GCE A LEVEL – NEW

A720U30-1

S17-A720U30-1

ENGLISH LITERATURE – A level component 3
Unseen Texts

THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 2017 – MORNING

2 hours

A720U301
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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.

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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 Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* published in 1890. You must use the supporting extracts which follow the passage to help you consider contexts and different interpretations. [50]

Basil Hallward is in his studio finishing his portrait of the young Dorian Gray, during a visit from Basil's friend, Lord Henry Wotton.

The studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden there came through the open door the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn.

From the corner of the divan of Persian saddle-bags on which he was lying, smoking, as usual, innumerable cigarettes, Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of the laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flame-like as theirs; and now and then the fantastic shadows of birds in flight flitted across the long tussore-silk curtains that were stretched in front of the huge window, producing a kind of momentary Japanese effect, and making him think of those pallid jade-faced painters who, in an art that is necessarily immobile, seek to convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way through the long unmown grass, or circling with monotonous insistence round the black-crocketed spires of the early June hollyhocks, seemed to make the stillness more oppressive, and the dim roar of London was like the bourdon note of a distant organ.

In the centre of the room, clamped to an upright easel, stood the full-length portrait of a young man of extraordinary personal beauty, and in front of it, some little distance away, was sitting the artist himself, Basil Hallward, whose sudden disappearance some years ago caused, at the time, such public excitement, and gave rise to so many strange conjectures.

As he looked at the gracious and comely form he had so skillfully mirrored in his art, a smile of pleasure passed across his face, and seemed about to linger there. But he suddenly started up, and, closing his eyes, placed his fingers upon the lids, as though he sought to imprison within his brain some curious dream from which he feared he might awake.

"It is your best work, Basil, the best thing you have ever done," said Lord Henry, languidly. "You must certainly send it next year to the Grosvenor. The Academy is too large and too vulgar. The Grosvenor is the only place."

"I don't think I will send it anywhere," he answered, tossing his head back in that odd way that used to make his friends laugh at him at Oxford. "No: I won't send it anywhere."

Lord Henry elevated his eyebrows, and looked at him in amazement through the thin blue wreaths of smoke that curled up in such fanciful whorls from his heavy opium-tainted cigarette. "Not send it anywhere? My dear fellow, why? Have you any reason? What odd chaps you painters are! You do anything in the world to gain a reputation. As soon as you have one, you seem to want to throw it away. It is silly of you, for there is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about. A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England, and make the old men quite jealous, if old men are ever capable of any emotion."

"I know you will laugh at me," he replied, "but I really can't exhibit it. I have put too much of myself into it."

Lord Henry stretched his long legs out on the divan and shook with laughter.

"Yes, I knew you would laugh; but it is quite true, all the same."

"Too much of yourself in it! Upon my word, Basil, I didn't know you were so vain; and I really can't see any resemblance between you, with your rugged strong face and your coal-black hair, and this young Adonis, who looks as if he was made of ivory and rose-leaves. Why, my dear Basil, he is a Narcissus, and you–well, of course you have an intellectual expression, and all that. But beauty, real beauty, ends where an intellectual expression begins. Intellect is in itself an exaggeration, and destroys the harmony of any face. The moment one sits down to think, one becomes all nose, or all forehead, or something horrid. Look at the successful men in any of the learned professions. How perfectly hideous they are! Except, of course, in the Church. But then in the Church they don't think. A bishop keeps on saying at the age of eighty what he was told to say when he was a boy of eighteen, and consequently he always looks absolutely delightful.

Supporting Extracts:

"While much of 'The Picture of Dorian Gray' delights in the beautiful and the intoxicating indulgence of the senses….it can be argued that Wilde intended his book neither as a celebration of decadence nor as a fable about the perils of its excesses. As Wilde states in the preface to the novel, 'There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written or badly written. That is all.' "

Article by Greg Buzwell on *The Picture of Dorian Gray* British Library Website

"Flying in the face of Victorian notions of both objective reality and eternal truths, Pater described a world of fleeting impressions. All the individual has is the subjective experience provided by intense sensory engagement with lovely things. Pater advises that the wisest people will seek to concentrate all their energies and efforts on the pleasure of these moments. For some, this seemed a recipe for self-indulgence through the hedonistic pursuit of pleasure. For others, though, it was a breathtakingly radical call to cast off the heavy weight of Victorian moralism and Christian doctrine in the name of art."

Article on *Oscar Wilde and Decadence* by Carolyn Burdett, British Library website

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Period 1918-1939

Or,

2. Analyse the following passage from Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*, published in 1927. You must use the supporting extracts which follow the passage to help you consider contexts and different interpretations. [50]

Mrs Ramsay is a woman of fifty from an artistic and cultured background. She is holidaying on the Isle of Skye with her husband, eight children, servants and guests.

Jasper and Rose said that Mildred wanted to know whether she should wait dinner.

'Not for the Queen of England,' said Mrs Ramsay emphatically.

'Not for the Empress of Mexico,' she added, laughing at Jasper; for he shared his mother's vice: he, too, exaggerated.

And if Rose liked, she said, while Jasper took the message, she might choose which jewels she was to wear. When there are fifteen people sitting down to dinner, one cannot keep things waiting forever. She was now beginning to feel annoyed with them for being so late; it was inconsiderate of them, and it annoyed her on top of her anxiety about them, that they should choose this very night to be out late when, in fact, she wished the dinner to be particularly nice, since William Bankes had at last consented to dine with them; and they were having Mildred's masterpiece – *Boeuf en Daube*. Everything depended upon things being served up the precise moment they were ready. The beef, the bayleaf, and the wine – all must be done to a turn. To keep it waiting was out of the question. Yet of course tonight, of all nights, out they went, and they came in late, and things had to be sent out, things had to be kept hot; the *Boeuf en Daube* would be entirely spoilt.

Jasper offered her an opal necklace; Rose a gold necklace. Which looked best against her black dress? Which did indeed, said Mrs Ramsay absent-mindedly, looking at her neck and shoulders (but avoiding her face) in the glass. And then, while the children rummaged among her other things, she looked out of the window at a sight which always amused her – the rooks trying to decide which tree to settle on. Every time, they seemed to change their minds and rose up into the air again, because, she thought, the old rook, the father rook, old Joseph was her name for him, was a bird of a very trying and difficult disposition. He was a disreputable old bird, with half his wing feathers missing. He was like some seedy old gentleman in a top hat she had seen playing the horn in front of a public house.

'Look!' she said, laughing. They were actually fighting. Joseph and Mary were fighting. Anyhow they all went up again, and the air was shoved aside by their black wings and cut into exquisite scimitar shapes. The movement of the wings beating out, out, out – she could never describe it accurately enough to please herself – was one of the loveliest of all to her. Look at that she said to Rose, hoping that Rose would see it more clearly than she could. For one's children so often gave one's own perceptions a little thrust forwards.

But which was it to be? They had all the trays of her jewel-case open. The gold necklace, which was Italian, or the opal necklace which Uncle James had brought from India; or should she wear her amethysts?

'Choose, dearests, choose,' she said, hoping that they would make haste.

But she let them take their time to choose: she let Rose particularly, take up this and then that, and hold her jewels against the black dress, for this little ceremony of choosing jewels, which was gone through every night, was what Rose liked best, she knew. She had some hidden reason of her own for attaching great importance to this choosing what her mother was to wear. What was the reason, Mrs Ramsay wondered, standing still to let her clasp the necklace she had chosen, divining through her own past, some deep, some buried, some quite speechless feeling that one has for one's mother at Rose's age. Like all feelings felt for oneself, Mrs Ramsay thought, it made one sad. It was so inadequate, what one could give in return; and what Rose felt was quite out of proportion to anything she actually was. And Rose would grow up; and Rose would suffer, she supposed with these deep feelings, and she said she was ready now, and they would go down, and Jasper, because he was the gentleman, should give her his arm, and Rose, as she was the lady, should carry her handkerchief (she gave her the handkerchief) and what else? Oh, yes, it might be cold: a shawl. Choose me a shawl, she said, for that would please Rose, who was bound to suffer so.

Supporting Extracts:

"The people in Mrs Woolf's book seem to be looking through each other at some farther question; and, although they interact vividly, they are not completely real. To know people in outline is one way of knowing them....but the result is that while you know quite well the kind of people represented in the story, they lack something as individuals."

Anonymous reviewer, *The Times Literary Supplement*, May 1927

"In an era when technologies of perception, from the motion picture camera to the X-ray machine proliferated, Woolf and Fry became interested in the ability of the artist to provide other kinds of insight into how the mind receives and records sense data. It is the task of the modern writer, Woolf asserted, to record these impressions, to give the reader nothing more or less than a portrait of 'an ordinary mind on an ordinary day'."

Victoria Posner, *The Cambridge Companion to the Bloomsbury Group*, published 2014

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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]

The Spring

Now that the winter's gone, the earth hath lost
Her snow-white robes, and now no more the frost
Candies the grass, or casts an icy cream
Upon the silver lake or crystal stream;
But the warm sun thaws the benumbed earth,
And makes it tender; gives a sacred birth
To the dead swallow; wakes in hollow tree
The drowsy cuckoo, and the humble-bee.
Now do a choir of chirping minstrels bring
In triumph to the world the youthful Spring.
The valleys, hills, and woods in rich array
Welcome the coming of the long'd-for May.
Now all things smile, only my love doth lour;
Nor hath the scalding noonday sun the power
To melt that marble ice, which still doth hold
Her heart congeal'd, and makes her pity cold.
The ox, which lately did for shelter fly
Into the stall, doth now securely lie
In open fields; and love no more is made
By the fireside, but in the cooler shade
Amyntas now doth with his Chloris* sleep
Under a sycamore, and all things keep
Time with the season; only she doth carry
June in her eyes, in her heart January.

Thomas Carew

*Amyntas and Chloris – a mythical shepherd and his lover

Or,

4. Analyse in detail the following poem. [30]

The Mistake

With the mistake your life goes in reverse.
Now you can see exactly what you did
Wrong yesterday and wrong the day before
And each mistake leads back to something worse

And every nuance of your hypocrisy
Towards yourself, and every excuse
Stands solidly on the perspective lines
And there is perfect visibility.

What an enlightenment. The colonnade
Rolls past on either side. You needn't move.
The statues of your errors brush your sleeve.
You watch the tale turn back – and you're dismayed.

And this dismay at this, this big mistake
Is made worse by the sight of all those who
Knew all along where these mistakes would lead –
Those frozen friends who watched the crisis break.

Why didn't they *say*? Oh, but they did indeed –
Said with a murmur when the time was wrong
Or by a mild refusal to assent
Or told you plainly but you would not heed.

Yes, you can hear them now. It hurts. It's worse
Than any sneer from any enemy.
Take this dismay. Lay claim to this mistake.
Look straight along the lines of this reverse.

James Fenton

END OF PAPER

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