



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2015

English - Higher Level - Paper 2

Total Marks: 200

Thursday, 4th June – Afternoon, 2.00 – 5.20

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, King Lear*).

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

A PRIDE AND PREJUDICE – Jane Austen

- (i) “The relationship between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet is an attraction of opposites.”

Discuss this view of the relationship between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet. Support your answer with reference to the novel, *Pride and Prejudice*.

OR

- (ii) “*Pride and Prejudice* is a novel so concerned with trivial romantic matters that it fails to engage with any substantial issues.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view of the novel? Support your answer with reference to the text.

B THE GREAT GATSBY – F. Scott Fitzgerald

- (i) “The friendship between Nick Carraway and Jay Gatsby is fascinating because it is both intimate and complex.”

Discuss this view of the friendship between Carraway and Gatsby. Support your answer with reference to the novel, *The Great Gatsby*.

OR

- (ii) “It is possible to be both attracted to the idealism and repelled by the corruption evident in *The Great Gatsby*.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view? Support your answer with reference to the novel.

C NEVER LET ME GO – Kazuo Ishiguro

- (i) “Ishiguro, in *Never Let Me Go*, both comforts and disturbs us because so much of human nature is reflected in the lives of the clones.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view? Support your answer with reference to the novel.

OR

- (ii) “The steady and relentless erosion of the hopes and dreams of Kathy, Ruth and Tommy contribute to the tragic story in this novel.”

Discuss this view of the novel, *Never Let Me Go*, supporting your answer with reference to two of the above characters.

D ALL MY SONS – Arthur Miller

- (i) “Ann Deever and Kate Keller are admirable because they are brave and honest.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view of Ann Deever and Kate Keller? Support your answer with reference to the play, *All My Sons*.

OR

- (ii) “The conflict between self-preservation and social responsibility dominates Miller’s play, *All My Sons*.”

Discuss this view, supporting your answer with reference to the text.

E OTHELLO – William Shakespeare

- (i) “Desdemona and Emilia are weak characters who fail to gain our sympathy.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view of Desdemona and Emilia? Support your answer with reference to the play, *Othello*.

OR

- (ii) “The values evident in *Othello* have a profound influence on the outcome of the play.”

Discuss this view, supporting your answer with reference to at least two of the values evident in the text.

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. All texts used in this section must be prescribed for comparative study for this year’s examination.

Please note:

- Questions in this section 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.
- When used, the word **reader** includes viewers of films and theatre audiences.
- When used, the term **literary technique** is taken to include techniques employed by authors, playwrights and directors of films.
- When used, the word **author** or **storyteller** is taken to include playwrights and directors of films.

A THEME OR ISSUE

1. “Some texts leave readers with a largely idealistic impression of a theme or issue, while others leave readers with a more realistic or believable impression of the same theme or issue.”

With reference to the above statement, compare the impressions of the same theme or issue you formed when studying **three texts** on your comparative course. Support your answer by reference to the texts. (70)

OR

2. “It is possible for a reader to be surprised or shocked (or both) by aspects of a theme or issue encountered in texts.”

(a) Discuss the extent to which you were surprised or shocked (or both) by aspects of a theme or issue encountered in **one** of the texts you have studied for your comparative course. Support your answer by reference to the text. (30)

(b) Compare the extent to which you were surprised or shocked (or both) by aspects of the same theme or issue encountered in **two other texts** you have studied on your comparative course. Support your answer by reference to the texts. (40)

B LITERARY GENRE

1. “Studying a selection of texts helps to highlight how some authors can make more skilful use of the same literary technique than others.”

Choose one literary technique, common to **three texts** on your comparative course, and compare how skilful the different authors are in using this literary technique in these texts. Support your answer by reference to the texts. (70)

OR

2. “Compelling storytelling can be achieved in a variety of ways.”

- (a) Identify two literary techniques found in **one** text you have studied. Discuss the extent to which these techniques contributed to compelling storytelling in this text. (30)
- (b) Identify one literary technique, common to **two other texts** on your comparative course. Compare the extent to which this literary technique contributed to compelling storytelling in these texts. You may select one of the literary techniques identified in 2. (a) above or you may choose to use any other literary technique in your answer. (40)

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

A UNSEEN POEM (20 marks)

Read the following poem by Peter Sirr, and answer **either** Question **1** **or** Question **2** which follow.

Peter Street

I'd grown almost to love this street,
each time I passed looking up
to pin my father's face to a window, feel myself

held in his gaze. Today there's a building site
where the hospital stood and I stop and stare
stupidly at the empty air, looking for him.

I'd almost pray some ache remain
like a flaw in the structure, something unappeasable
waiting in the fabric, between floors, in some

obstinate, secret room. A crane moves
delicately in the sky, in its own language.
Forget all that, I think as I pass, make it

a marvelous house; music should roam the corridors,
joy readily occur, St Valentine's
stubborn heart comes floating from Whitefriar Street*

to prevail, to undo injury, to lift my father from his bed,
let him climb down the dull red brick, effortlessly,
and run off with his life in his hands.

Peter Sirr

**A relic of St Valentine is kept at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Whitefriar St., Dublin*

1. (a) What do you believe is the central message of this poem?
Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
- (b) Identify two images that you find interesting in this poem.
Explain your choices, supporting your answer with reference to the poem. (10)

OR

2. Based on your reading of the above poem, identify the emotions expressed by the poet and explain how these emotions are conveyed in the poem. (20)

B PRESCRIBED POETRY (50 marks)

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

1. John Montague

“Montague makes effective use of evocative language to express a profound empathy with others.”

Discuss this statement, supporting your answer with reference to the poetry of John Montague on your course.

2. Robert Frost

“Frost communicates rich insights into human experience using language that is both accessible and appealing.”

Discuss this statement, supporting your answer with reference to the poetry of Robert Frost on your course.

3. Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin

“Ní Chuilleanáin’s demanding subject matter and formidable style can prove challenging.”

Discuss this statement, supporting your answer with reference to the poetry of Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin on your course.

4. Thomas Hardy

“Hardy’s poetry is dominated by bleak imagery which overshadows the comforting reflections found in his work.”

Discuss this statement, supporting your answer with reference to the poetry of Thomas Hardy on your course.

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