



GCE A LEVEL

A720U30-1



S18-A720U30-1



ENGLISH LITERATURE – A level component 3
Unseen Texts

FRIDAY, 15 JUNE 2018 – MORNING

2 hours

A720U301
01

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

A WJEC pink 16-page answer booklet.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

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

Write your answers in the separate answer booklet provided.

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

1. Analyse the following passage from H.G. Wells' *Tono-Bungay*, a fictional autobiography of the character, George Ponderovo, published in 1909. You must use the supporting extracts which follow the passage to help you consider contexts and different interpretations. [50]

In this extract, the narrator looks back upon being the child of a housekeeper in a grand, English country house.

In that English countryside of my boyhood every human being had a "place". It belonged to you from your birth like the colour of your eyes, it was inextricably your destiny. Above you were your betters, below you were your inferiors, and there were even an unstable questionable few, cases so disputable that you might, for the rough purposes of every day at least, regard them as your equals. Head and centre of our system was Lady Drew, her "leddyship", shrivelled, garrulous, with a wonderful memory for genealogies and very, very old, and beside her and nearly as old, Miss Somerville, her cousin and companion. These two old souls lived like dried-up kernels in the great shell of Bladesover House, the shell that had once been gaily full of fops, of fine ladies in powder and patches and courtly gentlemen with swords; and when there was no company they spent whole days in the corner parlour just over the housekeeper's room, between reading and slumber and caressing their two pet dogs. When I was a boy I used always to think of these two poor old creatures as superior beings living, like God, somewhere through the ceiling. Occasionally they bumped about a bit and one even heard them overhead, which gave them a greater effect of reality without mitigating their vertical predominance. Sometimes too I saw them. Of course if I came upon them in the park or in the shrubbery (where I was a trespasser) I hid or fled in pious horror, but I was upon due occasion taken into the Presence by request. I remember her "leddyship" then as a thing of black silks and a golden chain, a quavering injunction to me to be a good boy, a very shrunken loose-skinned face and neck and a ropy hand that trembled a halfcrown into mine. Miss Somerville hovered behind, a paler thing of broken lavender and white and black, with screwed up, sandy-lashed eyes. Her hair was yellow and her colour bright, and when we sat in the housekeeper's room of a winter's night warming our toes and sipping elder wine, her maid would tell us the simple secrets of that belated flush....After my fight with young Garvell I was of course banished, and I never saw those poor old painted goddesses again.

Then there came and went on these floors over our respectful heads, the Company; people I rarely saw, but whose tricks and manners were imitated and discussed by their maids and valets in the housekeeper's room and the steward's room—so that I had them through a medium at secondhand. I gathered that none of the company were really Lady Drew's equals, they were greater and lesser—after the manner of all things in our world. Once I

remember there was a Prince, with a real live gentleman in attendance, and that was a little above our customary levels and excited us all, and perhaps raised our expectations unduly. Afterwards, Rabbits, the butler, came into my mother's room downstairs, red with indignation and with tears in his eyes. "Look at *that!*" gasped Rabbits. My mother was speechless with horror. *That* was a sovereign, a mere sovereign, such as you might get from any commoner!

After Company, I remember, came anxious days, for the poor old women upstairs were left tired and cross and vindictive, and in a state of physical and emotional indigestion after their social efforts....

On the lowest fringe of these real Olympians hung the vicarage people, and next to them came those ambiguous beings who are neither quality nor subjects. The vicarage people certainly hold a place by themselves in the typical English scheme; nothing is more remarkable than the progress the Church has made—socially—in the last two hundred years. In the early eighteenth century the vicar was rather under than over the house-steward, and was deemed a fitting match for the housekeeper or any not too morally discredited discard. The eighteenth-century literature is full of his complaints that he might not remain at table to share the pie. He rose above these indignities because of the abundance of younger sons. When I meet the large assumptions of the contemporary cleric, I am apt to think of these things. It is curious to note that today that down-trodden, organ-playing creature, the Church of England village schoolmaster, holds much the same position as the seventeenth-century parson. The doctor in Bladesover ranked below the vicar but above the "vet", artists and summer visitors squeezed in above or below this point according to their appearance and expenditure; and then in a carefully arranged scale came the tenantry, the butler and housekeeper, the village shopkeeper, the head keeper, the cook, the publican, the second keeper, the blacksmith (whose status was complicated by his daughter keeping the post-office—and a fine hash she used to make of telegrams too!) the village shopkeeper's eldest son, the first footman, younger sons of the village shopkeeper, his first assistant, and so forth.

Supporting Extracts:

"To you, literature, like painting, is an end [in itself]. To me, literature, like architecture, is a means, it has a use...I had rather be called a journalist than an artist."

H.G. Wells, extract from a letter to fellow novelist Henry James (1915)

"Land and capital have created the division of society into hostile classes, with large appetites and no dinners at one extreme and large dinners and no appetites at the other. Nationalisation of land is a public duty. Capitalism has ceased to encourage invention and to distribute its benefits in the fairest way attainable."

Extract from *A Manifesto*, George Bernard Shaw (1884)

Period 1918-1939**Or,**

2. Analyse the following opening of the novel, *The Midnight Bell*, by Patrick Hamilton, published in 1929. You must use the supporting extracts which follow the passage to help you consider contexts and different interpretations. [50]

Bob is the 25-year-old resident barman of a fictional public house called 'The Midnight Bell' which the author, Patrick Hamilton, places in London's Earl's Court district.

Bob**Chapter 1**

Sleeping, just before five, on a dark October's afternoon, he had a singularly vivid and audible dream. He dreamed that he was on a ship, which was bound upon some far, lovely, and momentous voyage, but which had left the coast less than an hour ago. The coast, implicitly and strangely, was that of Spain. He was leaning over the side and peacefully savouring the phase of the journey – a phase which he knew well. It was that curiously dreamlike and uninspiring phase in which the familiarity and proximity of the coast yet steals all venturesomeness from the undertaking, and in which the climax of departure is dying down, to the level tune of winds and waves and motion, into the throbbing humdrum of voyage. That throbbing would continue for weeks and weeks...A strong wind was blowing, buffeting his ears, roaring over the green waves, and rendering utterly silent and unreal the land he had just left. He was extraordinarily cold, and a trifle sick. But he did not want to move – indeed he could not move. He was lulled by the mighty swish of the water beneath him, as it went seething out into the wake, and he could not, under any circumstances, move...

He awoke, with jarring abruptness, into the obliterating darkness of his own room. The swishing was his own breath, and the disinclination to move traceable to his snuggled, though cold and stiff position, on the bed. His dream sickness was a waking sickness. The thundering of the wind in his dream was the passing of a lorry in the Euston Road outside.

The burden of cold and ever-recurring existence weighed down his spirit. Here he was again.

He took stock of his miserable predicament. He was in his little hovel of a room – on his bed. He was not in bed, though. Save for his coat and his shoes he was fully dressed, and he was protected from the cold by his rough quilt alone. He apprehended that his clothes were wrinkled and frowsy from his heavy recumbence...

It was pitch dark – but it was not yet five o'clock. His alarm would have gone, if it had been. He need not yet stir. There were no sounds of life in the house below.

Why had he slept? He remembered coming up here, a happy man, at half-past three. It had been bright daylight then. Now the dark was uncanny.

He turned over with a sigh and a fresh spasm of sickness swept over him. He waited motionlessly and submissively until it passed. Then he cursed himself softly and vindictively. He faced facts. He had got drunk at lunch again.

At last he sprang from bed and lit the gas.

He poured out all the water from his jug into his basin, and plunged in his head, holding his breath and keeping down. He gasped into his towel and rubbed madly.

Braced by the friction he returned to normal and all but unrepentant humanity again. Horror fled. For a moment, he had been a racked soul contemplating itself in a pitch-dark and irrevocable Universe. Now he was reinstated as the waiter of 'The Midnight Bell' dressing in his room a quarter of an hour before opening time.

Nevertheless, the gas-lit walls and objects around him were heavy with his own depression – the depression of one who awakes from excess in the late afternoon. Only at dawn should a man awake from excess – at dawn a gleam with red and sorrowful resolve. The late, dark afternoon, with an evening's toil ahead, affords no such palliation.

In the house below – 'The Midnight Bell' – the silence was creepy. Creepy in a perfectly literal sense – the silence of things creeping. It was the silence of malignant things lurking in passages, and softly creeping up a little, and lurking again...

There came, however, the welcome and dispelling sound of light women's footsteps on the bare wooden stairs: and a humming, buoyant body swept past his door, and slammed itself into the room adjoining his.

That was Ella – his pert companion in toil – the barmaid of 'The Midnight Bell'.

She always hummed when she passed his door. In some respects, he reflected, she was a very self-conscious girl. He believed also that the brusque bumpings, the lively jug-and-basin sounds, which now came through the wall, were similarly subtly challenging and alluding to himself. A rather mystifying creature, of whom he knew, really, nothing – for all their chaff and friendliness.

Supporting Extracts:

"Patrick Hamilton has a distinctive place in the fictional portrayal of London, his being a famously bleak account of the desperation of ordinary lives in the years of economic, social and political crisis either side of the Second World War. He has been called the 'laureate of London's rootless masses, a genuine minor poet...of the loneliness, purposelessness and frustrations of urban contemporary life'."

From: *Social and Cultural Geography*, (March 2015) "Time-geography, gentlemen, please: chronotopes of publand in Patrick Hamilton's London trilogy", Philip Howell and David Beckingham, Dept. of Geography, University of Cambridge

"Hamilton is a writer of enormous gifts, and his sense of time, place and voice bring backstreet London in the 1930s alive with sense impressions. At the same time, Hamilton creates characters the reader instinctively cares about, even when they are being foolish. Evoking emotions ranging from anger to pity, they are depicted with a kind of dark humour which prevents the action from becoming sentimental and the characters from appearing self-indulgent."

Mary Whipple, from marywhiplereviews.com, January 2012

Section B: Unseen Poetry

Answer **one** question in this section.

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

Either,

3. Analyse in detail the following poem.

[30]

A Lady

| | |
|---|----|
| You are beautiful and faded | 1 |
| Like an old opera tune | |
| Played upon a harpsichord; | |
| Or like the sun-flooded silks | |
| Of an eighteenth-century boudoir. | 5 |
| In your eyes | |
| Smoulder the fallen roses of out-lived minutes, | |
| And the perfume of your soul | |
| Is vague and suffusing, | |
| With the pungence of sealed spice jars. | 10 |
| Your half-tones delight me, | |
| And I grow mad with gazing | |
| At your blent colours. | |
| | |
| My vigour is a new-minted penny, | |
| Which I cast at your feet. | 15 |
| Gather it up from the dust, | |
| That its sparkle may amuse you. | |

Amy Lowell

Or,

4. Analyse in detail the following poem.

[30]

Suburban Dream

| | |
|---|----|
| Walking the suburbs in the afternoon In summer when the idle doors stand open And the air flows through the rooms Fanning the curtain hems, | 1 |
| You wander through a cool Elysium Of women, schoolgirls, children, garden talks, With a schoolboy here and there Conning his history book. | 5 |
| The men are all away in offices, Committee-rooms, laboratories, banks, Or pushing cotton goods In Wick or Ilfracombe. | 10 |
| The massed unanimous absence liberates The light keys of the piano and sets free Chopin and everlasting youth, Now, with the masters gone. | 15 |
| And all things turn to images of peace, The boy curled over his book, the young girl poised On the path as if beguiled By the silence of a wood. | 20 |
| It is a child's dream of a grown-up world. But soon the brazen evening clocks will bring The tramp of feet and brisk Fanfare of motor horns And the masters come. | 25 |

Edwin Muir

END OF PAPER