



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2008

English - Higher Level - Paper 2

Total Marks: 200

Thursday, 5th June – Morning, 9.30 – 12.50

Candidates must attempt the following:-

- ONE question from SECTION I – The Single Text
- ONE question from SECTION II – The Comparative Study
- ONE question on the Unseen Poem from SECTION III – Poetry
- ONE question on Prescribed Poetry from SECTION III – Poetry

N.B. Candidates must answer on Shakespearean Drama.

They may do so in SECTION I, The Single Text (*Othello*) or in SECTION II, The Comparative Study (*Othello, Hamlet, As You Like It*).

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SECTION I

THE SINGLE TEXT (60 marks)

Candidates must answer **one** question from this section (A – E).

A **WUTHERING HEIGHTS** – Emily Brontë

- (i) “Although his passion for revenge horrifies us, Heathcliff still remains the most appealing character in the novel *Wuthering Heights*.”

Discuss this statement supporting your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) “In reading *Wuthering Heights* powerful imagery and symbolism contribute to our appreciation of the novel.”

Discuss this statement supporting your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

B **THE REMAINS OF THE DAY** – Kazuo Ishiguro

- (i) “I can't even say I made my own mistakes....what dignity is there in that?”
(Mr Stevens)

Write your personal assessment of the character of Stevens in the light of this quotation. Support your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) “The novel *The Remains of the Day* offers the reader a fascinating insight into the lives of the wealthy and the ordinary people in the England of the 1930s.”

Discuss this statement with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

C DEATH AND NIGHTINGALES – Eugene McCabe

- (i) “How extraordinarily beautiful the world could be and all the creatures in it, excepting mankind.”

Write a personal response to the world of *Death and Nightingales* in the light of this quotation from the novel. Support your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) “Beth Winters is the heroine of the novel *Death and Nightingales*.”

Do you agree with this statement? Support your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

D THE CRUCIBLE – Arthur Miller

- (i) “...a person is either with this court or he must be counted against it.”

Where do your sympathies lie in the conflict between Judge Danforth and John Proctor?

Support your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) Compare and contrast the characters of Elizabeth Proctor and Abigail Williams, supporting your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

E OTHELLO – William Shakespeare

- (i) “Othello’s foolishness rather than Iago’s cleverness leads to the tragedy of Shakespeare’s *Othello*.”

Discuss this statement supporting your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) “Shakespeare’s play *Othello* demonstrates the weakness of human judgement.”

Discuss this statement supporting your answer with the aid of suitable reference to the text.

SECTION II

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 marks)

Candidates must answer **one** question from **either** A – Theme or Issue
or B – Literary Genre.

In your answer you may not use the text you have answered on in **SECTION I** – The Single Text.

N.B. The questions use the word **text** to refer to all the different kinds of texts available for study on this course, i.e. novel, play, short story, autobiography, biography, travel writing, and film. The questions use the word **author** to refer to novelists, playwrights, writers in all genres, and film-directors.

A THEME OR ISSUE

1. “The comparative study of a theme or issue allows the reader/viewer to gain a variety of viewpoints on that theme or issue.”
 - (a) Describe the viewpoint on your chosen theme or issue that emerges from **one** of your comparative texts. (30)
 - (b) Compare the viewpoints on the same theme in the **other two texts** that you have studied. (40)

OR

2. “There are key moments in a text when a theme comes sharply into focus.”

Compare how key moments from the texts you have studied brought a theme or issue into sharp focus. (70)

B LITERARY GENRE

1. “A good text will have moments of great emotional power.”

(a) With reference to a key moment in **one** of your texts show how this emotional power was created. (30)

(b) Take key moments from the **other two texts** from your comparative course and compare the way in which the emotional power of these scenes was created. (40)

OR

2. “The creation of memorable characters is part of the art of good story-telling.”

Write an essay comparing the ways in which memorable characters were created and contributed to your enjoyment of the stories in the texts you have studied for your comparative course. It will be sufficient to refer to the creation of **one** character from each of your chosen texts. (70)

SECTION III

POETRY (70 marks)

Candidates must answer **A** – Unseen Poem **and B** – Prescribed Poetry.

A UNSEEN POEM (20 marks)

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Those Winter Sundays

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labour in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere¹ and lonely offices²?

Robert Hayden

1. austere: harsh,
strict

2. office: duty,
service, daily
worship

1. (a) What impression of the father-son relationship do you get from this poem? (10)
- (b) Choose a phrase or line from the poem that impressed you.
Explain your choice. (10)

OR

2. Write a personal response to this poem. Your answer should make close
reference to the text. (20)

B PRESCRIBED POETRY (50 marks)

Candidates must answer **one** of the following questions (**1 – 4**).

1. Philip Larkin

“Writing about unhappiness is the source of my popularity.” (Philip Larkin)

In the light of Larkin’s own assessment of his popularity, write an essay outlining your reasons for liking/not liking his poetry. Support your points with the aid of suitable reference to the poems you have studied.

2. John Donne

“John Donne uses startling imagery and wit in his exploration of relationships.”

Give your response to the poetry of John Donne in the light of this statement. Support your points with the aid of suitable reference to the poems you have studied.

3. Derek Mahon

“Derek Mahon explores people and places in his own distinctive style.”

Write your response to this statement supporting your points with the aid of suitable reference to the poems you have studied.

4. Adrienne Rich

“the desire to be heard, - that is the impulse behind writing poems, for me.”
(Adrienne Rich)

Does the poetry of Adrienne Rich speak to you? Write your personal response, referring to the poems of Adrienne Rich that do/do not speak to you.

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