



GCE AS

B720U10-1



S25-B720U10-1



THURSDAY, 15 MAY 2025 – MORNING

ENGLISH LITERATURE – AS component 1

Prose

2 hours

B720U101
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ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

A WJEC pink 16-page answer booklet.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Use black ink or black ball-point pen. Do not use gel pen or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question in Section A and **one** question in Section B.

Write your answers in the separate answer booklet provided, following the instructions on the front of the answer booklet.

Use both sides of the paper. Write only within the white areas of the booklet.

Write the question number in the two boxes in the left-hand margin at the start of each answer, for example

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Leave at least two line spaces between each answer.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Section A carries 60 marks and Section B carries 40 marks.

The number of marks is given in brackets at the end of each question or part-question.

You are advised to spend one hour and 10 minutes on Section A (20 minutes on part i) and 50 minutes on part ii) and 50 minutes on Section B.

You are reminded that assessment will take into account the quality of written communication used in your answers.

Section A: Prose fiction pre-1900

Answer **one** question in this section.

Each question is in **two** parts. In both **part i)** and **part ii)** you are required to analyse how meanings are shaped.

In **part ii)** you are also required to:

- demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received
- show how different interpretations have informed your reading.

Either

Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility* (Penguin Classics)

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Read the extract below and answer the questions which follow.

Mrs. John Dashwood did not at all approve of what her husband intended to do for his sisters. To take three thousand pounds from the fortune of their dear little boy, would be impoverishing him to the most dreadful degree. She begged him to think again on the subject. How could he answer it to himself to rob his child, and his only child too, of so large a sum? And what possible claim could the Miss Dashwoods, who were related to him only by half blood, which she considered as no relationship at all, have on his generosity to so large an amount. It was very well known, that no affection was ever supposed to exist between the children of any man by different marriages; and why was he to ruin himself, and their poor little Harry, by giving away all his money to his half sisters?

"It was my father's last request to me," replied her husband, "that I should assist his widow and daughters."

"He did not know what he was talking of I dare say; ten to one but he was light headed at the time. Had he been in his right senses, he could not have thought of such a thing as begging you to give away half your fortune from your own child."

"He did not stipulate for any particular sum, my dear Fanny, he only requested me, in general terms, to assist them, and make their situation more comfortable than it was in his power to do. Perhaps it would have been as well if he had left it wholly to myself. He could hardly suppose I should neglect them. But as he required the promise, I could not do less than give it: at least I thought so at the time. The promise, therefore, was given, and must be performed. Something must be done for them whenever they leave Norland and settle in a new home."

"Well, then, *let* something be done for them; but *that* something need not be three thousand pounds. Consider," she added, "that when the money is once parted with, it never can return. Your sisters will marry, and it will be gone for ever. If, indeed, it could be ever restored to our poor little boy—"

"Why, to be sure," said her husband, very gravely, "that would make a great difference. The time may come when Harry will regret that so large a sum was parted with. If he should have a numerous family, for instance, it would be a very convenient addition."

"To be sure it would."

"Perhaps, then, it would be better for all parties if the sum were diminished one half.—Five hundred pounds would be a prodigious increase to their fortunes!"

"Oh! beyond any thing great! What brother on earth would do half so much for his sisters, even if *really* his sisters! And as it is—only half blood!—But you have such a generous spirit!"

- Examine Austen's presentation of John and Fanny Dashwood in this extract. [20]
- How far do you agree with the view that "in *Sense and Sensibility*, family relationships are characterised by self-interest rather than affection"? In your response, you must give close consideration to **at least two** other parts of the novel and to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre* (Penguin Classics)

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Read the extract below and answer the questions which follow.

‘She likes you, I am sure,’ said I, as I stood behind his chair, ‘and her father respects you. Moreover, she is a sweet girl – rather thoughtless; but you would have sufficient thought for both yourself and her. You ought to marry her.’

‘Does she like me?’ he asked.

‘Certainly; better than she likes anyone else. She talks of you continually: there is no subject she enjoys so much or touches upon so often.’

‘It is very pleasant to hear this,’ he said, ‘very: go on for another quarter of an hour.’ And he actually took out his watch and laid it upon the table to measure the time.

‘But where is the use of going on,’ I asked, ‘when you are probably preparing some iron blow of contradiction, or forging a fresh chain to fetter your heart?’

‘Don’t imagine such hard things. Fancy me yielding and melting, as I am doing: human love rising like a freshly opened fountain in my mind and overflowing with sweet inundation all the field I have so carefully and with such labour prepared – so assiduously sown with the seeds of good intentions, of self-denying plans. And now it is deluged with a nectarous flood – the young germs swamped – delicious poison cankering them: now I see myself stretched on an ottoman in the drawing-room at Vale Hall at my bride Rosamond Oliver’s feet: she is talking to me with her sweet voice – gazing down on me with those eyes your skilful hand has copied so well – smiling at me with these coral lips. She is mine – I am hers – this present life and passing world suffice to me. Hush! say nothing – my heart is full of delight – my senses are entranced – let the time I marked pass in peace.’

I humoured him: the watch ticked on: he breathed fast and low: I stood silent. Amidst this hush the quarter sped; he replaced the watch, laid the picture down, rose, and stood on the hearth.

‘Now,’ said he, ‘that little space was given to delirium and delusion. I rested my temples on the breast of temptation, and put my neck voluntarily under her yoke of flowers; I tasted her cup. The pillow was burning: there is an asp in the garland: the wine has a bitter taste: her promises are hollow – her offers false: I see and know all this.’

I gazed at him in wonder.

‘It is strange,’ pursued he, ‘that while I love Rosamond Oliver so wildly – with all the intensity, indeed, of a first passion, the object of which is exquisitely beautiful, graceful and fascinating – I experience at the same time a calm, unwarped consciousness that she would not make me a good wife; that she is not the partner suited to me; that I should discover this within a year after marriage; and that to twelve months’ rapture would succeed a lifetime of regret. This I know.’

- i) Examine Brontë’s presentation of St. John Rivers in this extract. [20]
- ii) Explore the view that “in *Jane Eyre*, characters are torn between following their own desires or the expectations of others”. In your response, you must give close consideration to **at least two** other parts of the novel and to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

Elizabeth Gaskell: *North and South* (Penguin Classics)

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Read the extract below and answer the questions which follow.

‘And this imagination of power, this practical realization of a gigantic thought, came out of one man’s brain in our good town. That very man has it within him to mount, step by step, on each wonder he achieves to higher marvels still. And I’ll be bound to say, we have many among us who, if he were gone, could spring into the breach and carry on the war which compels, and shall compel, all material power to yield to science.’

‘Your boast reminds me of the old lines –

*‘I’ve a hundred captains in England,’ he said,
‘As good as ever was he.’*

At her father’s quotation Margaret looked suddenly up, with inquiring wonder in her eyes. How in the world had they got from the cog-wheels to Chevy Chase?

‘It is no boast of mine,’ replied Mr Thornton; ‘it is plain matter-of-fact. I won’t deny that I am proud of belonging to a town – or perhaps I should rather say a district – the necessities of which give birth to such grandeur of conception. I would rather be a man toiling, suffering – nay, failing and unsuccessful – here, than lead a dull prosperous life in the old worn grooves of what you call more aristocratic society down in the South, with their slow days of careless ease. One may be clogged with honey and unable to rise and fly.’

‘You are mistaken,’ said Margaret, roused by the aspersion on her beloved South to a fond vehemence of defence, that brought the colour into her cheeks and the angry tears into her eyes. ‘You do not know anything about the South. If there is less adventure or less progress – I suppose I must not say less excitement – from the gambling spirit of trade, which seems requisite to force out these wonderful inventions, there is less suffering also. I see men here going about in the streets who look ground down by some pinching sorrow or care – who are not only sufferers but haters. Now, in the South we have our poor, but there is not that terrible expression in their countenances of a sullen sense of injustice which I see here. You do not know the South, Mr Thornton,’ she concluded, collapsing into a determined silence, and angry with herself for having said so much.

‘And may I say you do not know the North?’ asked he, with an inexpressible gentleness in his tone, as he saw that he had really hurt her. She continued resolutely silent; yearning after the lovely haunts she had left far away in Hampshire, with a passionate longing that made her feel her voice would be unsteady and trembling if she spoke.

- i) Examine Gaskell’s presentation of Margaret and Mr Thornton in this extract. [20]
- ii) Explore the view that “in *North and South*, there is a constant tension between progress and the past”. In your response, you must give close consideration to **at least two** other parts of the novel and to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

Charles Dickens: *David Copperfield* (Penguin Classics)

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Read the extract below and answer the questions which follow.

‘Do you think I don’t know,’ said my aunt, turning a deaf ear to the sister, and continuing to address the brother, and to shake her head at him with infinite expression, ‘what kind of life you must have led that poor, unhappy, misdirected baby? Do you think I don’t know what a woeful day it was for the soft little creature, when *you* first came in her way – smirking and making great eyes at her, I’ll be bound, as if you couldn’t say boh! to a goose!’

‘I never heard anything so elegant!’ said Miss Murdstone.

‘Do you think I can’t understand you as well as if I had seen you,’ pursued my aunt, ‘now that I *do* see and hear you – which, I tell you candidly, is anything but a pleasure to me? Oh yes, bless us! who so smooth and silky as Mr Murdstone at first! The poor, benighted innocent had never seen such a man. He was made of sweetness. He worshipped her. He doted on her boy – tenderly doted on him! He was to be another father to him, and they were all to live together in a garden of roses, weren’t they? Ugh! Get along with you, do!’ said my aunt.

‘I never heard anything like this person in my life!’ exclaimed Miss Murdstone.

‘And when you had made sure of the poor little fool,’ said my aunt – ‘God forgive me that I should call her so, and she gone where *you* won’t go in a hurry – because you had not done wrong enough to her and hers, you must begin to train her, must you? begin to break her, like a poor caged bird, and wear her deluded life away, in teaching her to sing *your* notes?’

‘This is either insanity or intoxication,’ said Miss Murdstone, in a perfect agony at not being able to turn the current of my aunt’s address towards herself; ‘and my suspicion is, that it’s intoxication.’

Miss Betsey, without taking the least notice of the interruption, continued to address herself to Mr Murdstone as if there had been no such thing.

‘Mr Murdstone,’ she said, shaking her finger at him, ‘you were a tyrant to the simple baby, and you broke her heart. She was a loving baby – I know that; I knew it, years before *you* ever saw her – and through the best part of her weakness, you gave her the wounds she died of. There is the truth for your comfort, however you like it. And you and your instruments may make the most of it.’

‘Allow me to inquire, Miss Trotwood,’ interposed Miss Murdstone, ‘whom you are pleased to call, in a choice of words in which I am not experienced, my brother’s instruments?’

Still stone-deaf to the voice, and utterly unmoved by it, Miss Betsey pursued her discourse.

- i) Examine Dickens’ presentation of Miss Betsey in this extract. [20]
- ii) “In *David Copperfield*, we are reminded of the important influence mothers have in shaping an individual’s identity.” In the light of this statement, discuss Dickens’ presentation of mothers and mother figures. In your response, you must give close consideration to **at least two** other parts of the novel and to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

Thomas Hardy: *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (Penguin Classics)

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Read the extract below and answer the questions which follow.

He pressed on the preparations for his union, or rather re-union, with this pale creature in a dogged unflinching spirit which did credit to his conscientiousness. Nobody would have conceived from his outward demeanour that there was no amatory fire or pulse of romance acting as stimulant to the bustle going on in his gaunt, great house; nothing but three large resolves: one to make amends to his neglected Susan, another to provide a comfortable home for Elizabeth-Jane under his paternal eye; and a third to castigate himself with the thorns which these restitutory acts brought in their train; among them the lowering of his dignity in public opinion by marrying so comparatively humble a woman.

Susan Henchard entered a carriage for the first time in her life when she stepped into the plain brougham which drew up at the door on the wedding-day to take her and Elizabeth-Jane to church. It was a windless morning of warm November rain, which floated down like meal, and lay in a powdery form on the nap of hats and coats. Few people had gathered round the church door, though they were well packed within. The Scotchman, who assisted as groomsman, was of course the only one present, beyond the chief actors, who knew the true situation of the contracting parties. He, however, was too inexperienced, too thoughtful, too judicial, too strongly conscious of the serious side of the business, to enter into the scene in its dramatic aspect. That required the special genius of Christopher Coney, Solomon Longways, Buzzford, and their fellows. But they knew nothing of the secret; though as the time for coming out of church drew on they gathered on the pavement adjoining, and expounded the subject according to their lights.

"'Tis five-and-forty years since I had my settlement in this here town," said Coney; "but daze me if ever I see a man wait so long before to take so little! There's a chance even for thee after this, Nance Mockridge." The remark was addressed to a woman who stood behind his shoulder – the same who had exhibited Henchard's bad bread in public when Elizabeth and her mother entered Casterbridge.

"Be cust if I'd marry any such as he, or thee either," replied that lady. "As for thee, Christopher, we know what ye be, and the less said the better. And as for he – well, there – (lowering her voice) 'tis said 'a was a poor parish 'prentice – I wouldn't say it for all the world – but 'a was a poor parish 'prentice, that began life wi' no more belonging to 'en than a carrion crow."

"And now he's worth ever so much a minute," murmured Longways. "When a man is said to be worth so and so a minute he's a man to be considered!"

- i) Examine how Hardy creates mood and atmosphere in this extract. [20]
- ii) How far do you agree with the view that "the marriages in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* are characterised by manipulation and exploitation"? In your response, you must make close reference to **at least two** other parts of the novel and to relevant contexts. [40]

Section B: Prose fiction post-1900

Answer **one** question in this section.

In your response you are required to:

- analyse how meanings are shaped
- demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received
- show how different interpretations have informed your reading.

Either

Joseph Conrad: *The Secret Agent* (Penguin Classics)

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Examine the view that “*The Secret Agent* is a warning about the power and danger of illusions”. In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

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“*The Secret Agent* presents us with a world characterised by manipulation and exploitation.” In the light of this statement, discuss Conrad’s presentation of power in *The Secret Agent*. In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

E.M. Forster: *A Room with a View* (Penguin Classics)

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How far do you agree with the view that “in *A Room with a View*, characters are not always rewarded for their honesty”? In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

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Explore the view that “*A Room with a View* is a novel about the consequences of crossing boundaries”. In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

Emyr Humphreys: *A Toy Epic* (Seren)

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How far do you agree with the view that “in *A Toy Epic*, modernism is a destructive force”? In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

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Examine the view that “*A Toy Epic* is a story of innocence lost”. In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

Jean Rhys: *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Penguin Classics)

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How far would you agree with the view that “the relationships in *Wide Sargasso Sea* are characterised by cruelty and violence”? In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

1	3
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Explore the view that “in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, all the characters are outsiders in some way”. In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

Kazuo Ishiguro: *The Remains of the Day* (Faber)

1	4
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How far do you agree with the view that “in *The Remains of the Day*, the character Stevens at the end of the novel is no different from the Stevens at the beginning”? In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

Or

1	5
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“A novel where characters attempt, but fail, to connect with others.” In the light of this statement, explore Ishiguro’s presentation of relationships in *The Remains of the Day*. In the course of your response, you must give close consideration to relevant contexts. [40]

END OF PAPER