



Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/43

Paper 4 Unseen

October/November 2018

1 hour 15 minutes

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

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

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer.

Both questions in this paper carry equal marks.



This document consists of **5** printed pages, **3** blank pages and **1** Insert.

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

EITHER

- 1 Read carefully the poem opposite. The poet writes about two different 'household gods', the fire and the television screen.

How does the poet communicate to you her different feelings about the fire and the screen?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- the different ways in which she portrays the behaviour of the fire and the screen
- how she suggests we have different relationships with the fire and the screen
- what you find striking about the final three lines.

3

Household Gods

The room is silent except for the two hearth¹ spirits.

The fire speaks out of the grate like a kindly tongue.
The man speaks out of the square screen like a god.

The fire burns slowly, holding itself back from burning.
The man speaks quickly, hurtling himself into particles.

Hold up your hands to the fire, and they, too, are fires.
Hold your hands up to the screen, and feel the premises of illusion.

Wherever you move, the fire pulls you close like a magnet.
Wherever you look, the screen intercepts your escape.

When the fire is worshipped, the resident cats will pray with you.
When the screen presides, it lashes the dog with its scream.

The fire has nothing to tell you; it waits for your thoughts.
The screen has to tell you everything except what you are.

In heaven, they will give you to fire to be consumed into freedom.
In hell, they will play you over and over on the tape² of your dead life.

In hell, nothing you have done will be not watched.

¹ *hearth*: fireplace

² *tape*: video recording

OR

- 2 Read carefully the following extract. The narrator, Hurtle Duffield, overhears his parents talking about having him adopted by Mr and Mrs Courtney, who are very wealthy. He is then taken by his mother to the Courtneys' house. Hurtle's parents are very poor: they have seven children, including a baby, Sep, and Will, who shares a bed with Hurtle.

How does the writing make Hurtle's response to what is happening to him so striking?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- his reaction to his parents' conversation
- how he contrasts the way his family and the Courtneys live
- how the writing portrays the relationship between the boy and his mother.

'Hurtle's beautiful,' she said. 'S'air's¹ a lovely bright.'

'The boy's a boy.'

'A boy can be beautiful too. To anyone with eyes. Mrs Courtney's taken with Hurtle. Says 'e's adorable. And clever. Could be some sort of genius. I could'uv told 'er that if I 'adn't been the mother. Mr Courtney will want to see 'im. You should see Mr Courtney, Jim. Every one of 'is suits made to measure in London – so the girls was telling. Boots too. 'As 'is own last² – in the shop – in London.'

Pa snoring.

In the end it wasn't so interesting: you got what Mrs Courtney would have called 'bored', and the dripping³ lying a bit bilious.⁴

Then Mumma said, very distinct: 'I would give away any of my children, provided the opportunities were there. Blood is all very well. Money counts. I would give – I would give Hurtle.'

Pa's snore came roaring back up his throat. 'Give away yer children?'

Mumma laughed a rattling sort of laugh. 'Plenty more where they come from.'

'That's all very well for the mother. It's the father they blame. What'ud they say? Can't support 'is own kids!'

'The father!'

'Wouldn't be ethical, anyway.'

'Ethical's a parson's⁵ word.'

'What if the boy could 'ear 'is mum and dad entertainin' such an idea!'

Got out after that. Sand between your toes across the yard. The little, sharp, scratchy pebbles. Will was flopping around in the bed like a paralysed fowl. White eyelids. Glad of your brother to stop the shivers. Mothers and fathers, whoever they were, really didn't matter: it was between you and Death or something.

And now Mumma was combing out the dandruff because Courtneys had asked for him. Well, he would swallow down what he had overheard. His bumping heart would wait and accept whatever was offered or decided.

After they had passed Taylor Square, after they had got far enough on, Mumma walked with scarcely a word. Because of their important business they had left Sep with Mrs Burt, who had her new baby, and would give theirs a suck. Mumma's black old skirt was picking up the dust very easy: the hem had become unstitched. He tried to imagine her in Mrs Courtney's hat with the quills, but the tails of her hair hung down behind, where the comb couldn't hold them up. Her skin was yellow today.

She took his hand in her cracked hand. 'Come on,' she said. 'What are you looking at?'

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He began walking as he would, he felt, in a London suit, holding hands with Mrs Courtney, and it seemed as though the maid they passed polishing a doctor's plate was already looking different at him.

Mumma brightened, though one corner of her mouth was twitching. 'Are you hungry, love? You'll feel better for a bite of something.'

He ought to love poor Mumma for looking at him like that. He did, too: nothing else was real. There was nothing wrong in imagining a thing or two about himself and Courtneys.

Mumma saw he was having trouble with his boot. 'If your sole's coming off, Hurtle, slide your foot along the carpet when you go inside, then nobody'll notice.'

Her hand tightened as they began to clatter down the steep asphalt towards the 'Tradesmen's Entrance'⁶. Once or twice his sole flapped.

¹ 'S 'air's: (colloquial) his hair is

² *last*: cobbler's pattern for making handmade shoes

³ *dripping*: a meal of fat from meat

⁴ *bilious*: making someone feel sick

⁵ *parson*: priest or minister

⁶ *Tradesmen's Entrance*: back-door entrance for servants and deliveries

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