

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

EITHER

- 1 Read carefully the following extract of a poem, in which the poet is on a long, night-time bus journey. The bus stops as a moose (a very large animal) crosses the road.

How does the way the poet writes highlight the impact made by the sight of the moose?

To help you answer, you might consider:

- the description of her journey
- how the moose is described and the way the passengers react to it
- the impact of the ending of the poem on you.

from *The Moose*

Moonlight as we enter
the New Brunswick¹ woods,
hairy, scratchy, splintery;
moonlight and mist
caught in them like lamb's wool
on bushes in a pasture.

The passengers lie back.
Snores. Some long sighs.

....

– Suddenly the bus driver
stops with a jolt,
turns off his lights.

A moose has come out of
the impenetrable wood
and stands there, looms, rather,
in the middle of the road.
It approaches; it sniffs at
the bus's hot hood.

Towering, antlerless,
high as a church,
homely as a house
(or, safe as houses).
A man's voice assures us
"Perfectly harmless...."

Some of the passengers
exclaim in whispers,
childishly, softly,
“Sure are big creatures.”
“It’s awful plain.”
“Look! It’s a she!”

Taking her time,
she looks the bus over,
grand, otherworldly.
Why, why do we feel
(we all feel) this sweet
sensation of joy?

“Curious creatures,”
says our quiet driver,
rolling his *r*’s.
“Look at that, would you.”
Then he shifts gears.
For a moment longer,

by craning backward,
the moose can be seen
on the moonlit macadam²:
then there’s a dim
smell of moose, an acrid
smell of gasoline³.

¹ *New Brunswick*: a province of Canada

² *macadam*: tar-based road surface

³ *gasoline*: petrol, ‘gas’

OR

2 Read carefully the extract from a novel on the opposite page.

The young narrator has made friends on holiday with a family staying nearby in a house called the Cedars. The twin children, Myles and Chloe are about his age; their mother is Mrs Constance Grace (Connie). Rose is the children's nanny. Years later, as an adult, he is recalling his first meeting alone with Mrs Grace and its impact on him.

How does the writing capture the narrator's memories of Mrs Grace?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- the details of his description of Mrs Grace and where they met
- the language he uses to describe the impression she made on him
- the contrast between his feelings then and how he writes about them now.

I do not recall under what circumstances exactly I managed eventually to get inside the Cedars. I see myself after that initial encounter turning away frustratedly from the green gate with the twins watching me go, and then I see myself another day within the very sanctum¹ itself, as if I had vaulted all obstacles to land up in the living room next to an angled, solid-seeming beam of brassy sunlight, with Mrs Grace in a loose-fitting, flowered dress, light-blue with a darker pattern of blue blossoms, turning from a table and smiling at me, deliberately vague, evidently not knowing who I was but knowing nevertheless that she should, which shows that this cannot have been the first time we had ever encountered each other face to face. Where was Chloe? Where was Myles? Why was I left alone with their mother? She asked if I would like something, a glass of lemonade, perhaps. 'Or,' she said in a tone of faint desperation, 'an apple...?' I shook my head. Her proximity, the mere fact of her thereness, filled me with excitement and a mysterious sort of sorrow. Who knows the pangs that pierce a small boy's heart? She put her head on one side, puzzled, and amused, too, I could see, by the tongue-tied intensity of my presence before her. I must have seemed like a moth throbbing before a candle-flame, or like the flame itself, shivering in its own consuming heat.

What was it she had been doing at the table? Arranging flowers in a vase – or is that too fanciful? There is a multi-coloured patch in my memory of the moment, a shimmer of variegated brightness where her hands hover. Let me linger here with her a little while, before Rose appears, and Myles and Chloe return from wherever they are and her goatish husband comes clattering on to the scene; she will be displaced soon enough from the throbbing centre of my attentions. How intensely that sunbeam glows. Where is it coming from? It has an almost churchly cast, as if, impossibly, it were slanting down from a rose window² high above us. Beyond the smouldering sunlight there is the placid gloom of indoors on a summer afternoon, where my memory gropes in search of details, solid objects, the components of the past. Mrs Grace, Constance, Connie, is still smiling at me in that unfocused way, which, now that I consider it, is how she looked at everything, as if she were not absolutely persuaded of the world's solidity and half expected it all at any moment to turn, in some outlandish and hilarious way, into something entirely different.

I would have said then that she was beautiful, had there been anyone to whom I would have thought of saying such a thing, but I suppose she was not, really. She was rather stocky, and her hands were fat and reddish, there was a bump at the tip of her nose, and the two lank strands of blonde hair that her fingers kept pushing back behind her ears and that kept falling forward again were darker than the rest of her hair and had the slightly greasy hue of oiled oak. She walked at a languorous slouch, the muscles in her haunches quivering under the light stuff of her summer dresses. She smelled of sweat and cold cream and, faintly, of cooking fat. Just another woman, in other words, and another mother, at that. Yet to me she was in all her ordinariness as remote and remotely desirable as any painted pale lady with unicorn and book.

¹ *sanctum*: holy place

² *rose window*: stained-glass window in a church

BLANK PAGE

Copyright Acknowledgements:

Question 1 © Elizabeth Bishop; 'The Moose' in *The Complete Poems*; Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 1983.
Question 2 © John Banville; *The Sea*; Picador; 2005.

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

University of Cambridge International Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.