



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/31

Paper 3 Unseen

May/June 2011

1 hour 15 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

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

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

Both questions in this paper carry equal marks.



This document consists of **5** printed pages and **3** blank pages.



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

EITHER

1 Read carefully the poem opposite about children playing in the streets during the school holidays.

How do the words of the poem express the poet's feelings about the children she observes at play?

To help you answer, you might consider:

- how their play is described
- the portrayal of their parents
- the impact the ending of the poem makes on you.

One Street Beyond

From first light to pub¹ time,
always the trackless children
skirmishing, sliding
through the grit of empty underpasses;
making a chase-game,
throwing coke-cans, threats,
tumbling down the absurd
grass flanks of the main road.
All day you hear them,
tractors and go-carts² squealing
in mindless circles.
All day, some are clambering,
stranded on one
rusting climbing-frame.
Some are running away,
and others, standing staring
at a vacant play-space.
All through the long August
they are darkening, hardening
– the outdoor children
whose fathers come and leave
in vans or on foot
without a word;
whose mothers are always tired
and shouting from windows.
Making little, barbed worlds
from broken glass and match-sticks
at the edges of kerbs,
the children never listen.
They started with white socks,
new toys, washed faces,
but always end here,
dirty and alone,
one street beyond
justice or love.

¹ *pub*: public house, an inn where alcohol is served

² *go-carts*: small cars that children play at racing in

OR

- 2 Read carefully this extract from a novel set in Nigeria. In it, Ugwu, a young boy from a poor village, is about to start a new life working in the house of a university lecturer.

How does the writing help you to share the boy's different feelings about starting his new life?

To help you answer, you might consider:

- the descriptions of Ugwu's thoughts and feelings on the journey to his new workplace
- how the writing conveys his reactions to the lecturer and his house
- how the writing helps you to understand why this is such an exciting experience for Ugwu.

Master was a little crazy; he had spent too many years reading books overseas, talked to himself in his office, did not always return greetings, and had too much hair. Ugwu's aunty said this in a low voice as they walked on the path. 'But he is a good man,' she added. 'And as long as you work well, you will eat well. You will even eat meat every day.' She stopped to spit; the saliva left her mouth with a sucking sound and landed on the grass.

Ugwu did not believe that anybody, not even this master he was going to live with, ate meat *every day*. He did not disagree with his aunty, though, because he was too choked with expectation, too busy imagining his new life away from the village. They had been walking for a while now, since they got off the lorry at the motor park, and the afternoon sun burned the back of his neck. But he did not mind. He was prepared to walk hours more in even hotter sun. He had never seen anything like the streets that appeared after they went past the university gates, streets so smooth and tarred that he itched to lay his cheek down on them. He would never be able to describe to his sister Anulika how the bungalows here were painted the colour of the sky and sat side by side like polite, well-dressed men, how the hedges separating them were trimmed so flat on top that they looked like tables wrapped with leaves.

His aunty walked faster, her slippers making *slap-slap* sounds that echoed in the silent street. Ugwu wondered if she, too, could feel the coal tar getting hotter underneath, through her thin soles. They went past a sign, ODIM STREET, and Ugwu mouthed *street*, as he did whenever he saw an English word that was not too long. He smelt something sweet, heady, as they walked into a compound, and was sure it came from the white flowers clustered on the bushes at the entrance. The bushes were shaped like slender hills. The lawn glistened. Butterflies hovered above.

'I told Master you will learn everything fast, *osiso-osiso*¹,' his aunty said. Ugwu nodded attentively although she had already told him this many times, as often as she told him the story of how his good fortune came about: While she was sweeping the corridor in the Mathematics Department a week ago, she heard Master say that he needed a houseboy to do his cleaning, and she immediately said she could help, speaking before his typist or office messenger could offer to bring someone.

'I will learn fast, Aunty,' Ugwu said. He was staring at the car in the garage; a strip of metal ran around its blue body like a necklace.

'Remember, what you will answer whenever he calls you is *Yes, sah!*'

'Yes, sah!' Ugwu repeated.

They were standing before the glass door. Ugwu held back from reaching out to touch the cement wall, to see how different it would feel from the mud walls of his mother's hut that still bore the faint patterns of moulding fingers. For a brief moment, he wished he were back there now, in his mother's hut, under the dim coolness of the thatch roof; or in his aunty's hut, the only one in the village with a corrugated-iron roof.

His aunty tapped on the glass. Ugwu could see the white curtains behind the door. A voice said, in English, 'Yes? Come in.'

They took off their slippers before walking in. Ugwu had never seen a room so wide. Despite the brown sofas arranged in a semi-circle, the side tables between them, the shelves crammed with books, and the centre table with a vase of red and white plastic flowers, the room still seemed to have too much space. Master sat in an armchair, wearing a singlet and a pair of shorts. He was not sitting upright but slanted, a book covering his face, as though oblivious that he had just asked people in.

'Good afternoon, sah! This is the child,' Ugwu's aunty said.

Master looked up. His complexion was very dark, like old bark, and the hair that covered his chest and legs was a lustrous, darker shade. He pulled off his glasses. 'The child?'

'The houseboy, sah.'

'Oh, yes, you have brought the houseboy.' Master spoke in Igbo². It felt feathery in Ugwu's ears. It was Igbo coloured by the sliding sounds of English, the Igbo of one who spoke English often.

'He will work hard,' his aunty said. 'He is a very good boy. Just tell him what he should do. Thank, sah!'

¹ *osiso-osiso*: very quickly

² *Igbo*: a language spoken in Nigeria

Copyright Acknowledgments:

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