



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2017

English - Higher Level - Paper 2

Total Marks: 200

Thursday, 8th 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 (*Hamlet*) or in SECTION II, The Comparative Study (*Hamlet, Othello*).

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

A EMMA – Jane Austen

- (i) Jane Austen’s novel, *Emma*, has been described as “a frivolous romance of limited appeal.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this description of the novel?
In your response you should deal with all aspects of the statement, supporting your answer with reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) “For a variety of reasons, all the female characters in Jane Austen’s novel, *Emma*, are equally powerless.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?
Support your answer with reference to at least two female characters in the text.

B THE GREAT GATSBY – F. Scott Fitzgerald

- (i) *The Great Gatsby* has been described as “a study of selfish individuals which fails to offer a critical examination of society.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this description of the novel?
In your response you should deal with all aspects of the statement, supporting your answer with reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) “For a variety of reasons, all the female characters in Fitzgerald’s novel, *The Great Gatsby*, are equally powerless.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?
Support your answer with reference to at least two female characters in the text.

C A DOLL'S HOUSE – Henrik Ibsen

- (i) Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*, has been described as "a domestic drama which fails to address significant social issues."

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this description of the play?
In your response you should deal with all aspects of the statement, supporting your answer with reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) "Ibsen makes effective use of both Dr Rank and Nils Krogstad to fulfil a variety of dramatic functions in his play, *A Doll's House*."

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

D DEATH AND NIGHTINGALES – Eugene McCabe

- (i) *Death and Nightingales* has been described as "a far-fetched tale of violence and deceit."

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this description of the novel?
In your response you should deal with all aspects of the statement, supporting your answer with reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) "For a variety of reasons, all the female characters in McCabe's novel, *Death and Nightingales*, are equally powerless."

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?
Support your answer with reference to at least two female characters in the text.

E HAMLET – William Shakespeare

- (i) Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* has been described as "a disturbing psychological thriller."

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this description of the play?
In your response you should deal with all aspects of the statement, supporting your answer with reference to the text.

OR

- (ii) Shakespeare makes effective use of both Laertes and Horatio to fulfil a variety of dramatic functions in his play, *Hamlet*."

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

SECTION II

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY

(70 marks)

Candidates must answer **one** question from **either A** – The General Vision and Viewpoint **or B** – Theme or Issue.

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. Candidates may refer to only one film in the course of their answers.

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 **technique** is understood to include techniques employed by all writers and directors of films.
- When used, the word **author** is understood to include all writers and directors of films.

A THE GENERAL VISION AND VIEWPOINT

1. "Relationships between characters can influence our sense of the general vision and viewpoint of texts."

(a) Discuss the extent to which your sense of the general vision and viewpoint of **one** text on your comparative course is influenced by one (or more) relationship(s) in the text. Support your answer with reference to the text. (30)

(b) Compare the extent to which your sense of the general vision and viewpoint of **two other** texts on your comparative course is influenced by at least one relationship in each of these texts. Support your answer with reference to your chosen texts. (40)

OR

2. "A variety of factors in texts can change or reinforce our initial impression of the general vision and viewpoint."

Compare the main factor or factors in **three** texts on your comparative course that changed or reinforced your initial impression of the general vision and viewpoint in these texts. (70)

B THEME OR ISSUE

- 1.** “The same theme or issue can appear more relevant to life today in some texts than in others.”
- (a) In relation to **one** text on your comparative course, discuss the aspects of the text that, in your opinion, make your chosen theme or issue appear more or less relevant to life today. Support your answer with reference to the text. (30)
- (b) In relation to **two other** texts on your comparative course, compare the aspects of those texts that, in your opinion, make your chosen theme or issue appear more or less relevant to life today. Support your answer with reference to your chosen texts. (40)

OR

- 2.** “There are many reasons why the exploration of the same theme or issue can be more entertaining in some texts than in others.”

Compare the reasons why you found the exploration of the same theme or issue more entertaining in some texts than in others. Support your answer with reference to **three** texts on your comparative course. (70)

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

A UNSEEN POEM (20 marks)

Read the following poem by Robyn Sarah and answer **either** Question **1** or Question **2** which follow.

Bounty

Make much of something small.
The pouring-out of tea,
a drying flower's shadow on the wall
from last week's sad bouquet.
A fact: it isn't summer any more.

Say that December sun
is pitiless, but crystalline
and strikes like a bell.
Say it plays colours like a glockenspiel*.
It shows the dust as well,

the elemental sediment
your broom has missed,
and lights each grain of sugar spilled
upon the tabletop, beside
pistachio shells, peel of a clementine.

Slippers and morning papers on the floor,
and wafts of iron heat from rumbling rads,
can this be all? No, look – here comes the cat,
with one ear inside out.
Make much of something small.

Robyn Sarah

**Glockenspiel – a type of musical instrument.*

** Rads – radiators*

1. (a) What do you learn about the poet's approach to life from reading this poem? Explain your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
- (b) Identify a mood or feeling evoked in the above poem and explain how the poet creates this mood or feeling. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)

OR

2. Discuss the appeal of this poem with reference to its theme, tone and the poet's use of language and imagery. Refer closely to the text in support of your answer. (20)

B PRESCRIBED POETRY (50 marks)

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

1. Eavan Boland

“Boland makes effective use of symbols and metaphors to explore personal experiences and deliver penetrating truths about society.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Support your answer with reference to the poetry of Eavan Boland on your course.

2. John Donne

“Donne’s poetry can be simultaneously playful and challenging both in style and content.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Support your answer with reference to the poetry of John Donne on your course.

3. John Keats

“Keats uses sensuous language and vivid imagery to express a range of profound tensions.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Support your answer with reference to the poetry of John Keats on your course.

4. Elizabeth Bishop

From the poetry of Elizabeth Bishop that you have studied, select the poems that, in your opinion, best demonstrate her skilful use of language and imagery to confront life’s harsh realities.

Justify your selection by demonstrating Bishop’s skilful use of language and imagery to confront life’s harsh realities in the poems you have chosen.

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