

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/07

Paper 7 Comment and Appreciation

October/November 2003

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

2 hours

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.
You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs, music or rough working.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.
At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.
All questions carry equal marks.
You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

- 1 Write a comparison of the two extracts below, each of which describes a wet and dismal English county of Lincolnshire.

(a) Lady Dedlock has returned to her house in town for a few days previous to her departure for Paris; she has been down at what she calls, in familiar conversation, her 'place' in Lincolnshire. The waters are out in Lincolnshire. An arch of the bridge in the park has been sapped and sopped away. The adjacent low-lying ground, for half a mile in breadth, is a stagnant river, with melancholy trees for islands in it, and a surface punctured all over, all day long, with falling rain. Lady Dedlock's 'place' has been extremely dreary. The weather, for many a day and night, has been so wet that the trees seem wet through, and the soft loppings and prunings of the woodman's axe can make no crash or crackle as they fall. The deer, looking soaked, leave quagmires where they pass. The shot of a rifle loses its sharpness in the moist air, and its smoke moves in a tardy little cloud towards the green rise, coppice-topped, that makes a background for the falling rain. The view from Lady Dedlock's own windows is alternately a lead-coloured view, and a view in Indian ink. The vases on the stone terrace in the foreground catch the rain all day; and the heavy drops fall, drip, drip, drip, upon the broad flagged pavement, called, from old time, the Ghost's walk, all night.

(from **Bleak House** by Charles Dickens, published in 1853)

(b) The rain beats down upon the battlemented roof of Marchmont Towers this July day, as if it had a mind to flood the old mansion. The flat waste of grass, and the lonely clumps of trees, are almost blotted out by the falling rain. The low grey sky shuts out the distance. This part of Lincolnshire – fenny, misty, and flat always – seems flatter and mistier than usual today. The rain beats hopelessly upon the leaves in the wood behind Marchmont Towers, and splashes into great pools beneath the trees, until the ground is almost hidden by the fallen water, and the trees seem to be growing out of a black lake. The land is lower behind Marchmont Towers, and slopes down gradually to the bank of a dismal river, which straggles through the Marchmont property at a snail's pace, to gain an impetus farther on, until it hurries into the sea somewhere northward of Grimsby. The wood is not held in any great favour by the household at the Towers; and it has been a pet project of several Marchmonts to level and drain it, but a project not very easily to be carried out. Marchmont Towers is said to be unhealthy, as a dwelling-house, by reason of this wood, from which miasmas rise in certain states of the weather; and it is on this account that the back of the house – the eastern front, at least, as it is called – looking to the wood is very little used.

Mary Marchmont sits at a window in the western drawing-room, watching the ceaseless falling of the rain upon this dreary summer afternoon.

(from **John Marchmont's Legacy** by Mary Elizabeth Braddon, published in 1863)

- 2 Write a critical appreciation of the following poem by Zulfikar Ghose (born in 1935):

Flying over India

The point of the eagle's introspection
or its lonely watch-tower withdrawal
is also my point of view. This crab-crawl
flight through sand-holes of air and the suction
of blue, blue, blue makes the jungle below
seem a rotation-crops plot grown fallow: 5

nothing moves in the relativity
of speed. India lies still in primeval
intactness of growth. The great alluvial
plains are sodden with trees: neither city
nor village intrudes with temples and towers 10
in this sprawling virgin-land decked with flowers

and trees, trees. At the jungle's edge, a river
coils out to shed its snake-skin waters to the charm
of the sea. The bizarre, purposeless calm 15
of sand, the country's dangerous cobra-glitter!
The jet rises up in the ocean-swell
of the sky and slides through the air like a shell.

The pilot announces famous landmarks.
But what sand-dune civilization sank 20
in the mud-banks, what mosquito-kingdom drank
up the healing waters? The spoilt monarchs
of luxurious empires could not prevent
the bush-fires of religious dissent.

Give me the purer air. The flat earth is awful. 25
Give me height, height, with its cold perspective
of forms of the earth. Senseless now to dive
like eagles to the earth's sparrows. The jungle's
beasts are unseen from here. From these heights,
one can almost believe in human rights. 30

- 3 Write a critical appreciation of the following poem by Keith Douglas (1920–1944).

Behaviour of Fish in an Egyptian Tea Garden

As a white stone draws down the fish
she on the seafloor of the afternoon
draws down men's glances and their cruel wish
for love. Her red lip on the spoon

slips-in a morsel of ice-cream. Her hands
white as a shell are submarine
fronds, sink with spread fingers, lean
along the table, carmined at the ends.

5

A cotton magnate, an important fish
with great eyepouches and a golden mouth
through the frail reefs of furniture swims out
and idling, suspended, stays to watch.

10

A crustacean old man clamped to his chair
sits near her and might coldly see
her charms through fissures where the eyes should be;
or else his teeth are parted in a stare.

15

Captain on leave, a lean dark mackerel,
lies in the offing, turns himself and looks
through currents of sound. The flat-eyed flatfish sucks
on a straw, staring from its repose, laxly.

20

And gallants in shoals swim up and lag,
circling and passing near the white attraction –
sometimes pausing, opening a conversation –
fish pause so to nibble or tug.

Now the ice-cream is finished, is
paid for. The fish swim off on business
and she sits alone at the table, a white stone
useless except to a collector, a rich man.

25