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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/22**

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen **October/November 2024**

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.

This document has **12** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Section A: Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

KIRAN DESAI: *The Inheritance of Loss*

1 **Either** **(a)** Discuss Desai's presentation of the relationship between Sai and Jemubhai.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which Desai presents the argument between Sai and Gyan in the following passage.

Yes, he owed much to his rejection of Sai.

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But he caught her before she reached him and then threw her aside into the lantana bushes and beat about with a stick.

(*from* Chapter 40)

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IAN McEWAN: *Atonement*

2 **Either** **(a)** At the end of *Atonement*, Briony sees her book as 'a final act of kindness' to Cecilia and Robbie.

From your reading of the novel, discuss how far you agree with her view.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on McEwan's presentation of the event in the following passage.

He looked into the water, then he looked back at her, and simply shook his head as he raised a hand to cover his mouth.

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She, meanwhile, had disappeared into the house.

(*from* Chapter 2)

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Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1

3 **Either** **(a)** Discuss ways in which the writers of **two** stories present the importance of home.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage from *Of White Hairs and Cricket*, considering Rohinton Mistry's presentation of the narrator and his family.

The spindle spun to the floor this time without mishap, hanging by a fine, brand new thread. She hauled it up, winding the thread around the extended thumb and little finger of her left hand by waggling the wrist in little clockwise and counter-clockwise half-turns, while the index and middle fingers clamped tight the source: the shred of wool resembling a lock of her own hair, snow white and slightly tangled.

Mamaiji spun enough thread to keep us all in *kustis*. Since Grandpa's death, she spent more and more time spinning, so that now we each had a spare *kusti* as well. The *kustis* were woven by a professional, who always praised the fine quality of the thread; and even at the fire-temple, where we untied and tied them during prayers, they earned the covetous glances of other Parsis.

I beheld the spindle and *Mamaiji*'s co-ordinated feats of dexterity with admiration. All spinning things entranced me. The descending spindle was like the bucket spinning down into the sacred Bhikha Behram Well to draw water for the ones like us who went there to pray on certain holy days after visiting the fire-temple I imagined myself clinging to the base of the spindle, sinking into the dark well, confident that *Mamaiji* would pull me up with her waggling hand before I drowned, and praying that the thread would not break. I also liked to stare at records spinning on the old 78-rpm gramophone. There was one I was particularly fond of: its round label was the most ethereal blue I ever saw. The lettering was gold. I played this record over and over, just to watch its wonderfully soothing blue and gold rotation, and the concentric rings of the shiny black shellac, whose grooves created a spiral effect if the light was right. The gramophone cabinet's warm smell of wood and leather seemed to fly right out of this shellacked spiral, while I sat close, my cheek against it, to feel the hum and vibration of the turntable. It was so cosy and comforting. Like missing school because of a slight cold, staying in bed all day with a book, fussed over by Mummy, eating white rice and soup made specially for me.

Daddy finished cutting out and re-reading the classified advertisement. 'Yes, this is a good one. Sounds very promising.' He picked up the newspaper again, then remembered what *Mamaiji* had muttered, and said softly to me, 'If it is so *duleendar* and will bring bad luck, how is it I found this? These old people –' and gave a sigh of mild exasperation. Then briskly: 'Don't stop now, this week is very important.' He continued, slapping the table merrily at each word: 'Every-single-white-hair-out.'

There was no real enmity between Daddy and *Mamaiji*, I think they even liked each other. He was just disinclined towards living with his mother-in-law. They often had disagreements over me, and it was always *Mamaiji* versus Mummy and Daddy. *Mamaiji* firmly believed that I was underfed. Housebound as she was, the only food accessible to her was the stuff sold by door-to-door vendors, which I adored but was strictly forbidden: *samosa*, *bhajia*, *sevganthia*; or the dinners she cooked for herself, separately, because she said that Mummy's cooking was insipidity itself: 'Tasteless as spit, refuses to go down my throat.'

So I, her favourite, enjoyed from time to time, on the sly, hot searing curries and things she purchased at the door when Daddy was at work and Mummy in the kitchen.

(*from* Of White Hairs and Cricket)

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MARK TWAIN: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

4 **Either** **(a)** Discuss Twain's characterisation of Huck's father, considering his role in the novel.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which Twain presents the encounter between Huck and the old woman in the following passage.

She went and got the lump of lead and fetched it back and brought along a hank of yarn, which she wanted me to help her with. I held up my two hands and she put the hank over them and went on talking about her and her husband's matters. But she broke off to say:

'Keep your eye on the rats. You better have the lead in your lap, handy.'

So she dropped the lump into my lap, just at that moment, and I clapped my legs together on it and she went on talking. But only about a minute. Then she took off the hank and looked me straight in the face, but very pleasant, and says:

'Come, now – what's your real name?'

'Wh-what, mum?'

'What's your real name? Is it Bill, or Tom, or Bob? – or what is it?'

I reckon I shook like a leaf, and I didn't know hardly what to do. But I says:

'Please to don't poke fun at a poor girl like me, mum. If I'm in the way, here, I'll –'

'No, you won't. Set down and stay where you are. I ain't going to hurt you, and I ain't going to tell on you, nuther. You just tell me your secret, and trust me. I'll keep it; and what's more, I'll help you. So'll my old man, if you want him to. You see, you're a runaway 'prentice – that's all. It ain't anything. There ain't any harm in it. You've been treated bad, and you made up your mind to cut. Bless you, child, I wouldn't tell on you. Tell me all about it, now – that's a good boy.'

So I said it wouldn't be no use to try to play it any longer, and I would just make a clean breast and tell her everything, but she mustn't go back on her promise. Then I told her my father and mother was dead, and the law had bound me out to a mean old farmer in the country thirty mile back from the river, and he treated me so bad I couldn't stand it no longer; he went away to be gone a couple of days, and so I took my chance and stole some of his daughter's old clothes, and cleared out, and I had been three nights coming the thirty miles; I traveled nights, and hid day-times and slept, and the bag of bread and meat I carried from home lasted me all the way and I had a plenty. I said I believed my uncle Abner Moore would take care of me, and so that was why I struck out for this town of Goshen.

'Goshen, child? This ain't Goshen. This is St Petersburg. Goshen's ten mile further up the river. Who told you this was Goshen?'

'Why, a man I met at day-break this morning, just as I was going to turn into the woods for my regular sleep. He told me when the roads forked I must take the right hand, and five mile would fetch me to Goshen.'

'He was drunk I reckon. He told you just exactly wrong.'

'Well, he did act like he was drunk, but it ain't no matter now. I got to be moving along. I'll fetch Goshen before daylight.'

'Hold on a minute. I'll put you up a snack to eat. You might want it.'

(*from* Chapter 11)

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Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

5 Discuss the presentation of the incident in the following passage.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, tone and narrative methods.

Edna was not in the least surprised by my offer; she was obviously the trusting type – which augured well[1].

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I'm terribly sorry, my dear.'

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Or

6 Comment closely on the following passage, considering the presentation of the argument.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, dialogue and dramatic methods.

Brag: You turned against us!

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Lena: It must be, or we'll be condemned to go on living like this for ever.

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