



AS

ENGLISH LITERATURE A

Paper 2 Love through the ages: Prose

Friday 23 May 2025

Morning

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page Answer Book
- a copy of each of the set texts you have studied for **Section B**. These texts must **not** be annotated and must **not** contain additional notes or materials.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7711/2.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- Answer the question in Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.
- In your response you need to:
 - analyse carefully the writers' methods
 - explore the contexts of the texts you are writing about
 - explore connections across the texts you have studied
 - explore different interpretations of your texts.

Section A: Unseen prose

Answer the question in this section.

0

1

The Evening of the Holiday by Shirley Hazzard (1931–2016) was published in 1966. Sophie, a young independent woman, is close to the end of a holiday in Italy when she meets an Italian, Tancredi, who is an older man, separated from his wife. Tancredi is keen to develop their relationship and has recently written Sophie a love letter. In this extract, Sophie buys a bunch of carnations in a local market before returning to her hotel.

Examine the view that Sophie is presented as more worried than excited by her developing relationship with Tancredi.

Make close reference to the writer's methods in your response.

[25 marks]

How absurd, she thought, to have bought these flowers; now I have to go home and put them in water. And she began to climb the steep street she had just come down. The stems in their damp paper rested against her body, and the strong delicious scent rose over her face. But they *are* lovely, she thought, and they'll last until I go.

Her way back to the hotel lay past the post office. She crossed the wide, unshaded piazza without a glance at the café, although it was early in the afternoon and in any case she knew he wouldn't be there. It was two days since she had received his letter. In another two days she would be gone. Except for the possibility of such an accident — running into him in the street or the piazza — she need never meet him again. It was for this reason, perhaps, that she imagined she saw him so many times as she walked down the main street of the town.

Yet, oddly, as she strolled along, she thought of Tancredi only indirectly. She was thinking, rather, of a man she had loved when she was a schoolgirl, and she saw herself walking up and down with him in a garden, anxiously listening to his complicated exposition of the reasons why he could not love her in return. It must be the carnations, she thought suddenly — the smell of the carnations — that brought that far-off garden and that other summer into her mind. She had not thought of it for years, and was glad now to be reminded of the intricate, lasting nature of any form of love.

The entrance of the hotel was beautifully cool after her walk through the streets. She went over to the desk for her key, but the young man at the Reception came limping out to meet her. He thought she did not understand what he said to her, and repeated his message, directing her to the back of the lobby with his hand.

Tancredi had seen her first, and in the instant before their eyes met he had a strong impression of her appearance. He thought involuntarily (as he sometimes thought if he saw a stylish woman walking alone in the evening or a girl leaning out of a window): She is in love. So detached was this judgement that his first response to it was a pang of jealousy.

He stood up as she came across the coloured tiles to where he was waiting by the windows. She made a movement to put the flowers from her, as if they gave her an unfair advantage. He took them gently out of her grasp and, calling one of the bellboys, asked for them to be put into water. She made no attempt to give him her hand or to speak casually. She came and sat beside him on the sofa with her head slightly lowered and her hands in her lap.

"Don't be annoyed," he said.

"I'm going away soon."

"Because of me?"

She glanced up and half smiled. "You're a threat to me."

He said seriously: "You must forgive me for that."

"You don't deny it," she observed.

"Are you always like this?"

"Like what?"

"Following the score instead of listening to the music?"

She shook her head, but not in answer to his question. He lifted her hand on to his knee and laid his own hand over it. "You won't leave," he said.

She stayed in her slack, acquiescent attitude — like a defeated general, not accounting for the errors that led to this predicament.

He said: "You aren't happy now. But I promise that you will be." When he removed his hand, hers remained on his knee as though she had placed it there to comfort him.

"Tomorrow," he said.

Tomorrow seemed to her as remote, as unlikely as the end of the summer. She thought that probably she would not go away after all; they could have their afternoons again, for a while, in the piazza. Nothing need be undone; nothing more need happen. She thought that, since he said so, perhaps she would be happy.

Turn over for Section B

Turn over ►

Section B: Comparing prose texts

Answer **one** question in this section.

Either

0	2
---	---

'In literature, women are often presented as passive lovers who rarely take charge.'

By comparing **two** prose texts, explore the extent to which you agree with this statement.
[25 marks]

or

0	3
---	---

'In literature, love is presented as full of risk.'

By comparing **two** prose texts, explore this view.
[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

Copyright information

For confidentiality purposes, all acknowledgements of third-party copyright material are published in a separate booklet. This booklet is published after each live examination series and is available for free download from www.aqa.org.uk

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases, efforts to contact copyright-holders may have been unsuccessful and AQA will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements. If you have any queries please contact the Copyright Team.

Copyright © 2025 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

