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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 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 **16** 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 Biju's experience of restaurant jobs in America.

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

'Biju!

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Any subversion against the US government – they would be happy to help.

(*from* Chapter 19)

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IAN McEWAN: *Atonement*

2 **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which McEwan explores story-telling in the novel.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage, considering ways in which McEwan presents Briony's perception of events.

If he had not been, as he described it, a slave to the Ministry, and to Eventuality Planning, if he had been at home, sending Hardman down for the wines, steering the conversation, deciding without appearing to when it was time to 'go through', she would not be crossing the hallway now with such heaviness in her step.

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Briony stopped and said her sister's name.

(*from* Chapter 10)

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Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1

3 **Either** **(a)** Discuss ways in which the writers make buildings important in **two** stories.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage from *Report on the Threatened City*, considering ways in which Doris Lessing presents the narrator and their perception of earth.

PRIORITY FLASH ONE

All coordinates all plans all prints cancelled. As of now condition unforeseen by us obtaining this city. Clear all programmes all planners all forecasters for new setting on this information.

PRIORITY

Base to note well that transmisson this channel will probably be interrupted by material originating locally. Our fuel is low and this channel therefore only one now operative.

Summary of Background to Mission

Since our planet discovered that this city was due for destruction or severe damage, all calculations and plans of our department have been based on one necessity: how to reach the city to warn its inhabitants of what is to come. Observing their behaviour, both through Astroviewers and from our unmanned machines launched at intervals this past year, their time, our Commissioners for External Affairs decided these people could have no idea at all of what threatened, that their technology, while so advanced in some ways, had a vast gap in it, a gap that could be defined, in fact, precisely by that area of ignorance – not knowing what was to befall them. This gap seemed impossible. Much time was spent by our technicians trying to determine what form of brain these creatures could have that made this contradiction possible – as already stated, a technology so advanced in one area and blank in another. Our technicians had to shelve the problem, since their theories became increasingly improbable and since no species known to us anywhere corresponds even at a long remove with what we believed this one to be. It became, perhaps, the most intriguing of our unsolved problems, challenging and defeating one department after another.

Summary of Objective this Mission

Meanwhile, putting all speculations on one side, attractive though they were, all our resources have been used, at top speed and pressure, to develop a spacecraft that could, in fact, land a team on this planet, since it was our intention, having given the warning, offered the information available to us, but (we thought) not to them, which made the warning necessary, to offer them more; our assistance. We meant to help clear the area, transport the population elsewhere, cushion the shock to the area and then, having done what, after all, we have done for other planets, our particular mental structure being suited to this kind of forecasting and assistance, return to base, taking some suitable specimens of them with us, in order to train them in a way that would overcome the gap in their minds and, therefore, their science. The first part we achieved: that is, we managed, in the time set for it, to develop a spacecraft that could make the journey here, carrying the required number of personnel. It strained our own technology and postponed certain cherished plans of our own. But our craft landed here, on the western shore of the land mass, as planned, and without any trouble, seven days ago.

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The Nature of the Problem

You will have wondered why there have been no transmissions before this. There have been two reasons. One: we realised at once that there would be heavier demands on our fuel than we had anticipated and that we would have to conserve it. Two: we were waiting to understand what it was we had to tell you. We did not understand the problem. For it was almost at once clear to us that all our thinking about 'the gap in their mental structure' was off the point. We have never understood the nature of the problem. So improbable is it that we delayed communicating until we were sure. The trouble with this species is not that it is unable to forecast its immediate future; it is that it doesn't seem to care. Yet that is altogether too simple a stating of its condition. If it were so simple – that it knew that within five years its city was to be destroyed, or partly destroyed, and that it was indifferent – we should have to say: This species lacks the first quality necessary to any animal species; it lacks the will to live. Finding out what the mechanism is has caused the delay. Which I now propose partially to remedy by going into an account of what befell us, step by step. This will entail a detailed description of a species and a condition absolutely without precedent in our experience of the inhabited planets.

(*from* Report on the Threatened City)

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MARK TWAIN: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

4 **Either** **(a)** Discuss Twain's presentation of the Grangerford and the Shepherdson families.

Or **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage, considering Twain's presentation of Huck's attitude to the duke and the king.

I says to myself, this is *another* one that I'm letting him rob her of her money. And when she got through, they all jest laid theirselves out to make me feel at home and know I was amongst friends. I felt so ornery and low down and mean, that I says to myself, My mind's made up; I'll hive that money for them or bust.

So then I lit out – for bed, I said, meaning some time or another. When I got by myself, I went to thinking the thing over. I says to myself, shall I go to that doctor, private, and blow on these frauds? No – that won't do. He might tell who told him; then the king and the duke would make it warm for me. Shall I go, private, and tell Mary Jane? No – I dasn't do it. Her face would give them a hint, sure; they've got the money, and they'd slide right out and get away with it. If she was to fetch in help, I'd get mixed up in the business, before it was done with, I judge. No, there ain't no good way but one. I got to steal that money, somehow; and I got to steal it some way that they won't suspicion that I done it. They've got a good thing, here; and they ain't agoing to leave till they've played this family and this town for all they're worth, so I'll find a chance time enough. I'll steal it, and hide it; and by-and-by, when I'm away down the river, I'll write a letter and tell Mary Jane where it's hid. But I better hive it to-night, if I can, because the doctor maybe hasn't let up as much as he lets on he has; he might scare them out of here, yet.

So, thinks I, I'll go and search them rooms. Up stairs the hall was dark, but I found the duke's room, and started to paw around it with my hands; but I recollected it wouldn't be much like the king to let anybody else take care of that money but his own self; so then I went to his room and began to paw around there. But I see I couldn't do nothing without a candle, and I dasn't light one, of course. So I judged I'd got to do the other thing – lay for them, and eavesdrop. About that time, I hears their footsteps coming, and was going to skip under the bed; I reached for it, but it wasn't where I thought it would be; but I touched the curtain that hid Mary Jane's frocks, so I jumped in behind that and snuggled in amongst the gowns, and stood there perfectly still.

They come in and shut the door; and the first thing the duke done was to get down and look under the bed. Then I was glad I hadn't found the bed when I wanted it. And yet, you know, it's kind of natural to hide under the bed when you are up to anything private. They sets down, then, and the king says:

'Well, what is it? and cut it middlin' short, because it's better for us to be down there a whoopin'-up the mournin', than up here givin' 'em a chance to talk us over.'

'Well, this is it, Capet. I ain't easy; I ain't comfortable. That doctor lays on my mind. I wanted to know your plans. I've got a notion, and I think it's a sound one.'

'What is it, duke?'

'That we better glide out of this, before three in the morning, and clip it down the river with what we've got. Specially, seeing we got it so easy – *given* back to us, flung at our heads, as you may say, when of course we allowed to have to steal it back. I'm for knocking off and lighting out.'

That made me feel pretty bad.

(*from* Chapter 26)

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Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

5 Discuss the presentation of Kamla's and Rajinder's differing views in the following passage.

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

[KAMLA *is speaking on the telephone to* KATIE *in the refuge office.*]

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Kamla: It's not pleasant, or easy, I know, but that is the procedure, for everyone, regardless of race and religion.

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Or

6 Comment closely on the presentation of changing ideas of poetry in the following poem.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, structure and poetic methods.

Phoenix and Unicorn

Where shall we find new metaphor?

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And snow falls slowly, swooping like a bird.

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