



GCE A LEVEL

A720U30-1



S23-A720U30-1



FRIDAY, 16 JUNE 2023 – AFTERNOON

ENGLISH LITERATURE – A level component 3

Unseen Texts

2 hours

A720U301
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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 50 marks and Section B carries 30 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 15 minutes on Section A and 45 minutes on Section B.

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

Section A: Unseen Prose

Answer **one** question in this section.

Each question consists of an unseen prose passage and supporting extracts. You must use the supporting extracts to answer the question.

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 of the unseen passage.

Either,

Period 1880–1910

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Analyse the following extract taken from the opening chapter of the satirical novel *The Green Carnation*, based upon Oscar Wilde and his social circle. The author, Robert Hichens, introduces the main character, Reggie Hastings.

You must use the supporting extracts which follow the extract to help you consider contexts and different interpretations. [50]

Chapter I

He slipped a green carnation into his evening coat, fixed it in its place with a pin, and looked at himself in the glass, the long glass that stood near the window of his London bedroom. The summer evening was so bright that he could see his double clearly, even though it was just upon seven o'clock. There he stood in his favourite and most characteristic attitude, with his left knee slightly bent, and his arms hanging at his sides, gazing, as a woman gazes at herself before she starts for a party. The low and continuous murmur of Piccadilly, like the murmur of a flowing tide on a smooth beach, stole to his ears monotonously, and inclined him insensibly to a certain thoughtfulness. Floating through the curtained window the soft lemon light sparkled on the silver backs of the brushes that lay on the toilet-table, on the dressing-gown of spun silk that hung from a hook behind the door, on the great mass of Gloire de Dijon roses, that dreamed in an ivory-white bowl set on the writing-table of ruddy-brown wood. It caught the gilt of the boy's fair hair and turned it into brightest gold, until, despite the white weariness of his face, the pale fretfulness of his eyes, he looked like some angel in a church window designed by Burne-Jones, some angel a little blasé from the injudicious conduct of its life. He frankly admired himself as he watched his reflection, occasionally changing his pose, presenting himself to himself, now full face, now three-quarters face, leaning backward or forward, advancing one foot in its silk stocking and shining shoe, assuming a variety of interesting expressions. In his own opinion he was very beautiful, and he thought it right to appreciate his own qualities of mind and of body. He hated those fantastic creatures who are humble even in their self-communings, cowards who dare not acknowledge even to themselves how exquisite, how delicately fashioned they are. Quite frankly he told other people that he was very wonderful, quite frankly he avowed it to himself. There is a nobility in fearless truthfulness, is there not? and about the magic of his personality he could never be induced to tell a lie.

It is so interesting to be wonderful, to be young, with pale gilt hair and blue eyes, and a face in which the shadows of fleeting expressions come and go, and a mouth like the mouth of Narcissus. It is so interesting to oneself. Surely one's beauty, one's attractiveness, should be one's own greatest delight. It is only the stupid, and those who still cling to Exeter Hall as to a Rock of Ages, who are afraid, or ashamed, to love themselves, and to express that love, if need be. Reggie Hastings, at least, was not ashamed. The mantel-piece in his sitting-room bore only photographs of himself, and he explained this fact to inquirers by saying that he worshipped

beauty. Reggie was very frank. When he could not be witty, he often told the naked truth; and truth, without any clothes on, frequently passes for epigram. It is daring, and so it seems clever. Reggie was considered very clever by his friends, but more clever by himself. He knew that he was great, and he said so often in Society. And Society smiled and murmured that it was a pose. Everything is a pose nowadays, especially genius.

This evening Reggie stood before the mirror till the Sèvres clock on the chimneypiece gently chimed seven. Then he drew out of their tissue paper a pair of lavender gloves, and pressed the electric bell.

“Call me a hansom, Flynn,” he said to his valet.

He threw a long buff-coloured overcoat across his arm, and went slowly downstairs. A cab was at the door, and he entered it and told the man to drive to Belgrave Square. As they turned the corner of Half Moon Street into Piccadilly, he leant forward over the wooden apron and lazily surveyed the crowd. Every second cab he passed contained an immaculate man going out to dinner, sitting bolt upright, with a severe expression of countenance, and surveying the world with steady eyes over an unyielding rampart of starched collar. Reggie exchanged nods with various acquaintances. Presently he passed an elderly gentleman with a red face and small side whiskers. The elderly gentleman stared him in the face, and sniffed ostentatiously.

“What a pity my poor father is so plain,” Reggie said to himself with a quiet smile. Only that morning he had received a long and vehement diatribe from his parent, showering abuse upon him, and exhorting him to lead a more reputable life. He had replied by wire—

“What a funny little man you are.—Reggie.”

The funny little man had evidently received his message.

As his cab drew up for a moment at Hyde Park corner to allow a stream of pedestrians to cross from the Park, he saw several people pointing him out. Two well-dressed women looked at him and laughed, and he heard one murmur his name to the other. He let his blue eyes rest upon them calmly as they peacocked across to St. George’s Hospital, still laughing, and evidently discussing him. He did not know them, but he was accustomed to being known. His life had never been a cautious one. He was too modern to be very reticent, and he liked to be wicked in the eye of the crowd. Secret wickedness held little charm for him. He preferred to preface his failings with an overture on the orchestra, to draw up the curtain, and to act his drama of life to a crowded audience of smart people in the stalls. When they hissed him, he only pitied them, and wondered at their ignorance. His social position kept him in Society, however much Society murmured against him; and, far from fearing scandal, he loved it. He chose his friends partly for their charm, and partly for their bad reputations; and the white flower of a blameless life was much too inartistic to have any attraction for him. He believed that Art showed the way to Nature, and worshipped the abnormal with all the passion of his impure and subtle youth.

Supporting Extracts:

“The plant (Green Carnation) quickly became an emblem of Wilde and his companions, who were largely followers of the Aestheticism movement. They believed in Art for Art’s sake, and often dressed in ways deemed effeminate or over-the-top. The green carnation, then, is an embodiment of the decadent, the unnatural, and the artistic. So synonymous was the flower with Aestheticism, in fact, that the anonymously published *The Green Carnation* (1894) was interpreted as an unmistakable parody of Oscar Wilde.”

Davies, C. (2022) *Flowers of Pride: The Green Carnation*, Available at:
<https://www.thewalledgardenatmells.co.uk/post/flowers-of-pride-the-green-carnation>

“One of the main tenets of aestheticism was that art was not confined to painting and sculpture and the false values of the art market. Potential for art is everywhere around us, in our homes and public buildings, in the detail of the way we choose to live our lives.”

MacCarthy, F. (2011) *The Aesthetic Movement*, The Guardian, Available at:
<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/mar/26/aestheticism-exhibition-victoria-albert-museum>

“The themes are dated; the style antiquated, but they reflect the cunning of a clever wordsmith, and are sparkling touchstones that evoke the spirit of their times.”

Peters, B. (2017) *The Case for Robert Hichens*, Available at:
<http://brookspeters.blogspot.com/2017/11/a-case-for-robert-hichens.html>

Period 1919–1939

Or,

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Analyse the following extract below taken from the novel *The Lost Girl* by D.H. Lawrence, published in 1921, where the author casts an eye over the society of a small mining town in the Midlands.

You must use the supporting extracts which follow the extract to help you consider contexts and different interpretations. [50]

CHAPTER I — THE DECLINE OF MANCHESTER HOUSE

Take a mining townlet like Woodhouse, with a population of ten thousand people, and three generations behind it. This space of three generations argues a certain well-established society. The old "County" has fled from the sight of so much disembowelled coal, to flourish on mineral rights in regions still idyllic. Remains one great and inaccessible magnate, the local coal owner: three generations old, and clambering on the bottom step of the "County," kicking off the mass below. Rule him out.

A well-established society in Woodhouse, full of fine shades, ranging from the dark of coal-dust to grit of stone-mason and sawdust of timber-merchant, through the lustre of lard and butter and meat, to the perfume of the chemist and the disinfectant of the doctor, on to the serene gold-tarnish of bank-managers, cashiers for the firm, clergymen and such-like, as far as the automobile refulgence of the general-manager of all the collieries. Here the *ne plus ultra*. The general manager lives in the shrubberied seclusion of the so-called Manor. The genuine Hall, abandoned by the "County," has been taken over as offices by the firm.

Here we are then: a vast substratum of colliers; a thick sprinkling of tradespeople intermingled with small employers of labour and diversified by elementary schoolmasters and nonconformist clergy; a higher layer of bank-managers, rich millers and well-to-do ironmasters, episcopal clergy and the managers of collieries, then the rich and sticky cherry of the local coal-owner glistening over all.

Such the complicated social system of a small industrial town in the Midlands of England, in this year of grace 1920. But let us go back a little. Such it was in the last calm year of plenty, 1913.

A calm year of plenty. But one chronic and dreary malady: that of the odd women. Why, in the name of all prosperity, should every class but the lowest in such a society hang overburdened with Dead Sea fruit of odd women, unmarried, unmarriageable women, called old maids? Why is it that every tradesman, every school-master, every bank-manager, and every clergyman produces one, two, three or more old maids? Do the middle-classes, particularly the lower middle-classes, give birth to more girls than boys? Or do the lower middle-class men assiduously climb up or down, in marriage, thus leaving their true partners stranded? Or are middle-class women very squeamish in their choice of husbands?

However it be, it is a tragedy. Or perhaps it is not. Perhaps these unmarried women of the middle-classes are the famous sexless-workers of our ant-industrial society, of which we hear so much. Perhaps all they lack is an occupation: in short, a job. But perhaps we might hear their own opinion, before we lay the law down.

In Woodhouse, there was a terrible crop of old maids among the "nobs," the tradespeople and the clergy. The whole town of women, colliers' wives and all, held its breath as it saw a chance of one of these daughters of comfort and woe getting off. They flocked to the well-to-do weddings with an intoxication of relief. For let class-jealousy be what it may, a woman hates to see another woman left stalely on the shelf, without a chance. They all *wanted* the middle-class girls to find husbands. Every one wanted it, including the girls themselves. Hence the dismalness.

Now James Houghton had only one child: his daughter Alvina. Surely Alvina Houghton— But let us retreat to the early eighties, when Alvina was a baby: or even further back, to the palmy days of James Houghton. In his palmy days, James Houghton was *crème de la crème* of Woodhouse society. The house of Houghton had always been well-to-do: tradespeople, we must admit; but after a few generations of affluence, tradespeople acquire a distinct *cachet*. Now James Houghton, at the age of twenty-eight, inherited a splendid business in Manchester goods, in Woodhouse. He was a tall, thin, elegant young man with side-whiskers, genuinely refined, somewhat in the Bulwer style. He had a taste for elegant conversation and elegant literature and elegant Christianity: a tall, thin, brittle young man, rather fluttering in his manner, full of facile ideas, and with a beautiful speaking voice: most beautiful. Withal, of course, a tradesman. He courted a small, dark woman, older than himself, daughter of a Derbyshire squire. He expected to get at least ten thousand pounds with her. In which he was disappointed, for he got only eight hundred. Being of a romantic-commercial nature, he never forgave her, but always treated her with the most elegant courtesy. To see him peel and prepare an apple for her was an exquisite sight. But that peeled and quartered apple was her portion. This elegant Adam of commerce gave Eve her own back, nicely cored, and had no more to do with her. Meanwhile Alvina was born.

Before all this, however, before his marriage, James Houghton had built Manchester House. It was a vast square building—vast, that is, for Woodhouse—standing on the main street and high-road of the small but growing town. The lower front consisted of two fine shops, one for Manchester goods, one for silk and woollens. This was James Houghton's commercial poem.

For James Houghton was a dreamer, and something of a poet: commercial, be it understood. He liked the novels of George Macdonald, and the fantasies of that author, extremely. He wove one continual fantasy for himself, a fantasy of commerce. He dreamed of silks and poplins, luscious in texture and of unforeseen exquisiteness: he dreamed of carriages of the "County" arrested before his windows, of exquisite women ruffling charmed, entranced to his counter. And charming, entrancing, he served them his lovely fabrics, which only he and they could sufficiently appreciate. His fame spread, until Alexandra, Princess of Wales, and Elizabeth, Empress of Austria, the two best-dressed women in Europe, floated down from heaven to the shop in Woodhouse, and sallied forth to show what could be done by purchasing from James Houghton.

Supporting Extracts:

"The great enemy of human (and of aesthetic) wholeness, Lawrence believed, was modern life itself. Industrialisation had cut man off from the past, had mechanized his daily life and transformed human relations into a power struggle to acquire material commodities, thereby alienating man from the divine potency residing in both nature and other men and women."

MAMBROL, N., 2019. *Analysis of D. H. Lawrence's Novels*. [online] Literary Theory and Criticism. Available at: <https://literariness.org/2019/04/08/analysis-of-d-h-lawrences-novels/>

"Think of a woman in her 20s at the outbreak of the war. Getting married during the war was either not possible or not desirable. Thus, she was still single at the end of the war. She and many other women then faced a deficit of men in her own age group. Finding a husband would be difficult. Older men who were less likely to have been killed during the war were already married. But young men were also less likely to have been killed, as teenagers were not mobilized during the war. They were in their 20s after the war, so women started to marry younger men. In doing so, however, they also started to compete with the next generation of women who would have normally married these men. Thus, the next generation of women would have to wait and may also have to marry younger men."

Vandenbroucke, G., 2015. [online] Available at: <https://www.stlouisfed.org/on-the-economy/2015/march/how-world-war-i-changed-marriage-patterns-in-europe>

Section B: Unseen Poetry

Answer **one** question in this section.

In your response you are required to analyse how meanings are shaped.

Either,

0	3	Analyse in detail the following poem.
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[30]

Absence

I visited the place where we last met.	
Nothing was changed, the gardens were well-tended,	
The fountains sprayed their usual steady jet;	
There was no sign that anything had ended	
And nothing to instruct me to forget.	5
The thoughtless birds that shook out of the trees,	
Singing an ecstasy I could not share,	
Played cunning in my thoughts. Surely in these	
Pleasures there could not be a pain to bear	
Or any discord shake the level breeze.	10
It was because the place was just the same	
That made your absence seem a savage force,	
For under all the gentleness there came	
An earthquake tremor: Fountain, birds and grass	
Were shaken by my thinking of your name.	15

Elizabeth Jennings

Or,

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 Analyse in detail the following poem.

[30]

Vergissmeinnicht¹

Three weeks gone and the combatants gone
 returning over the nightmare ground
 we found the place again, and found
 the soldier sprawling in the sun.

The frowning barrel of his gun
 overshadowing. As we came on
 that day, he hit my tank with one
 like the entry of a demon. 5

Look. Here in the gunpit spoil
 the dishonoured picture of his girl
 who has put: *Steffi. Vergissmeinnicht*
 in a copybook gothic script. 10

We see him almost with content,
 abased, and seeming to have paid
 and mocked at by his own equipment
 that's hard and good when he's decayed. 15

But she would weep to see today
 how on his skin the swart flies move;
 the dust upon the paper eye
 and the burst stomach like a cave. 20

For here the lover and killer are mingled
 who had one body and one heart.
 And death who had the soldier singled
 has done the lover mortal hurt.

Keith Douglas

¹ *Vergissmeinnicht*: forget me not

END OF PAPER