



# Cambridge International AS & A Level

## LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/23

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen

October/November 2024

2 hours



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:  
 Section A: answer **one** question.  
 Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

### INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

This document has **16** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

**Section A: Prose**

Answer **one** question from this section.

**KIRAN DESAI: *The Inheritance of Loss***

- 1 **Either** (a) Discuss Desai's presentation of Biju's experience of restaurant jobs in America.  
**Or** (b) Comment briefly on Desai's presentation of Saeed Saeed in the following passage.

*'Biju!*

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government – they would be happy to help. Any ~~s~~ ~~b~~ ~~r~~ ~~i~~ ~~s~~ on against the US

*(from Chapter 19)*

**IAN McEWAN: *Atonement***

- 2 Either** (a) Discuss some of the ways in which McEwan explores story telling in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, considering ways in which McEwan presents Briony's perception of events

If he had not been, as he described it, a slave to the Ministry, and to Eventuality Planning, if he had been at home, sending Hardman down for the wines, seeing the operation, deciding without appearing to when it was time to 'go through', she would not be closing the hallway now with such heaviness in her step.

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Briony stopped and said her sister's name.

(from Chapter 10)

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### Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1

- 3 Either (a) Discuss ways in which the writers make buildings important in two stories
- Or (b) Comment closely on the following passage from *Report on the Threatened City*, considering ways in which Doris Lessing presents the narrator and their perception of earth.

#### PRIORITY FLASH ONE

*All coordinates all plans all prints cancelled. As of now condition unforeseen by us obtaining this city. Clear all programmes all planners all forecasters for new setting on this information.*

#### PRIORITY

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*Base to note well that transmission this channel will probably be interrupted by material originating locally. Our fuel is low and this channel therefore only one now operative.*

#### Summary of Background to Mission

Since our planet discovered that this city was due for destruction or severe damage, all calculations and plans of our department have been based on one necessity: how to reach the city to warn its inhabitants of what is to come. Observing their behaviour, both through Astronauts and from our unmanned machines launched at intervals this past year, their time, our Commissioners for External Affairs decided these people would have no idea at all of what threatened, that their technology, while so advanced in some ways, had a serious gap in it, a gap that could be defined, in fact, precisely by that area of ignorance – not knowing what was to befall them. This gap seemed impossible. Much time was spent by our technicians trying to determine what form of brain these creatures could have that made this contradiction possible – as already stated, a technology so advanced in one area and blank in another. Our technicians had to believe the problem, since their theories became increasingly improbable and since no previous known to us anywhere corresponds even at a long remove with what we believed this one to be. It became, perhaps, the most intriguing of our unsolved problems: challenging and defeating one department after another.

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#### Summary of Objective this Mission

Meanwhile, putting all speculations on one side, attractive though they were, all our resources have been used, at top speed and pressure, to develop a spacecraft that could, in fact, land a team on this planet, since it was our intention, having given the warning, offered the information available to us but (we thought) not to them, which made the warning necessary, to offer them more; our assistance. We meant to help clear the area, transport the population elsewhere, a mission the best to the area and then, having done what, after all, we have done for other planets: our particular mental structure being suited to this kind of forecasting and assistance, return to base, taking some suitable specimens of them with us in order to train them in a way that would overcome the gap in their minds and, therefore, their sense. The first part we achieved: that is we managed, in the time set for it, to develop a spacecraft that could make the journey here, carrying the required number of personnel. It sustained our own technology and postponed certain cherished plans of our own. But our craft landed here, on the western shore of the land mass as planned, and without any trouble, several days ago.

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*The Nature of the Problem*

You will have wondered why there have been no transmissions before this. There have been two reasons. One: we realised at once that there would be heavier demands on our fuel than we had anticipated and that we would have to organise it. Two: we were waiting to understand what it was we had to tell you. We did not understand the problem. For it was almost unbearable to us that all our thinking about 'the gap in their mental structure' was off the point. We have never understood the nature of the problem. So improbable is it that we delayed communicating until we were sure. The trouble with this species is not that it is unable to foresee its immediate future; it is that it does not seem to care. Yet that is altogether too simple a statement of its condition. If it were so simple – that it knew that within five years its city was to be destroyed, or partly destroyed, and that it was indifferent – we should have to say. This species lacks the first quality necessary to any animal species: it lacks the will to live. Finding out what the mechanism is has caused the delay. While I now propose partially to remedy by going into an account of what befell us step by step. This will entail a detailed description of a species and a condition absolutely without precedent in our experience of the inhabited planets.

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*(from Report on the Threatened City)*

**MARK TWAIN: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

- 4 Either** (a) Discuss Twain's presentation of the Grangerford and the Shepherdson families
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, considering Twain's presentation of Huckleberry's attitude to the duke and the king.

I a s s to m s If, this is *another* one that I'm letting him rob her of her money. And when h e got through, they all j e s laid thei e s out to make me feel at home and k ow I was among s friends I felt s ornery and low down and mean, that I a s s to m s If, My mind's made up; I'll hie that money for them or bu s .

So then I lit out – for bed, I a id, meaning s me time or another. When I got by m s If, I went to think ng the thing o e r. I a s s to m s If, h all I go to that dot or, pria te, and blow on the s fraud s No – that won't do. He might tell who told him; then the k ng and the duke would make it warm for me. Shall I go, pria te, and tell Mary d ne? No – I das 't do it. Her fae would gie them a hint, s re; the y e got the money, and they d b ide right out and get away with it. If h e was to fetb in help, I'd get mie d up in the bu s ne s before it was done with, I judge. No, there ain't no good way but one. I got to s eal that money, s mehow; and I got to s eal it s me way that they won't s p ic on that I done it. They e got a good thing, here; and they ain't agoing to leave till they e play d this family and this town for all they re worth, s I'll find a b ane time enough. I'll s eal it, and hide it; and by and-by, when I'm away down the rie r, I'll write a letter and tell Mary d ne where it's hid. But I better hie it to-night, if I a n, bea u s the dot or map e has 't let up as mu s as he lets on he has he might a re them out of here, e t.

So, think I, I'll go and s arb them rooms Up s airs the hall was dark but I found the duke 's room, and s arted to paw around it with my hands but I reo llet ed it wouldn't be mu s like the k ng to let any o dy e s take a re of that money but his own s If; s then I went to his room and began to paw around there. But I s e I o uldn't do nothing without a a ndle, and I das 't light one, of o u s . So I judged I'd got to do the other thing – lay for them, and ea e d rop. About that time, I hears their foot s eps o ming, and was going to k p under the bed; I reab ed for it, but it was 't where I thought it would be; but I tou b ed the a rtain that hid Mary d ne's fro s s I jumped in behind that and s uggled in among s the gowns and s ood there perfec ly s ill.

They o me in and b ut the door; and the fi s thing the duke done was to get down and look under the bed. Then I was glad I hadn't found the bed when I wanted it. And e t, e u k ow, it's k nd of natural to hide under the bed when e u are up to any hing pria te. They s ts down, then, and the k ng a s s

'Well, what is it? and a t it middlin' b ort, bea u s it's better for us to be down there a whoopin'-up the mournin', than up here giiv n' 'em a b ane to talk us o e r.'

'Well, this is it, Capet. I ain't eas I ain't o mfortable. That dot or la s on my mind. I wanted to k ow e ur plans I e got a notion, and I think it's a s und one.'

'What is it, duke ?'

'That we better glide out of thi s before three in the morning, and b ip it down the rie r with what we e got. Spei ally, s eing we got it s eas – *given back* to us flung at our heads as e u may say, when of o u s we allowed to ha e to s eal it back I'm for k ok ng off and lighting out.'

That made me feel pretty bad.

*(from Chapter 26)*



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**Section B: Unseen**

Answer **one** question from this section.

**Either**

**5** Discuss the presentation of Kamla's and Rajinder's differing views in the following passage.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, structure and dramatic methods

[KAMLA is speaking on the telephone to KATIE in the refuge office.]

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*Kamla:* It's not pleasant, or easy, I know, but that is the procedure, for everyone, regardless of race and religion.

Or

6 Comment closely on the presentation of changing ideas of poetry in the following poem.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, structure and poetic methods

*Phoenix and Unicorn*

Where shall we find new metaphor?

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And now falls slowly, swooping like a bird.



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