledge of the Bible, and it provides his terms of reference for all moral issues. The greatest virtue is to be productive, and this is what inspires him to such immense efforts to cultivate crops. Man must try to imitate his Creator. As this exercise becomes increasingly futile, given Robinson's solitude, he becomes seduced by the idea of a relationship, perhaps spiritual as well as physical, with Mother Earth. The arrival of Vendredi prompts him to revert to his former principles, as the latter's master and teacher. However, the baptism of Vendredi introduces an ambivalent note: Friday marks the death of Christ and the birth of Venus. Perhaps this marks the next step away from conventional Christianity towards some form of pantheism. After the explosion, the former is abandoned in favour of worship of the elements. The baptism of the cabin boy as Jeudi at the end of the story relates to the pagan god Jupiter. The words of Captain Van Deyssel should be called to mind : his evocation of the very gods who seem to preside over Robinson's spiritual development ends with that of Jupiter, who, in the Captain's perception, takes human form as a boy and comes to offer him « les clefs de la Cité solaire ».

- C « Soleil, rends-moi semblable à Vendredi. » Explain and discuss the wish expressed by Robinson here.**

Robinson utters this exhortation in his log book. It is part of the first entry since the explosion caused by Vendredi which destroyed the buildings. This event has brought about a dramatic change in Robinson's aspirations. He has abandoned the role of Governor, master and purveyor of civilised values to the untamed native. He has no further use for calendar or clock. Liberated from his administrative role, he has resolved to discover a new order of things. He has set off on a *voie inconnue*, guided by his new-found admiration for Vendredi's natural affinity with the elements. Anxious to jettison the vestiges of his puritan upbringing and his Englishman's inhibitions, he wants to be able to laugh, dance and run naked in the way that Vendredi does. The spontaneous enjoyment of nature and of whatever happens to

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him is his only ambition. The sun has replaced God, in his perception, as the giver of life. He goes on to ask the sun : « Ma métamorphose va-t-elle assez dans le sens de ta flamme ? » He knows that the baggage of his past prevents him from being a natural creature of the elements like Vendredi, but he ascribes to the sun the power to infuse new life into the *grosse larve blanche et molle cachée dans les ténèbres souterraines*. It is in these terms that he now sees his old life. The power of the sun and the example set by Vendredi offer him a new life.