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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/21**

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen **October/November 2021**

2 hours



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:
  - Section A: answer **one** question.
  - Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

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Section A: Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

E M FORSTER: *Howards End*

1 Either (a) 'It's the houses that are mesmerising me … Houses are alive.'

In the light of Margaret's comment, discuss ways in which Forster presents the importance of houses in the novel.

Or (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following passage presents the relationship between Margaret and Henry Wilcox.

With a smile of pleasure she moved forward to greet him, and her feeling of loneliness vanished.

'I thought I'd get round if I could,' said he. 'Evie told me of her little plan, so I just slipped in and secured a table. Always secure a table first. Evie, don't pretend you want to sit by your old father, because you don't. Miss Schlegel, come in my side, out of pity. My goodness, but you look tired! Been worrying round after your young clerks?'

'No, after houses,' said Margaret, edging past him into the box. 'I'm hungry, not tired; I want to eat heaps.'

'That's good. What'll you have?'

'Fish pie,' said she, with a glance at the menu.

'Fish pie! Fancy coming for fish pie to Simpson's. It's not a bit the thing to go for here.'

'Go for something for me, then,' said Margaret, pulling off her gloves. Her spirits were rising, and his reference to Leonard Bast had warmed her curiously.

'Saddle of mutton,' said he after profound reflection; 'and cider to drink. That's the type of thing. I like this place, for a joke, once in a way. It is so thoroughly Old English. Don't you agree?'

'Yes,' said Margaret, who didn't. The order was given, the joint rolled up, and the carver, under Mr Wilcox's direction, cut the meat where it was succulent, and piled their plates high. Mr Cahill insisted on sirloin, but admitted that he had made a mistake later on. He and Evie soon fell into a conversation of the 'No, I didn't; yes, you did' type – conversation which, though fascinating to those who are engaged in it, neither desires nor deserves the attention of others.

'It's a golden rule to tip the carver. Tip everywhere's my motto.'

'Perhaps it does make life more human.'

'Then the fellows know one again. Especially in the East, if you tip, they remember you from year's end to year's end.'

'Have you been in the East?'

'Oh, Greece and the Levant. I used to go out for sport and business to Cyprus; some military society of a sort there. A few piastres, properly distributed, help to keep one's memory green. But you, of course, think this shockingly cynical. How's your discussion society getting on? Any new utopias lately?'

'No, I'm house-hunting, Mr Wilcox, as I've already told you once. Do you know of any houses?'

'Afraid I don't.'

'Well, what's the point of being practical if you can't find two distressed females a house? We merely want a small house with large rooms, and plenty of them.'

'Evie, I like that! Miss Schlegel expects me to turn house-agent for her!'

'What's that, father?'

'I want a new home in September, and someone must find it. I can't.'

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'Percy, do you know of anything?'
'I can't say I do,' said Mr Cahill.
'How like you! You're never any good.'
'Never any good. Just listen to her! Never any good. Oh, come!'
'Well, you aren't. Miss Schlegel, is he?'
The torrent of their love, having splashed these drops at Margaret, swept away on its habitual course.

(*from* Chapter 17)

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ANDREA LEVY: *Small Island*

2 **Either** **(a)** Discuss ways in which Levy depicts the contrasting wartime experiences of **two** characters.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which the following passage presents the early relationship between Queenie and Bernard.

And he dithered over change.

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That man is a brick – you'll be safe as houses with him.'

(*from* Chapter 24)

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Stories of Ourselves, Volume 2

3 Either (a) Discuss ways in which **two** stories present differences in social status.

Or (b) Comment closely on ways in which Fitzgerald's narrator presents Singlebury in the following passage from *The Axe*.

… You will recall that when the planned redundancies became necessary as the result of the discouraging trading figures shown by this small firm – in contrast, so I gather from the Company reports, with several of your other enterprises – you personally deputed to me the task of 'speaking' to those who were to be asked to leave. It was suggested to me that if they were asked to resign in order to avoid the unpleasantness of being given their cards, it might be unnecessary for the firm to offer any compensation. Having glanced personally through my staff sheets, you underlined the names of four people, the first being that of my clerical assistant, W. S. Singlebury. Your actual words to me were that he seemed fairly old and could probably be frightened into taking a powder. You were speaking to me in your 'democratic' style.

From this point on I feel able to write more freely, it being well understood, at office-managerial level, that you do not read more than the first two sentences of any given report. You believe that anything which cannot be put into two sentences is not worth attending to, a piece of wisdom which you usually attribute to the late Lord Beaverbrook.

As I question whether you have ever seen Singlebury, with whom this report is mainly concerned, it may be helpful to describe him. He worked for the Company for many more years than myself, and his attendance record was excellent. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, he wore a blue suit and a green knitted garment with a front zip. On Tuesdays and Thursdays he wore a pair of grey trousers of man-made material which he called 'my flannels', and a fawn cardigan. The cardigan was omitted in summer. He had, however, one distinguishing feature, very light blue eyes, with a defensive expression, as though apologizing for something which he felt guilty about but could not put right. The fact is that he was getting old. Getting old is, of course, a crime of which we grow more guilty every day.

Singlebury had no wife or dependants, and was by no means a communicative man. His room is, or was, a kind of cubby-hole adjoining mine – you have to go through it to get into my room – and it was always kept very neat. About his 'things' he did show some mild emotion. They had to be ranged in a certain pattern in respect to his in and out trays, and Singlebury stayed behind for two or three minutes every evening to do this. He also managed to retain every year the complimentary desk calendar sent to us by Dino's, the Italian café on the corner. Singlebury was in fact the only one of my personnel who was always quite certain of the date. To this too his attitude was apologetic. His phrase was, 'I'm afraid it's Tuesday.'

His work, as was freely admitted, was his life, but the nature of his duties – though they included the post-book and the addressograph – were rather hard to define, having grown round him with the years. I can only say that after he left, I was surprised myself to discover how much he had had to do.

(*from* The Axe)

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[Turn over

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NGŨGĨ WA THIONG'O: *Petals of Blood*

4 **Either** **(a)** Discuss ways in which Ngũgĩ presents the effects of colonialism in the novel.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on Ngũgĩ's presentation of Munira's state of mind in the following passage.

'I tried, I struggled to extricate myself but I could not.

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The security and the defences around my lifelong twilight slumber were being cut at the roots and I felt the pain of blood-sap trickling through heart's veins and arteries awaking from years of numbness.

(*from* Chapter 9)

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TURN OVER FOR SECTION B.

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Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

5 Discuss the presentation of the relationship between Eileen and her brother Brendan in the following passage.

Consider the writer's choice of language, structure and narrative methods in your answer.

Eileen was genuinely pleased for her brother when she heard the news. She felt saddened too, because it meant that he would be leaving home, and she would miss him. They had always been good friends, always been close. She was also a bit scared by the prospect because she knew what it would mean. Brendan would not live with them again as part of the family. He would only ever return as a visitor, from the moment he left to embark on his university career. He would no longer be tied by his father's dominance and stubborn authority. He would be free of it, and Eileen knew that that fact alone would change Brendan. He would not be the brother she needed in adversity.

Still, she found consolation thinking that it would only be a matter of two years before she could expect to do the same. If it was possible. Her father had already threatened to bring her out of school when she finished her 'O' levels, but he had not carried out his threat. She was going back that September to the sixth form. But she knew that he was not above changing his mind and so the prospect hung over her like a dark cloud. But she had worked out a solution, if it became necessary. She would leave home at eighteen anyway. There was nothing he could do about that. She would pack a bag and get out. He could not stop her. But she was worried by the next two years without Brendan to back her up. She felt indebted to her brother, because just having someone older than her meant that she had extra time to work things out. She was legacee[1] to Brendan's problems.

When Brendan began to question their faith at the age of sixteen, Eileen was there to experience those doubts with him. By the time she reached that age herself she had already had two years to sort out the same problems. It was as if being two years younger enabled her to develop a better understanding when she reached that same age. It was, she was sure, the only single advantage that she had over him. She was always the more decisive of the two, clearer in her ideas than he was. All their relatives commented on it, that she seemed to understand things. She did. She understood that to her parents Brendan was really the only one that mattered. Her understanding did not spare her any pain, but increased it.

When Brendan spoke her parents listened, especially her mother. Sometimes it almost drove her mad to see her mother being weighed down by Brendan's adolescent authority. But she could not blame her brother for that. It saddened her to think that he might go through life believing in this power vested from God that all men possessed. He might end up like their father.

'I give the orders in this house!' their father would yell and his wife, standing behind her husband, would nod meekly and agree, only right and fitting.

Eileen had spotted the warning signs, for Brendan was beginning to show that annoying arrogance he had first displayed at fourteen when Eileen had hated him. He came home from the Irish Christian Brothers' School one day saying, 'What have women ever done? Our physics teacher said women were just the tools of men and that it is our Christian duty not to take advantage of their natural inferiority, because He has made it like that for a purpose. Tools,' he repeated staring dreamily out of the window.

Eileen had felt destroyed. She cried in bed not wanting to be merely a tool. It

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was so unfair, she could not even be an altar boy. And now again at eighteen he was lording it over his mother, treating her as though she was an idiot. Eileen hated seeing him behave like that. It drove her crazy. *45*

[1]*legacee*: one who inherits

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Or

6 Discuss the presentation of rain in the following poem.

Consider the writer's choice of language, imagery and structure in your answer.

Night Rain

What time of night it is
I do not know
Except that like some fish
Doped out of the deep
I have bobbed up bellywise
From stream of sleep
And no cocks crow.
It is drumming hard here
And I suppose everywhere
Droning with insistent ardour upon
Our roof-thatch and shed
And through sheaves slit open
To lighting and rafters
I cannot make out overhead
Great water drops are dribbling
Falling like orange or mango
Fruits showered forth in the wind
Or perhaps I should say so
Much like beads I could in prayer tell
Them on string as they break
In wooden bowls and earthenware
Mother is busy now deploying
About our roomlet and floor.
Although it is so dark
I know her practised step as
She moves her bins, bags, and vats
Out of the run of water
That like ants filing out of the wood
Will scatter and gain possession
Of the floor. Do not tremble then
But turn brothers, turn upon your side
Of the loosening mats
To where the others lie.
We have drunk tonight of a spell
Deeper than the owl's or bat's
That wet of wings may not fly.
Bedraggled upon the *iroko*[1], they stand
Emptied of hearts, and
Therefore will not stir, no, not
Even at dawn for then
They must scurry in to hide.
So we'll roll over on our back
And again roll to the beat
Of drumming all over the land
And under its ample soothing hand

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Joined to that of the sea
We will settle to sleep of the innocent.

[1]*iroko*: large African tree

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