

**GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

**HISTORY OF THEATRE, COSTUME
AND LITERATURE SG
(Second Paper)**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS / MOONTLIKE ANTWOORDE SUPP 2007

**SECTION A
TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE**

Answer any TWO questions from this section.

**QUESTION 1
WAR POETS**

- ◆ Learners may discuss any war poetry period- poets of their choice who protest or promote war.
- ◆ These include Brooke, Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Douglas, Levertov. **[30]**

**QUESTION 2
SYLVIA PLATH**

- ◆ Born in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts
- ◆ Early years spent close to the sea - this closely influences her poetry
- ◆ Devastated with father's death at early age of eight - will never speak to God again
- ◆ Moved inland to Wellesley
- ◆ Marshall Livingston Perrin Grammar School
- ◆ Art lessons
- ◆ Smith College in 1950 - writes poetry
- ◆ Won first prize in 1952 /1953
- ◆ Works in New York editing
- ◆ Not accepted into Harvard writing course - devastated - mental instability begins to show - tried to commit suicide
- ◆ Institutionalized - given insulin and shock treatment
- ◆ Returns to Smith - receives scholarship and prizes, given a Fullbright grant at Cambridge
- ◆ Graduates 1955 'summa cum laude'
- ◆ Meets Ted Hughes 1956 - madly in love with him secret wedding
- ◆ Returns to USA - takes up teaching.
- ◆ Rocky marriage
- ◆ First born: Rebecca
- ◆ Miscarriage - writes Parliament Hill Fields – Tulips
- ◆ Second born - son: Nicholas

- ◆ 1962 – discovers Ted's unfaithfulness
- ◆ Writes 26 ARIEL POEMS after divorce
- ◆ Poems deepen and intensify
- ◆ Death gets allure
- ◆ Psychic pain becomes tactile
- ◆ 1963 - BELL JAR
- ◆ Terrible circumstances still able to produce brilliant poetry
- ◆ February 1963 tries to gas herself in oven

Learners can elaborate freely on various poetry collections, journal articles published

- ◆ Called a confessional poet
- ◆ Uses autobiography
- ◆ Figures who moulded her in her poetry
- ◆ Accent is American with sharp tonal contrasts at times seems like Blake visionary
- ◆ Lurid, flickering images seem to arise from subconscious
- ◆ Images at times surreal
- ◆ Poems also strongly feminist
- ◆ Father figure - turning women into objects - translates into various male figures
- ◆ Only solution is death
- ◆ Much of poetry speaks of longing for perfection

Learners may discuss any Three poems that illustrate relationship between life and poetry

10x3= [30]

**QUESTION 3
EDWARD ALBEE**

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

Learners may draw from anywhere in the play to substantiate their claims in terms of character relationships and conflict situations.

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? was first performed in New York City in 1962. The play stunned and pleased American audiences, seemed to provide a vital insight into American life. The country was coming out of the 1950s, when Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower was a conservative, well-loved president and television shows like *Leave it to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best* were popular. The importance of a happy family was emphasized by both politicians and popular culture. Many Americans considered success to be measured by having one's own house, car, kids, and dog. By all shallow measures, the 1950s were a stable, productive time for the United States of America. And yet, these shallow measures and the trappings of success often hid real problems, which will eventually crop up in any human community. It is this raw, human truth beneath the phony exterior that Edward Albee attempts to reveal in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Characters:

George - A 46-year-old member of the history department at New Carthage University. George is married to Martha, in a once loving relationship now defined by sarcasm and frequent acrimony.

Martha - Martha is the 52-year-old daughter of the president of New Carthage University. She is married to George, though disappointed with his aborted academic career. She attempts to have an affair with Nick.

Nick - Nick has just become a new member of the biology faculty at New Carthage University. He is 30 years old, good-looking, Midwestern, and clean-cut. He is married to Honey.

Honey - Honey is the petite, bland wife of Nick. She is 26 years old, has a weak stomach, and is not the brightest bulb of the bunch.

Themes:

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? was a sensation in its own time because of the powerful themes that it touched on. By writing a play, with its inherent tension between actors and audience, rather than a novel or a short story, Edward Albee uses his genre to illustrate one of these themes.

Albee is an existentialist and a social satirist. He links man's metaphysical alienation in a senseless universe with his social alienation. In his plays, cruelty is shared after kindness is rejected. In a world of isolated compartments, hatred becomes the tie that binds.

He brings up the idea of private and public images in marriage. Inherent in this idea of public and private faces is the theme of phoniness. Many couples, Albee seems to say, project false images of themselves in public situations. In fact, that phoniness is generally preferred to exposing all of one's problems and indiscretions to the world.

Yet, Albee also shows that people not only make up images of themselves for their friends and neighbours, they create illusions for their husbands and wives as well. Both of the couples in this play make up fantasies about their lives together in a somewhat unconscious attempt to ease the pains that they have had to face along the way.

The play thus deals with illusion and reality. George and Martha's child, Honey's pregnancy - both illusory - are, or were, "real" enough to the two sets of "parents". The third act, entitled "The Exorcism", focuses on the ritualistic removal and purification of the illusion upon which George and Martha have based their lives. In "killing" the child, Albee suggests that George kills the way of life of which the child was a crucial part. Their lives will now be different. By the end of the play, the characters achieve self-knowledge ("We all peel labels, sweetie"). This does not mean that they will be happier, or that they will necessarily build a life founded on truth, but both at least have become possible. Over the course of the play, Martha, George, Nick, and Honey have been exposed to themselves and to each other. Perhaps this exposure has freed them as well.

One of the difficulties that Martha and George experience in their marriage is his apparent lack of success at his job. Albee shows the power of this failure through George's cynical disgust with young, ambitious Nick. Through George, Albee questions the reason for this desire for success, and demonstrates how the desire can destroy one's self-esteem and individuality.

From the relationship between Martha and George, it seems that women can be more caught up with the idea of success than men. Martha is disappointed in George's professional failure, perhaps more than he is. One of the reasons for this expectation and hope for her husband could be the fact that she wants to live through his experience. Women had careers much less frequently in the 1950s and 60s than they do today, so Martha might have felt limited.

Part of the ideal of familial success is children. Albee explores how children and parents affect each other. Neither couple in this play has a child, a fact that seems to come between both sets of parents. For Martha and George, their lack of a child is another failure. For Honey and Nick, it is another ground upon which they are not communicating. Both couples furthermore, are deeply influenced by the wife's father; the play forwards the thought that none of the characters is ready to have children in part because they are all living like children themselves.

Albee often symbolises social alienation by a rupture between parents and children. In *Whose Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, a woman who does not want children has an imaginary pregnancy and an imaginary son is killed by his father, who may have killed his own parents, and whose father-in-law "couldn't care less what happens to his only daughter."

Another major Albee theme is the vacuousness, coarseness and false values of American society. He attacks the substitution of artificial for real values in our society and condemns complacency, cruelty, emasculation and vacuity. Albee savagely dramatises the dry rot of middle-class America and shows up the failure of the so-called American dream. When George reads: "And the west, encumbered by crippling alliances, and burdened with a morality too rigid to accommodate itself to the swing of events, must...eventually..fall", we are hearing a rueful but incisive commentary on what has been revealed to us in the play.

Inhabiting this deteriorating landscape are emasculating women and emasculated men: Martha eats cubes of ices; threatens to "fix" her husband; refers to him as "it"; publicly humiliates him when she needles him into breaking a whiskey bottle - a symbolic castration ceremony. George is a passive, futile man who at least is imaginative enough to try to compensate with words and small actions. The future, personified by the anti-humanist, opportunistic, all-American Nick, foreshadows a conformist culture. His name derives from Nikita Khrushchev.

The play is distinctively American. Popular American culture is reflected at the play's outset as Martha attempts to remember the name of an old Bette Davis movie and one of the play's "games" recalls a film of the thirties, called *Bringing Up Baby*. Lines are also recalled from *A Streetcar Named Desire* ("Flores para muertos") and the symbolism of these lines is appropriated by the very literate characters. The title of the play reveals another literary reference. At the climax of the play, George speaks in Latin pronouncing the funeral mass over their "dead" son. George and Martha were intended to suggest George and Martha Washington, and therefore to imply that the USA has not lived up to its idealistic beginnings.

From the very beginning, George and Martha are a surprising and disturbing couple. They explode all fantasies about the bliss of marital life. Not only are they cruel to each other, but they cannot even be civil around their company. Through their horrifying behaviour, Edward Albee seems to indicate that love can quickly transform into hatred. In addition, since George and Martha connect to each other best when trading insults, he also reveals that a marriage can fall into being a series of games that the couple plays with each other.

This play also toys with the idea of privacy in marriage. In this theme, the audience is crucial. After all, not only is Albee opening up George and Martha's marriage to Nick and Honey, but he is revealing their mode of interaction to an entire audience of theatre-goers. After a long stretch of time where families were pictured as perfect and happy (think about the 1950s television shows *Leave it to Beaver*, *Lassie*, and *I Love Lucy*), George and Martha were especially shocking. In the simple fact that George and Martha share the name of America's founding and most famous couple, George and Martha Washington, Albee also implicitly extends his portrayal of this *one* faulty marriage to all of America. The illusions and tensions under which they hide and snipe at each other are paradigmatic of a larger phenomenon in the nation itself.

Part of the reason that George and Martha relate to each other by trading insults is that they are afraid to communicate in a sincere way. It is easier to be mean and hide their true feelings. Therefore, as they drink heavily, the alcohol becomes a symbol of their desire to mask their true emotions from each other and themselves. At the same time, George does not want to be so phoney. He attacks Nick's profession and genetic engineering because he is afraid of artificially changing the way that people are supposed to turn out.

Of course, one could read his distaste for genetic engineering as a result of his own career path. In the 1950s and early 1960s, many social scientists argued that the professional competitiveness that men felt was very destructive. Albee seems to be picking up on this idea. George clearly feels like a bit of a failure, having lost the position of head of the history department. George felt people pushing him to be a success but did not want to involve himself in such a rat race. Therefore, the genetic engineering scares George because it seems like the ultimate form of personal competition. He hates the way that people only want to succeed now, and genetic engineering just seems to be the next step.

The meaning of the title, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, becomes clearer as the play progresses, but so far we know that it comes from a joke at a cocktail party. The song usually goes, "Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?" Virginia Woolf was an English writer during the first half of the twentieth century. She wrote in the style of stream-of-consciousness, which tried to mimic the thought patterns of her characters. One might be afraid of Virginia Woolf because she tries to understand the intricacies of the human mind and heart. She is so honest that she might frighten characters like George and Martha, who hide behind their insults. At the same time, her writing is also very complex and intellectual. Therefore, one might be afraid of not understanding her. In the competitive world of a University, no one would want to admit to being afraid to read something by her. The title, then, could also refer to the competition that George feels at his job, and the need that all people within that academic environment have to puff up their own intelligence.

Much of this first section simply sets up the climax of the play. All of the discussion of George and Martha's child, then, is foreshadowing for the revelation at the end of the play.

Martha's desperation can be seen as a feminist statement by Edward Albee. As she tells her own history, the audience realizes that she never considered taking over the University herself. Instead, she felt that she had to marry someone to do it for her. Therefore, her only power comes from her father. She seems to try to gain power through sexuality, though. As Martha puts on a sexy dress, flirts with Nick, and reveals secrets from her sexual past, she is attempting to gain some authority. She insists, through this behaviour, that she made her own decision and that she can control men. But, her attempts to show this power are somewhat sad because she is ultimately disappointed with her life. She does not have much power, because her fate is so tied up in the men around her.

As Martha and George fight about their son's eye colour, they hint at the fact that the audience learns later--they made him up. The significance of this fight beyond their usual bickering is that they are trying to claim ownership for this fantasy. Whereas a real child might bring parents together, the dream of one that they created is tearing them apart. They each want to be closer to this dream, to make it more theirs. Instead of joining together through their pain, they fight each other.

In the meantime, Honey and Nick are not completely innocent. Nick, with his many degrees and boxing prowess, is an image of youthful pride. Nick can be seen as a younger version of George. Although George no longer has Nick's ambition or youthful energy, George began his time at the University with similar hopes (as Nick mentioned earlier in the act). As Nick and Honey watch this disenchanting, cynical, seemingly hopeless couple fight each other, they seem to recognize the potential for the same in their own lives. This realization might be symbolized by Honey's need to vomit.

This act is titled "Walpurgisnacht." This German word refers to the night before May Day (the first day of May) when witches are supposed to meet together and create havoc. Anything called a "Walpurgisnacht" is supposed to have a nightmarish quality. This term relates to the second act of Albee's play because the games among the guests escalate to a frightening level. In addition, since "Walpurgisnacht" is a pagan myth, Albee uses it to show the breakdown of modern civilization. Conservative, modern ideas, like church and family, are all collapsing in this act.

The theme of parents and children also emerges very strongly here. George recalls his young friend going crazy from the guilt of accidentally killing his parents. This story shows George's distress at the amount of power parents have over their children and how much the lives of parents affect their children. This is an extreme example, but the pattern is echoed in Martha and Honey, whose fathers' wealth and prestige led, in great part, to their marriages. Nick and George seem to regret the amount of power these men have (or had) over them. But, as George's tone in the story indicates, he is resigned to the overwhelming nature of this power.

Nick's story about Honey also reveals how sexuality can create power for women. When Honey appeared pregnant, Nick married her. And, both George and Nick recognize that part of having power at the University is sleeping with the women that are a part of the community. Therefore, Martha is not alone in thinking that much of her power could come from seduction.

Much of this conversation becomes a triumph for George. He is afraid of Nick, after all, because he fears that Nick's field, genetic engineering, signals the future of the University (and the country). But, as George peels layers away from Nick's golden-boy veneer, he reveals a great number of faults and fears. Nick the unblemished, blonde, athletic, good-looking man whose very life is dedicated to eradicating the imperfections in human genes, is himself revealed as flawed. Similarly, the appearance of a perfect marriage between Nick and Honey is shattered by Nick's admission that they got married because she was pregnant. After he tells George that secret, George and Martha's relationship seems partially more healthy than Nick and Honey's. At least their tensions are out in the open.

The war between Martha and George is heating up. She insults him more and more personally, honing in on his work and its connection to his personal life. Plus, the fact that he could not publish his book without her father's approval reveals his reliance on her and her family for his life and livelihood.

George goes after the guests in a forced removal of their last shred of dignity. As he and Martha take each other down, he does not want to let them get away without some humiliation. This can be seen as a complex point by Albee. He seems to be pointing out that one of the major problems in his society is that people measure themselves against one another. All competition results from comparison. George seems to understand this problem and tries to rise above competition. But, as he is being humiliated, he becomes competitive about how desperate and low he is. His attack on Nick and Honey is ironic, then, because he is simply engaging in another kind of competition, similar to the one he disparages.

As the perfect image of Nick and Honey crumbles, the final idealization of marriage and family also collapses. Albee reveals that even this, the seemingly perfect marriage, has serious problems. Honey is afraid of having children, so they cannot have a family. And, it is unclear whether they love each other at all. Nick, the perfect model of a new faculty member, is rather easily seduced by Martha.

The climax of the play reveals the extent to which invention is featured in the story. Their son is made up, as is, perhaps, the story from George's childhood about his friend who accidentally killed his parents. The idea behind the "Exorcism" (the title of the final act) is that the characters are getting rid of the illusions. To "exorcise" means to rid one's body of evil spirits. Therefore, in terms of the play, no more will George and Martha exist in a land of fantasy and make-believe. Still, Martha fears the amount of reality involved in this life. She is afraid of Virginia Woolf, who tried to expose reality and the sincerity of emotion.

This exorcism occurs in front of Honey and Nick, who are not sure what to make of it. Most of their masks have come down as well, but they remain somewhat naïve. After all, Honey comes out of the bathroom where she was tearing the label off of a bottle of alcohol. While the peeling of the label is symbolic of her desire to reveal the truth beyond the surface, she remains attached to alcohol, another symbol of removal and hidden emotions. Nick and Honey might not be ready to tear down their illusions yet. In part, perhaps subconsciously, or perhaps incidentally, George and Martha seem to be both warnings and guides to Nick and Honey. Though Nick and Honey hold the potential of becoming another George and Martha, perhaps in seeing the example of George and Martha they might be able to avoid that fate.

George's prayer chant is a Latin requiem for the dead or dying. As he chants, he marks the passing of his and Martha's fictional son. At the same time, he also imposes a Catholic order on the night that had thus far been pagan and ritualistic. "Walpurgisnacht" is a term for a pagan event. "Exorcism," too, is often connected to pagan traditions rather than those of an established church. The evening of the play, therefore, has passed as a whirling, chaotic, pagan experience. George's prayer, then, exorcises not only the phoniness of his and Martha's child but also the chaos of the night.

[30]

QUESTION 4 HAROLD PINTER

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

Learners may draw from anywhere in the play to substantiate their claims in terms of character relationships and conflict situations.

Craftsman:

- ◆ Well structured play
- ◆ Written like Agatha Christie thriller, but also existentialism, etc. - not just entertainment

Master of dialogue:

- ◆ Absurdist techniques - non sequitur, strong verbal rhythms, the repeated use of seemingly irrelevant clichés
- ◆ Realistic dialogue appropriate to each character . Use of language habits and rituals

Technician of suspense:

- ◆ Nameless and unspecified terror, often from the outside, sometimes a projection of a character's insecurities and fears, contaminates an apparently secure world, confounding a defenceless creature huddled inside his room;
- ◆ People tend to huddle inside their rooms or houses, often in darkness, seeking security; (Stanley, for example, claims never to have stepped outside the door of his room when he lived in Basingstoke. When Lulu tries to make him go outside with her, he refuses);
- ◆ Commonplace situation invested with menace, dread and mystery; the deliberate omission of an explanation or a motivation for the action; (Stanley cruelly teases Meg about the two men with a wheelbarrow in the back of their van who are looking for a *certain person*. Just as she is terrified by this nameless threat of retribution for unknown crimes, so we can be terrified when the same fate overtakes Stanley).
- ◆ Stanley's breakdown is terrifying even though we never know what he is guilty of; The more doubt there is about the exact nature of the menace, the exact provocation which has brought it into being, the less chance there is of anyone in the audience feeling that it could not happen to him;

- ◆ Cast doubt upon everything by matching each apparently clear and unequivocal statement with an equally clear and unequivocal statement of its contrary; creates air of mystery and uncertainty; within ordinary of surroundings lurk mysterious terrors and uncertainties Can we ever know the truth about anything or anyone? Is there any absolute truth to be known?
- ◆ Man's need to dominate fellow man (battle for dominance, with the characters carefully calculating their opponents' strengths and weaknesses, as if they were players in a hard-fought game) Interrogation - set out to destroy Stanley
- ◆ Meg = would-be mother and mistress to Stanley
- ◆ Stanley tells Meg about the anonymous and cruel people who, he claims, "Carved me up" (page 23) at the concert hall

Laughter:

- ◆ Comedy of menace: "comedy of manners". Begin on comic note, end in a situation either of actual violence or of psychological catastrophe; distinctive tragic-comic blend; "is funny up to a point. Beyond that point it ceases to be funny, and it was because of that point that I wrote it."
- ◆ Comic use of character, dialogue, music hall characteristics (double act); physical comedy routines, well-known jokes
- ◆ Recognisable reality of the absurdity of what we do and how we behave and how we speak."
- ◆ Humour = largely verbal; unexpected, accuracy of description; repetitions, rhythms and ambiguities of contemporary speech; words used in an unusual context; mixture of linguistic registers

Surprise:

- ◆ Personality and character = unstable; mysterious; different names

Emotion:

- ◆ Feel sympathy for characters (Meg, Petey, Lulu)
- ◆ Frightened by terror of interrogation, intrigued, angry at unfair treatment etc. very engaging

Artist, a true poet of the stage:

Play has been subject to a number of interpretations;
Poetic metaphor which lies open to a number of interpretations: individual's pathetic search for security; of secret dreads and anxieties; of existential anguish; of the terrorism of our world, so often embodied in false bonhomie and bigoted brutality; of the pressure on the artist to conform to the norms of society; of birth and death; of the problem of identity; of the initiation that occurs from unreality to reality; of the tragedy that arises from lack of understanding between people on different levels of awareness.

Representation of the pressures put upon artists to conform to the norms and requirements of society (Stanley = artist, has to conform, loses voice, wears conservative suit)

Social forces which control our lives.

- ◆ Secret dreads and anxieties;
- ◆ Terrorism of the world, often embodied in false bonhomie and bigoted brutality;
- ◆ McCann = Irish, brooding ferocity, concerned with politics and religion, treachery to "the organisation" and matters of heresy.
- ◆ Goldberg = Jewish, interested in sex and property (Stanley murdered his wife, ran out on his fiancée and so on)

- ◆ Man's insatiable need to dominate his fellow man; dramatises human relationships as a battle for dominance, with the characters carefully calculating their opponents' strengths and weaknesses, as if they were players in a hard-fought game (note the many cricket terms)
- ◆ Interrogation: McCann and Goldberg set out to destroy Stanley, and they have planned for this carefully.
- ◆ Meg: she plays another and more subtle kind of power game as would-be mother and mistress; decides when he wakes up and what he eats, and through this domestic ritual she aims to dominate him.
- ◆ World of unmotivated cruelty and hate - McCann and Goldberg - "unidentified" threat
- ◆ Stanley tells Meg about the anonymous and cruel people who, he claims, "Carved me up" (page 23) at the concert hall.
- ◆ Mysterious individuals who are coming to the house with a van and a wheelbarrow to take Meg away. When Goldberg and McCann arrive, it is
- ◆ Unclear whether they are the people Stanley has been referring to.
- ◆ Stanley = reborn; no longer seems to be the same person we met at the beginning; articulate individual who harasses Meg in the initial breakfast scene has turned into a silent and unrecognisable shell of a man in acts two and three allegory of birth and death. Stanley, the sinful mortal, can be seen as a modern-day Everyman figure. He is snatched away from the home he has built for himself, from the warmth of love embodied by Meg's mixture of motherliness and sexuality; called upon to die by two Angels of Death (McCann and Goldberg) who pose to him the question of which came first, the chicken or the egg

Desire for personal freedom

- ◆ Stanley, unlike Petey, refuses to be drawn into Meg's net and makes her understand this by complaining bitterly about the food and drink.
- ◆ Petey: don't let them tell you what to do
- ◆ Stanley's various attempts to rebel - ultimately unsuccessful

SECTION B
SOUTH AFRICAN LITERATURE

QUESTION 5
DOUGLAS LIVINGSTONE

Learners use following information to discuss relevant themes as evidenced by THREE of Livingstone's Poems

Livingstone's stance on conservation

- ◆ (Pteranodon, Leviathan, Gentling a Wildcat, The Lost Mine, A Flower for the Night, Sleep of my Lions)
- ◆ Wants readers to be challenged into having some care, some concern, some identification with this beautiful planet
- ◆ Not romantic about animal kingdom; perceives animals as creatures in their own right with a legitimate world of their own; does not give them a human consciousness; his animals are concerned with bare survival in a tough, often violent world; nature is biological struggle. He is a poet of the instinct to survive and he finds a kind of heroism in the act of survival. External nature becomes a metaphor of existential effort
- ◆ Wild animals represent to me a sort of harsh freedom and beauty from which humanity is inexorably excluding itself; I am optimistic about the planet and its inherent life-force, but pessimistic about man - the ultimate polluter through his greed and numbers.
- ◆ Nature is harsh and unremitting, neither a pastoral retreat (the romantic attitude) nor a hunter's paradise (the colonial attitude), but a "stark, animal- infested land, threatening, ominous, unlovely."
- ◆ Nature will always win in the end
- ◆ Cycle of nature

Supremacy of nature over technology or human progress

- ◆ The lost mine - all human interventions forgotten, silent now, overhead tack the triumphant bats.
- ◆ Sleep of My Lions where bricks, guns, etc relegated to healing power of ocean; hippos flatten cultivated gardens / deckchairs
- ◆ The flower for the night which inspires awe in people - appreciation of nature
- ◆ Livingstone's attitude towards God and nature may be seen in the quote below:

The problems are enormous: why do the ungodly prosper? why cruelty? Why greed that will destroy a valley, a river, a hill or coast for immediate profit? Then comes the crunch: we have free will; we are the architects of our own salvation or destruction - which means we are, finally, just another life-form despite these lofty choices available to us. If we do not make it morally, or should I say spiritually, the earth, the Creative Principle will replace us.

Science is man's search for truth:

- ◆ Interest in science - Worked as bench-chemist at a sugar-mill, then as a lab technician
- ◆ Trained as a marine bacteriologist at the Pasteur Institute in what was then Salisbury
- ◆ In charge of the pathological diagnostic laboratory
- ◆ Scientific powers of observation combined with an imaginative use of metaphor
- ◆ Poems very scientifically worked out in terms of structure (line length, metre rhyme scheme, internal rhymes, etc. verse length - examples from The Lost Mine, Dust, etc.)
- ◆ Scientific in terms of nature and relationship between man and his world (Gentling a Wildcat)
- ◆ Nature is biological struggle, harsh, unremitting (Gentling a Wildcat)
- ◆ Scientific in terms of Social poems in that science = neutral observation - Observe facts as they exist, unemotional, criticizes social system through details (Dust)
- ◆ Uncertainty - everything needs to be tested
- ◆ Definitions e.g. Sjangbok - uses quasi scientific definitions
- ◆ Fascination with prehistoric creatures (Pteranodon, Leviathan)

Art is man's interpretation of it:

- ◆ Vacillates between **pessimistic** (Dust) and **optimistic** (A Flower for the Night) views of the world
- ◆ Uses a combination of **lyrical** (Vanderdecken) and **dramatic** (Sjangbok) techniques
- ◆ Poetry is seen as **re-ordering experience**, rather than simply representing it; art is a desperate game - a means of generating new possibilities from within poetic language itself; in an apparently fractured world, things can be synthesized in a poetic universe of metaphor and symbol
- ◆ "Means of shoring up fragments against his ruin" after dad died
- ◆ Sees feminine principal as restorative
- ◆ Brutal, graphic **imagery** because this is how he sees world

[30]

**QUESTION 6
ATHOL FUGARD**

THE ROAD TO MECCA

**Learners may refer to ANY (at least three) of the themes in the play.
Learners must display understanding on how the themes operate using suitable examples from the play**

Miss Helen

A frail, bird-like woman in her late sixties; neglects herself personally; lonely; misunderstood by community; naïve; gusty loner; creative artist; oppressed (even Marius and Elsa, both of whom love her, sees her in terms of themselves and impose their values on her); needs to work in order to survive; she feels rather than intellectualises; suffering from deteriorating eyesight and hands which have been badly burnt and scarred from working with glass; a visionary; has a sense of humour - see p.79; Helen's soul is fought over (her freedom/ creative energy, which has made her a threat to the community).

Elsa

A strong young woman in her late twenties, an English language teacher at a Coloured school in Cape Town (in reality a social worker); represents the white liberal consciousness; modern free-thinking South African; tetchy; brusque; urban; guilty about own abortion and issues of race; lonely; has broken up with her married boyfriend, David; feels bitter to an extent; needs to believe in Helen's art in order to survive; an outsider in New Bethesda

Chart changing relationship through the play

Arrival of Elsa - sets up tension/expectations, see relationship relax - play game together and laugh (like children together)

Give one another news; Trust and love introduced

Remember their first meeting - get picture of relationship

Elsa reveals her reason for being here: Helen's last letter: Elsa dealing with the issues - being put out of the house - Sunshine Home for the Aged; asks What are you going to do? - is patronising towards Helen

Helen is truthful about real reason for letter - DARKNESS! end of Mecca (mini-climax)

Entry of Marius creates further suspense and tension between women because of their differing views on him; a clash of values anticipated

When Elsa discovers truth about the accident, feels betrayed - Helen has abandoned her/ no trust

Helen asks "Who are you?"

Elsa reveals admiration for Helen and understanding of context within village (Helen is not harmless: Village/Mecca; her monsters an expression of freedom)

Helen describes process of becoming artist: candle gave her courage, free from husband, vision of Mecca/East, started to create

Chart changing relationship through the play

Arrival of Elsa - sets up tension/expectations, see relationship relax - play game together and laugh (like children together)

Give one another news; Trust and love introduced

Remember their first meeting - get picture of relationship

Elsa reveals her reason for being here: Helen's last letter: Elsa dealing with the issues - being put out of the house - Sunshine Home for the Aged; asks What are you going to do? - is patronising towards Helen

Helen is truthful about real reason for letter - DARKNESS! end of Mecca (mini-climax)

Entry of Marius creates further suspense and tension between women because of their differing views on him; a clash of values anticipated

When Elsa discovers truth about the accident, feels betrayed - Helen has abandoned her/ no trust

Helen asks "Who are you?"

States her own independence: I won't be using this. I can't reduce my world to a few ornaments.

Elsa's insight into Marius' love for Helen and pride in her (you affirmed your right, as a woman)

Overwhelmed by her own loneliness (Patience, child, abortion, etc.) Helen comforts her

Realisation about putting out candles - master

Reaffirmation of their friendship and trust (Open your arms, I'm going to jump)

Darkness - the extinction of my creativity

- ◆ Attempt to understand the genesis, nature and consequences of creative energy
great fear = possible drying up of my creative energy. What would I do if I ever found that I could not write again and there was still a lot of time left to live? I once said in an interview that the only truly safe place I have ever known in this world in this life that I have lived was at the centre of a story as its teller. I am writing a new play and because of that I know who I am, what I am, where I am and why I'm there. All the why's, who's, what's and where's of my life are taken care of when I am writing.
- ◆ Terrible kind of limbo existence between one kind of story-telling and another. I have only once experienced the indescribable hell called writer's block when you just can't get it down on paper and though it was many year's ago, that once was enough. It is a form of anguish that still frightens me when I think about it now. Dealing with that fear was, I now believe, one of the main reasons for writing *The Road to Mecca*.
- ◆ Miss Helen = a self-portrait, not biography
- ◆ What happens when all the candles go out? What Miss Helen realises of course is that to be a true master you have got to know not only how to light them, but also how to blow them out. This recognition has, I think, been the inspiration for some of the most moving works of art.
- ◆ "The affirmation in my plays is Miss Helen's recognition and acceptance of that necessity.

Symbolic vocabulary

Candles:

"Never light a candle carelessly and be quite sure you know what you're doing when you blow it out." Lighting candles becomes a metaphor for creativity.

Getting big, for Helen, was being able to have her own candle. Candles can also hurt - though small, they can be dangerous.

Candles = "brave little lights" thus equating creativity with courage.

Marius' last words to Helen are: "I've never seen you as happy as this! There is more light in you than in all your candles put together."

Light and Dark

Light and darkness stand for many things - creativity and stagnation, vision and blindness, hope and despair, life and death. The danger Helen faces (the loss of her power to create, her approaching death, her increasing blindness) is seen as encroaching darkness. See the letter she wrote to Elsa: p.38 and her speeches on p.46, p.72 and p.78.

This fighting against the night is a life and death struggle "which Fugard ultimately sees as positive, because the play ends with a message of hope, human courage and connection".

Helen needs to accept the darkness if she is to become a "master" creator.

The Camel Yard/The Owl House:

These are the external embodiments of the vision within Helen (p.72).

Become symbols for artistic creations of any kind and her struggle to defend them becomes, in turn, a metaphor for all individual struggles against oppression.

Elsa says: "Those statues out there are monsters for the simple reason that they represent Helen's freedom." (p.66)

Her struggle thus also becomes a means of exploring the universal struggle of all people for meaning and dignity.

Objects she has created are fantastic, the products of her vivid imagination, "with a logic of [their] own" (p.36). Helen identifies herself with her artworks (p.35) and by liking them, Elsa is liking her. Her creations are her only reason to continue living and her greatest fear is "that there won't be any more pictures inside ever again, that this time [she] has reached the end." (p.37)

Mecca:

Mecca is the Muslim holy city and all must visit it during their lifetime. It is Helen's replacement for Christianity.

Mecca also represents artistic fulfilment and thus the road to Mecca represents the journey Helen undergoes in order to attempt to reach artistic fulfilment.

"The only reason I have for being alive is my Mecca." Helen's creativity gives her a reason for living. The greatest fear she has is of losing her creativity.

THEME: 10 x 3= [30]

QUESTION 7
GCINA MHLOPE

HAVE YOU SEEN ZANDILE?

Effectively explores the lives of women

- ◆ Zandile: creative, lonely, imaginative, initially not politically aware - wants to be a white person so that she can have nice clothes, shoes and a car, storyteller in making, give Gogo purpose in life, misses Gogo hugely - continues to write, wants to be a teacher; praise poem for Mr Hlatshwayo who is going on pension; ultimately Z is her vehicle - she is independent, clever, funny, aware of all that is happening, sympathetic etc. Her father is married to someone else and has six children and so she is "no-one's responsibility".
- ◆ Gogo: believes in importance of education; sees potential in Z; child very NB to her, gives Z gift of stories and magic to tell them; believes in traditional values, yet also flexible and wants Z to succeed; human values = everything that grows has feelings, cares for her emotionally and materially, desperate when Z is gone - feelings for grandchild never die
- ◆ Lulama: lives in the Transkei with her husband and four children, inflexible adherence to traditional values as result of own disappointments, wants Z to do woman's work in order to find husband; arranging a marriage for Zandile with the nephew of the richest man in the village; has wanted Zandile to be with her for years; left Zandile because her husband would not have accepted her. Lulama's hard times: after she had married, working in Durban for two pounds a month, sending money home to her children in the Transkei. Joined a band called "Mtateni Queens" and sang at weddings; hard work; hoped for better things which never came; wants to disillusion her child of any unfounded hopes that she might have. One day five men in black suits and shiny shoes came in, ordered the band to sing a song over and over, tried to grab her, Zandi's father stepped in and knocked him down. He then persuaded the gang to let them go. Lulama fell pregnant which interfered with the band cutting a record and going on tour. She stayed in Durban until Zandile was born; we see what is expected in traditional society
- ◆ Lindiwe: more traditional, accepting of roles of women; innocent confusions around womanhood; knows traditional beauty remedies and remedies; physically mature, gets period; goes to Joburg; a bit boy crazy after meeting Paul at the wedding;

Under the apartheid regime

Doubly oppressed (women and black) Pass laws
Bantu education Group areas act
Separation of family

Story told without bitterness

- ◆ Simple dramatic story, arranged into fourteen scenes,
- ◆ Although it deals with G's own experience, does not indulge . Unsentimental approach
- ◆ Z's ebullient energy, optimism, imagination and determination provide humour and emotional depth to the story.
- ◆ Charming, funny, quirky (letters on sand) innocent, alive with imagination
- ◆ Lots of singing and dancing and action to create vibrant energy which saves piece from getting solemn or too tragic (sugar sugar)
- ◆ Simple devices such as radio announcement to move story on. Identify with all characters in story (even Lulama)
- ◆ Real coming of age story - puberty dealt with sensitively, innocent confusions addressed
- ◆ Simple dramatic devices - two handers, monologues, songs
- ◆ Although certain events happen in 1976, no other reference to politics of the time, we are allowed to make connections
- ◆ Moments of great excitement when Z thinks she has found Gogo
- ◆ End of play deals with human loss - identifiable and engaging for all criticised by some as lacking political clout.

White audiences: mental pain/anauish not merely province of whites

- ◆ Universal work, dealing with role of women in society, friendship, importance of family, expectations and dreams etc.
- ◆ It is an intensely personal story - not protest, theatre of resistance of theatre of liberation (personal, seemingly apolitical story, which is gentle, beautiful and tragic, but never sloganeering)
- ◆ Different type of opposition - convince audience of humanity
- ◆ Carries a consciousness of its time and reflects this truthfully.

Impact of play on first audiences

Moving, funny, thought-provoking, makes statement about universality of experience - ultimately we are all the same as human beings

[30]

QUESTION 8 ZAKES MDA

Magic realism

- ◆ A narrative technique that blurs the distinction between fantasy and reality. It is characterized by an equal acceptance of the ordinary and the extraordinary.
- ◆ Fuses (1) lyrical and, at times, fantastic writing with (2) an examination of the character of human existence and (3) an implicit criticism of society, particularly the elite.
- ◆ Became the hallmark of literature built on the conviction that a nation needed stories in order to define its identity
- ◆ Stories that transform time and space into magical and elastic concepts in which time present and time past co-exist unproblematically with time future; stories that restore a sense of wholeness to the world
- ◆ Charging the here and now with the fiery breath of symbol and allegory
- ◆ Discover the long story of a country in the generations of a single family
- ◆ Rooted in the tangible shapes of the real; But this real is transformed into the miraculous by infusing it with the unexpected and with a joyful acknowledgment of the deeper, darker, creative forces of the natural world which refuse to be explained or contained by science and technology and even religion. This makes reality magical.
- ◆ The magical is presented as a function of language itself
- ◆ Deep seriousness: reinvents history
- ◆ Offers alternative views to the dominant, rectilinear patterns of conventional history
- ◆ Africa has an ancient tradition of oral storytelling, which suspends linear time and turns cause and effect inside out, while the dead and the living interact freely and commerce with the ancestors is a necessary ingredient of social intercourse.
- ◆ The lightness of the style = bright excesses of humour in which all conventional rationality is exploded, a carnival of exuberance where the sacred cows of society can be sacrificially slaughtered

Transforms the real into the miraculous

- ◆ Christmas Day - New Year (miracle of Xmas)
- ◆ Toloki's smell which creates intervention between funeral and wedding parties
- ◆ Combination of foods (Swiss cake and green onion)
- ◆ Jwara's creativity inspired by Noria's singing. Toloki's journey to the city
- ◆ Forgiveness becomes magical. The bathing scene
- ◆ Toloki's drawings and their powers

By infusing it with the unexpected

- ◆ Toloki's smell which has power . Toloki's attitude to profession. Acquisition of outfit
- ◆ Noria's laughter: people used to tickle the baby to hear her laugh. Eventually she got sores under her armpits from all the tickling and her laughter turned to tears.
- ◆ Story of Mountain woman and health assistant. Noria and Toloki unlikely combination
- ◆ Bizarre religious story regarding Apostolic Blessed Church of Holly (sic) Zion on the Mountain Top

Ways in which magical atmosphere is created

- ◆ Use of language: razor blades in her tongue
- ◆ Strange events - 15 months of being pregnant, then again - gave birth to Vutha twice; Jwara's death and the description of the body; Nefolovhodwe, the furniture-maker, keeps flea circus;
- ◆ Use of imagination - use of the magazines to create home and garden
- ◆ Use of obscure or undefined names
- ◆ Sense of hope amidst despair. Through art
- ◆ The figurines and their effect on the children

Effect on the reader

- ◆ Effect of communal narrator on reader - seems magical that they can all know
- ◆ All-seeing eyes of the village gossip
- ◆ Feel like we are listening to gossip
- ◆ Could be anywhere therefore more universal
- ◆ Naivety in the style =endearing
- ◆ Exquisite blend of fantasy and reality
- ◆ Sense of dignity of people

Ways of *Dying* deals specifically with the lives of the oppressed

- ◆ Rural village community to the shabby, vibrant outskirts of a contemporary South African city
- ◆ Townships, squatter camps
- ◆ Funerals
- ◆ Sense of so many deaths (lives cheap)
- ◆ Vibrancy of this life
- ◆ Few delicacies (Toloki's food)
- ◆ Toloki going to sleep - takes all worldly possessions from his shopping trolley
- ◆ Sleep on a bench
- ◆ Cannot afford mourning clothes
- ◆ Hungry
- ◆ Unrest - school girl shot
- ◆ Shadrack = wealthiest man, but runs a spaza shop and a taxi
- ◆ Problems with finding employment Toloki decided to leave after this. He took part-time jobs in different places and deaths and funerals continued to follow him. One such incident is described, where a community turned against ten men who had been rapists and murders, killing them. The community would never be the same again and for the rest of their lives, its people would walk in a daze.
- ◆ Shacks
- ◆ Community shares what it has "We are like two hands that wash each other"
- ◆ Hard for Noria to find jobs -sweeper in the town, sweeping job at the Bible Society, prostitute at a hotel
- ◆ Aspirations are so commonplace

- ◆ Toloki was hawker; bought himself a trolley for grilling meat and boerewors. He would make mielie pap to go with the wors. He conducted his trade in the central business district and made a lot of money from this business. Unfortunately one day he ran out of meat and ran to the butchery, chaining his cart to a pole. When he returned his cart had been confiscated and demolished. He tried to continue his business using a gas cooker, but his money ran out and his friends left him.
- ◆ Shadrack was accosted by three white, right-wing men, who beat him up, took him to a mortuary to have some fun and then dumped him on the road
- ◆ That afternoon, Noria and Toloki go to Madimbhaza's house, which is known as the "dumping ground" as it is where women dump their unwanted babies, many of them handicapped
- ◆ Women cooking food for a community meeting
- ◆ Stay aways
- ◆ Political demonstrations at five
- ◆ Poor community manages to laugh, find happiness, etc.

Makes very few references to the lives of the oppressors

A man helped him to get employment as a malayisha at a mill, which meant that he loaded and unloaded bags of maize and mielie-meal. His job had been held by a man who had been accused of stealing. This man had been tortured by the police, but would not confess to any crime and so he was ultimately released - he lost his job and his manhood.

One day he went to visit his friend and discovered people weeping. His friend had been burnt to death in a deadly game he played with a white colleague (being drenched with petrol)...there is discussion as to whether this white man wanted him dead, out of jealousy, or whether he saw it as just a game.
Shadrack injured by the police

Contains implicit criticism of social conditions in which Toloki and Noria exist

- ◆ Deep seriousness: rather than an opting out of reality, it invests reality with the whole gamut of its own possibilities, realized and unrealized.
- ◆ Reinvents history and interrogates why at any given moment of its history a people should feel the need to invent certain myths and not others
- ◆ Offers alternative views to the dominant, rectilinear patterns of conventional history
- ◆ Invites readers to compare this version with the others they already know, in order to ponder the possibilities, and to make a choice, assuming all the risk and responsibility of such a choice.
- ◆ Says profound things about the South African experience, criticizing many aspects of our society, while displaying tremendous sensitivity and tenderness for all those involved in these human tragedies.

[30]

TOTAL FOR SECTION B: [60]

TOTAL: 120