VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY

Victorian Certificate of Education 2008

LITERATURE

Written examination

Thursday 6 November 2008

Reading time: 3.00 pm to 3.15 pm (15 minutes)
Writing time: 3.15 pm to 5.15 pm (2 hours)

TASK BOOK

Structure of book

Tasks	*Marks*
1	20
2	20
	Total 40

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or white out liquid/tape, dictionaries.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

Materials supplied
- Task book of 64 pages, including the **Assessment criteria** and a checklist on page 64.
- One or more script books. All script books contain unruled (rough work only) pages for making notes, plans and drafts if you wish.

The task
- You are required to complete **two** pieces of writing based on **two texts** selected from the list on pages 2 and 3 of this task book.

Each text must be chosen from a different part.
- Each piece of writing is worth half of the total assessment for the examination.
- Write your **student number** in the space provided on the front cover(s) of the script book(s).
- Write the **part numbers** and **text numbers** of your selected texts on the front cover(s) of your script book(s).
- All written responses must be in English.

At the end of the task
- Place all other used script books inside the front cover of one of the used script books.
- You may keep this task book.

Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

Instructions

You are required to complete two pieces of writing based on **two texts** selected from the list on pages 2 and 3.

The list is divided into five parts.

The texts you select must be chosen from different parts. **You must not write on two texts from the same part**. If you answer on two texts from the same part, one of the pieces will be awarded zero marks.

1. Find the passages for the texts on which you wish to write.
2. Three passages have been set for every text.
3. The passages are printed in the order in which they appear in the texts.
4. For each of your selected texts, you must use one or more of the passages as the basis for a discussion of that text.
5. In your pieces of writing, refer in detail to the passage or passages and the texts. You may include minor references to other texts.
6. As a guide, each piece of writing should be between 400–1000 words. However, length will not be a major consideration in the assessment.

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Assessment criteria 64

A checklist for planning and revising 64

1: Novels

1 – 1 Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Sense and Sensibility.*

1.

"I do not attempt to deny," said she, "that I think very highly of him—that I greatly esteem, that I like him."

Marianne here burst forth with indignation—

"Esteem him! Like him! Cold-hearted Elinor! Oh! worse than cold-hearted! Ashamed of being otherwise. Use those words again and I will leave the room this moment."

Elinor could not help laughing. "Excuse me," said she, "and be assured that I meant no offence to you, by speaking, in so quiet a way, of my own feelings. Believe them to be stronger than I have declared; believe them, in short, to be such as his merit, and the suspicion—the hope of his affection for me may warrant, without imprudence or folly. But farther than this you must *not* believe. I am by no means assured of his regard for me. There are moments when the extent of it seems doubtful; and till his sentiments are fully known, you cannot wonder at my wishing to avoid any encouragement of my own partiality, by believing or calling it more than it is. In my heart I feel little—scarcely any doubt of his preference. But there are other points to be considered besides his inclination. He is very far from being independent. What his mother really is we cannot know; but, from Fanny's occasional mention of her conduct and opinions, we have never been disposed to think her amiable; and I am very much mistaken if Edward is not himself aware that there would be many difficulties in his way, if he were to wish to marry a woman who had not either a great fortune or high rank."

Marianne was astonished to find how much the imagination of her mother and herself had outstripped the truth.

"And you really are not engaged to him!" said she. "Yet it certainly soon will happen. But two advantages will proceed from this delay. *I* shall not lose you so soon, and Edward will have greater opportunity of improving that natural taste for your favourite pursuit which must be so indispensably necessary to your future felicity. Oh! if he should be so far stimulated by your genius as to learn to draw himself, how delightful it would be!"

Elinor had given her real opinion to her sister. She could not consider her partiality for Edward in so prosperous a state as Marianne had believed it. There was, at times, a want of spirits about him which, if it did not denote indifference, spoke a something almost as unpromising. A doubt of her regard, supposing him to feel it, need not give him more than inquietude. It would not be likely to produce that dejection of mind which frequently attended him.

* * *

2.

Elinor drew near, but without saying a word; and seating herself on the bed, took her hand, kissed her affectionately several times, and then gave way to a burst of tears, which at first was scarcely less violent than Marianne's. The latter, though unable to speak, seemed to feel all the tenderness of this behaviour, and after some time thus spent in joint affliction, she put all the letters into Elinor's hands; and then covering her face with her handkerchief, almost screamed with agony. Elinor, who knew that such grief, shocking as it was to witness it, must have its course, watched by her till this excess of suffering had somewhat spent itself, and then turning eagerly to Willoughby's letter, read as follows:

Bond Street, January.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I have just had the honour of receiving your letter, for which I beg to return my sincere acknowledgments. I am much concerned to find there was any thing in my behaviour last night which did not meet your approbation; and though I am quite at a loss to discover in what point I could be so unfortunate as to offend you, I intreat your forgiveness of what I can assure you to have been perfectly unintentional. I shall never reflect on my former acquaintance with your family in Devonshire without the most grateful pleasure, and flatter myself it will not be broken by any mistake or misapprehension of my actions. My esteem for your whole family is very sincere; but if I have been so unfortunate as to give rise to a belief of more than I felt, or meant to express, I shall reproach myself for not having been more guarded in my professions of that esteem. That I should ever have meant more, you will allow to be impossible, when you understand that my affections have been long engaged elsewhere, and it will not be many weeks, I believe, before this engagement is fulfilled. It is with great regret that I obey your commands of returning the letters, with which I have been honoured from you, and the lock of hair, which you so obligingly bestowed to me.

I am, dear Madam,
Your most obedient
humble Servant,
JOHN WILLOUGHBY.

With what indignation such a letter as this must be read by Miss Dashwood may be imagined.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

1: Novels

1 – 1 Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility* – continued

3.

When Elinor had ceased to rejoice in the dryness of the season, a very awful pause took place. It was put an end to by Mrs. Dashwood, who felt obliged to hope that he had left Mrs. Ferrars very well. In an hurried manner, he replied in the affirmative.

Another pause.

Elinor, resolving to exert herself, though fearing the sound of her own voice, now said,

"Is Mrs. Ferrars at Longstaple?"

"At Longstaple!"—he replied, with an air of surprise—"No, my mother is in town."

"I meant," said Elinor, taking up some work from the table, "to enquire after Mrs. *Edward* Ferrars."

She dared not look up;—but her mother and Marianne both turned their eyes on him. He coloured, seemed perplexed, looked doubtingly, and after some hesitation, said,

"Perhaps you mean—my brother—you mean Mrs.—Mrs. *Robert* Ferrars."

"Mrs. Robert Ferrars!"—was repeated by Marianne and her mother, in an accent of the utmost amazement;— and though Elinor could not speak, even *her* eyes were fixed on him with the same impatient wonder. He rose from his seat and walked to the window, apparently from not knowing what to do; took up a pair of scissars that lay there, and while spoiling both them and their sheath by cutting the latter to pieces as he spoke, said, in an hurried voice,

"Perhaps you do not know— you may not have heard that my brother is lately married to—to the youngest—to Miss Lucy Steele."

His words were echoed with unspeakable astonishment by all but Elinor, who sat with her head leaning over her work, in a state of such agitation as made her hardly know where she was.

"Yes," said he, "they were married last week, and are now at Dawlish."

Elinor could sit it no longer. She almost ran out of the room, and as soon as the door was closed, burst into tears of joy, which at first she thought would never cease. Edward, who had till then looked anywhere rather than at her, saw her hurry away, and perhaps saw—or even heard, her emotion; for immediately afterwards he fell into a reverie, which no remarks, no enquiries, no affectionate address of Mrs. Dashwood could penetrate, and at last, without saying a word, quitted the room, and walked out towards the village;—leaving the others in the greatest astonishment and perplexity on a change in his situation, so wonderful and so sudden;—a perplexity which they had no means of lessening but by their own conjectures.

* * *

1: Novels

1 – 2 Pat Barker: *Regeneration*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Regeneration*.

1.

Pat Barker, *Regeneration*,
Penguin Books, 1992

pp 13–14

2.

Pat Barker, *Regeneration*,
Penguin Books, 1992

pp 134–135

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

1: Novels

1 – 2 Pat Barker: *Regeneration* – continued

3.

Pat Barker, *Regeneration*,
Penguin Books, 1992

pp 232–233

1: Novels

1 – 3 Anne Brontë: *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

1.

That day was rainy like its predecessor; but towards evening it began to clear up a little, and the next morning was fair and promising. I was out on the hill with the reapers. A light wind swept over the corn; and all nature laughed in the sunshine. The lark was rejoicing among the silvery floating clouds. The late rain had so sweetly freshened and cleared the air, and washed the sky, and left such glittering gems on branch and blade, that not even the farmers could have the heart to blame it. But no ray of sunshine could reach my heart, no breeze could freshen it; nothing could fill the void my faith, and hope, and joy in Helen Graham had left, or drive away the keen regrets, and bitter dregs of lingering love that still oppressed it.

While I stood, with folded arms, abstractedly gazing on the undulating swell of the corn not yet disturbed by the reapers, something gently pulled my skirts, and a small voice, no longer welcome to my ears, aroused me with the startling words: –

'Mr Markham, mamma wants you.'

'Wants *me*, Arthur?'

'Yes. Why do you look so queer?' said he, half laughing, half frightened at the unexpected aspect of my face in suddenly turning towards him – 'and why have you kept so long away? – Come! – Won't you come?'

'I'm busy just now,' I replied, scarce knowing what to answer.

He looked up in childish bewilderment; but before I could speak again, the lady herself was at my side.

'Gilbert, I *must* speak with you!' said she in a tone of suppressed vehemence.

I looked at her pale cheek and glittering eye, but answered nothing.

'Only for a moment,' pleaded she. 'Just step aside into this other field,' she glanced at the reapers, some of whom were directing looks of impertinent curiosity towards her – 'I won't keep you a minute.'

I accompanied her through the gap.

'Arthur, darling, run and gather those bluebells,' said she, pointing to some that were gleaming, at some distance, under the hedge along which we walked. The child hesitated, as if unwilling to quit my side. 'Go, love!' repeated she more urgently, and in a tone which, though not unkind, demanded prompt obedience, and obtained it.

'Well, Mrs Graham?' said I, calmly and coldly; for, though I saw she was miserable, and pitied her, I felt glad to have it in my power to torment her.

* * *

2.

'Now, you think you will win, don't you.'

'I hope so,' replied I, taking his pawn that he had pushed into the way of my bishop with so careless an air that I thought it was an oversight, but was not generous enough, under the circumstances, to direct his attention to it, and too heedless, at the moment, to foresee the after consequences of my move.

'It is those bishops that trouble me,' said he; 'but the bold knight can overleap the reverend gentleman,' taking my last bishop with his knight; – 'and now, those sacred persons once removed, I shall carry all before me.'

'Oh Walter, how you talk!' cried Milicent – 'She has far more pieces than you still.'

'I intend to give you some trouble yet,' said I; 'and perhaps, sir, you will find yourself checkmated before you are aware. Look to your queen.'

The combat deepened. The game *was* a long one, and I *did* give him some trouble: but he *was* a better player than I.

'What keen gamesters you are!' said Mr Hattersley, who had now entered, and been watching us for some time. 'Why, Mrs Huntingdon, your hand trembles as if you had staked your all upon it! and Walter – you dog – you look as deep and cool as if you were certain of success, – and as keen and cruel as if you would drain her heart's blood! – But if I were you, I wouldn't beat her, for very fear: she'll hate you if you do – she will, by Heaven! – I see it in her eye.'

'Hold your tongue, will you?' said I – his talk distracted me, for I was driven to extremities. A few more moves and I was inextricably entangled in the snare of my antagonist.

'Check,' – cried he: I sought in agony some means of escape – 'mate!' he added, quietly but with evident delight. He had suspended the utterance of that last fatal syllable the better to enjoy my dismay. I was foolishly disconcerted by the event. Hattersley laughed; Milicent was troubled to see me so disturbed. Hargrave placed his hand on mine that rested on the table, and, squeezing it with a firm but gentle pressure, murmured 'Beaten – beaten!' and gazed into my face with a look where exultation was blended with an expression of ardour and tenderness yet more insulting.

'*No, never*, Mr Hargrave!' exclaimed I, quickly withdrawing my hand.

'Do you deny?' replied he, smilingly pointing to the board.

'No, no,' I answered, recollecting how strange my conduct must appear; 'you have beaten me in that game.'

'Will you try another, then?'

'No.'

'You acknowledge my superiority?'

'Yes – as a chess-player.'

I rose to resume my work.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

1: Novels

1 – 3 Anne Brontë: *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* – continued

3.

‘“I *can't* repent; I only fear.”

‘“You only regret the past for its consequences to yourself?”

‘“Just so – except that I’m sorry to have wronged you Nell, because you’re so good to me.”

‘“Think of the goodness of God, and you cannot but be grieved to have offended Him?”

‘“What *is* God – I cannot see him or hear Him? – God is only an idea.”

‘“God is Infinite Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness – and LOVE; but if this idea is too vast for your human faculties – if your mind loses itself in its overwhelming infinitude, fix it on Him who condescended to take our nature upon Him, who was raised to Heaven even in his glorified human body, in whom the fulness of the godhead shines.”

‘But he only shook his head and sighed. Then, in another paroxysm of shuddering horror, he tightened his grasp on my hand and arm, and groaning and lamenting, still clung to me with that wild, desperate earnestness so harrowing to my soul, because I know I cannot help him. I did my best to soothe and comfort him.

‘“Death is so terrible,” he cried, “I cannot bear it! *You* don’t know, Helen – you can’t imagine what it is, because you haven’t it before you; and when I’m buried, you’ll return to your old ways and be as happy as ever, and all the world will go on just as busy and merry as if I had never been; while I –” He burst into tears.

‘“You needn’t let *that* distress you,” I said; “we shall all follow you soon enough.”

‘“I wish to God I could take you with me now!” he exclaimed, “you should plead for me.”

‘“No man can deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him,” I replied: “it cost more to redeem their souls – it cost the blood of an incarnate God, perfect and sinless in himself, to redeem us from the bondage of the evil one; – let *Him* plead for you.”

‘But I seem to speak in vain. He does not now, as formerly, laugh these blessed truths to scorn: but still he cannot trust, or will not comprehend them. He cannot linger long. He suffers dreadfully, and so do those that wait upon him – but I will not harass you with further details: I have said enough, I think, to convince you that I did well to go to him.’

*

Poor, poor Helen! dreadful indeed her trials must have been! And I could do nothing to lessen them – nay, it almost seemed as if I had brought them upon her myself, by my own secret desires; and whether I looked at her husband’s sufferings or her own, it seemed almost like a judgment upon myself for having cherished such a wish.

* * *

1: Novels

1 – 4 Michelle de Kretser: *The Hamilton Case*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Hamilton Case*.

1.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*
Vintage, Random House 2004

pp 31–32

2.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*
Vintage, Random House 2004

pp 140–141

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

1: Novels

1 – 4 Michelle de Kretser: *The Hamilton Case* – continued

3.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*
Vintage, Random House 2004

pp 291–292

1: Novels

1 – 5 Charles Dickens: *Bleak House*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Bleak House*.

1.

'The Jarndyce in question,' said the Lord Chancellor, still turning over leaves, 'is Jarndyce of Bleak House.'

'Jarndyce of Bleak House, my lord,' said Mr Kenge.

'A dreary name,' said the Lord Chancellor.

'But not a dreary place at present, my lord,' said Mr Kenge.

'And Bleak House,' said his lordship, 'is in—'

'Hertfordshire, my lord.'

'Mr Jarndyce of Bleak House is not married?' said his lordship.

'He is not, my lord,' said Mr Kenge.

A pause.

'Young Mr Richard Carstone is present?' said the Lord Chancellor, glancing towards him.

Richard bowed and stepped forward.

'Hum!' said the Lord Chancellor, turning over more leaves.

'Mr Jarndyce of Bleak House, my lord,' Mr Kenge observed, in a low voice, 'if I may venture to remind your lordship, provides a suitable companion for—'

'For Mr Richard Carstone?' I thought (but I am not quite sure) I heard his lordship say, in an equally low voice, and with a smile.

'For Miss Ada Clare. This is the young lady. Miss Summerson.'

His lordship gave me an indulgent look, and acknowledged my curtsey very graciously.

'Miss Summerson is not related to any party in the cause, I think?'

'No, my lord.'

Mr Kenge leant over before it was quite said, and whispered. His lordship, with his eyes upon his papers, listened, nodded twice or thrice, turned over more leaves, and did not look towards me again, until we were going away.

Mr Kenge now retired, and Richard with him, to where I was, near the door, leaving my pet (it is so natural to me that again I can't help it!) sitting near the Lord Chancellor; with whom his lordship spoke a little apart; asking her, as she told me afterwards, whether she had well reflected on the proposed arrangement, and if she thought she would be happy under the roof of Mr Jarndyce of Bleak House, and why she thought so? Presently he rose courteously, and released her, and then he spoke for a minute or two with Richard Carstone; not seated, but standing, and altogether with more ease and less ceremony – as if he still knew, though he *was* Lord Chancellor, how to go straight to the candour of a boy.

'Very well!' said his lordship aloud. 'I shall make the order. Mr Jarndyce of Bleak House has chosen, so far as I may judge,' and this was when he looked at me, 'a very good companion for the young lady, and the arrangement altogether seems the best of which the circumstances admit.'

* * *

2.

He steps into the room, and she comes in too, closing both the doors behind her. There is a wild disturbance – is it fear or anger? – in her eyes. In her carriage and all else, she looks as she looked down-stairs two hours ago.

Is it fear, or is it anger, now? He cannot be sure. Both might be as pale, both as intent.

'Lady Dedlock?'

She does not speak at first, nor even when she has slowly dropped into the easy chair by the table. They look at each other, like two pictures.

'Why have you told my story to so many persons?'

'Lady Dedlock, it was necessary for me to inform you that I knew it.'

'How long have you known it?'

'I have suspected it a long while – fully known it, a little while.'

'Months?'

'Days.'

He stands before her, with one hand on a chair-back and the other in his old-fashioned waistcoat and shirt-frill, exactly as he has stood before her at any time since her marriage. The same formal politeness, the same composed deference that might as well be defiance; the whole man the same dark, cold object, at the same distance, which nothing has ever diminished.

'Is this true concerning the poor girl?'

He slightly inclines and advances his head, as not quite understanding the question.

'You know what you related. Is it true? Do her friends know my story also? Is it the town-talk yet? Is it chalked upon the walls and cried in the streets?'

So! Anger, and fear, and shame. All three contending. What power this woman has, to keep these raging passions down! Mr Tulkinghorn's thoughts take such form as he looks at her, with his ragged grey eyebrows a hair's-breadth more contracted than usual, under her gaze.

'No, Lady Dedlock. That was a hypothetical case, arising out of Sir Leicester's unconsciously carrying the matter with so high a hand. But it would be a real case if they knew – what we know.'

'Then they do not know it yet?'

'No.'

'Can I save the poor girl from injury before they know it?'

'Really, Lady Dedlock,' Mr Tulkinghorn replies, 'I cannot give a satisfactory opinion on that point.'

And he thinks, with the interest of attentive curiosity, as he watches the struggle in her breast, 'The power and force of this woman are astonishing!'

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

1: Novels

1 – 5 Charles Dickens: *Bleak House* – continued

3.

'Is this a healthy place to live in, Richard, do you think?' said I.

'Why, my dear Minerva,' answered Richard, with his old gay laugh, 'it is neither a rural nor a cheerful place; and when the sun shines here, you may lay a pretty heavy wager that it is shining brightly in an open spot. But it's well enough for the time. It's near the offices, and near Vholes.'

'Perhaps,' I hinted, 'a change from both—'

'– Might do me good?' said Richard, forcing a laugh as he finished the sentence. 'I shouldn't wonder! But it can only come in one way now – in one of two ways, I should rather say. Either the suit must be ended, Esther, or the suitor. But it shall be the suit, the suit, my dear girl!'

These latter words were addressed to Ada, who was sitting nearest to him. Her face being turned away from me and towards him, I could not see it.

'We are doing very well,' pursued Richard. 'Vholes will tell you so. We are really spinning along. Ask Vholes. We are giving them no rest. Vholes knows all their windings and turnings, and we are upon them everywhere. We have astonished them already. We shall rouse up that nest of sleepers, mark my words!'

His hopefulness had long been more painful to me than his despondency; it was so unlike hopefulness, had something so fierce in its determination to be it, was so hungry and eager, and yet so conscious of being forced and unsustainable, that it had long touched me to the heart. But the commentary upon it now indelibly written in his handsome face, made it far more distressing than it used to be. I say indelibly; for I felt persuaded that if the fatal cause could have been for ever terminated, according to his brightest visions, in that same hour, the traces of the premature anxiety, self-reproach, and disappointment it had occasioned him, would have remained upon his features to the hour of his death.

'The sight of our dear little woman,' said Richard: Ada still remaining silent and quiet: 'is so natural to me, and her compassionate face is so like the face of old days—'

Ah! No, no. I smiled and shook my head.

'– So exactly like the face of old days,' said Richard in his cordial voice, and taking my hand with the brotherly regard which nothing ever changed, 'that I can't make pretences with her. I fluctuate a little; that's the truth. Sometimes I hope, my dear, and sometimes I – don't quite despair, but nearly. I get,' said Richard, relinquishing my hand gently, and walking across the room, 'so tired!'

He took a few turns up and down, and sunk upon the sofa. 'I get,' he repeated gloomily, 'so tired. It is such weary weary work!'

* * *

1: Novels

1 – 6 E M Forster: *A Passage to India*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *A Passage to India*.

1.

'Do you really want to meet the Aryan Brother, Miss Quested? That can be easily fixed up. I didn't realize he'd amuse you.' He thought a moment. 'You can practically see any type you like. Take your choice. I know the Government people and the landowners, Heaslop here can get hold of the barrister crew, while if you want to specialize on education we can come down on Fielding.'

'I'm tired of seeing picturesque figures pass before me as a frieze,' the girl explained. 'It was wonderful when we landed, but that superficial glamour soon goes.'

Her impressions were of no interest to the Collector; he was only concerned to give her a good time. Would she like a Bridge Party? He explained to her what that was – not the game, but a party to bridge the gulf between East and West; the expression was his own invention, and amused all who heard it.

'I only want to meet those Indians whom you come across socially – as your friends.'

'Well, we don't come across them socially,' he said, laughing. 'They're full of all the virtues, but we don't, and it's now eleven-thirty, and too late to go into the reasons.'

'Miss Quested, what a name!' remarked Mrs Turton to her husband as they drove away. She had not taken to the new young lady, thinking her ungracious and cranky. She trusted that she hadn't been brought out to marry nice little Heaslop, though it looked like it. Her husband agreed with her in his heart, but he never spoke against an Englishwoman if he could avoid doing so, and he only said that Miss Quested naturally made mistakes. He added: 'India does wonders for the judgement, especially during the Hot Weather; it has even done wonders for Fielding.' Mrs Turton closed her eyes at this name and remarked that Mr Fielding wasn't pukka, and had better marry Miss Quested, for she wasn't pukka. Then they reached their bungalow, low and enormous, the oldest and most uncomfortable bungalow in the Civil Station, with a sunk soup-plate of a lawn, and they had one drink more, this time of barley-water, and went to bed. Their withdrawal from the Club had broken up the evening, which, like all gatherings, had an official tinge. A community that bows the knee to a Viceroy and believes that the divinity that hedges a king can be transplanted, must feel some reverence for any viceregal substitute. At Chandrapore the Turtons were little gods; soon they would retire to some suburban villa, and die exiled from glory.

'It's decent of the great man,' chattered Ronny, much gratified at the civility that had been shown to his guests. 'Do you know, he's never given a Bridge Party before? Coming on top of the dinner too! I wish I could have arranged something myself, but when you know the natives better you'll realize it's easier for the Burra Sahib than for me. They know him – they know he can't be fooled – I'm still fresh comparatively. No one can even begin to think of knowing this country until he has been in it twenty years.

* * *

2.

'Yes, I am your friend,' she said, laying her hand on his sleeve, and thinking, despite her fatigue, how very charming, how very good, he was, and how deeply she desired his happiness. 'So may I make another suggestion? Don't let so many people come with you this time. I think you may find it more convenient.'

'Exactly, exactly,' he cried, and, rushing to the other extreme, forbade all except one guide to accompany Miss Quested and him to the Kawa Dol. 'Is that all right?' he inquired.

'Quite right, now enjoy yourselves, and when you come back tell me all about it.' And she sank into the deckchair.

If they reached the big pocket of caves, they would be away nearly an hour. She took out her writing-pad and began, 'Dear Stella, Dear Ralph,' then stopped, and looked at the queer valley and their feeble invasion of it. Even the elephant had become a nobody. Her eye rose from it to the entrance tunnel. No, she did not wish to repeat that experience. The more she thought over it, the more disagreeable and frightening it became. She minded it much more now than at the time. The crush and the smells she could forget, but the echo began in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life. Coming at a moment when she chanced to be fatigued, it had managed to murmur: 'Pathos, piety, courage – they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value.' If one had spoken vileness in that place, or quoted lofty poetry, the comment would have been the same – 'ou-boum'. If one had spoken with the tongues of angels and pleaded for all the unhappiness and misunderstanding in the world, past, present, and to come, for all the misery men must undergo whatever their opinion and position, and however much they dodge or bluff – it would amount to the same, the serpent would descend and return to the ceiling. Devils are of the North, and poems can be written about them, but no one could romanticize the Marabar, because it robbed infinity and eternity of their vastness, the only quality that accommodates them to mankind.

She tried to go on with her letter, reminding herself that she was only an elderly woman who had got up too early in the morning and journeyed too far, that the despair creeping over her was merely her despair, her personal weakness, and that even if she got a sunstroke and went mad the rest of the world would go on. But suddenly, at the edge of her mind, Religion appeared, poor little talkative Christianity, and she knew that all its divine words from 'Let there be light' to 'It is finished' only amounted to 'boum'.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

1: Novels

1 – 6 E M Forster: *A Passage to India* – continued

3.

'I'm afraid I have made a mistake.'

'What nature of mistake?'

'Dr Aziz never followed me into the cave.'

The Superintendent slammed down his papers, then picked them up and said calmly: 'Now, Miss Quested, let us go on. I will read you the words of the deposition which you signed two hours later in my bungalow.'

'Excuse me, Mr McBryde, you cannot go on. I am speaking to the witness myself. And the public will be silent. If it continues to talk, I will have the court cleared. Miss Quested, address your remarks to me, who am the Magistrate in charge of the case, and realize their extreme gravity. Remember you speak on oath, Miss Quested.'

'Dr Aziz never –'

'I stop these proceedings on medical grounds,' cried the Major on a word from Turton, and all the English rose from their chairs at once, large white figures behind which the little Magistrate was hidden. The Indians rose too, hundreds of things went on at once, so that afterwards each person gave a different account of the catastrophe.

'You withdraw the charge? Answer me,' shrieked the representative of Justice.

Something that she did not understand took hold of the girl and pulled her through. Though the vision was over, and she had returned to the insipidity of the world, she remembered what she had learned. Atonement and confession – they could wait. It was in hard prosaic tones that she said, 'I withdraw everything.'

'Enough – sit down. Mr McBryde, do you wish to continue in the face of this?'

The Superintendent gazed at his witness as if she was a broken machine, and said, 'Are you mad?'

'Don't question her, sir; you have no longer the right.'

'Give me time to consider –'

'Sahib, you will have to withdraw; this becomes a scandal,' boomed the Nawab Bahadur suddenly from the back of the court.

'He shall not,' shouted Mrs Turton against the gathering tumult. 'Call the other witnesses; we're none of us safe –' Ronny tried to check her, and she gave him an irritable blow, then screamed insults at Adela.

* * *

1: Novels

1 – 7 Henry James: *Washington Square*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Washington Square*.

1.

It never entered into her mind to throw her lover off; but from the first she tried to assure herself that there would be a peaceful way out of their difficulty. The assurance was vague, for it contained no element of positive conviction that her father would change his mind. She only had an idea that if she should be very good, the situation would in some mysterious manner improve. To be good she must be patient, respectful, abstain from judging her father too harshly, and from committing any act of open defiance. He was perhaps right, after all, to think as he did; by which Catherine meant not in the least that his judgment of Morris's motives in seeking to marry her was perhaps a just one, but that it was probably natural and proper that conscientious parents should be suspicious and even unjust. There were probably people in the world as bad as her father supposed Morris to be, and if there were the slightest chance of Morris being one of these sinister persons, the Doctor was right in taking it into account. Of course he could not know what she knew – how the purest love and truth were seated in the young man's eyes; but Heaven, in its time, might appoint a way of bringing him to such knowledge. Catherine expected a good deal of Heaven, and referred to the skies the initiative, as the French say, in dealing with her dilemma. She could not imagine herself imparting any kind of knowledge to her father; there was something superior even in his injustice, and absolute in his mistakes. But she could at least be good, and if she were only good enough, Heaven would invent some way of reconciling all things – the dignity of her father's errors and the sweetness of her own confidence, the strict performance of her filial duties, and the enjoyment of Morris Townsend's affection. Poor Catherine would have been glad to regard Mrs Penniman as an illuminating agent, a part which this lady herself, indeed, was but imperfectly prepared to play. Mrs Penniman took too much satisfaction in the sentimental shadows of this little drama to have, for the moment, any great interest in dissipating them. She wished the plot to thicken, and the advice that she gave her niece tended, in her own imagination, to produce this result.

* * *

2.

On Saturday morning, the Doctor, who had been watching in silence, spoke to his sister Lavinia.

'The thing has happened – the scoundrel has backed out!'

'Never!' cried Mrs Penniman, who had bethought herself what she should say to Catherine, but was not provided with a line of defence against her brother, so that indignant negation was the only weapon in her hands.

'He has begged for a reprieve, then, if you like that better!'

'It seems to make you very happy that your daughter's affections have been trifled with.'

'It does,' said the Doctor; 'for I had foretold it! It's a great pleasure to be in the right.'

'Your pleasures make one shudder!' his sister exclaimed.

Catherine went rigidly through her usual occupations; that is, up to the point of going with her aunt to church on Sunday morning. She generally went to afternoon service as well; but on this occasion her courage faltered, and she begged of Mrs Penniman to go without her.

'I am sure you have a secret,' said Mrs Penniman, with great significance, looking at her rather grimly.

'If I have, I shall keep it!' Catherine answered, turning away.

Mrs Penniman started for church; but before she had arrived, she stopped and turned back, and before twenty minutes had elapsed she re-entered the house, looked into the empty parlours, and then went upstairs and knocked at Catherine's door. She got no answer; Catherine was not in her room, and Mrs Penniman presently ascertained that she was not in the house. 'She has gone to him! she has fled!' Lavinia cried, clasping her hands with admiration and envy. But she soon perceived that Catherine had taken nothing with her – all her personal property in her room was intact – and then she jumped at the hypothesis that the girl had gone forth, not in tenderness, but in resentment. 'She has followed him to his own door! She has burst upon him in his own apartment!' It was in these terms that Mrs Penniman depicted to herself her niece's errand, which, viewed in this light, gratified her sense of the picturesque only a shade less strongly than the idea of a clandestine marriage. To visit one's lover, with tears and reproaches, at his own residence, was an image so agreeable to Mrs Penniman's mind that she felt a sort of aesthetic disappointment at its lacking, in this case, the harmonious accompaniments of darkness and storm. A quiet Sunday afternoon appeared an inadequate setting for it; and, indeed, Mrs Penniman was quite out of humor with the conditions of the time, which passed very slowly as she sat in the front-parlour, in her bonnet and her cashmere shawl, awaiting Catherine's return.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

1: Novels

1 – 7 Henry James: *Washington Square* – continued

3.

Doctor Sloper had his theory, and he rarely altered his theories. The marriage would have been an abominable one, and the girl had had a blessed escape. She was not to be pitied for that, and to pretend to condole with her would have been to make concessions to the idea that she had ever had a right to think of Morris.

'I put my foot on this idea from the first, and I keep it there now,' said the Doctor. 'I don't see anything cruel in that; one can't keep it there too long.' To this Mrs Almond more than once replied that, if Catherine had got rid of her incongruous lover, she deserved the credit of it, and that to bring herself to her father's enlightened view of the matter must have cost her an effort that he was bound to appreciate.

'I am by no means sure she has got rid of him,' the Doctor said. 'There is not the smallest probability that, after having been as obstinate as a mule for two years, she suddenly became amenable to reason. It is infinitely more probable that he got rid of her.'

'All the more reason you should be gentle with her.'

'I *am* gentle with her. But I can't do the pathetic; I can't pump up tears, to look graceful, over the most fortunate thing that ever happened to her.'

'You have no sympathy,' said Mrs Almond; 'that was never your strong point. You have only to look at her to see that, right or wrong, and whether the rupture came from herself or from him, her poor little heart is grievously bruised.'

'Handling bruises, and even dropping tears on them, doesn't make them any better! My business is to see she gets no more knocks, and that I shall carefully attend to. But I don't at all recognize your description of Catherine. She doesn't strike me in the least as a young woman going about in search of moral poultice. In fact, she seems to me much better than while the fellow was hanging about. She is perfectly comfortable and blooming; she eats and sleeps, takes her usual exercise, and overloads herself, as usual, with finery. She is always knitting some purse or embroidering some handkerchief, and it seems to me she turns these articles out about as fast as ever. She hasn't much to say; but when had she anything to say? She had her little dance, and now she is sitting down to rest. I suspect that, on the whole, she enjoys it.'

'She enjoys it as people enjoy getting rid of a leg that has been crushed. The state of mind after amputation is doubtless one of comparative repose.'

'If your leg is a metaphor for young Townsend, I can assure you he has never been crushed. Crushed? Not he! He is alive and perfectly intact; and that's why I am not satisfied.'

'Should you have liked to kill him?' asked Mrs Almond.

'Yes, very much.'

* * *

1: Novels

1 – 8 Andrew McGahan: *The White Earth*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The White Earth*.

1.

Andrew McGahan ,*The White Earth*
Allen & Unwin 2004

pp 152–153

2.

Andrew McGahan ,*The White Earth*
Allen & Unwin 2004

pp 229–230

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

1: Novels

1 – 8 Andrew McGahan: *The White Earth* – continued

3.

Andrew McGahan ,*The White Earth*
Allen & Unwin 2004

pp 348–349

1: Novels

1 – 4 Michelle de Kretser: *The Hamilton Case*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Hamilton Case*.

1.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*
Vintage, Random House 2004

pp 31–32

2.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*
Vintage, Random House 2004

pp 140–141

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

1: Novels

1 – 9 Ann Patchett: *Bel Canto* – continued

3.

Ann Patchett, *Bel Canto*
Fourth Estate 2002

pp 310–311

2: Plays

2 – 1 Anton Chekhov: *Three Sisters*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Three Sisters*.

1.

OLGA: Today it's warm, we can keep the windows open, but the birches aren't in leaf yet. Father got his brigade and we left Moscow eleven years ago, and I remember very well, at the beginning of May just now in Moscow everything is already in bloom, it's warm, everything's bathed in sunshine. Eleven years have passed and I remember it all there as if we'd left yesterday. My God! This morning I woke up, I saw a mass of light, I saw the spring, and joy welled up in my soul and I had a huge longing for home.

CHEBUTYKIN: The devil it is!

TUZENBAKH: Of course, that's nonsense.

[MASHA, *lost in thought over her book, quietly whistles a song*.]

OLGA: Don't whistle, Masha. How can you!

[*A pause.*]

Every day I teach at the Gymnasium and afterwards I give lessons until evening, and so I've got a constant headache and my thoughts are those of an old woman. And indeed, during these four years I've been teaching at the Gymnasium, I've felt my strength and my youth draining from me every day, drop by drop. And one single thought grows stronger and stronger . . .

IRINA: To leave for Moscow. To sell the house, finish with everything here and – to Moscow . . .

OLGA: Yes! To Moscow, soon.

[CHEBUTYKIN *and* TUZENBAKH *laugh.*]

IRINA: Andrey will probably get a professor's chair and in any case he won't live here. The only problem is poor Masha.

OLGA: Masha will come to Moscow for the whole summer, every year.

[MASHA *quietly whistles a song*.]

IRINA: Everything will come out all right, God willing. [*Looking out of the window.*] The weather's good today. I don't know why I feel so radiant. This morning I remembered it's my name-day, and suddenly I felt joy and remembered my childhood when Mama was still alive. And what wonderful thoughts stirred me, what thoughts!

* * *

2.

CHEBUTYKIN [*glumly*]: To hell with them all . . . all to hell . . . They think I'm a doctor, can treat all kinds of illnesses, but I know absolutely nothing, I've forgotten everything I knew, I remember nothing, absolutely nothing.

[OLGA *and* NATASHA *go out without his noticing*.]

To hell with them. Last Wednesday I had a patient at Zasyp, a woman – she died and it's my fault that she died. Yes . . . Twenty-five years ago I knew a few things but now I remember nothing. Nothing. Perhaps I am not a man but only look as if I have arms and legs and a head; perhaps I don't exist at all but only think that I walk, eat, sleep. [*Weeps.*] Oh if only I could just not exist! [*Stops weeping; gloomily*] Devil knows . . . A couple of days ago they were chatting in the Club; talking about Shakespeare, Voltaire . . . I haven't read them, haven't read them at all, but I tried to look as if I had. And the others did what I did. How cheap! How low! And I remembered the woman I murdered on Wednesday . . . and I remembered everything, and I felt I was morally deformed, vile, loathsome . . . I went off and hit the bottle . . .

[*Enter* IRINA, VERSHININ *and* TUZENBAKH*;* TUZENBAKH *is wearing new and smart civilian clothes*.]

IRINA: Let's sit a moment in here. No one will come in.

VERSHININ: If it hadn't been for the soldiers, the whole town would have burnt down. Good boys! [*Rubs his hands with pleasure.*] Pure gold! What good boys!

KULYGIN [*going up to them*]: What time is it, my friends?

TUZENBAKH: Already after three. It's getting light.

IRINA: They're all sitting in the hall, no one is leaving. And your friend Solyony is sitting there too . . . [*To Chebutykin*] You should go to bed, Doctor.

CHEBUTYKIN: It's all right . . . Thank you . . . [*Combs his beard.*]

KULYGIN [*laughs*]: Ivan Romanych has got quite tiddly! [*Claps him on the shoulder.*] Good chap! *In vino veritas* – as the ancients said.

TUZENBAKH: People keep asking me to organize a concert for the benefit of the fire victims.

IRINA: Well, who could you have . . .?

TUZENBAKH: With a bit of will it could be organized. I think Marya Sergeyevna plays the piano beautifully . . .

KULYGIN: She does play beautifully.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

2: Plays

2 – 1 Anton Chekhov: *Three Sisters* – continued

3.

VERSHININ [*glancing at his watch*]: We're leaving now, Olga Sergeyevna. It's time for me to go.

[*A pause.*]

I wish you every, every . . . Where is Mariya Sergeyevna?
IRINA: She's somewhere in the garden. I'll go and look for her.
VERSHININ: That's kind of you. I'm in a hurry.
ANFISA: And I'll go and look for her too. [*Shouting*] Mashenka, Hallo-o!

[*She and* IRINA *go out together to the bottom of the garden.*]

Hallo-o, hallo-o!
VERSHININ: Everything comes to an end. So we too are parting. [*Looking at his watch.*] The town gave us a sort of luncheon, we drank champagne, the mayor made a speech, I ate and listened, but my heart was here, with you . . . [*Looking round the garden.*] I've got accustomed to you.
OLGA: Will we ever see each other again?
VERSHININ: Most probably not.

[*A pause.*]

My wife and both girls will stay on here two more months; please, if anything happens or if anything is needed . . .
OLGA: Yes, yes, of course. Don't worry.

[*A pause.*]

Tomorrow there won't be a single soldier in the town, everything will be a memory, and of course for us a new life will be beginning . . .

[*A pause.*]

Nothing happens as we want it. I didn't want to become headmistress and all the same I did. So I won't get to Moscow . . .
VERSHININ: Well . . . Thank you for everything. Forgive me if I haven't quite . . . I've talked a great deal, a very great deal – forgive me for that too, don't think ill of me.
OLGA [*wiping her eyes*]: Why isn't Masha coming? . . .
VERSHININ: What else can I say to you as a goodbye? What bit of philosophy? . . . [*Laughs.*] Life is a heavy load. Many of us find it blank, hopeless, but still one has to admit it is becoming brighter and easier every day, and one can see the time is not far off when it will be filled with light. [*Looking at his watch.*] I must go, I must!

* * *

2: Plays

2 – 2 Henrik Ibsen: *Hedda Gabler*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Hedda Gabler*.

1.

TESMAN. Have you heard anything of Ejlert? Since I went away, I mean?

MISS TESMAN. No, only that he's supposed to have brought out a new book.

TESMAN. *What?* Ejlert Lövborg? Just recently? Eh?

MISS TESMAN. Yes, so they say. I shouldn't think there can be much in it, would you? Now when *your* new book comes out, that will be quite another story, Jörgen. What is it going to be about?

TESMAN. It's going to be about domestic crafts in Brabant in the Middle Ages.

MISS TESMAN. Well, well! To think you can write about a thing like that!

TESMAN. As a matter of fact, the book may take some time yet. I've got to arrange those enormous collections of material first, you know.

MISS TESMAN. Ah yes. Arranging and collecting – that's what you're so good at. You're not dear Jochum's son for nothing.

TESMAN. I'm looking forward immensely to getting down to it. Especially now that I've got a charming house of my own, my own home to work in.

MISS TESMAN. And first and foremost, my dear, now that you've got the wife your heart was set on.

TESMAN [*giving her a hug*]. Why, of course, Aunt Julle! Hedda! Why, that's the loveliest thing of all! [*Looking towards the centre doorway.*] I think she's coming. Eh?

[*Hedda comes in from the left, through the inner room. She is a woman of twenty-nine. Her face and figure show breeding and distinction, her complexion has an even pallor. Her eyes are steel-grey; cold, clear and calm. Her hair is a beautiful light brown, though not noticeably abundant. The loose-fitting morning costume she is wearing is in good style.*]

MISS TESMAN [*going up to Hedda*]. Good morning, Hedda dear! A very good morning to you!

HEDDA [*holding out her hand*]. Good morning, my dear Miss Tesman. What an early visit! It was kind of you.

MISS TESMAN [*seeming a little taken aback*]. Well, has the bride slept well in her new home?

* * *

2.

LÖVBORG. Yes, that's just what I can't understand, looking back. But tell me now, Hedda, wasn't it love that was at the bottom of that relationship? Wasn't it, on your side, as though you wanted to purify and absolve me, when I made you my confessor? Wasn't it that?

HEDDA. No, not quite.

LÖVBORG. What made you do it, then?

HEDDA. Do you find it so impossible to understand, that a young girl, when there's an opportunity . . . in secret . . .

LÖVBORG. Well?

HEDDA. That one should want to have a glimpse of a world that . . .

LÖVBORG. That . . .?

HEDDA. That one isn't allowed to know about?

LÖVBORG. So that was it then?

HEDDA. That . . . that as well, I rather think.

LÖVBORG. The bond of our common hunger for life. But why couldn't that have gone on, in any case?

HEDDA. That was your own fault.

LÖVBORG. It was you who broke it off.

HEDDA. Yes, when there was imminent danger of our relationship becoming serious. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Ejlert Lövborg. How could you take advantage of – your unsuspecting comrade!

LÖVBORG [*clenching his hands*]. Oh, why didn't you make a job of it! Why didn't you shoot me down when you threatened to!

HEDDA. Yes . . . I'm as terrified of scandal as all that.

LÖVBORG. Yes, Hedda; you are a coward at bottom.

HEDDA. An awful coward. [*Changing her tone.*] But it was lucky enough for you. And now you have consoled yourself so delightfully up at the Elvsteds'.

LÖVBORG. I know what Thea has told you.

HEDDA. And you have told her something about us two?

LÖVBORG. Not a word. She's too stupid to understand a thing like that.

HEDDA. Stupid?

LÖVBORG. She is stupid about that sort of thing.

HEDDA. And I'm a coward. [*She leans nearer to him, without meeting his eyes, and says more softly*]. But now *I* will confess something to *you*.

LÖVBORG [*eagerly*]. Well?

HEDDA. That, my not daring to shoot you down –

LÖVBORG. Yes?

HEDDA. That wasn't my worst piece of cowardice . . . that night.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

2: Plays

2 – 2 Henrik Ibsen: *Hedda Gabler* – continued

3.

HEDDA [*looking up at him*]. So I am in your power, Mr Brack. From now on, you have a hold over me.

BRACK [*whispering softly*]. My dearest Hedda, believe me I shall not abuse the position.

HEDDA. In your power, all the same. At the mercy of your will and demands. And so a slave! A slave! [*Getting up impatiently.*] No! That thought I cannot tolerate. Never!

BRACK [*looking at her half mockingly*]. And yet one usually manages to tolerate the inevitable.

HEDDA [*returning his look*]. Yes, possibly. [*She goes across to the writing-table.*]

HEDDA [*suppressing an involuntary smile and imitating Tesman's intonation*]. Well, is it getting on all right, Jörgen? Eh?

TESMAN. The Lord only knows, my dear. In any case, there's months of work here.

HEDDA [*as before*]. Well, fancy that! [*Letting her hands stray gently through Mrs Elvsted's hair.*] Doesn't it feel strange to you, Thea? Here you are sitting with Jörgen Tesman just as you once sat with Ejlert Lövborg.

MRS ELVSTED. Well, if only I could inspire your husband too –

HEDDA. Oh, that will come all right – in time.

TESMAN. Yes, do you know, Hedda, I really think I am beginning to feel something of the kind. But you go back and sit down with Judge Brack again.

HEDDA. Is there nothing here I can help you two with?

TESMAN. Not a thing in the world. [*Turning his head.*] Would you be so kind as to keep Hedda company for the time being, Judge Brack?

BRACK [*with a glance at Hedda*]. It will give me the very greatest pleasure.

HEDDA. Thanks. But I'm tired tonight. I will lie down for a little while on the sofa in there.

TESMAN. Yes do, my dear. Eh?

[*Hedda goes into the inner room and draws the curtains after her. There is a short pause. Suddenly she is heard playing a wild dance tune on the piano.*]

MRS ELVSTED [*jumping up from her chair*]. Oh! What is that?

TESMAN [*running to the doorway*]. But, Hedda, my dearest – don't play dance music this evening. Think of Aunt Rina! And of Ejlert, too!

HEDDA [*putting out her head between the hangings*]. And of Aunt Julle. And of all the rest of them. I will be quiet in future. [*She pulls the curtains to again after her.*]

* * *

2: Plays

2 – 3 Joanna Murray-Smith: *Honour*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Honour*.

1.

HONOR: A physical relationship is very, very important—but at a certain age—it can become a presence which is partly memory.
CLAUDIA: Memory?
HONOR: Well, one *remembers* what one has shared and that has a vigilant kind of life in the present.
CLAUDIA: That's—that's upsetting.
HONOR: Oh no! Not at all. I mean you still have a physical life together of course—very satisfying—but passion—well passion is partly knowing who each other *used* to be. I remember those first years with George and that contributes to my love of him now. Perhaps we exploit the past for what the present lacks. You know, it's a mistake to think that love belongs only to the present. It's incremental.
CLAUDIA: Fascinating . . .
HONOR: I must be boring you—
CLAUDIA: Not at all. Being so close to George—you're a great ally for this profile.
HONOR: Well, one could say, I see less. Perhaps there is less clarity.
CLAUDIA: I'm not sure I understand.
HONOR: One may become insensitive to character by being so—so exposed to it. Perhaps I see George *less* well!
CLAUDIA: Are you saying intimacy *clouds* knowledge?
HONOR: I don't know. I'd like to think we were still capable of surprising one another.
CLAUDIA: What an interesting—Most married women wouldn't say that—most women in your—
HONOR: Middle-aged, you mean?
CLAUDIA: Well—
HONOR: Middle-class?
CLAUDIA: I'm trying to make a point here, not be, not be—
HONOR: I'm very happy to be middle-aged and middle-class! Only the young middle class find that derogatory—as if ordinariness were the greatest terror.
CLAUDIA: Do you like being a writer?
Beat.
HONOR: Yes. Yes. It's—it's tiring. It's tiring always leaving yourself—so—well, unless you're prepared to *feel* things—to feel things—there isn't much point. Which means that life is constantly upsetting. Even a middle-aged, middle-class life.

* * *

2.

CLAUDIA: Sophie, maybe you could just bite the bullet and *say*—
SOPHIE: What are you doing, Claudia?
Beat.
CLAUDIA: I'm in love with him.
SOPHIE: You're in love with him.
CLAUDIA: Yes.
SOPHIE: You feel—towards him you feel—
CLAUDIA: Passion.
SOPHIE: Passion, yes.
CLAUDIA: Yes.
SOPHIE: Right [*Beat.*] I guess it's his mesmerising physique.
CLAUDIA: Look, Sophie—when I got involved with George—let me be straight with you—I fell in love with George, not with George and his wife and his daughter. All right? So while I agreed to meet you here today, I'm not looking for your *understanding*.
SOPHIE: How can you be so—so unfeeling?
CLAUDIA: Unfeeling? I feel! That's why we're here now. Because I *do* feel!
SOPHIE: She says as she destroys people's lives! You're so full of strategy—You're even proud of it!
CLAUDIA: Whose lives am I destroying?
SOHPIE: My mother's life!
CLAUDIA: Actually, I think I'm saving her life.
SOPHIE: What?
CLAUDIA: Sophie, you're twenty-four years old. You don't own your parents. You're going to have to face the fact that they don't belong to *your* needs.
SOPHIE: But they do belong to yours?
CLAUDIA: George has a right to be happy.
SOPHIE: And Honor has a duty to be unhappy?
CLAUDIA: Should he give up his life to spare her feelings?
SOPHIE: Should she give up her life to indulge his?
CLAUDIA: He needs to be loved—
SOPHIE: He *is* loved!
CLAUDIA: He's a passionate man! I *make* him passionate—
SOPHIE: I don't want—
CLAUDIA: Your father excites me!
SOPHIE: Oh, please!

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

2: Plays

2 – 3 Joanna Murray-Smith: *Honour* – continued

3.

GEORGE: You're telling me you admire my wife?
CLAUDIA: I look at myself and I think why is my voice so clear? Why do my words sound so satisfied with themselves?
GEORGE: What?
CLAUDIA: Can anyone that sure of themself feel anything?
GEORGE: You feel things!
CLAUDIA: When you read my work—
GEORGE: That's—that's different!
CLAUDIA: You felt then—You saw—
GEORGE: You feel things!
CLAUDIA: Do I? Do I?
GEORGE: We feel things!
CLAUDIA: Do you, George? Or are you like me? Choosing a life, answering every mystery with a certainty, composing ourselves through each other. Is there any—any grace here? When there is no doubt. Is there the *grace* to love?
GEORGE: Are you saying—?
CLAUDIA: What loss is within me?
GEORGE: What? What?
CLAUDIA: Honor. Asked me. She said to me: What loss is within you?
GEORGE: She's cast a spell—she's manipulating you!
CLAUDIA: She was—showing me—she was— [*Beat.*] There is nothing here, George— [*Indicating her heart*] Here.
GEORGE: You don't love me?
CLAUDIA: I love— [*Beat.*] To be loved . . .
GEORGE: You don't love me?
CLAUDIA: When you touch me, it's as if my body falls into place . . .
GEORGE: And that's not love?
CLAUDIA: And when you speak to me—that way—that way that you do—When you tell me things—I feel—I feel—as if I am in a story, and it wraps around me, because—because I'm important to you . . .
GEORGE: You *are* important to me!
CLAUDIA: And you'll want to make me happy and part of you. That when I call for you—
GEORGE: I'll listen.
CLAUDIA: And that my loss will—
GEORGE: Devastate me—
CLAUDIA: That my loss will—
GEORGE: Devastate me.
CLAUDIA: And that my loss will . . .

They look at each other.
Silence. The truth is suddenly felt by both of them.

* * *

2: Plays

2 – 4 Hannie Rayson: *Hotel Sorrento*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Hotel Sorrento*.

1.

TROY *and* PIPPA *are fishing together on the jetty where* MARGE *and* DICK *were sitting earlier.*

TROY: Pip?
PIPPA: Mm?
TROY: Have you read Aunt Meg's book?
PIPPA: Yeah.
TROY: What d'you think?
PIPPA: Have you read it?
TROY: No.

Pause. PIPPA *looks uncomfortable.*

PIPPA: Well it's good. Very well written.

Pause.

I mean that's what everyone is saying. The critics and everyone.
TROY: Yeah. I mean did you like it?
PIPPA: Mmm.

She takes a deep breath. Pause.

TROY: I read this letter that Meg sent to Mum.

He steals a glance at PIPPA. *She gives him a disapproving look.*

Yeah, I know. Anyway she said that people might think that the 'Helen' character was . . . Mum. But that she shouldn't worry because it wasn't supposed to be . . . or something like that.
PIPPA: What else did she say? Did she say anything about the Grace character?

TROY *shrugs.*
TROY: Does it make Mum out to be . . . an idiot or something?
PIPPA: No. Nothing like that.
TROY: Well, what is it then? How come everyone just goes silent?

Pause.

Is it about my Dad?

Long pause.

PIPPA: Why don't you read it. You read it . . . and make up your own mind? It's sort of about all of us. In a way . . .

* * *

2.

The lunch. EDWIN *and* DICK *are on the verandah. The sounds of chatter and laughter are heard from the kitchen. It is as though they are waiting for the women to come out. There is an awkward silence. They drink from cans of beer.*

DICK: So, you're in publishing?
EDWIN: Yes. It's just a small concern really. I'm in partnership with another chap and we do about twenty books a year.
DICK: What sort of stuff?
EDWIN: Oh . . . coffee table books mostly.

He laughs self-deprecatingly.

We do a lot of art books. Architecture, historic buildings. That sort of thing. We've done the occasional cookery book. Against my better judgement I might add.
DICK: I wouldn't have thought the English had much of a culinary tradition.
EDWIN: Ah . . . no. That's not strictly true. There's quite a resurgence of interest in it at the moment – it's highly fashionable to know about food and wine. The art of entertaining. Among certain sections of the community of course.
DICK: I don't suppose you've ever considered grubbying your hands with anything more political?

At this moment TROY *comes in.*

EDWIN: I don't think it's a question of grubbying one's hands actually. I think it's merely a matter of expertise. Ah Troy. You know . . . er . . . Dick? Dick Bennett – Troy.
TROY: Yeah. G'day.
DICK: How's things?
TROY: Okay.
EDWIN: Traditional Australian gathering by the looks of it. Men in one room, women in the other. Isn't that how it goes?

He grins.

TROY: Yeah.
EDWIN: I've never really been able to understand that you know. I mean as far as I'm concerned, I've always thought that Australian women were amongst the loveliest in the world. And yet the men – your average Aussie bloke – doesn't seem to be all that interested in them. That's always struck me as being very peculiar.
DICK: I think that's a bit of a cliché, actually.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

2: Plays

2 – 4 Hannie Rayson: *Hotel Sorrento* – continued

3.

EDWIN: [*to* MARGE] Sometimes I have this very strange feeling of having been here before. It all seems so familiar. Then at other times it's not at all like what I imagined. It's very odd.

MARGE: How is it different to what you imagined?

EDWIN: It isn't as harsh. The light. In fact it's very gentle . . . very mellow.

MARGE: Rather melancholy?

EDWIN: Yes. [*He smiles.*] I suppose that's why I feel I know the place. Odd isn't it?

MARGE: No, not at all. It's a very powerful evocation of the place.

EDWIN: Yes, it is isn't it? I hadn't really appreciated that before I came. She writes with such a potent sense of place and I haven't really understood before just how central it is to her writing.

MARGE: It's the life source of the novel I would have thought.

EDWIN: Yes.

Pause.

I wonder whether it's the life source for the novelist.

MARGE *nods thoughtfully. There is a pensive silence.*

You know . . . the great irony is that she's being accused here of 'borrowing' from real life, at least that's what her sisters are suggesting, and yet in London there are certain critics who've argued that it's derivative of other fiction.

MEG *wanders up.*

MARGE: British critics?

EDWIN *nods.*

That'd be right. They can't conceive that anything original could be produced here; that something of beauty, profundity or passion could arise from an experience that's essentially Australian.

EDWIN: I don't think it's a question of lack of originality.

MEG: No, it's only a question of quality isn't it? Being written in a language of such tawdry dreams?

Silence.

MARGE: You could hardly put *Melancholy* in that category.

MEG: Oh, perhaps you could. Perhaps it's all about tawdry little dreams.

* * *

2: Plays

2 – 5 Yasmina Reza: *'Art'*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *'Art'*.

1.

Yazmina Reza, *'Art'*
Faber & Faber 1996

pp 19–20

2.

Yazmina Reza, *'Art'*
Faber & Faber 1996

pp 26–27

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

2: Plays

2 – 5 Yasmina Reza: *'Art'* – continued

3.

Yazmina Reza, *'Art'*
Faber & Faber 1996

pp 53–55

2: Plays

2 – 6 William Shakespeare: *King Lear*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *King Lear*.

1.

KENT Is not this your son, my lord?
GLOUCESTER His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge. I have so often blushed to acknowledge him that now I am brazed to it.
KENT I cannot conceive you.
GLOUCESTER Sir, this young fellow's mother could; whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?
KENT I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.
GLOUCESTER But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account. Though this knave came something saucily to the world, before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?
EDMUND No, my lord.
GLOUCESTER My lord of Kent. Remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.
EDMUND My services to your lordship.
KENT I must love you and sue to know you better.
EDMUND Sir, I shall study deserving.
GLOUCESTER He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The King is coming.

Sound a sennet. Enter one bearing a coronet
Enter King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Gonerill,
Regan, Cordelia, and attendants

LEAR Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.
GLOUCESTER I shall, my liege.

Exeunt Gloucester and Edmund

LEAR
Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.
Give me the map there. Know, that we have divided
In three our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age,
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburdened crawl toward death.

* * *

2.

LEAR Let the great gods
That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch
That hast within thee undivulgèd crimes
Unwhipped of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand,
Thou perjured, and thou simular of virtue
That art incestuous. Caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Has practised on man's life. Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinned against than sinning.
KENT Alack, bare-headed?
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest.
Repose you there while I to this hard house –
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in – return and force
Their scanted courtesy.
LEAR My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy. How dost my boy? Art cold?
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange
And can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.
FOOL (*sings*)
He that has and a little tiny wit,
With heigh-ho, the wind and the rain,
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
Though the rain it raineth every day.
LEAR True, boy. Come, bring us to this hovel.

Exeunt Lear and Kent

FOOL This is a brave night to cool a courtesan. I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter,
When brewers mar their malt with water,
When nobles are their taylors' tutors,
No heretics burned but wenches' suitors –
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

2: Plays

2 – 6 William Shakespeare: *King Lear* – continued

3.

GONERILL Milk-livered man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs!
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering, that not knowest
Fools do those villians pity who are punished
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
With plumèd helm thy state begins to threat,
Whilst thou, a moral fool, sits still and cries
'Alack, why does he so?'
ALBANY See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity shows not in the fiend
So horrid as in a woman.
GONERILL O vain fool!
ALBANY
Thou changèd and self-covered thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature. Were't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones. Howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.
GONERILL Marry, your manhood! Mew!
Enter a Messenger
ALBANY What news?
MESSENGER
O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead,
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloucester.
ALBANY Gloucester's eyes?
MESSENGER
A servant that he bred, thrilled with remorse,
Opposed against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enraged,
Flew on him and amongst them felled him dead,
But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath plucked him after.
ALBANY This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! But, O, poor Gloucester!
Lost he his other eye?
MESSENGER Both, both, my lord.

* * *

2: Plays

2 – 7 William Shakespeare: *Much Ado About Nothing*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Much Ado About Nothing*.

1.

CLAUDIO
Hath Leonato any son, my lord?
DON PEDRO
No child but Hero; she's his only heir.
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?
CLAUDIO O, my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I looked upon her with a soldier's eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love;
But now I am returned and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying I liked her ere I went to wars.
DON PEDRO
Thou wilt be like a lover presently
And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
And I will break with her and with her father
And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?
CLAUDIO
How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salved it with a longer treatise.
DON PEDRO
What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity.
Look what will serve is fit. 'Tis once, thou lovest,
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling tonight;
I will assume thy part in some disguise
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale.
Then after, to her father will I break,
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.
In practice let us put it presently. *Exeunt*

* * *

2.

DOGBERRY If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.
SECOND WATCHMAN If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?
DOGBERRY Truly, by your office, you may, but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled. The most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.
VERGES You have always been called a merciful man, partner.
DOGBERRY Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.
VERGES If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.
SECOND WATCHMAN How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?
DOGBERRY Why, then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats.
VERGES 'Tis very true.
DOGBERRY This is the end of the charge: you, constable, are to present the Prince's own person; if you meet the Prince in the night, you may stay him.
VERGES Nay, by'r Lady, that I think 'a cannot.
DOGBERRY Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statutes, he may stay him; marry, not without the Prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.
VERGES By'r Lady, I think it be so.
DOGBERRY Ha, ah ha! Well, masters, good night; an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me. Keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night. Come, neighbour.
FIRST WATCHMAN Well, masters, we hear our charge. Let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.
DOGBERRY One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signor Leonato's door, for the wedding being there tomorrow, there is a great coil to-night.
Adieu; be vigitant, I beseech you.
Exeunt Dogberry and Verges

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

2: Plays

2 – 7 William Shakespeare: *Much Ado About Nothing* – continued

3.

BENEDICK . . .

Enter Beatrice

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I called thee?

BEATRICE Yea, signor, and depart when you bid me.

BENEDICK O, stay but till then!

BEATRICE 'Then' is spoken; fare you well now. And yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came, which is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

BENEDICK Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

BEATRICE Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkissed.

BENEDICK Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And I pray thee now, tell me for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

BEATRICE For them all together; which maintained so politic a state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

BENEDICK Suffer love! A good epithet, I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

BEATRICE In spite of your heart, I think; alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

BENEDICK Thou and I are too wise to woo peacably.

BEATRICE It appears not in this confession; there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

BENEDICK An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

BEATRICE And how long is that, think you?

BENEDICK Question – why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum. Therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy. And now tell me, how doth your cousin?

BEATRICE Very ill.

BENEDICK And how do you?

BEATRICE Very ill too.

BENEDICK Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter Ursula

URSULA Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil at home; it is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the Prince and Claudio mightily abused, and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently?

* * *

2: Plays

2 – 8 Sophocles: *Antigone*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Antigone*.

1.

CREON . . .
No other touchstone can test the heart of a man,
The temper of his mind and spirit, till he be tried
In the practice of authority and rule.
For my part, I have always held the view,
And hold it still, that a king whose lips are sealed
By fear, unwilling to seek advice, is damned.
And no less damned is he who puts a friend
Above his country; I have no good word for him.
As God above is my witness, who sees all,
When I see any danger threatening my people,
Whatever it may be, I shall declare it.
No man who is his country's enemy
Shall call himself my friend. Of this I am sure –
Our country is our life; only when she
Rides safely, have we any friends at all.
Such is my policy for our common weal.
In pursuance of this, I have made a proclamation
Concerning the sons of Oedipus, as follows:
Eteocles, who fell fighting in defence of the city,
Fighting gallantly, is to be honoured with burial
And with all the rites due to the noble dead.
The other – you know whom I mean – his brother Polynices,
Who came back from exile intending to burn and destroy
His fatherland and the gods of his fatherland,
To drink the blood of his kin, to make them slaves –
He is to have no grave, no burial,
No mourning from anyone; it is forbidden.
He is to be left unburied, left to be eaten
By dogs and vultures, a horror for all to see.
I am determined that never, if I can help it,
Shall evil triumph over good. Alive
Or dead, the faithful servant of his country
Shall be rewarded.

* * *

2.

ANTIGONE: You see me, countrymen, on my last journey,
Taking my last leave of the light of day;
Going to my rest, where death shall take me
Alive across the silent river.
No wedding-day; no marriage-music;
Death will be all my bridal dower.
CHORUS: But glory and praise go with you, lady,
To your resting-place. You go with your beauty
Unmarred by the hand of consuming sickness,
Untouched by the sword, living and free,
As none other that ever died before you.
ANTIGONE: The daughter of Tantalus, a Phrygian maid,
Was doomed to a piteous death on the rock
Of Sipylus, which embraced and imprisoned her,
Merciless as the ivy; rain and snow
Beat down upon her, mingled with her tears,
As she wasted and died. Such was her story,
And such is the sleep that I shall go to.
CHORUS: She was a goddess of immortal birth,
And we are mortals; the greater the glory,
To share the fate of a god-born maiden,
A living death, but a name undying.
ANTIGONE: Mockery, mockery! By the gods of our fathers,
Must you make me a laughing-stock while I yet live?
O lordly sons of my city! O Thebes!
Your valleys of rivers, your charriots and horses!
No friend to weep at my banishment
To a rock-hewn chamber of endless durance,
In a strange cold tomb alone to linger
Lost between life and death for ever.
CHORUS: My child, you have gone your way
To the outermost limit of daring
And have stumbled against Law enthroned.
This is the expiation
You must make for the sin of your father.
ANTIGONE: My father – the thought that sears my soul –
The unending burden of the house of Labdacus.
Monstrous marriage of mother and son . . .
My father . . . my parents . . . O hideous shame!
Whom now I follow, unwed, curse-ridden,
Doomed to this death by the ill-starred marriage
That marred my brother's life.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

2: Plays

2 – 8 Sophocles: *Antigone* – continued

3.

MESSENGER . . .
One that stood near the accursed place had heard
Loud cries of anguish, and came to tell King Creon.
As he approached, came strange uncertain sounds
Of lamentation, and he cried aloud:
'Unhappy wretch! Is my foreboding true?
Is this the most sorrowful journey that ever I went?
My son's voice greets me. Go, some of you, quickly
Through the passage where the stones are thrown apart,
Into the mouth of the cave, and see if it be
My son, my own son Haemon that I hear.
If not, I am the sport of gods.'
We went
And looked, as bidden by our anxious master.
There in the furthest corner of the cave
We saw her hanging by the neck. The rope
Was of the woven linen of her dress.
And, with his arms about her, there stood he
Lamenting his lost bride, his luckless love,
His father's cruelty.
When Creon saw them,
Into the cave he went, moaning piteously.
'O my unhappy boy,' he cried again,
'What have you done? What madness brings you here
To your destruction? Come away, my son,
My son, I do beseech you, come away!'
His son looked at him with one angry stare,
Spat in his face, and then without a word
Drew sword and struck out. But his father fled
Unscathed. Whereon the poor demented boy
Leaned on his sword and thrust it deeply home
In his own side, and while his life ebbed out
Embraced the maid in loose-enfolding arms,
His spurting blood staining her pale cheeks red.

* * *

2: Plays

2 – 9 Dylan Thomas: *Under Milk Wood*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Under Milk Wood*.

1.

Dylan Thomas, *Under Milk Wood*
Penguin Modern Classics 2000

pp 5–6

2.

Dylan Thomas, *Under Milk Wood*
Penguin Modern Classics 2000

pp 22–23

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

2: Plays

2 – 9 Dylan Thomas: *Under Milk Wood* – continued

3.

Dylan Thomas, *Under Milk Wood*
Penguin Modern Classics 2000

pp 49–50

3: Short stories

3 – 1 Thea Astley: *Hunting the Wild Pineapple*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Hunting the Wild Pineapple.*

1.

The Curate Breaker

Furiously the Canon indicated the floor.

'Down! Kneel down, woman, and repeat after me these words for forgiveness.'

Rigid on his probationary chair Father Rassini thought, 'Oh my God my God.'

'Please, John' she begged again, so softly it could hardly be heard.

'Down!' the Canon repeated.

She flashed one terrible glance at Father Rassini, then closed her eyes on the shame of it and wobbled to her knees on the carpet before her husband.

'Now,' the Canon said, 'now repeat after me: I beg forgiveness –'

It was as if she were stoppered for a few seconds and then the words, almost inaudible, faltered out: 'I beg forgiveness –'

'– for having interrupted the work of God –'

'– for having interrupted the work of God –'

'– and that of my husband –'

'– and that of my husband –'

'– who is His servant.'

'– who is –'

At this point Father Rassini, who was swallowing a revolting nausea, hauled himself up abruptly and blundered out of the room, down the clean hall, down the clean steps and into the rain.

'Oh, my God!' he kept mumbling to himself. 'Oh, my God my God my God!'

He pedalled slowly back to the highway and across town in the mouldering weather, the rain sputtering all over him, splashing, sluicing. The word 'horrible' kept forming in his mind. Horrible. Horrible. Somehow the quality of the rotted skies underscored – what was it? – goodness by antithesis, the virtue of the reasonable man. A kind of membrane tautened by his belief in the fabric of charity kept him dry.

He set the bike in the garage under the water-logged mango-trees. They were shifting their branches uneasily under the weight and in a sudden unshackled moment Father Rassini, who hadn't done such a boyish thing in years, turned his face up to them, opened his mouth and took communion. Unexpectedly he felt vigorous, alive.

* * *

2.

Petals from Blown Roses . . .

Mrs Waterman is a yummy forty-five. Her cool and beautiful face gazes appraisingly at me from beneath a dense simplicity of dark hair and she smiles with a terrible slowness, her ladylike fingers delicately holding her gin glass like a question mark.

Beyond the pool, feverish under light, the saffron curtain of guinea vine dangled banners of enormous and dynamic promise. Gorgeous flowers swung – rollicked would be a better word – between trees, and if there were a slightly unpleasant stench from their pannicles no one seemed to notice. The gin helped, too, Mrs Waterman appeared to be finding, as she watched flowers and her more personally quiet manias swing in space with the blossom.

'Do you swim?'

'Only to frighten people.' I patted my bogus leg.

She laughed vigorously somewhere below middle C. Bosie was back again, hovering on our edges; but Mrs Waterman raised her glass, drank deeply this time and laughed again.

'And *do* you?'

'Only the weak-minded.'

'Then come on in.'

The pool was a fury of horse-play. Chlorinated water sloshed about our feet with spilt beer. The hi-fi belted into the night.

'*C'mon*!' a voice woofed from the raft. 'Get y'gear off!'

'There. You see what I mean,' Bosie whimpered, pained. 'You do see what I mean about Brain?'

Mrs Waterman seemed to be tracking the spoor of some unsolved problem. Her eyes fixed thoughtfully on the rocking surface of the pool while one manicured hand patted my arm absently.

'I think,' she stated judgmentally, 'that I will.'

Without speed, with a kind of deft but leisurely sacrificial motion, Mrs Waterman got her gear off.

Deliberately she stepped forward into the pool-side light, her body impressively sumptuous and white. For a full minute she stood smiling abstractedly while the guests goggled and the hi-fi blared solo, then she dived, to emerge near the raft on which her host lay sprawled with two of the girls. When she turned I saw she was smiling her fête-opener's smile at them.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 41

3: Short stories

3 – 1 Thea Astley: *Hunting the Wild Pineapple* – continued

3.

Ladies Need Only Apply

That afternoon she went down to the creek where it entered the forest, stripped, and floated in the water-hole. She wanted silence so she could think it out; but as she floated under the forest canopy she found there was nothing to think about or salvage in the coolness that reduplicated whatever it was he was playing up at the shack; so that the run of notes brothered the creek, moved into it, into the white blur she had become.

After, as she dried herself, there were leeches, blood, tears.

Humbled, she asked that night, 'What was it you were playing this afternoon?'

'You liked it, Sadie?'

She was afraid of tricks. After all, she was trying to atone.

'Yes. Yes, I did. Very much.'

'And what did you like about it?' His glinting eye challenged her. The tea-towel dangled from her hand, hopeless. There was a trick.

'I'm not sure,' she said. 'I just liked. Something. The creek in it.'

'The creek in it?' He made her sound foolish. Wait, she told herself. Wait for the smile.

'Yes.' It sounded stupid now, not beautiful as she had intended. And he was smiling again. 'I wouldn't mind hearing it once more.'

'Wouldn't you?' he said, enjoying her penance. 'To tell the truth, I don't feel much like playing this evening. It's been a heavy day. I think I'll turn in early. And you'd better catch up on some sleep, too.'

'Oh, my God!' she cried. 'We're getting nowhere at all, are we?' He was silent. 'Do you hear? It's simply getting nowhere. Nowhere. It's a waste of time. To tell the truth' – it was unconscious parody –, 'a total goddam waste of time and we both know it. Have known for weeks.'

'I thought you'd never notice,' he replied, not bothering with the whack her mouth showed but becoming, despite the lighted room, part of the dark outside it.

Even Sadie marvelled at her capacity for punishment as she shone her torch back across the foot-bridge. Even when spoken good-nights had failed her they still wanted to be uttered.

The papaw-trees clustered with fruit now smelled thickly in air still and loud with the held-back water of the wet. As again she lay sleepless on the tumbled bed, the night was so motionless she could hear the crackle of turned pages of the week-old paper he was reading. She become all ear in the weighty dark, a tightened membrane against which the stir of his hair, his lips, the unbent muscles of his fingers, lost their silence and made monstrous drumming.

Later that evening the clouds broke.

* * *

3: Short stories

3 – 2 A S Byatt: *Sugar & Other Stories*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Sugar & Other Stories*.

1.

The July Ghost

"The only thing I want, the only thing I want at all in this world, is to see that boy."

She stared at the garden and he stared with her, until the grass began to dance with empty light, and the edges of the shrubbery wavered. For a brief moment he shared the strain of not seeing the boy. Then she gave a little sigh, sat down, neatly as always, and passed out at his feet.

After this she became, for her, voluble. He didn't move her after she fainted, but sat patiently by her, until she stirred and sat up; then he fetched her some water, and would have gone away, but she talked.

"I'm too rational to see ghosts, I'm not someone who would see anything there was to see, I don't believe in an after-life, I don't see how anyone can, I always found a kind of satisfaction for myself in the idea that one just came to an end, to a sliced-off stop. But that was myself; I didn't think *he* – not *he* – I thought ghosts were – what people *wanted* to see, or were afraid to see . . . and after he died, the best hope I had, it sounds silly, was that I would go mad enough so that instead of waiting every day for him to come home from school and rattle the letter-box I might actually have the illusion of seeing or hearing him come in. Because I can't stop my body and mind waiting, every day, I can't let go. And his bedroom, sometimes at night I go in, I think I might just for a moment forget he *wasn't* in there sleeping, I think I would pay almost anything – anything at all – for a moment of seeing him like I used to. In his pyjamas, with his – his – his hair . . . ruffled, and, his . . . you said, his . . . that *smile*.

"When it happened, they got Noel, and Noel came in and shouted my name, like he did the other day, that's why I screamed, because it – seemed the same – and then they said, he is dead, and I thought coolly, *is* dead, that will go on and on and on till the end of time, it's a continuous present tense, one thinks the most ridiculous things, there I was thinking about grammar, the verb to be, when it ends to be dead . . . And then I came out into the garden, and I half saw, in my mind's eye, a kind of ghost of his face, just the eyes and hair, coming towards me – like every day waiting for him to come home, the way you think of your son, with such pleasure, when he's – not there – and I – I thought – no, I won't *see* him, because he is dead, and I won't dream about him because he is dead, I'll be rational and practical and continue to live because one must, and there was Noel . . .

* * *

2.

The Changeling

The subject of Josephine's writing was fear. Rational fear, irrational fear, the huge-bulking fear of the young not at home in the world. Every writer, James says, discovers his or her subject matter early and spends a lifetime elaborating and exploring it. That may or may not be generally true, but it was certainly true of Josephine Piper. Her characteristic form was the long novella: her characteristic hero a boy, anywhere between infancy and late adolescence, threatened and in retreat. Some of these boys were actually mutilated or killed, driven away in cars with no inner door handles, rushed stumbling through urban jungles at knife-point, ritually tormented by gangs of other boys in public school dormitory or state school playground. If they were hurt it was always fast and unexpected: the subject was not violence but fear. Often they were not hurt: they suffered from a look, an exclusion, a crack in a windowpane, a swaggering bus conductor keeping order on the top deck because he himself was afraid for his life.

Josephine's work had been compared to Kafka as well as to Wilkie Collins and James himself. *The Boiler-Room*, whose central figure was Simon Vowle, was a surreal story of a boy in a boarding school who had built himself a Crusoe-like burrow or retreat in the dust behind the coiling pipe-system of the coke-boiler in the school basement and had finally moved in there completely, making forays for food and drink at night. It had a macabre end: Josephine Piper did not let her characters off. It had been described, with the usual hyperbole, as the last word on institutional terrors in schools. Josephine Piper could make an ordinary desk, a heap of football boots, a locked steel locker, tall and narrow, bristle with the horror of what man can do to man.

She recognized fear in Henry Smee, though she had no idea what he was afraid of, or whether his fears were real or phantasmagoric. She recognized something else too, from her own experience; the inconvenience, to the pathologically afraid, of an excessive gift of intellectual talent. Poor Henry could not but enjoy a grammatical dispute or the strict form of complex music: he perceived order and beauty, he remembered forms and patterns, he was doomed to think.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 43

3: Short stories

3 – 2 A S Byatt: *Sugar & Other Stories* – continued

3.

In the Air

Once, in the wood, someone who might have been the man had cycled very slowly past her. It might have been noon, on a good day: Wolfgang was foraging in brambles. He had cycled so slowly he had wobbled, and had looked straight at her, noticing, she thought, her fear. He was a huge man, in a singlet, and jeans, and working boots, with greying curly hair and a yellowish, yellow-clay skin. She had brought her whistle smartly out of her pocket and called Wolfgang. The whistle was a relic of playground duty: with it she had quelled gang-bashings and started netball matches. Its dried pea quavered tremulously in its throat and Wolfgang bounded up. The man went on, but was back, crossing her in the other direction, with a hard stare, before she was out of the wood. He knew she was afraid, and liked the knowledge. It went no further than that. She stumped slowly on in her zipped boots. The man did not acquire the features of the cyclist, but remained a shape-changer. He was black, he was white, he was brown, he was dirty grey, he was a thin youth with acne or an ageing bullet-headed stroller in leather jacket and trainers. He carried a briefcase, a plastic bag of junk from rubbish bins, a knife. He had all the time in the world, unlike Mrs Sugden, whose eventless days slipped into each other like nylon thread through a chain of enamelled television-beads. Every day she feared him a little more, every day the mental encounter took another step into the vividly realized. Mrs Sugden, a sensible woman, knew he was an obsession, but she did not know how to exorcize him. Yesterday's local paper carried an account of a rugger-tackled, abused female jogger (48) in the Park, and a raped teenager (15) in the concrete waste land behind the local supermarket. Why should he not wait for, or at the least, accidentally notice her too?

She was afraid to go out. Wolfgang could not understand her delays. She went round the flat, dusting already spotless books and silver teapot, watering the rubber plant. It was a nice flat, but small – one-bedroomed, with one living room and a ship's-galley-sized kitchen, in which were the washing machine and dryer James and Alison had bought her as house-moving presents when the big house was sold up, when Brian died. The washing machine was another source of wholly irrational shame. It was automatic, there was no work to it. She had always had one washday a week, sitting over her twin tub, lifting the clothes in and out of the steaming suds with wooden pincers, caring for them. She would rather have had visits from James and Alison, but James was in Saudi Arabia much of the time and Alison was busy teaching.

* * *

3: Short stories

3 – 3 D H Lawrence: *The Fox/The Captain's Doll/The Ladybird*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Fox/The Captain's Doll/The Ladybird*.

1.

D H Lawrence, *Three Novellas: The Fox/The Captain's Doll/The Ladybird*
Penguin Classics 2006

pp 10–11

2.

D H Lawrence, *Three Novellas: The Fox/The Captain's Doll/The Ladybird*
Penguin Classics 2006

pp 104–105

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 45

3: Short stories

3 – 3 D H Lawrence: *The Fox/The Captain's Doll/The Ladybird* – continued

3.

D H Lawrence, *Three Novellas: The Fox/The Captain's Doll/The Ladybird*
Penguin Classics 2006

p 182

4: Other literature

4 – 1 Michael McGirr: *Bypass: The Story of a Road*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Bypass: The Story of a Road*.

1.

Michael McGirr, *The Story of a Road*
Pan MacMillan 2005

pp 157–158

2.

Michael McGirr, *The Story of a Road*
Pan MacMillan 2005

pp 170–171

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 47

4: Other literature

4 – 1 Michael McGirr: *Bypass: The Story of a Road* – continued

3.

Michael McGirr, *The Story of a Road*
Pan MacMillan 2005

pp 296–297

4: Other literature

4 – 2 Drusilla Modjeska: *Timepieces*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Timepieces*.

1.

In *The Persimmon Tree* Marjorie Barnard was, I think, writing about the end of her affair with the writer Frank Dalby Davison, who without warning left both her and his wife, married another woman and moved to Melbourne. The affair had been illicit, one of those open secrets literary circles enjoy, and it had touched her deeply. The narrator of the story is convalescing from a winter of physical illness, though the symptoms she describes are psychological. Early in the spring she takes a flat in 'a quiet, blind street, lined with English trees', in a part of the city where in life Marjorie had rented a small flat to give her and Frank the privacy that was impossible with her parents in Longueville. In the block opposite – 'discreet, well-tended, with a wide entrance'– she comes to realise that the window level with her flat is occupied by a woman she has seen in the street, 'still handsome' with 'reserve in her every movement'. One morning a row of persimmons, fruit that belong to autumn, appear on her window sill although it is spring. It is a strange, oblique story, one lonely woman watching another, their loneliness 'a barrier, not a link'. One woman facing herself, a woman no longer young greeting her own bruised and humiliated heart. A woman enduring private pain during the public confusion of war, and in the process learning something of the ancient paradox between transcience and the enduring spirit. *If man's world were in ashes, spring would still come.*

This transformation of experience into a work of art was very far from anything I was capable of in 1982 when Marjorie gave me the book.

* * *

2.

In 1911, when he was still a relatively young man, Joseph Beckett was moved to Bendigo from the Melbourne head office of the bank for which he worked. The reason is said to have been stress and unhappiness – which makes me wonder whether he was a man boxed into a life that didn't suit him and as a result resented in his daughter creative capacities that were absent in his own life. Was it a fear of his fragility that stopped his wife and daughter from standing up to him?

Clarice accepted his ruling against a studio –'the kitchen table would do,' he said. She made herself a little cart and pulled her paints along behind her when she could escape the house early in the morning and again at dusk when her chores were done. If there's loneliness in her paintings and a kind of hankering as she watches the bus disappear without her, can we say that this was the condition of her soul? Or even of her life? If she has figures walking out of the frame, is it because she knew what it was to live within tight, ungiving boundaries? My companion at the exhibition pointed to the full realisation of the images, and to the concentration that went into every slight but shifting difference of view. More sympathetic to the virtues of limitation (if limitation it was), he saw a meditative quality, and a deliberate detachment. How else did she come to see the suburban road with such potency? I had no difficulty in seeing how much she did with a limited environment, but for me the misty tones of her roads held the shadow not only of her father, but of her teacher Max Meldrum.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 49

4: Other literature

4 – 2 Drusilla Modjeska: *Timepieces* – continued

3.

I was in England looking after my father who had been diagnosed with the cancer that killed him the next year. He was still relatively well, over the first operation and in a lull between radiation treatments. He pottered in his garden while I read under the trees. It was a harmonious time – my stepmother was away – and at the end of each day we'd take a tray into the garden to catch the last of the sun.

I talked to him about Elizabeth Jolley and the autobiography she was transfiguring into a novel. I told him how it was in part an elegy for a lost father, and he was moved, I think, by the sadness of a daughter who comes to understand too late something of the nature of a father's love. We spoke in code, through these books, of the painfulness for a father of releasing a daughter into a life of her own mistakes.

And I talked to him about the shift in view, and in voice, that the trilogy enacts, a shift that has happened since he was a soldier at the same time that Vera – Elizabeth Jolley's fictional alter ego – was a nurse. To become pregnant at the end of the war to a consultant in the hospital where she was training was as obliterating as a war wound. Even a father couldn't redeem the shame as Vera retreated to the country as a skivvy. She was cast into the misery that comes with the inability to articulate or bring to consciousness the meanings of your own story. There was almost no one she could speak to, and when she did speak, she was rarely heard by anyone other than those just as silenced. But by the end of the century, at the time of writing, the voices that once humiliated Vera had lost their authority, and it is she who's in a position to tell the story, not them. My father understood this shift and exactly what I meant when I said that it wasn't only which stories can be told that has changed, or who can tell them, but the ways in which they are told and the kinds of meanings that can be taken from them into social as well as private understanding.

* * *

4: Other literature

4 – 3 Tobias Wolff: *This Boy's Life*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *This Boy's Life*.

1.

Tobias Wolff, *This Boy's Life*
Bloomsbury 1989

pp 101–102

2.

Tobias Wolff, *This Boy's Life*
Bloomsbury 1989

pp 146–148

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 51

4: Other literature

4 – 3 Tobias Wolff: *This Boy's Life* – continued

3.

Tobias Wolff, *This Boy's Life*
Bloomsbury 1989

pp 240–241

5: Poetry

5 – 1 W H Auden: *Selected Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of W H Auden.

1.

27

W H Auden, *Selected Poems*
Faber & Faber 1979

p 43

2.

44

In Memory of W. B. Yeats
(*d. January 1939*)

W H Auden, *Selected Poems*
Faber & Faber 1979

p 80

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 53

5: Poetry

5 – 1 W H Auden: *Selected Poems* – continued

3.

65

In Praise of Limestone

W H Auden, *Selected Poems*
Faber & Faber 1979

pp 186–187

5: Poetry

5 – 2 Judith Beveridge: *Wolf Notes*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Judith Beveridge.

1.

Exsanguination

Judith Beveridge, *Wolf Notes*
Giramondo 2003

pp 27–28

2.

Tigers

Judith Beveridge, *Wolf Notes*
Giramondo 2003

p 65

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 55

5: Poetry

5 – 2 Judith Beveridge: *Wolf Notes* – continued

3.

Sailor

Judith Beveridge, *Wolf Notes*
Giramondo 2003

pp 110–111

5: Poetry

5 – 3 John Donne: *Selected Poetry*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of John Donne.

1.

Elegy 2: To his Mistress Going to Bed

Come, Madam, come, all rest my powers defy,
Until I labour, I in labour lie.
The foe oft-times, having the foe in sight,
Is tired with standing though they never fight.
Off with that girdle, like heaven's zone glistering,
But a far fairer world encompassing.
Unpin that spangled breastplate, which you wear
That th' eyes of busy fools may be stopped there:
Unlace yourself, for that harmonious chime
Tells me from you that now 'tis your bed-time.
Off with that happy busk, which I envy,
That still can be, and still can stand so nigh.
Your gown going off, such beauteous state reveals,
As when from flowery meads th' hill's shadow steals.
Off with your wiry coronet and show
The hairy diadem which on you doth grow.
Off with those shoes: and then safely tread
In this love's hallowed temple, this soft bed.
In such white robes heaven's angels used to be
Received by men; thou angel bring'st with thee
A heaven like Mahomet's paradise; and though
Ill spirits walk in white, we easily know
By this these angels from an evil sprite,
They set our hairs, but these our flesh upright.
  Licence my roving hands, and let them go
Behind, before, above, between, below.
O my America, my new found land,
My kingdom, safeliest when with one man manned,
My mine of precious stones, my empery,
How blessed am I in this discovering thee.
To enter in these bonds is to be free,
Then where my hand is set my seal shall be.
  Full nakedness, all joys are due to thee.
As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be,
To taste whole joys. Gems which you women use
Are like Atlanta's balls, cast in men's views,
That when a fool's eye lighteth on a gem
His earthly soul may covet theirs, not them.
Like pictures, or like books' gay coverings made
For laymen, are all women thus arrayed;
Themselves are mystic books, which only we
Whom their imputed grace will dignify
Must see revealed. Then since I may know,
As liberally as to a midwife show
Thyself; cast all, yea this white linen hence,
Here is no penance, much less innocence.
  To teach thee, I am naked first: why then
What needst thou have more covering than a man?

* * *

2.

Song

Sweetest love, I do not go,
  For weariness of thee,
Nor in hope the world can show
  A fitter love for me;
    But since that I
Must die at last, 'tis best,
To use my self in jest
  Thus by feigned deaths to die.

Yesternight the sun went hence,
  And yet is here today,
He hath no desire nor sense,
  Nor half so short a way:
    Then fear not me,
But believe that I shall make
Speedier journeys, since I take
  More wings and spurs than he.

O how feeble is man's power,
  That if good fortune fall,
Cannot add another hour,
  Nor a lost hour recall!
    But come bad chance,
And we join to it our strength,
And we teach it art and length,
  Itself o'er us to advance.

When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st not wind,
  But sigh'st my soul away,
When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,
  My life's blood doth decay.
    It cannot be
That though lov'st me, as thou say'st,
If in thine my life thou waste,
  Thou art the best of me.

Let not thy divining heart
  Forethink me any ill,
Destiny may take thy part,
  And may thy fears fulfil;
    But think that we
Are but turned aside to sleep;
They who one another keep
  Alive, ne'er parted be.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 57

5: Poetry

5 – 3 John Donne: *Selected Poetry* – continued

3.

A Hymn to Christ, at the Author's last going into Germany

In what torn ship soever I embark,
That ship shall be my emblem of thy ark;
What sea soever swallow me, that flood
Shall be to me an emblem of thy blood;
Though thou with clouds of anger do disguise
Thy face; yet through that mask I know those eyes,
    Which, though they turn away sometimes,
        They never will despise.

I sacrifice this Island unto thee,
And all whom I loved there, and who loved me;
When I have put our seas 'twixt them and me,
Put thou thy sea betwixt my sins and thee.
As the tree's sap doth seek the root below
In winter, in my winter now I go,
    Where none but thee, th' eternal root
        Of true love I may know.

Nor thou nor thy religion dost control,
The amorousness of an harmonious soul,
But thou wouldst have that love thyself: as thou
Art jealous, Lord, so I am jealous now,
Thou lov'st not, till from loving more, thou free
My soul; who ever gives, takes liberty:
    O, if thou car'st not whom I love
        Alas, thou lov'st not me.

Seal then this bill of my divorce to all,
On whom those fainter beams of love did fall;
Marry those loves, which in youth scattered be
On fame, wit, hopes (false mistresses) to thee.
Churches are best for prayer, that have least light:
To see God only, I go out of sight:
    And to 'scape stormy days, I choose
        An everlasting night.

* * *

5: Poetry

5 – 4 John Keats: *The Major Works*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of John Keats.

1.

'When I have fears that I may cease to be'

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,
Before high piled Books in charactery
Hold like rich garners the full ripen'd grain—
When I behold upon the night's starr'd face
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And feel that I may never live to trace
Their shadows with the magic hand of Chance:

And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more
Never have relish in the fairy power
Of unreflecting Love: then on the Shore
Of the wide world I stand alone and think
Till Love and Fame to Nothingness do sink.—

* * *

2.

The Eve of St. Agnes

25
Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

26
Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

27
Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

28
Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breath'd himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo!—how fast she slept.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 59

5: Poetry

5 – 4 John Keats: *The Major Works* – continued

3.

To Autumn

1
Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

2
Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

3
Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

* * *

5: Poetry

5 – 5 John Kinsella: *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of John Kinsella.

1.

Wheatbelt Gothic or Discovering a Wyeth

Outflanked by the sheep run, wild oats
dry and riotous, barbed wire bleeding rust
over fence-posts, even quartz chunks
flaking with a lime canker, the theme
chooses itself: *ubi sunt* motif, but the verse
becomes as deceptive as an idle plough,
or a mat of hay spread over the ooze
of a dead sheep that is the floor
of the soak (blood-black beneath the skin,
bones honeycombed), crystallised with salt.

And yesteryear occluded by the viscous waters
of the stone-walled well which (on higher
ground) marks the dryness of the soak as either
delusion or lie. Only green shoots hidden
in the dead sheaths of reeds on the soak's rim
hint that water supports this travesty.

And the moon absorbs the sun, its fabric
subtlety—the undressing of a summer landscape
too blond for its own good, too much an extract:
the mid-West Gothic of a lone tree stump
that appears to beckon in its loneliness—open space
as collusive as a vaulted cathedral in Europe,
and the well as much a receptacle of guilt
as the cathedral's font. And consider the potential,
no, consider the necessity, of a flaxen-haired girl
merging in this field of vision and then erupting
from a point above the waterline, the tree stump.

* * *

2.

The Machine of the Twentieth Century Rolls Through the High-Yielding Crop

Dust particles cling to sweat despite the sun just up,
moisture levels within brittle stalks drop
as rapidly as markets are lost or gained, shadow
puppetry of information exchange leading the finest
of mechanical technologies astray, as over the crop

the machine of the twentieth century poises—straining
against dry dock, a Titanic that won't be sunk in those deepest
spots of abundance, a post-modern Ceres busy at the helm
lest a hidden rock break the fingers clawing in the grain;
this schizophrenic God whose speech is a rustle, a token bristling

like static on the stereo, despite state-of-the-art electronics
and a bathyspherical cabin of glass and plastic sealed
against all intrusion though retaining hawk-like vision and radio
contact with the outside world. On the fringes—at home base,
or by the gate—the workers are ready to launch out, to drain

grain from a bulging bin. The art of harvesting is in the hiding
of the operation. Behind clean lines and sun-deflecting paint
the guts of the machine work furiously; from point of entry
to expulsion the process is relentless—from comb working greedily,
grain spirals up elevators, thrashed in a drum

at tremendous speeds, straw spewed out back by
manic straw-walkers, the kernels falling to sieves below
as fans drive cocky chaff out into the viscous
daylight. The sun at mid-morning rages out of control,
glutted on this excess fuel. Melanomas spread on field workers

as they tarp a load; the driver plunges with precision
back into the crop, setting a perfect line, de-mystifying
this inland sea—an illusion, a mirage that hangs around
just before summer has reached full-blown. City granaries
filling, factories churning, 'design' a catchword instigating

plenty—the risks of intensive farming, tomorrow's worry—
stubble itching, high yields floating like oil on troubled waters,
the Titanic's myth attracting the districts of the hungry.

* * *

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 61

5: Poetry

5 – 5 John Kinsella: *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems* – continued

3.

The Shed

. . .
You wouldn't call him a regionalist;
he thinks about gender. Half-light
solidifies the spaces between letters.
Language is a long solid run, continually
wrapping itself round. The potbelly
stove expands illegally, its light the glow
of combustion. Smoke collects moisture
and falls to the gulley, where foxes
move carefully—he would never say
they lurked—unable to settle confidently
to building the next stage of their occupation.
In the scrap lumber piled next to the shed
wall, mice move freely. The tawny frogmouth
is probably aware of their presence,
and might be waiting—the sound of the grinder
diminished, then gone. Conjunctions
lost, night-talk enjambed
in the trusses overhead, panels
of corrugated iron rippling with the lifting
wind. Bike frames, motors from washing machines,
peanut paste jars filled with nails and washers,
fireplaces and doors from demolished
Federation houses, three-legged wicker chairs
unwinding like family stories, odd shaped
panels of metal whose history is lost,
encoded nowhere, a sack of offcuts
from black sheep, a cement-mixer powered
by a motor from somewhere else. These
are mapped in halfsleep, only seen
before work, or on days off.
Soon, very soon, the house
will be built.

* * *

5: Poetry

5 – 6 Philip Larkin: *Collected Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Philip Larkin.

1.

Mr Bleaney

Philip Larkin, *Collected Poems*
Marvell Press 2003

p 81

2.

Ambulances

Philip Larkin, *Collected Poems*
Marvell Press 2003

p 104

THIS QUESTION IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 63

5: Poetry

5 – 6 Philip Larkin: *Collected Poems* – continued

3.

The Explosion

Philip Larkin, *Collected Poems*
Marvell Press 2003

p 54

Assessment criteria

The examination will address all of the criteria. All students will be examined against the following criteria.

1. Understanding of the text demonstrated in a relevant and plausible interpretation.
2. Ability to write expressively and coherently to present an interpretation.
3. Understanding of how views and values may be suggested in the text.
4. Analysis of how key passages and/or moments in the text contribute to an interpretation.
5. Analysis of the features of a text and how they contribute to an interpretation.
6. Analysis and close reading of textual details to support a coherent and detailed interpretation of the text.

A checklist for planning and revising

Have I included the part numbers and text numbers of my chosen texts on the front cover(s) of all script books?

Have I written on texts from two different parts?

Have I demonstrated my knowledge and understanding of the chosen texts?

Have I referred to the chosen texts in detail to illustrate or justify my responses?

Have I discussed at least one set passage for each text in detail?

Have I expressed myself effectively and appropriately?

Have I edited my final version for spelling, punctuation and sentence structure?

Are there places where my handwriting would be difficult to read and should be tidied?

Are any alterations I have made clear to the reader?

END OF TASK BOOK