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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/23**

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen **October/November 2023**

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.

IAN McEWAN: *Atonement*

1 Either (a) 'In *Atonement* events are told and retold from different points of view.'

With this comment in mind, discuss some of the effects McEwan achieves by the use of different narrative perspectives in the novel.

Or (b) Comment closely on McEwan's presentation of Briony and her actions in the following passage.

She ran along the second-floor corridor to Cecilia's room.

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'I'll read it.'

(*from* Chapter 14)

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NGŨGĨ WA THIONG'O: *Petals of Blood*

2 Either (a) Discuss the importance of Inspector Godfrey's investigation to the novel as a whole.

Or (b) Comment closely on Ngũgĩ's presentation of Wanja's story in the following passage.

'You talk of the past coming to visit you … There is one picture that always comes to mind.

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He may have thought that the town wife who had rejected him was inside the hut.'

(*from* Chapter 3)

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Stories of Ourselves, Volume 2

3 **Either** **(a)** 'The writers are interested in women who seek their own course.'

In the light of this comment, discuss the presentation of independent female characters in **two** stories.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which Ovo Adagha presents Namidi and his family in the following passage from *The Plantation*.

'Ochuko!

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In the stroking brightness of the sun, an owl in full glide flapped its brown-streaked wings, turned its head and then sounded a doleful note as it flew past the trudging party below.

(*from* The Plantation)

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MARK TWAIN: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

4 Either (a) Discuss Twain's presentation of Huck's attitudes to crime and wrongdoing.

Or (b) Comment closely on Twain's presentation of the feud between the Shepherdsons and the Grangerfords in the following passage.

Soon as I could get Buck down by the corn-cribs under the trees by ourselves, I says:

'Did you want to kill him, Buck?'

'Well, I bet I did.'

'What did he do to you?'

'Him? He never done nothing to me.'

'Well, then, what did you want to kill him for?'

'Why nothing – only it's on account of the feud.'

'What's a feud?'

'Why, where was you raised? Don't you know what a feud is?'

'Never heard of it before – tell me about it.'

'Well,' says Buck, 'a feud is this way. A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man's brother kills *him*; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another; then the *cousins* chip in – and by-and-by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time.'

'Has this one been going on long, Buck?'

'Well I should *reckon*! it started thirty year ago, or som'ers along there. There was trouble 'bout something and then a lawsuit to settle it; and the suit went agin one of the men, and so he up and shot the man that won the suit – which he would naturally do, of course. Anybody would.'

'What was the trouble about, Buck? – land?'

'I reckon maybe – I don't know.'

'Well, who done the shooting? – was it a Grangerford or a Shepherdson?'

'Laws, how do *I* know? it was so long ago.'

'Don't anybody know?'

'Oh, yes, pa knows, I reckon, and some of the other old folks; but they don't know, now, what the row was about in the first place.'

'Has there been many killed, Buck?'

'Yes – right smart chance of funerals. But they don't always kill. Pa's got a few buck-shot in him; but he don't mind it 'cuz he don't weigh much anyway. Bob's been carved up some with a bowie, and Tom's been hurt once or twice.'

'Has anybody been killed this year, Buck?'

'Yes, we got one and they got one. 'Bout three months ago my cousin Bud, fourteen year old, was riding through the woods on t'other side of the river, and didn't have no weapon with him, which was blame' foolishness, and in a lonesome place he hears a horse a-coming behind him, and sees old Baldy Shepherdson a-linkin' after him with his gun in his hand and his white hair a-flying in the wind; and 'stead of jumping off and taking to the brush, Bud 'lowed he could outrun him; so they had it, nip and tuck, for five mile or more, the old man a-gaining all the time; so at last Bud seen it warn't any use, so he stopped and faced around so as to have the bullet holes in front, you know, and the old man he rode up and shot him down. But he didn't git much chance to enjoy his luck, for inside of a week our folks laid *him* out.'

(*from* Chapter 18)

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Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

5 Discuss the presentation of the setting and the characters in the following passage.

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

In the courtyard of the painter Agnolo's house in Milan, the sunshine fell strong and golden, sparkling on the fountain that rose in the centre from its rough stone basin, and throwing the waxen blossoms of the chestnut into brilliant relief against the sapphire sky.

The courtyard was of stone. Round three sides ran the wall, one with its door into the street; opposite was a large garden, entered by an archway, the wicket[1] in which stood always ajar.

The fourth side of the quadrangle was formed by the dwelling-house, which stood with its back to the ivied walls, itself a long, low building, the upper half of which, jutting above the lower, was supported on pillars of carved stone.

Round the bottom wall ran a wide border of plants, some climbing, others heavy with brilliant blossoms, trailing along the ground, and in the cool, blue shadows in the recess formed by the projecting storey were large pots of spreading ferns, vivid green, mingled with the spikes of bright scarlet flowers.

The basin of the fountain in the centre was velvet green with moss, and over the limpid water there spread the flat leaves of water-lilies. Above the wall rose the sweet-smelling chestnuts, spreading their fan-like foliage and snowy blossoms, tier upon tier, against the brilliant sky, and through the low arch, trellised with roses, the garden stretched, a bewildering mass of colour, white, mauve, yellow, pink, blue and red, into the soft distance, a swaying mass of trees. It was late afternoon, and the shadows were lengthening, as out of the house, the door of which stood open, came the little painter. He stepped into the sunshine, mopping his face and shaking his clothes.

From head to foot he was a mass of green slime, his doublet torn, his hands scratched, his face hot and perspiring. After a few vain attempts to remove the dirt that clung to him, he looked round with a rueful countenance.

'Graziosa!' he called. 'Graziosa!'

The lattice of an upper window was thrown open, and Graziosa looked out.

At sight of her father she laughed. 'Hast thou been down thy passage again, father?' she called from the window.

Agnolo made a wry face good-humouredly. 'That I have,' he returned, 'and fell into a pond at the other end.'

'The other end!' echoed his daughter. 'Then you got through?'

Vistarnini [Agnolo] rubbed his damaged hands together with satisfaction. 'Ay,' he said with a smile, 'after tearing my clothes, fighting briars, stepping on toads, stifling with dust, and pitching on my face in the dark, I –'

'Fell into a pond!' laughed Graziosa.

[1] *wicket*: gate

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Or

6 Comment closely on the presentation of the women's clothes shop in the following passage.

Consider the writer's choice of language, dialogue and dramatic methods in your answer.

[*The shopfront and door are along the back of the stage. 'Chèrie et Cie' can be seen, upside down, in big black letters in the windows. There is a small clock, on the right, near the door. Dress racks stand on either side, with a long mirror, out from the rack, on the left, and a couple of bright metal chairs at the end of each rack. One or two model frocks are displayed on the right. A ladder leans against the right wall, near the front: boxes arranged on the shelves. The exit to the interior of the shop is alongside.*

MISS DREW *paces near the entrance.* VERA *has the* EXACTING[1] CUSTOMER *before the mirror, dresses piled over a chair nearby.* PHYLLIS *on the ladder, hands down boxes to* ELSIE. *The* ABSURD[2] PERSON *enters by the shop door. She is shortsighted and flustered.*]

Miss Drew: Forward one!

[ELSIE *goes to the customer.*]

Absurd Person: Is this Margot's?

Miss Drew [*brightly, impressively*]: No, madame, this is Chèrie and Co's.

Absurd Person: Oh … I thought it was Margot's.

[*She turns to go out.*]

Elsie [*gliding beside her*]: Can I help you, Madame? We have some wonderful lines of costumes and afternoon frocks at reduced prices.

Absurd Person: But –

Elsie: This way, madame …

Absurd Person: No. No, thank you. There are such *bargains* at Margot's, they say.

[*She goes out.*]

Vera [*working desperately with the* EXACTING CUSTOMER]: So smart, madame.

Exacting Customer: Came out of the ark, if you ask me.

Vera: But really, madame, it's a copy of one of our exclusive models.

Miss Drew [*to* ELSIE]: That's the third you've let slip through your fingers, this afternoon.

Elsie: I'm sorry, madame.

[*She returns to the ladder and goes on with her work there.* PHYLLIS *descends.*]

Exacting Customer: I want something that will wash and wear well.

Vera: Yes, madame.

Phyllis [*in an undertone, wearily*]: What's the time?

Elsie: Not four yet.

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Phyllis [*moving her back as though it were aching*]: Seems as if the afternoon would never end sometimes.

Exacting Customer: No spots or stripes.

Vera: Floral designs are more becoming, aren't they? Slip on the green linen again, madame. *45*

Exacting Customer: It's not a bit of use. My husband can't endure me in green.

Vera: Blue is your colour, isn't it? That figured morocain suited you so well, and it's marked down to almost cost price.

Exacting Customer: I'm tired to death of blue. *50*

Vera: One does get tired of the same colour, doesn't one? The beige ensemble looks awfully sweet.

Exacting Customer: It's too long.

Vera: But we could easily alter the length, madame.

Exacting Customer: Those light colours soil so easily. Let me see the black and white again. *55*

Vera: Certainly, madame. Will you try it on?

Exacting Customer: No, I remember – the sleeves were too short.

Vera: But madame –

Elsie [*to* PHYLLIS]: Better shin up the ladder again. She's glaring. *60*

[PHYLLIS *climbs the ladder and arranges boxes on the shelf.*]

Exacting Customer: Perhaps I won't bother, after all.

Vera: You won't get any better value in town, madame.

Exacting Customer: Oh well. I made up my mind *not* to buy anything today. Just thought I'd have a look at things. By the way, Margot's are having a sale today, aren't they? *65*

Vera: I really cannot say, madame.

Exacting Customer: I may as well go along and see what they've got. [*Taking a last look at herself in the mirror*] This is *rather* attractive.

Vera: It is a bargain, madame. *70*

Exacting Customer [*hesitating*]: Ye-es. [*Decisively*] No. I made up my mind *not* to buy anything today.

[*She takes off the dress and puts on her own.*]

[1] *Exacting*: difficult and demanding
[2] *Absurd*: foolish

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