

English Literature Admissions Test**4501/01a****Wednesday 5th November 2008****Morning****1 hour 30 minutes****Instructions to Candidates**

Please read this page carefully, but do not open the question paper until told to do so.

A separate 8 page answer booklet is provided. Please check you have one.

Write your name, date of birth and centre number in the spaces provided on the answer booklet. Please write very clearly.

You should allow at least 30 minutes for reading this question paper, making notes and preparing your answer.

At the end of the examination, you must hand in both your answer booklet and this question paper. Any rough notes or plans that you make should only be written in your answer booklet.

No texts, dictionaries or sources of reference may be brought into the examination.

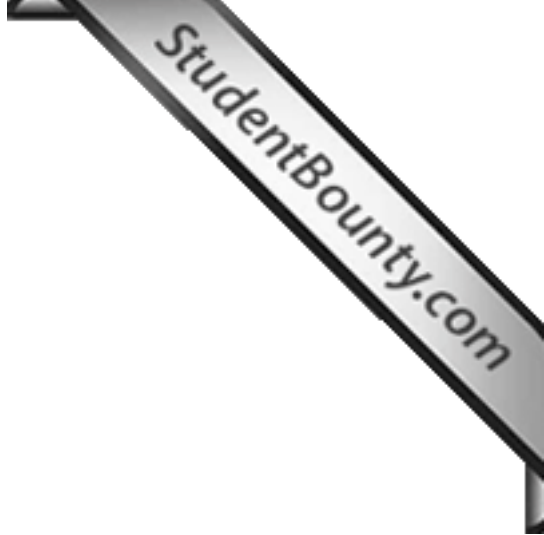


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This paper consists of 8 printed pages and 4 blank pages.





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Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes.

You should spend at least 30 minutes reading and annotating the passages and in preparing your answer.

The following poems and extracts from longer texts are all concerned, directly or obliquely, with portraits, self-portraits or portrait painting. They are arranged in reverse chronological order, the most recent first. Read all the material carefully, and then complete the task below. You are advised to spend at least 30 minutes in planning and preparing your essay.

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| (a) | From the novel <i>On Beauty</i> (2005), by Zadie Smith | page 4 |
| (b) | 'Self-portrait with Rembrandt Self-portrait' (2003), a poem by the American poet C.K. Williams | page 5 |
| (c) | From <i>A Question of Attribution</i> (1991), a play by Alan Bennett | page 6 |
| (d) | From the novel <i>Middlemarch</i> (1871-2) by George Eliot | page 7 |
| (e) | From Essay 43, 'Of Beauty' (1625) by Francis Bacon | page 8 |
| (f) | From the sonnet sequence <i>Astrophil and Stella</i> (c1585) Sonnet VII, by Sir Philip Sidney | page 9 |

Task:

Select two or three of the passages (a) to (f) and compare and contrast them in any ways that seem interesting to you, paying particular attention to distinctive features of structure, language and style. In your introduction, indicate *briefly* what you intend to explore or illustrate through close reading of your chosen passages.

This task is designed to assess your responsiveness to unfamiliar literary material and your skills in close reading. Marks are not awarded for references to other texts or authors you have studied.

(a) From the novel *On Beauty* (2005), by Zadie Smith

Taken from: *On Beauty* Penguin 2006 pp.441-443

Starting: "Howard entered. Polite but fatigued applause greeted him..."

Finishing: "...the underlying blue of her veins and the ever present human hint of yellow, intimation of what is to come."

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- (b) **'Self-portrait with Rembrandt Self-portrait' (2003), a poem by the American poet C.K. Williams**

Taken from: *The Singing New York*: Ferrar, Strauss and Giroux 2003, pp.9

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(c) From *A Question of Attribution* (1991), a play by Alan Bennett

Taken from: Alan Bennett *Plays 2* London: Faber and Faber 1998

Starting: " Blunt [*Sir Anthony Blunt, Keeper of the Queen's Pictures*] Ma'am must have had more experience of painters than most."

Finishing: "Though it's generally assumed that one has. If it could be proved that one hadn't, some of the newspapers would have precious little to write about."

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(d) **From the novel *Middlemarch* (1871-2) by George Eliot**

5 One fine morning a young man whose hair was not immoderately long, but abundant and curly, and who was otherwise English in his equipment, had just turned his back on the Belvedere Torso in the Vatican and was looking out on the magnificent view of the mountains from the adjoining round vestibule. He was sufficiently absorbed not to notice the approach of a dark-eyed, animated German who came up to him and placing a hand on his shoulder, said with a strong accent, 'Come here, quick! else she will have changed her pose.'

10 Quickness was ready at the call, and the two figures passed lightly along by the Meleager towards the hall where the reclining Ariadne, then called the Cleopatra, lies in the marble voluptuousness of her beauty, the drapery folding around her with a petal-like ease and tenderness. They were just in time to see another figure standing against a pedestal near the reclining marble: a breathing blooming girl, whose form, not shamed by the Ariadne, was clad in Quakerish grey drapery; her long cloak, fastened at the neck, was thrown backward from her arms, and one beautiful ungloved hand pillowed her cheek, pushing somewhat backward the white beaver bonnet which made a sort of halo to her face around the simply braided dark-
15 brown hair. She was not looking at the sculpture, probably not thinking of it: her large eyes were fixed dreamily on a streak of sunlight which fell across the floor. But she became conscious of the two strangers who suddenly paused as if to contemplate the Cleopatra, and, without looking at them, immediately turned away to join a maid-servant and courier who were loitering along the hall at a little distance off.

20 'What do you think of that for a fine bit of antithesis?' said the German, searching in his friend's face for responding admiration, but going on volubly without waiting for any other answer. 'There lies antique beauty, not corpse-like even in death, but arrested in the complete contentment of its sensuous perfection: and here stands beauty in its breathing life, with the consciousness of Christian centuries in its bosom. But she should be dressed as a nun; I think
25 she looks almost what you call a Quaker; I would dress her as a nun in my picture. However, she is married! I saw her wedding-ring on that wonderful left hand.'

(e) **From Essay 43, 'Of Beauty' (1625) by Francis Bacon**

Virtue is like a rich stone, best plain set; and surely virtue is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features; and that hath rather dignity of presence than beauty of aspect. Neither is it almost seen, that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue; as if nature were rather busy not to err, than in labour to produce excellency. And therefore they prove
 5 accomplished, but not of great spirit; and study rather behaviour than virtue. But this holds not always: for Augustus Caesar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Bel of France, Edward the Fourth of England, Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael the Sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits; and yet the most beautiful men of their times. In beauty, that of favour is more than that of colour; and that of decent and gracious motion more than that of favour. That is the best part of beauty,
 10 which a picture cannot express; no nor the first sight of the life.

There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles or Albert Durer were the more trifler; whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions; the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces, to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but the painter that made
 15 them. Not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind of felicity (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that if you examine them part by part, you shall find never a good; and yet altogether do well. If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel though persons in years seem many times more amiable; *pulchrorum autumnus pulcher** the comeliness. Beauty is as summer fruits, which are easy to corrupt, and cannot
 20 last; and for the most part it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance; but yet certainly again, if it light well, it maketh virtue shine, and vices blush.

* 'The autumn of beautiful people is beautiful'

- (f) **From the sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella* (c1585) Sonnet VII, by Sir Philip Sidney**

WHEN Nature made her chief work, Stella's eyes,
In colour black why wrapt she beams so bright?
Would she in beamy black, like painter wise,
Frame daintiest lustre mixt of shades and light?
5 Or did she else that sober hue devise,
In object best to knit and strength our sight;
Lest if no veil these brave gleams did disguise
They sunlike should more dazzle than delight?
Or would she her miraculous power show,
10 That, whereas black seems Beauty's contrary,
She even in black doth make all beauties flow?
Both so and thus: she, minding Love should be
Placed ever there, gave him this mourning weed
To honour all their deaths who for her bleed.

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