CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge O Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **2010/12**

Paper 1 Poetry and Prose **May/June 2026**

1 hour 30 minutes

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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.

INFORMATION

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

This document has **28** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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CONTENTS

Section A: Poetry

text	*question numbers*	*page[s]*
Songs of Ourselves: Volume 1	1, 2	pages 4–5
Songs of Ourselves: Volume 2, Part 3	3, 4	pages 6–7
Kayo Chingonyi: *Kumukanda*	5, 6	pages 8–9

Section B: Prose

text	*question numbers*	*page[s]*
Chinua Achebe: *Things Fall Apart*	7, 8	pages 10–11
Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice*	9, 10	pages 12–13
Anita Desai: *Fire on the Mountain*	11, 12	pages 14–15
Kiran Desai: *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*	13, 14	pages 16–17
Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*	15, 16	pages 18–19
Susan Hill: *I'm the King of the Castle*	17, 18	pages 20–21
H G Wells: *The War of the Worlds*	19, 20	pages 22–23
Stories of Ourselves: Volume 2	21, 22	pages 24–25

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Section A: Poetry

Answer **one** question from this section.

from ***Songs of Ourselves: Volume 1***

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

Hunting Snake

Sun-warmed in this late season's grace

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looked at each other, and went on.

(Judith Wright)

In what ways does Wright powerfully convey the speaker's fascination with the snake in this poem?

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Or **2** Explore how Mungoshi memorably depicts the boy's feelings of pleasure in *Before the Sun*.

Before the Sun

Intense blue morning

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in the sun.

(Charles Mungoshi)

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from ***Songs of Ourselves: Volume 2, Part 3***

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **3** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

The Enemies

Last night they came across the river and
Entered the city. Women were awake
With lights and food. They entertained the band,
Not asking what the men had come to take
Or what strange tongue they spoke
Or why they came so suddenly through the land.

Now in the morning all the town is filled
With stories of the swift and dark invasion;
The women say that not one stranger told
A reason for his coming. The intrusion
Was not for devastation:
Peace is apparent still on hearth and field.

Yet all the city is a haunted place.
Man meeting man speaks cautiously. Old friends
Close up the candid looks upon their face.
There is no warmth in hands accepting hands;
Each ponders, 'Better hide myself in case
Those strangers have set up their homes in minds
I used to walk in. Better draw the blinds
Even if the strangers haunt in my own house.'

(Elizabeth Jennings)

How does Jennings make this such a disturbing poem?

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Or **4** Explore the ways in which Zimunya vividly conveys the speaker's feelings about change in *A Long Journey*.

A Long Journey

Through decades that ran like rivers

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an almighty hand reaches for our shirts.

(Musaemura Zimunya)

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from **KAYO CHINGONYI:** ***Kumukanda***

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **5** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

The Colour of James Brown's Scream

for Steve McCarthy and Todd Bracey

I have known you by many names

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trying to recreate ever since.

How does Chingonyi vividly convey the power of music in this poem?

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Or **6** Explore how Chingonyi makes *Fisherman's Song* such an unsettling poem.

Fisherman's Song

What sadness for a fisherman

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who navigates the blue?

Section B: Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

CHINUA ACHEBE: *Things Fall Apart*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

There was a small bush behind Okonkwo's compound.

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He had already chosen the title of the book, after much thought:
The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger.

(*from* Chapter 25)

How does Achebe make this such a powerful ending to the novel?

Or **8** In what ways does Achebe memorably portray Nwoye?

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JANE AUSTEN: *Pride and Prejudice*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 9 Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

When the dancing recommenced, however, and Darcy approached to claim her hand, Charlotte could not help cautioning her in a whisper not to be a simpleton and allow her fancy for Wickham to make her appear unpleasant in the eyes of a man of ten times his consequence. Elizabeth made no answer, and took her place in the set, amazed at the dignity to which she was arrived in being allowed to stand opposite to Mr Darcy, and reading in her neighbours' looks their equal amazement in beholding it. They stood for some time without speaking a word; and she began to imagine that their silence was to last through the two dances, and at first was resolved not to break it; till suddenly fancying that it would be the greater punishment to her partner to oblige him to talk, she made some slight observation on the dance. He replied, and was silent again. After a pause of some minutes she addressed him a second time with

'It is *your* turn to say something now, Mr Darcy. – *I* talked about the dance, and *you* ought to make some kind of remark on the size of the room, or the number of couples.'

He smiled, and assured her that whatever she wished him to say should be said.

'Very well. – That reply will do for the present. – Perhaps by and bye I may observe that private balls are much pleasanter than public ones. – But *now* we may be silent.'

'Do you talk by rule then, while you are dancing?'

'Sometimes. One must speak a little, you know. It would look odd to be entirely silent for half an hour together, and yet for the advantage of *some*, conversation ought to be so arranged as that they may have the trouble of saying as little as possible.'

'Are you consulting your own feelings in the present case, or do you imagine that you are gratifying mine?'

'Both,' replied Elizabeth archly; 'for I have always seen a great similarity in the turn of our minds. – We are each of an unsocial, taciturn disposition, unwilling to speak, unless we expect to say something that will amaze the whole room, and be handed down to posterity with all the eclat of a proverb.'

'This is no very striking resemblance of your own character, I am sure,' said he. 'How near it may be to *mine*, I cannot pretend to say. – *You* think it a faithful portrait undoubtedly.'

'I must not decide on my own performance.'

He made no answer, and they were again silent till they had gone down the dance, when he asked her if she and her sisters did not very often walk to Meryton. She answered in the affirmative, and, unable to resist the temptation, added, 'When you met us there the other day, we had just been forming a new acquaintance.'

The effect was immediate. A deeper shade of hauteur overspread his features, but he said not a word, and Elizabeth, though blaming herself for her own weakness, could not go on. At length Darcy spoke, and in a constrained manner said,

'Mr Wickham is blessed with such happy manners as may ensure his *making* friends – whether he may be equally capable of *retaining* them, is less certain.'

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‘He has been so unlucky as to lose *your* friendship,’ replied Elizabeth with emphasis, ‘and in a manner which he is likely to suffer from all his life.’

Darcy made no answer, and seemed desirous of changing the subject. At that moment Sir William Lucas appeared close to them, meaning to pass through the set to the other side of the room; but on perceiving Mr Darcy he stopt with a bow of superior courtesy to compliment him on his dancing and his partner.

‘I have been most highly gratified indeed, my dear Sir. Such very superior dancing is not often seen. It is evident that you belong to the first circles. Allow me to say, however, that your fair partner does not disgrace you, and that I must hope to have this pleasure often repeated, especially when a certain desirable event, my dear Miss Eliza (glancing at her sister and Bingley,) shall take place. What congratulations will then flow in! I appeal to Mr Darcy: – but let me not interrupt you, Sir. – You will not thank me for detaining you from the bewitching converse of that young lady, whose bright eyes are also upbraiding me.’

That latter part of this address was scarcely heard by Darcy; but Sir William’s allusion to his friend seemed to strike him forcibly, and his eyes were directed with a very serious expression towards Bingley and Jane, who were dancing together.

(*from* Chapter 18)

How does Austen make this such a memorable moment in the novel?

Or **10** In what ways does Austen use letters to powerful effect in the novel?

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ANITA DESAI: *Fire on the Mountain*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **11** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

Then Nanda Kaul returned to the passage about the woman who lived alone and smiled again, in spite of herself, wondering if Carignano would live up to that epicurean lady's ideas of how things should be.

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Discharge.

(*from* Part 1, Chapter 8)

In what ways does Desai movingly portray Nanda Kaul at this moment in the novel?

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Or **12** How does Desai powerfully portray Ila Das's poverty?

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KIRAN DESAI: *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

They looked here. They looked there. Up and down the guava tree.

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Gingerly, they approached the bubbling cauldron.

(*from* Chapter 25)

Explore how Desai makes this such a striking ending to the novel.

Or **14** How does Desai memorably portray Sampath before his time in the orchard?

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HARPER LEE: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **15** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

When Boo Radley shuffled to his feet, light from the living-room windows glistened on his forehead.

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We never put back into the tree what we took out of it: we had given him nothing, and it made me sad.

(*from* Chapter 31)

Explore how Lee makes this moment in the novel so moving.

Or **16** In what ways does Lee make Maudie Atkinson such an admirable character?

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

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **17** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

Kingshaw stiffened and moved slowly towards the first of the glass cases.

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A door closed somewhere.

(*from* Chapter 3)

How does Hill vividly convey Hooper's cruelty at this moment in the novel?

Or **18** Explore the ways in which Hill strikingly portrays Mrs Kingshaw.

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H G WELLS: *The War of the Worlds*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 19 Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

After a time we drew near the road, and as we did so we heard the clatter of hoofs and saw through the tree-stems three cavalry soldiers riding slowly towards Woking. We hailed them, and they halted while we hurried towards them. It was a lieutenant and a couple of privates of the 8th Hussars, with a stand like a theodolite, which the artilleryman told me was a heliograph.

'You are the first men I've seen coming this way this morning,' said the lieutenant. 'What's brewing?'

His voice and face were eager. The men behind him stared curiously. The artilleryman jumped down the bank into the road and saluted.

'Gun destroyed last night, sir. Have been hiding. Trying to rejoin battery, sir. You'll come in sight of the Martians, I expect, about half a mile along this road.'

'What the dickens are they like?' asked the lieutenant.

'Giants in armour, sir. Hundred feet high. Three legs and a body like 'luminium, with a mighty great head in a hood, sir.'

'Get out!' said the lieutenant. 'What confounded nonsense!'

'You'll see, sir. They carry a kind of box, sir, that shoots fire and strikes you dead.'

'What d'ye mean – a gun?'

'No, sir,' and the artilleryman began a vivid account of the Heat-Ray. Halfway through, the lieutenant interrupted him and looked up at me. I was still standing on the bank by the side of the road.

'Did you see it?' said the lieutenant.

'It's perfectly true,' I said.

'Well,' said the lieutenant, 'I suppose it's my business to see it too. Look here' – to the artilleryman – 'we're detailed here clearing people out of their houses. You'd better go along and report yourself to Brigadier-General Marvin, and tell him all you know. He's at Weybridge. Know the way?'

'I do,' I said; and he turned his horse southward again.

'Half a mile, you say?' said he.

'At most,' I answered, and pointed over the tree-tops southward. He thanked me and rode on, and we saw them no more.

Further along we came upon a group of three women and two children in the road, busy clearing out a labourer's cottage. They had got hold of a little hand-truck, and were piling it up with unclean-looking bundles and shabby furniture. They were all too assiduously engaged to talk to us as we passed.

By Byfleet station we emerged from the pine-trees, and found the country calm and peaceful under the morning sunlight. We were far beyond the range of the Heat-Ray there, and had it not been for the silent desertion of some of the houses, the stirring movement of packing in others, and the knot of soldiers standing on the bridge over the railway and staring down the line towards Woking, the day would have seemed very like any other Sunday.

Several farm wagons and carts were moving creakily along the road to Addlestone, and suddenly through the gate of a field we saw, across

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a stretch of flat meadow, six twelve-pounders, standing neatly at equal distances pointing towards Woking. The gunners stood by the guns waiting, and the ammunition wagons were at a business-like distance. The men stood almost as if under inspection.

'That's good!' said I. 'They will get one fair shot, at any rate.'

The artilleryman hesitated at the gate.

'I shall go on,' he said.

Further on towards Weybridge, just over the bridge, there were a number of men in white fatigue jackets throwing up a long rampart, and more guns behind.

'It's bows and arrows against the lightning, anyhow,' said the artilleryman. 'They 'aven't seen that fire-beam yet.'

The officers who were not actively engaged stood and stared over the tree-tops south-westward, and the men digging would stop every now and again to stare in the same direction.

(*from* Book 1, Chapter 12)

How does Wells vividly create tension at this moment in the novel?

Or **20** Explore the ways in which Wells makes this such an exciting novel.

Do **not** use the passage printed in **Question 19** in answering this question.

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from ***Stories of Ourselves: Volume 2***

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **21** Read this passage from *When It Happens* (by Margaret Atwood), and then answer the question that follows it:

With the electricity off they can no longer get the television.

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She thinks about setting fire to the house herself, before anyone else can do it.

In what ways does Atwood strikingly build tension at this moment in the story?

Or **22** Explore how Jane Gardam vividly portrays the relationship between Philip and his mother in *Showing the Flag*.

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