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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

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Paper 7 Comment and Appreciation

October/November 2012

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **8** printed pages.



1 Write a critical comparison of the following poems.

Working Late

A light is on in my father's study.
 "Still up?" he says, and we are silent,
 looking at the harbor lights,
 listening to the surf
 and the creak of coconut boughs. 5

He is working late on cases.
 No impassioned speech! He argues from evidence,
 actually pacing out and measuring,
 while the fans revolving on the ceiling
 winnow the true from the false. 10

Once he passed a brass curtain rod
 through a head made out of plaster
 and showed the jury the angle of fire—
 where the murderer must have stood.
 For years, all through my childhood,
 if I opened a closet ... bang! 15
 There would be the dead man's head
 with a black hole in the forehead.

All the arguing in the world
 will not stay the moon. 20
 She has come all the way from Russia
 to gaze for a while in a mango tree
 and light the wall of a veranda,
 before resuming her interrupted journey
 beyond the harbor and the lighthouse 25
 at Port Royal, turning away
 from land to the open sea.

Yet, nothing in nature changes, from that day to this,
 she is still the mother of us all. 30
 I can see the drifting offshore lights,
 black posts where the pelicans brood.

And the light that used to shine
 at night in my father's study
 now shines as late in mine.

Louis Simpson (born 1923)

Workman

My father can make catches that work –
locks and latches for any door,

weighted or sprung, and
cleverly hidden to admit just those

trusted with home-secrets. He knows
that a job is best done now, and well,

5

and must wonder at one who fiddles so,
leaves work waiting, will drop all

for friends and a beer. Yet he finds no fault:
he is kind, and has patience to match.

10

But what does he make of one who winds words,
and works at tapping away layers of sense

to craft poems as rough-edged as home-brew,
who spends hours making his verse a catch?

Brian Walter (born 1956)

- 2 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from the novel *Anna of the Indies* by Arnold Bennett (1867–1931).

Anna is taking her first boat trip, together with her friend Henry Mynors and the whole Sutton family; they are sailing from Liverpool in north-west England to the Isle of Man, a voyage that will take several hours.

Suddenly the landing-stage and all the people on it moved away bodily from the ship; there was green water between; a tremor like that of an earthquake ran along the deck; handkerchiefs were waved. The voyage had commenced. Mynors found chairs for all the Suttons, and tucked them up on the lee-side of a deck-house; but Anna did not stir. They passed New Brighton, Seaforth, and the Crosby and Formby light-ships. 5

'Come and view the ship,' said Mynors, at her side. 'Suppose we go round and inspect things a bit?'

'It's a very big one, isn't it?' she asked.

'Pretty big,' he said; 'of course not as big as the Atlantic liners – I wonder we didn't meet one in the river – but still pretty big. Three hundred and twenty feet overall. I sailed on her last year on her maiden voyage. She was packed, and the weather very bad.' 10

'Will it be rough to-day?' Anna inquired timidly.

'Not if it keeps like this,' he laughed. 'You don't feel queer, do you?' 15

'Oh, no. It's as firm as a house. No one could be ill with this?'

'Couldn't they?' he exclaimed. 'Beatrice could be.'

They descended into the ship, and he explained all its internal economy, with a knowledge that seemed to her encyclopaedic. They stayed a long time watching the engines, so titanic, ruthless, and deliberate; even the smell of the oil was pleasant to Anna. When they came on deck again the ship was at sea. For the first time Anna beheld the ocean. A strong breeze blew from prow to stern, yet the sea was absolutely calm, the unruffled mirror of effulgent¹ sunlight. The steamer moved alone on the waters, exultantly, leaving behind it an endless track of white froth in the green, and the shadow of its smoke. The sun, the salt breeze, the living water, the proud gaiety of the ship, produced a feeling of intense, inexplicable joy, a profound satisfaction with the present, and a negligence of past and future. To exist was enough, then. As Anna and Henry leaned over the starboard quarter² and watched the torrent of foam rush madly and ceaselessly from under the paddle-box to be swallowed up in the white wake, the spectacle of the wild torrent almost hypnotized them, destroying thought and reason, and all sense of their relation to other things. With difficulty Anna raised her eyes, and perceived the dim receding line of the Lancashire coast. 20 25 30

'Shall we get quite out of sight of land?' she asked.

'Yes, for a little while, about half an hour or so. Just as much out of sight of land as if we were in the middle of the Atlantic.' 35

'I can scarcely believe it.'

'Believe what?'

'Oh! The idea of that – of being out of sight of land – nothing but sea.'

When at last it occurred to them to reconnoitre the Suttons, they found all three still in their deck-chairs, enwrapped and languid. Mr Sutton and Beatrice were apparently dozing. This part of the deck was occupied by somnolent, basking figures. 40

'Don't wake them,' Mrs Sutton enjoined, whispering out of her hood. Anna glanced curiously at Beatrice's yellow face.

'Go away, do,' Beatrice exclaimed, opening her eyes and shutting them again, wearily. 45

So they went away, and discovered two empty deck-chairs on the fore-deck. Anna was innocently vain of her immunity from *malaise*³. Mynors appeared to appoint himself little errands about the deck, returning frequently to his chair. 'Look over there. Can you see anything?' 50

Anna ran to the rail, with the infantile idea of getting nearer, and Mynors followed, laughing. What looked like a small slate-coloured cloud lay on the horizon.

'I seem to see something,' she said.

'That is the Isle of Man.'

By insensible gradations the contours of the land grew clearer in the afternoon haze. 55

'How far are we off now?'

'Perhaps twenty miles.'

Twenty miles of uninterrupted flatness, and the ship steadily invading that separating solitude, yard by yard, furlong⁴ by furlong! The conception awed her. 60 There, a morsel in the waste of the deep, a speck under the infinite sunlight, lay the island, mysterious, enticing, enchanted, a glinting jewel on the sea's bosom, a remote entity fraught with strange secrets. It was all unspeakable.

¹ *effulgent*: shining brightly

² *starboard quarter*: one side of the ship

³ *malaise*: sea-sickness

⁴ *furlong*: a distance of about 200 metres

3 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from *The Dilemma of a Grandchild* by Ata Aidoo (born 1942).

Ato has just returned to his home in Ghana, after studying at a university in America. In this extract he is seeing his mother, Esi, and his grandmother, Nana, together with other villagers and members of his family.

- Akyere: I say, Esi. For a long time I have not been seeing that sheep which you were rearing in Ato's name.
- Akroma: As for you women.
- Esi: Ho, I have sold it.
- Mansa and Akyere: Sold it! 5
- Esi: But yes.
- Akyere: What did you do with the money?
- Esi: [*Indirectly addressing ATO*] I have not done anything with it. It had a good market and I thought I would find some more money and add to it to give to Ato's father to pay for the bride price for its owner. 10
- Akyere: That is very good.
- Petu: But women, can you not wait for us to finish what we came here to say? The child has just come from a journey. You have not welcomed him but already you want to marry for him.
- Ato: [*As if just awake from sleep*] Ei, Uncle, are you talking of marriage? 15
- Esi: It is nothing. I was only telling your aunt that I have sold your sheep to pay the bride price for you when you make up your mind to marry ...
- Ato: [*Casually*] But I am already married, Maami.
- All: You are married? Married! Married! 20
- Esi: [*Overlapping*] Who is your wife?
- Akyere: [*Overlapping*] When did you marry?
- Mansa: Who is your wife?
- Monka: [*Overlapping*] What is her name?
- Esi: Where does she come from? 25
- [*Everyone repeats her words to create confusion.*]
- Petu: You must all be quiet. One must take time to dissect an ant in order to discover its entrails.
- Monka: [*Laughing wickedly*] Ei, so I have a sister-in-law whom I do not know? 30
- Akroma: Ei, Monka, keep quite.
- Nana: [*Who has been sleeping since she last spoke*] What is all this noise about? Have you asked the child news from his journey?
- [*Silence while everyone stares at ATO*]
- Petu: Ato, when did you marry? 35
- Ato: That is what I was going to tell you. One week ago.
- Nana: [*Spitting*] My grand-child, so you have married? Why did you never write to tell us?
- Esi: Ato my son, who is your wife?

- Ato:* [Quite embarrassed] Eulalie.
- All:* Eh!
- Ato:* I said 'Eulalie'. [*By now all the women are standing.*]
- Monka:* Hurere!
- Esi:* Petu! Akyere! What does he say?
- The Women:* Hurere! 45
- Monka:* Oh, let us say, let us say that some of the names that are coming into the world are fearful.
- Esi:* Ato, you know that some of us did not hear the school bell when it rang. Therefore we will not be able to say this name. This Uhu-hu ... I want her real name, my son. 50
- Ato:* But Maami, this is her only name.
- Mansa:* Our master, isn't your wife ... eh ... Fanti?
- Ato:* No, aunt.
- Akyere:* [*Contemptuously*] If so, what is her tribe?
- Ato:* She has no tribe. She does not come from ... 55
- Nana:* [*Looking up at him*] She has no tribe? The story you are telling us is too sweet, my grand-child. Since I was born, I have not heard of a human being born out of the womb of a woman who has no tribe. Are there trees which never have any roots?
- Petu:* Ato, where does your wife come from? [*A short silence. All look at ATO.*] 60
- Ato:* But no one is prepared to listen to me. My wife comes from ... America.
- Esi:* [*Putting her hands on her head*] Oh Esi! You have an unkind soul. We always hear of other women's sons going to the white man's country. Why should my own go and marry a white woman? 65
- Monka:* Amrika! My brother, you have arrived indeed.
- Akyere:* But we thought that we too have found a treasure at last for our house. What have you done to us, my son? We do not know the ways of the white people. Will not people laugh at us? 70
- Ato:* [*Very nervously*] But who says I have married a white woman? Is everyone in America white? In that country there are white men and black men.
- Akroma:* Nephew, you must tell us properly. We do not know.
- Ato:* But you will not listen to me. [*All quiet. Eyes are focused on ATO.*] I say my wife is as black as we all are. [*Sighs of relaxation.*] 75
- Esi:* But how is it, my child, that she comes from Amrika and she has this strange name? [*The old woman spits significantly.*]
- Nana:* Is that what people call their children in the white man's country?
- Ato:* [*Irritably*] It is not the white man's country. 80
- All:* O ... O ... Oh!
- Ato:* Please, I beg you all, listen. Eulalie's ancestors were of our ancestors. But [*warming up*] as you all know, the white people came and took some away in ships to be slaves ...

- Nana:* [Calmly] And so, my grand-child, all you want to tell us is that my wife is a slave? [At this point even the men get up with shock from their seats. All the women break into violent weeping. ESI KOMA is beside herself with grief. She walks round in all attitudes of mourning.]
- Ato:* [Wildly] But she is not a slave. It was her grandfathers and her grandmothers who were slaves. 90
- Nana:* Ato, do not talk with the foolishness of your generation.

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