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Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

LITERATURE (ENGLISH) (US)

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Paper 1 Poetry and Prose

May/June 2015

1 hour 30 minutes

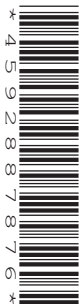
No Additional Materials are required.

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 **two** questions: **one** question for Section A and **one** question for Section B.

All questions in this paper carry equal points.



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SECTION A: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

BILLY COLLINS: from *Sailing Alone Around the Room: New and Selected Poems*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 1 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Books

From the heart of this dark, evacuated campus I can hear the library humming in the night, a choir of authors murmuring inside their books along the unlit, alphabetical shelves, Giovanni Pontano next to Pope, Dumas next to his son, each one stitched into his own private coat, together forming a low, gigantic chord of language.	5
I picture a figure in the act of reading, shoes on a desk, head tilted into the wind of a book, a man in two worlds, holding the rope of his tie as the suicide of lovers saturates a page, or lighting a cigarette in the middle of a theorem. He moves from paragraph to paragraph as if touring a house of endless, paneled rooms.	10
I hear the voice of my mother reading to me from a chair facing the bed, books about horses and dogs, and inside her voice lie other distant sounds, the horrors of a stable ablaze in the night, a bark that is moving toward the brink of speech.	15
I watch myself building bookshelves in college, walls within walls, as rain soaks New England, or standing in a bookstore in a trench coat.	20
I see all of us reading ourselves away from ourselves, straining in circles of light to find more light until the line of words becomes a trail of crumbs that we follow across a page of fresh snow; when evening is shadowing the forest and small birds flutter down to consume the crumbs, we have to listen hard to hear the voices of the boy and his sister receding into the woods.	25 30

What do Collins's words and images in *Books* make you feel about books and reading?

Or 2 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Workshop

I might as well begin by saying how much I like the title.
It gets me right away because I'm in a workshop now
so immediately the poem has my attention,
like the Ancient Mariner grabbing me by the sleeve.

And I like the first couple of stanzas, 5
the way they establish this mode of self-pointing
that runs through the whole poem
and tells us that words are food thrown down
on the ground for other words to eat.
I can almost taste the tail of the snake 10
in its own mouth,
if you know what I mean.

But what I'm not sure about is the voice,
which sounds in places very casual, very blue jeans,
but other times seems standoffish, 15
professorial in the worst sense of the word
like the poem is blowing pipe smoke in my face.
But maybe that's just what it wants to do.

What I did find engaging were the middle stanzas, 20
especially the fourth one.
I like the image of clouds flying like lozenges
which gives me a very clear picture.
And I really like how this drawbridge operator
just appears out of the blue
with his feet up on the iron railing 25
and his fishing pole jiggling—I like jiggling—
a hook in the slow industrial canal below.
I love slow industrial canal below. All those I's.

Maybe it's just me,
but the next stanza is where I start to have a problem. 30
I mean how can the evening bump into the stars?
And what's an obligato of snow?
Also, I roam the decaffeinated streets.
At that point I'm lost. I need help.

The other thing that throws me off, 35
and maybe this is just me,
is the way the scene keeps shifting around.
First, we're in this big aerodrome
and the speaker is inspecting a row of dirigibles,
which makes me think this could be a dream. 40
Then he takes us into his garden,
the part with the dahlias and the coiling hose,
though that's nice, the coiling hose,
but then I'm not sure where we're supposed to be.
The rain and the mint green light, 45
that makes it feel outdoors, but what about this wallpaper?

Or is it a kind of indoor cemetery?
There's something about death going on here.

In fact, I start to wonder if what we have here
is really two poems, or three, or four, 50
or possibly none.

But then there's that last stanza, my favorite.
This is where the poem wins me back,
especially the lines spoken in the voice of the mouse.
I mean we've all seen these images in cartoons before, 55
but I still love the details he uses
when he's describing where he lives.

The perfect little arch of an entrance in the baseboard,
the bed made out of a curled-back sardine can,
the spool of thread for a table. 60

I start thinking about how hard the mouse had to work
night after night collecting all these things
while the people in the house were fast asleep,
and that gives me a very strong feeling,
a very powerful sense of something. 65
But I don't know if anyone else was feeling that.
Maybe that was just me.
Maybe that's just the way I read it.

What do you find effective about the ways in which Collins describes his responses to a poem in *Workshop*?

from *SONGS OF OURSELVES*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 3 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Away, Melancholy

Away, melancholy,
Away with it, let it go.

Are not the trees green,
The earth as green?
Does not the wind blow,
Fire leap and the rivers flow?
Away melancholy.

5

The ant is busy
He carrieth his meat,
All things hurry
To be eaten or eat.
Away, melancholy.

10

Man, too, hurries,
Eats, couples, buries,
He is an animal also
With a hey ho melancholy,
Away with it, let it go.

15

Man of all creatures
Is superlative
(Away melancholy)
He of all creatures alone
Raiseth a stone
(Away melancholy)
Into the stone, the god
Pours what he knows of good
Calling, good, God.
Away melancholy, let it go.

20

25

Speak not to me of tears,
Tyranny, pox, wars,
Saying, Can God
Stone of man's thought, be good?

30

Say rather it is enough
That the stuffed
Stone of man's good, growing,
By man's called God.
Away, melancholy, let it go.

35

Man aspires
To good,
To love
Sighs; 40

Beaten, corrupted, dying
In his own blood lying
Yet heaves up an eye above
Cries, Love, love.
It is his virtue needs explaining, 45
Not his failing.

Away, melancholy,
Away with it, let it go.

(by Stevie Smith)

Explore how Smith's words powerfully reveal to you the speaker's attitude to life in this poem.

Or 4 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

from *Long Distance*

Though my mother was already two years dead
Dad kept her slippers warming by the gas,
put hot water bottles her side of the bed
and still went to renew her transport pass.

You couldn't just drop in. You had to phone. 5
He'd put you off an hour to give him time
to clear away her things and look alone
as though his still raw love were such a crime.

He couldn't risk my blight of disbelief
though sure that very soon he'd hear her key
scrape in the rusted lock and end his grief. 10
He *knew* she'd just popped out to get the tea.

I believe life ends with death, and that is all.
You haven't both gone shopping; just the same,
in my new black leather phone book there's your name 15
and the disconnected number I still call.

(by Tony Harrison)

Explore the ways in which Harrison movingly conveys feelings of sadness in this extract from *Long Distance*.

SECTION B: PROSE

Answer **one** question from this section.

HARPER LEE: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 5 Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

The night was still. I could hear his breath coming easily beside me. Occasionally there was a sudden breeze that hit my bare legs, but it was all that remained of a promised windy night. This was the stillness before a thunderstorm. We listened.

‘Heard an old dog just then,’ I said.

5

‘It’s not that,’ Jem answered. ‘I hear it when we’re walkin’ along, but when we stop I don’t hear it.’

‘You hear my costume rustlin’. Aw, it’s just Halloween got you....’

I said it more to convince myself than Jem, for sure enough, as we began walking, I heard what he was talking about. It was not my costume.

10

‘It’s just old Cecil,’ said Jem presently. ‘He won’t get us again. Let’s don’t let him think we’re hurrying.’

We slowed to a crawl. I asked Jem how Cecil could follow us in this dark, looked to me like he’d bump into us from behind.

‘I can see you, Scout,’ Jem said.

15

‘How? I can’t see you.’

‘Your fat streaks are showin’. Mrs Crenshaw painted ’em with some of that shiny stuff so they’d show up under the footlights. I can see you pretty well, an’ I expect Cecil can see you well enough to keep his distance.’

I would show Cecil that we knew he was behind us and we were ready for him. ‘Cecil Jacobs is a big wet he-en!’ I yelled suddenly, turning around.

20

We stopped. There was no acknowledgement save he-en bouncing off the distant school-house wall.

‘I’ll get him,’ said Jem. ‘He-y!’

Hay-e-hay-e-hay-e, answered the school-house wall.

25

It was unlike Cecil to hold out for so long; once he pulled a joke he’d repeat it time and again. We should have been leapt at already. Jem signalled for me to stop again.

He said softly, ‘Scout, can you take that thing off?’

‘I think so, but I ain’t got anything on under it much.’

30

‘I’ve got your dress here.’

‘I can’t get it on in the dark.’

‘Okay,’ he said, ‘never mind.’

‘Jem, are you afraid?’

‘No. Think we’re almost to the tree now. Few yards from that, an’ we’ll be to the road. We can see the street-light then.’ Jem was talking in an unhurried, flat toneless voice. I wondered how long he would try to keep the Cecil myth going.

35

‘You reckon we oughta sing, Jem?’

‘No. Be real quiet again, Scout.’

40

We had not increased our pace. Jem knew as well as I that it was difficult to walk fast without stumping a toe, tripping on stones, and other inconveniences, and I was barefooted. Maybe it was the wind rustling the trees. But there wasn’t any wind and there weren’t any trees except the big oak.

45

Our company shuffled and dragged his feet, as if wearing heavy shoes. Whoever it was wore thick cotton pants; what I thought were trees rustling was the soft swish of cotton on cotton, wheek, wheek, with every step.

I felt the sand go cold under my feet and I knew we were near the big oak. Jem pressed my head. We stopped and listened. 50

Shuffle-foot had not stopped with us this time. His trousers swished softly and steadily. Then they stopped. He was running, running towards us with no child's steps.

'Run, Scout! Run! Run!' Jem screamed.

I took one giant step and found myself reeling; my arms useless, in the dark, I could not keep my balance. 55

'Jem, Jem, help me, Jem!'

Something crushed the chicken wire around me. Metal ripped on metal and I fell to the ground and rolled as far as I could, floundering to escape my wire prison. From somewhere near by came scuffling, kicking sounds, sounds of shoes and flesh scraping dirt and roots. Someone rolled against me and I felt Jem. He was up like lightning and pulling me with him but, though my head and shoulders were free, I was so entangled we didn't get very far. 60

We were nearly to the road when I felt Jem's hand leave me, felt him jerk backwards to the ground. More scuffling, and there came a dull crunching sound and Jem screamed. 65

I ran in the direction of Jem's scream and sank into a flabby male stomach. Its owner said, 'Uff!' and tried to catch my arms, but they were tightly pinioned. His stomach was soft but his arms were like steel. He slowly squeezed the breath out of me. I could not move. Suddenly he was jerked backwards and flung on the ground, almost carrying me with him. I thought, Jem's up. 70

[from Chapter 28]

Explore how Lee's writing conveys the tension and drama of this moment.

- Or 6 How does Lee make the relationship between Boo Radley and the Finch children so moving?

CARSON McCOLLERS: *The Member of the Wedding*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 7 Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

"I came to get my fortune told," F. Jasmine said.

While Big Mama talked to herself when alone, she could be very silent at other times. She stared at F. Jasmine for several seconds before she answered: "Very well. Draw up that stool before the organ."

F. Jasmine brought the stool close to the bed, and leaning forward, stretched out her palm. But Big Mama did not take her palm. She examined F. Jasmine's face, then spat the wad of snuff into a chamberpot which she pulled from underneath the bed, and finally put on her glasses. She waited so long that it occurred to F. Jasmine that she was trying to read her mind, and this made her uneasy. The walking in the back room stopped and there was no sound in the house.

"Cast back your mind and remember," she said finally. "Tell me the revelation of your last dream."

F. Jasmine tried to cast back her mind, but she did not dream often. Then finally she remembered a dream she had had that summer: "I dreamed there was a door," she said. "I was just looking at it and while I watched, it began slowly to open. And it made me feel funny and I woke up."

"Was there a hand in the dream?"

F. Jasmine thought. "I don't think so."

"Was there a cockroach on that door?"

"Why—I don't think so."

"It signifies as follows." Big Mama slowly closed and opened her eyes. "There going to be a change in your life."

Next she took F. Jasmine's palm and studied it for quite a while. "I see here where you going to marry a boy with blue eyes and light hair. You will live to be your three-score and ten, but you must act careful about water. I see here a red-clay ditch and a bale of cotton."

F. Jasmine thought to herself that there was nothing to it, only a pure waste of money and time. "What does that signify?"

But suddenly the old woman raised her head and the cords of her neck stiffened as she called: "You, Satan!"

She was looking at the wall between the parlor and the kitchen, and F. Jasmine turned to look over her shoulder also.

"Yessum," a voice replied from the back room, and it sounded like Honey.

"How many times is I got to tell you to take them big feets off the kitchen table!"

"Yessum." Honey said again. His voice was meek as Moses, and F. Jasmine could hear him put his feet down on the floor.

"Your nose is going to grow into that book, Honey Brown. Put it down and finish up your supper."

F. Jasmine shivered. Had Big Mama looked clear through the wall and seen Honey reading with his feet up on the table? Could those eyes pierce through a pure blank wall? It seemed as though it would behoove her to listen carefully to every word.

"I see here a sum of money. A sum of money. And I see a wedding."

F. Jasmine's outstretched hand trembled a little. "That!" she said. "Tell me about that!"

"The wedding or the money?"

"The wedding."

50

[from Part 2]

How does McCullers make this moment in the novel so entertaining?

- Or** **8** "I wish I was somebody else except me," says Frankie. Explore the ways in which McCullers conveys Frankie's wish to be somebody else.

from *STORIES OF OURSELVES*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

- Either 9** Read this passage from *The Village Saint* (by Bessie Head), and then answer the question that follows it:

This went on for ten years. Both mother and son lived a busy life and people imagined they were two peas in a pod, they seemed so alike in their interests and behaviour. Then Mompoti fell in love with Mary Pule, a thin, wilting, willowy dreamy girl with a plaintive, tremulous voice. She had a façade too that concealed a tenacious will. She was so anxious to secure Mompoti permanently as a husband that she played a hard game. All during the time he courted her, and it took months, she led him this way and that, with a charming smile. Oh, maybe she loved him. Maybe she did not. She wasn't sure. Mompoti was intense about everything, so he was intensely in love. He shared his depressions and elations with his mother. The girl was invited to teas and showered with flattery and teasing until, in her own time, she accepted his proposal. It had nothing to do with either Mompoti or his mother. It was her own plan. 5 10

A small flat was built in the yard in preparation for Mompoti's future married life, and all proceeded well up to a certain point – the month after the marriage. Then Mma-Mompoti began to undo herself. Throughout the ten years she had lived with her son, she had played a little game. Mompoti used to bring his pay-packet home intact but she wanted him to buy her just a teeny-weeny something – a pair of stockings, a bottle of scent, a little handkerchief or a new dress. It just pleased her, she said, that her son cared about his mother. So she always extracted a teeny bit for her share and handed him the rest. She soon informed her daughter-in-law of this procedure and like all powerful personalities, she secretly despised the weak, wilting, plaintive little wretch her son had married. She needed to dominate and shove the wretch around. So at the end of that month, she over-stepped the mark. She opened the pay-packet as usual and suddenly needed an enormous amount of things all at once—a pair of shoes, a new dress, and a necklace. 15 20 25

What she handed over to her son could barely keep him and his wife in food for a week. She could not follow them into the privacy of their home, but unconsciously her vampire teeth were bared for battle. She noted that her daughter-in-law often looked gloomy and depressed in the ensuing days; her son was cold and reserved. She attacked the daughter-in-law with brittle smiles: 30

'Well, what's wrong with you, my child? Can't you greet an old person in a cheerful way?' 35

'There's nothing wrong, mother,' the girl replied, with a painful smile.

At the end of the next month, Mompoti walked straight to his own flat and handed his pay-packet intact to his wife, ate a good supper, and fell into a sound sleep after many nights of worry and anguish. The following morning he left for work without even a glance at his mother's home. Then the storm burst. The pose of God and Jesus were blown to the winds and the demented vampire behind it was too terrible to behold. She descended on her daughter-in-law like a fury. 40

'You have done this to my son!' she snarled. 'You have turned him against me! His duty is to respect me and honour me and you cannot take it away from me! You see that water tap? You shall not draw any more water 45

from it while you are in this yard! Go and draw water at the village tap in future!’

And so the whole village became involved in the spectacle. They stopped and blinked their eyes as they saw the newly-wed Mary carrying a water bucket a mile away from her own home to the village water taps. 50

‘Mary,’ they asked curiously, ‘why is it you have to draw water here like everyone else when your mother-in-law has a water tap in her yard?’

Mary talked freely and at great length – a long weepy story of misery and torture. And people said: ‘Well, we can’t believe that a good woman like Mma-Mompati could be so harsh to her own child,’ and they shook their heads in amazement at this thunderbolt. That was the end of Mma-Mompati. No one ever believed in her again or her God or Jesus Christ but she still buried the dead and prayed for the sick. 55 60

Her son, Mompati, set up home in a far-off part of the village. He never discussed the abrupt break with his mother to whom he had once been so overwhelmingly devoted, but one day his voice suddenly boomed out through the store in reply to some request by a friend:

‘I’m sorry,’ he said. ‘I never do anything without first consulting my wife...’ 65

What vivid impressions does Head create for you of the characters in this passage?

Or 10 How does Naipaul vividly portray the conflict between mother and son in *The Enemy*?

AMY TAN: *The Joy Luck Club*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 11 Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

I see him standing by the wall, safe, calling to my father, who looks over his shoulder toward Bing. How glad I am that my father is going to watch him for a while! Bing starts to walk over and then something tugs on my father's line and he's reeling as fast as he can.

Shouts erupt. Someone has thrown sand in Luke's face and he's jumped out of his sand grave and thrown himself on top of Mark, thrashing and kicking. My mother shouts for me to stop them. And right after I pull Luke off Mark, I look up and see Bing walking alone to the edge of the reef. In the confusion of the fight, nobody notices. I am the only one who sees what Bing is doing.

Bing walks one, two, three steps. His little body is moving so quickly, as if he spotted something wonderful by the water's edge. And I think, *He's going to fall in.* I'm expecting it. And just as I think this, his feet are already in the air, in a moment of balance, before he splashes into the sea and disappears without leaving so much as a ripple in the water.

I sank to my knees watching that spot where he disappeared, not moving, not saying anything. I couldn't make sense of it. I was thinking, Should I run to the water and try to pull him out? Should I shout to my father? Can I rise on my legs fast enough? Can I take it all back and forbid Bing from joining my father on the ledge?

And then my sisters were back, and one of them said, "Where's Bing?" There was silence for a few seconds and then shouts and sand flying as everyone rushed past me toward the water's edge. I stood there unable to move as my sisters looked by the cove wall, as my brothers scrambled to see what lay behind pieces of driftwood. My mother and father were trying to part the waves with their hands.

We were there for many hours. I remember the search boats and the sunset when dusk came. I had never seen a sunset like that: a bright orange flame touching the water's edge and then fanning out, warming the sea. When it became dark, the boats turned their yellow orbs on and bounced up and down on the dark shiny water.

As I look back, it seems unnatural to think about the colors of the sunset and boats at a time like that. But we all had strange thoughts. My father was calculating minutes, estimating the temperature of the water, readjusting his estimate of when Bing fell. My sisters were calling, "Bing! Bing!" as if he were hiding in some bushes high above the beach cliffs. My brothers sat in the car, quietly reading comic books. And when the boats turned off their yellow orbs, my mother went for a swim. She had never swum a stroke in her life, but her faith in her own *nengkan* convinced her that what these Americans couldn't do, she could. She could find Bing.

And when the rescue people finally pulled her out of the water, she still had her *nengkan* intact. Her hair, her clothes, they were all heavy with the cold water, but she stood quietly, calm and regal as a mermaid queen who had just arrived out of the sea. The police called off the search, put us all in our car, and sent us home to grieve.

I had expected to be beaten to death, by my father, by my mother, by my sisters and brothers. I knew it was my fault. I hadn't watched him closely enough, and yet I saw him. But as we sat in the dark living room, I heard them, one by one whispering their regrets.

"I was selfish to want to go fishing," said my father.

50

"We shouldn't have gone for a walk," said Janice, while Ruth blew her nose yet another time.

"Why'd you have to throw sand in my face?" moaned Luke. "Why'd you have to make me start a fight?"

And my mother quietly admitted to me, "I told you to stop their fight. I told you to take your eyes off him."

55

If I had had any time at all to feel a sense of relief, it would have quickly evaporated, because my mother also said, "So now I am telling you, we must go and find him, quickly, tomorrow morning." And everybody's eyes looked down. But I saw it as my punishment: to go out with my mother, back to the beach, to help her find Bing's body.

60

[from *"The Twenty-Six Malignant Gates"* –
Rose Hsu Jordan – *Half and Half*]

How does Tan powerfully convey the effect of this tragic incident on Rose and her family?

- Or** **12** "The mothers are full of good intentions, which often go wrong." Explore the ways in which Tan demonstrates this through Suyuan and Lindo.

ALICE WALKER: *The Color Purple*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 13 Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

Dear God,

I was in town sitting on the wagon while Mr —— was in the dry good

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real slow. What you setting here laughing like a fool fer?

How does Walker vividly capture Celie's thoughts and feelings in this letter?

Or **14** In what ways does Walker make you strongly dislike Alphonso?

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