



**Cambridge International Examinations**  
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

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**LITERATURE (ENGLISH)**

**0486/12**

Paper 1

**October/November 2014**

**2 hours 15 minutes**

**Texts studied should be taken into the examination.**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer **three** questions: **one** question from Section A, **one** question from Section B, and **one** question from Section C.

Answer at least **one** passage-based question (marked \*) and at least **one** essay question (marked †).

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.



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## SECTION A: DRAMA

### ARTHUR MILLER: *All My Sons*

**Either \*1** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Mother:* And you? You [*shakes her head negatively*] go out much? [*Slight pause.*]

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*Mother:* I have to have some tea.

[from Act 1]

How does Miller make this moment in the play so full of tension? Support your ideas with details from the writing.

- Or**    †2    What do you think Miller's portrayal of Jim Bayliss contributes to the power of the play? Support your ideas with details from the writing.
- Or**    3    You are Joe Keller. Chris has left after you have admitted your guilt. You are in your room. Write your thoughts.





WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *The Tempest*

**Either \*7** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

|                  |   |    |
|------------------|---|----|
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Moon-calf, speak once in thy life, if thou beest a good moon-calf.  |    |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | How does thy honour? Let me lick thy shoe.<br>I'll not serve him; he is not valiant.  |    |
| <i>Trinculo:</i> | Thou liest, most ignorant monster: I am in case to juggle a constable. Why, thou debosh'd fish, thou, was there ever man a coward that hath drunk so much sack as I to-day? Wilt thou tell a monstrous lie, being but half a fish and half a monster? | 5  |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | Lo, how he mocks me! Wilt thou let him, my lord?  | 10 |
| <i>Trinculo:</i> | 'Lord' quoth he! That a monster should be such a natural!   |    |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | Lo, lo again! Bite him to death, I prithee.   |    |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Trinculo, keep a good tongue in your head; if you prove a mutineer – the next tree! The poor monster's my subject, and he shall not suffer indignity.   | 15 |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | I thank my noble lord. Wilt thou be pleas'd to hearken once again to the suit I made to thee?   |    |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Marry will I; kneel and repeat it; I will stand, and so shall Trinculo.   |    |
|                  | <i>Enter Ariel, invisible.</i>  | 20 |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | As I told thee before, I am subject to a tyrant, a sorcerer, that by his cunning hath cheated me of the island.   |    |
| <i>Ariel:</i>    | Thou liest.   |    |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | Thou liest, thou jesting monkey, thou; I would my valiant master would destroy thee. I do not lie.  | 25 |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Trinculo, if you trouble him any more in's tale, by this hand, I will supplant some of your teeth.  |    |
| <i>Trinculo:</i> | Why, I said nothing.  |    |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Mum, then, and no more. Proceed.  |    |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | I say, by sorcery he got this isle;<br>From me he got it. If thy greatness will<br>Revenge it on him – for I know thou dar'st,<br>But this thing dare not –   | 30 |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | That's most certain.  |    |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | Thou shalt be lord of it, and I'll serve thee.  | 35 |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | How now shall this be compass'd?<br>Canst thou bring me to the party?   |    |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | Yea, yea my lord; I'll yield him thee asleep,<br>Where thou mayst knock a nail into his head.   |    |
| <i>Ariel:</i>    | Thou liest; thou canst not.   | 40 |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | What a pied ninny's this! Thou scurvy patch!<br>I do beseech thy greatness, give him blows,<br>And take his bottle from him. When that's gone<br>He shall drink nought but brine; for I'll not show him   |    |



|                  |  |    |
|------------------|--|----|
|                  | Where the quick freshes are.   | 45 |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Trinculo, run into no further danger; interrupt the monster one word further and, by this hand, I'll turn my mercy out o' doors, and make a stock-fish of thee.            |    |
| <i>Trinculo:</i> | Why, what did I? I did nothing. I'll go farther off.   |    |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Didst thou not say he lied?  | 50 |
| <i>Ariel:</i>    | Thou liest.  |    |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Do I so? Take thou that. [ <i>Beats him</i> ]<br>As you like this, give me the lie another time.   |    |
| <i>Trinculo:</i> | I did not give the lie. Out o' your wits and hearing too? A pox o' your bottle! This can sack and drinking do. A murrain on your monster, and the devil take your fingers! | 55 |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | Ha, ha, ha!  |    |
| <i>Stephano:</i> | Now, forward with your tale. –<br>Prithee stand further off.   |    |
| <i>Caliban:</i>  | Beat him enough; after a little time, I'll beat him too.   | 60 |

[from Act 3 Scene 2]

Explore the ways in which Shakespeare makes this such an entertaining moment in the play.

**Or**    **†8**    To what extent does Shakespeare make you admire Prospero? Support your ideas with details from the play.

**Or**    **9**    You are Sebastian at the end of the play.

Write your thoughts.

OSCAR WILDE: *The Importance of Being Earnest*

**Either \*10** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

|                   |  |    |
|-------------------|--|----|
| <i>Cecily:</i>    | May I offer you some tea, Miss Fairfax?  |    |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | [ <i>With elaborate politeness.</i> ] Thank you. [ <i>Aside.</i> ] Detestable girl! But I require tea!   |    |
| <i>Cecily:</i>    | [ <i>Sweetly.</i> ] Sugar?   |    |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | [ <i>Superciliously.</i> ] No, thank you. Sugar is not fashionable any more.   | 5  |
|                   | [ <i>Cecily looks angrily at her, takes up the tongs and puts four lumps of sugar into the cup.</i> ]  |    |
| <i>Cecily:</i>    | [ <i>Severely.</i> ] Cake or bread and butter?   |    |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | [ <i>In a bored manner.</i> ] Bread and butter, please. Cake is rarely seen at the best houses nowadays.   | 10 |
| <i>Cecily:</i>    | [ <i>Cuts a very large slice of cake and puts it on the tray.</i> ]<br>Hand that to Miss Fairfax.  |    |
|                   | [ <i>Merriman does so, and goes out with footman.</i><br><i>Gwendolen drinks the tea and makes a grimace. Puts down cup at once, reaches out her hand to the bread and butter, looks at it, and finds it is cake. Rises in indignation.</i> ]                                | 15 |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | You have filled my tea with lumps of sugar, and though I asked most distinctly for bread and butter, you have given me cake. I am known for the gentleness of my disposition, and the extraordinary sweetness of my nature, but I warn you, Miss Cardew, you may go too far. | 20 |
| <i>Cecily:</i>    | [ <i>Rising</i> ] To save my poor, innocent, trusting boy from the machinations of any other girl there are no lengths to which I would not go.  | 25 |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | From the moment I saw you I distrusted you. I felt that you were false and deceitful. I am never deceived in such matters. My first impressions of people are invariably right.  |    |
| <i>Cecily:</i>    | It seems to me, Miss Fairfax, that I am trespassing on your valuable time. No doubt you have many other calls of a similar character to make in the neighbourhood.   | 30 |
|                   | [ <i>Enter Jack.</i> ]   |    |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | [ <i>Catching sight of him.</i> ] Ernest! My own Ernest!   |    |
| <i>Jack:</i>      | Gwendolen! Darling! [ <i>Offers to kiss her.</i> ]   |    |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | [ <i>Drawing back.</i> ] A moment! May I ask if you are engaged to be married to this young lady?  | 35 |
|                   | [ <i>Points to Cecily.</i> ]   |    |
| <i>Jack:</i>      | [ <i>Laughing.</i> ] To dear little Cecily! Of course not! What could have put such an idea into your pretty little head?  |    |
| <i>Gwendolen:</i> | Thank you. You may! [ <i>Offers her cheek.</i> ]   | 40 |
| <i>Cecily:</i>    | [ <i>Very sweetly.</i> ] I knew there must be some misunderstanding, Miss Fairfax. The gentleman whose arm is at present round your waist is my guardian, Mr. John Worthing.   |    |

|            |  |    |
|------------|--|----|
| Gwendolen: | I beg your pardon?   | 45 |
| Cecily:    | This is Uncle Jack.  |    |
| Gwendolen: | [ <i>Receding.</i> ] Jack! Oh!   |    |
|            | <i>Enter Algernon</i>  |    |
| Cecily:    | Here is Ernest.  |    |
| Algernon:  | [ <i>Goes straight over to Cecily without noticing any one else.</i> ]<br>My own love! [Offers to kiss her.]   | 50 |
| Cecily:    | [ <i>Drawing back.</i> ] A moment, Ernest! May I ask you—are you engaged to be married to this young lady?   |    |
| Algernon:  | [ <i>Looking round.</i> ] To what young lady? Good heavens! Gwendolen!   | 55 |
| Cecily:    | Yes! to good heavens, Gwendolen, I mean to Gwendolen.  |    |
| Algernon:  | [ <i>Laughing.</i> ] Of course not! What could have put such an idea into your pretty little head?   |    |
| Cecily:    | Thank you. [ <i>Presenting her cheek to be kissed.</i> ] You may. [Algernon kisses her.]   | 60 |
| Gwendolen: | I felt there was some slight error, Miss Cardew. The gentleman who is now embracing you is my cousin, Mr. Algernon Moncrieff.  |    |
| Cecily:    | [ <i>Breaking away from Algernon.</i> ] Algernon Moncrieff! Oh!<br>[ <i>The two girls move towards each other and put their arms round each other's waists as if for protection.</i> ] | 65 |
| Cecily:    | Are you called Algernon?   |    |
| Algernon:  | I cannot deny it.  |    |
| Cecily:    | Oh!  |    |
| Gwendolen: | Is your name really John?  | 70 |
| Jack:      | [ <i>Standing rather proudly.</i> ] I could deny it if I liked. I could deny anything if I liked. But my name certainly is John. It has been John for years.                           |    |
| Cecily:    | [ <i>To Gwendolen</i> ] A gross deception has been practised on both of us.  | 75 |
| Gwendolen: | My poor wounded Cecily!  |    |
| Cecily:    | My sweet wronged Gwendolen!  |    |
| Gwendolen: | [ <i>Slowly and seriously.</i> ] You will call me sister, will you not?<br>[ <i>They embrace. Jack and Algernon groan and walk up and down.</i> ]                                      | 80 |
|            | <i>[from Act 2]</i>  |    |

Explore the ways in which Wilde makes the various misunderstandings and their effects so hilarious at this moment in the play.

**Or †11** How do you think Wilde makes Dr. Chasuble such an amusing character in the play? Support your views with details from Wilde's writing.

**Or 12** You are Lady Bracknell. You are just about to arrive with Gwendolen to have tea with Algernon.

Write your thoughts.

## SECTION B: POETRY

THOMAS HARDY: *Selected Poems*

**Either \*13** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Nobody Comes*

Tree-leaves labour up and down,  
 And through them the fainting light  
 Succumbs to the crawl of night.  
 Outside in the road the telegraph wire  
 To the town from the darkening land 5  
 Intones to travellers like a spectral lyre  
 Swept by a spectral hand.

A car comes up, with lamps full-glare,  
 That flash upon a tree:  
 It has nothing to do with me, 10  
 And whangs along in a world of its own,  
 Leaving a blacker air;  
 And mute by the gate I stand again alone,  
 And nobody pulls up there.

How does Hardy make the feelings of the speaker so vivid in this poem?

**Or †14** How does Hardy make *In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'* so memorable for you?

**Or †15** Explore the ways in which Hardy writes vividly about the past in **either** *On The Departure Platform* **or** *The Going*.



## SECTION C: PROSE

TSITSI DANGAREMBGA: *Nervous Conditions*

**Either \*19** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

I like to think Nyasha really believed that the confrontation had taken a conciliatory turn. She smiled that the number of her male acquaintances was the one thing that should put her father at ease.

'You know me,' she told him, but of course she was mistaken. 'You've taught me how I should behave. I don't worry about what people think so there's no need for you to.' She did not know her father either, because anyone who did would have retreated at that stage. 5

'Don't push me too far,' Babamukuru pleaded. Mustering up his courage, Chido tried to help. 'They were only talking for a few minutes, Dad,' he said, and was ordered to be silent. 10

'You, Chido, keep quiet,' Babamukuru snapped. 'You let your sister behave like a whore without saying anything. Keep quiet.'

'Babawa Chido,' began Maiguru, but was silenced immediately.

Nyasha grew uncharacteristically calm at times like this. 'Now why,' she enquired of no particular person, 'should I worry about what people say when my own father calls me a whore?' She looked at him with murder in her eyes. 15

'Nyasha, be quiet,' Chido advised.

'Chido, I have told you to keep out of this,' reminded Babamukuru, gathering himself within himself so that his whole weight was behind the blow he dealt Nyasha's face. 'Never,' he hissed, 'never,' he repeated, striking her other cheek with the back of his hand, 'speak to me like that.' 20

Nyasha fell on to the bed, her minuscule skirt riding up her bottom. Babamukuru stood over her, distending his nostrils to take in enough air.

'Today I am going to teach you a lesson,' he told her. 'How can you go about disgracing me? Me! Like that! No, you cannot do it. I am respected at this mission. I cannot have a daughter who behaves like a whore.' 25

Nyasha was capable of pointing out that by his own definition that was exactly what he had, but she did not. 'Don't hit me, Daddy,' she said backing away from him. 'I wasn't doing anything wrong. Don't hit me.' 30

'Yuwi, yuwi, yuwi!' Maiguru moaned. 'Babawa Chido, do you want to kill me with your anger? She is only a child, Babawa Chido, a child.'

'You must learn to be obedient,' Babamukuru told Nyasha and struck her again.

'I told you not to hit me,' said Nyasha, punching him in the eye. 35

Babamukuru bellowed and snorted that if Nyasha was going to behave like a man, then by his mother who was at rest in her grave he would fight her like one. They went down on to the floor, Babamukuru alternately punching Nyasha's head and banging it against the floor, screaming or trying to scream but only squeaking, because his throat had seized up with fury, that he would kill her with his bare hands; Nyasha, screaming and wriggling and doing what damage she could. Maiguru and Chido could not stay out of it any longer. They had to hold him. 40

[from Chapter 6]

Explore the ways in which Dangarembga makes this moment in the novel so shocking and surprising.

**Or**    **†20**    To what extent does Dangarembga present Tambu's father, Jeremiah, as a weak man? Support your ideas with details from the novel.

**Or**    **21**    You are Babamukuru. Maiguru has just left your home following the quarrel over Tambu's punishment.

Write your thoughts.

**ANITA DESAI: *Fasting, Feasting***

**Either \*22** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

She fumbles her way back to the veranda and the swing and sits with MamaPapa, staring into the dark.

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What Anamika's family said was that it was fate, God had willed it and it was Anamika's destiny.

What Uma said was nothing.

[from Chapter 13]

How does Desai make this such a disturbing moment in the novel?

**Or** †23 *'A life full of disappointment'*.

Do you think this is a fair description of Uma's life? Support your answer with details from Desai's writing.

**Or** 24 You are Arun. You are on your way back to the dorm at the end of the novel.

Write your thoughts.

**KIRAN DESAI: *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard***

**Either \*25** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

At precisely this time in the army cantonment area, the lights were blazing from the barracks

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‘Damn!’ The Brigadier smashed his fist down upon his palm. ‘Damn, damn, damn.’ It was a bad omen.

*[from Chapter 24]*

How does Desai surprise you with her portrayal of the Brigadier here? Support your ideas with details from the writing.

**Or †26** Explore in detail **two** moments in the novel where for you Desai most effectively makes self-important people seem ridiculous. (Do **not** use the extract printed in question 25 in answering this question.)

**Or 27** You are Sampath. You have just been thrown out of Mr. D.P.S.'s house after your striptease.

Write your thoughts.

GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner*

Either \*28 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

The door opened, and a thick-set, heavy-looking young man entered, with the flushed face and the gratuitously elated bearing which mark the first stage of intoxication. It was Dunsey, and at the sight of him Godfrey's face parted with some of the gloom to take on the more active expression of hatred. The handsome brown spaniel that lay on the hearth retreated under the chair in the chimney-corner. 5

'Well, Master Godfrey, what do you want with me?' said Dunsey, in a mocking tone. 'You're my elders and betters, you know; I was obliged to come when you sent for me.'

'Why, this is what I want—and just shake yourself sober and listen, will you?' said Godfrey, savagely. He had himself been drinking more than was good for him, trying to turn his gloom into uncalculating anger. 'I want to tell you, I must hand over that rent of Fowler's to the Squire, or else tell him I gave it you; for he's threatening to distrain for it, and it'll all be out soon, whether I tell him or not. He said, just now, before he went out, he should send word to Cox to distrain, if Fowler didn't come and pay up his arrears this week. The Squire's short o' cash, and in no humour to stand any nonsense; and you know what he threatened, if ever he found you making away with his money again. So, see and get the money, and pretty quickly, will you?' 10 15 20

'Oh!' said Dunsey, sneeringly, coming nearer to his brother and looking in his face. 'Suppose, now, you get the money yourself, and save me the trouble, eh? Since you was so kind as to hand it over to me, you'll not refuse me the kindness to pay it back for me: it was your brotherly love made you do it, you know.' 25

Godfrey bit his lips and clenched his fist. 'Don't come near me with that look, else I'll knock you down.'

'Oh, no, you won't,' said Dunsey, turning away on his heel, however. 'Because I'm such a good-natured brother, you know. I might get you turned out of house and home, and cut off with a shilling any day. I might tell the Squire how his handsome son was married to that nice young woman, Molly Farren, and was very unhappy because he couldn't live with his drunken wife, and I should slip into your place as comfortable as could be. But, you see, I don't do it—I'm so easy and good-natured. You'll take any trouble for me. You'll get the hundred pounds for me—I know you will.' 30 35

'How can I get the money?' said Godfrey, quivering. 'I haven't a shilling to bless myself with. And it's a lie that you'd slip into my place: you'd get yourself turned out too, that's all. For if you begin telling tales, I'll follow. Bob's my father's favourite—you know that very well. He'd only think himself well rid of you.' 40

'Never mind,' said Dunsey, nodding his head sideways as he looked out of the window. 'It 'ud be very pleasant to me to go in your company—you're such a handsome brother, and we've always been so fond of quarrelling with one another, I shouldn't know what to do without you. But you'd like better for us both to stay at home together; I know you would. So you'll manage to get that little sum o' money, and I'll bid you good-bye, though I'm sorry to part.' 45

Dunstan was moving off, but Godfrey rushed after him and seized him by the arm, saying, with an oath.

'I tell you, I have no money: I can get no money.' 50  
'Borrow off old Kimble.'

'I tell you, he won't lend me any more, and I shan't ask him.'

'Well then, sell Wildfire.'

'Yes, that's easy talking. I must have the money directly.'

'Well, you've only got to ride him to the hunt to-morrow. There'll be Bryce and Keating there, for sure. You'll get more bids than one.' 55

'I daresay, and get back home at eight o'clock, splashed up to the chin. I'm going to Mrs. Osgood's birthday dance.'

'Oho!' said Dunsey, turning his head on one side, and trying to speak in a small mincing treble. 'And there's sweet Miss Nancy coming; and we shall dance with her, and promise never to be naughty again, and be taken into favour, and—' 60

'Hold your tongue about Miss Nancy, you fool,' said Godfrey, turning red, 'else I'll throttle you.'

'What for?' said Dunsey, still in an artificial tone, but taking a whip from the table and beating the butt-end of it on his palm. 'You've a very good chance. I'd advise you to creep up her sleeve again: it 'ud be saving time if Molly should happen to take a drop too much laudanum some day, and make a widower of you. Miss Nancy wouldn't mind being a second, if she didn't know it. And you've got a good-natured brother, who'll keep your secret well, because you'll be so very obliging to him.' 65 70

[from Chapter 3]

How does Eliot memorably convey Dunsey's unpleasantness here?

Or †29 Explore **two** moments in the novel which Eliot makes particularly amusing for you.

Or 30 You are Nancy. You are preparing for bed after the party at the Red House.

Write your thoughts.

**SUSAN HILL: *I'm the King of the Castle***

**Either \*31** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

'I'm going to swim,' he said later. They had eaten tomatoes and biscuits for breakfast. Hooper was lying flat on the ground in a lozenge of sunlight. His clothes looked crumpled. Just ahead of him, below a bush, a thrush was banging a snail down on to a flat stone to smash the shell. Hooper watched it intently. 5

'You'd better not come in the water, though. You might have got a cold from yesterday.'

'I'm all right.'

'Well ...'

'Anyway, I don't feel like swimming. In a minute, I'm going to get a biscuit and see if this bird'll come for crumbs.' 10

'It won't.'

'Why won't it?'

'Because it's wild. Not like in the garden.'

'Don't be stupid. All birds are wild, they're all the same.' 15

'It won't come nearer if you're there.'

'We'll see.'

'It's a waste of food. We need to save it all.'

'I'm only giving it crumbs. Anyway, you mind your own business, Kingshaw.' 20

But Hooper spoke mildly, his attention fixed on the bird.

Kingshaw took off his clothes, and went and lay down in the shallowest part of the stream. The stones were cold against his buttocks and shoulders, but not sharp. The water moved over and over him, parting and coming together again. He opened his legs wide and then closed them, like scissors. The sunlight was limey-yellow, coming through the leaves above. They fidgeted gently the whole time. A black and white bird flew up, parting them, going off into the open sky. 25

Kingshaw closed his eyes. He didn't want to swim, not to move at all. He thought, this is all right, this is all right. Hooper was still watching the thrush. It had got the snail out of the broken shell, now. 30

All round them, the wood pigeons called.

It was then that he heard the first shout. A dog barked. It was far away, at first, but they got nearer very quickly. None of it seemed to take long. Crash, crash, crash they came, through the undergrowth. Someone shouted again. They were almost in the clearing, but Kingshaw couldn't tell what any of them had said. The dog barked again. 35

He opened his eyes, and saw Hooper, sitting up, looking at him.

'Someone's coming.'

Kingshaw did not answer, did not move, only closed his eyes again and lay, letting the water sift over his naked body. He thought, I don't want them to come, I don't want them to find us. Not now. This is all right. I want to stay here. 40

He didn't even mind Hooper, now. Not in the wood. It was another world. If they couldn't have found their way out, then they would either die, or survive. But this was what he had wanted. To get away, change things. Now, someone was coming, they would be taken back to the house. 45

For a second, he dreaded it. Then, he remembered everything that had happened with Hooper, since yesterday morning. Things *had* changed. Perhaps it would be all right. 50

There was another shout. When he opened his eyes again, his view of the tree-tops and the sunlight was blocked, by a man's head.

*[from Chapter 9]*

How does Hill at this moment in the novel powerfully convey Kingshaw's feeling that he has escaped, but also suggest that he has not?

**Or †32** What does Hill make you feel about Mr Hooper's attitudes towards his son and towards Kingshaw? Support your ideas with details from the writing.

**Or 33** You are Hooper. From your window you are watching Kingshaw early in the morning attempting to run away.

Write your thoughts.

From *Stories of Ourselves*

**Either \*34** Read this extract from *The Rain Horse* (by Ted Hughes), and then answer the question that follows it:

Over to his right a thin, black horse was running across the ploughland towards the hill, its head down, neck stretched out. It seemed to be running on its toes like a cat, like a dog up to no good.

From the high point on which he stood the hill dipped slightly and rose to another crested point fringed with the tops of trees, three hundred yards to his right. As he watched it, the horse ran up that crest, showed against the sky – for a moment like a nightmarish leopard – and disappeared over the other side.

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For several seconds he stared at the skyline, stunned by the unpleasantly strange impression the horse had made on him. Then the plastering beat of icy rain on his bare skull brought him to himself. The distance had vanished in a wall of grey. All around him the fields were jumping and streaming.

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Holding his collar close and tucking his chin down into it he ran back over the hilltop towards the town-side, the lee-side, his feet sucking and splashing, at every stride plunging to the ankle.

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This hill was shaped like a wave, a gently rounded back lifting out of the valley to a sharply crested, almost concave front hanging over the river meadows towards the town. Down this front, from the crest, hung two small woods separated by a fallow field. The near wood was nothing more than a quarry, circular, full of stones and bracken, with a few thorns and nondescript saplings, foxholes and rabbit holes. The other was rectangular, mainly a planting of scrub oak trees. Beyond the river smouldered the town like a great heap of blue cinders.

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He ran along the top of the first wood and finding no shelter but the thin, leafless thorns of the hedge, dipped below the crest out of the wind and jogged along through thick grass to the wood of oaks. In blinding rain he lunged through the barricade of brambles at the wood's edge. The little crippled trees were small choice in the way of shelter, but at a sudden fierce thickening of the rain he took one at random and crouched down under the leaning trunk.

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Still panting from his run, drawing his knees up tightly, he watched the bleak lines of rain, grey as hail, slanting through the boughs into the clumps of bracken and bramble. He felt hidden and safe. The sound of the rain as it rushed and lulled in the wood seemed to seal him in. Soon the chilly sheet lead of his suit became a tight, warm mould, and gradually he sank into a state of comfort that was all but trance, though the rain beat steadily on his exposed shoulders and trickled down the oak trunk on to his neck.

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All around him the boughs angled down, glistening, black as iron. From their tips and elbows the drops hurried steadily, and the channels of the bark pulsed and gleamed. For a time he amused himself calculating the variation in the rainfall by the variations in a dribble of water from a trembling twig-end two feet in front of his nose. He studied the twig, bringing dwarfs and continents and animals out of its scurfy bark. Beyond the boughs the blue shoal of the town was rising and falling, and darkening and fading again, in the pale, swaying backdrop of rain.

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He wanted this rain to go on for ever. Whenever it seemed to be drawing off he listened anxiously until it closed in again. As long as it lasted he was suspended from life and time. He didn't want to return to his

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sodden shoes and his possibly ruined suit and the walk back over that land of mud.

All at once he shivered. He hugged his knees to squeeze out the cold and found himself thinking of the horse. The hair on the nape of his neck prickled slightly. He remembered how it had run up to the crest and showed against the sky. 55

He tried to dismiss the thought. Horses wander about the countryside often enough. But the image of the horse as it had appeared against the sky stuck in his mind. It must have come over the crest just above the wood in which he was now sitting. To clear his mind, he twisted around and looked up the wood between the tree stems, to his left. 60

At the wood top, with the silvered grey light coming in behind it, the black horse was standing under the oaks, its head high and alert, its ears pricked, watching him.

How does Hughes make this such a powerful moment in the story?

**Or †35** How does the writer vividly convey what it is like for someone to live in a completely unfamiliar country in **either** *At Hiruharama* (by Penelope Fitzgerald) **or** *Sandpiper* (by Ahdaf Soueif)?

**Or 36** You are Randolph in *The Son's Veto*. Your mother has just died.

Write your thoughts.

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