

RAFFLES INSTITUTION

2024 YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

HIGHER 2

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9509/01

Paper 1 Reading Literature

Tuesday 10 September 2024

**3 hours
1330-1630**

No Additional Materials are required.

Set texts may be taken into the examination room. They may bear underlining or highlighting. Any kind of folding or flagging of papers in texts (e.g. use of post-its, tape flags or paper clips) is not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Writing paper will be provided. If you need additional paper ask the invigilator.
Write your name and CT group on all the work you hand in.

Answer **three** questions: one question from Section A, one question from Section B, and one question from Section C.
You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

At the end of the examination tie your answer sheets to each section securely.
Hand in your answers **separately**.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **9** printed pages and **1** blank page.

[Turn over

Section A

1

Either (a) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which language, style and form contribute to each poet's portrayal of a father-son relationship.

A

THE HARP

When he was my age and I was already a boy
 my father made a machine in the garage.
 A wired piece of steel
 with many small and beautiful welds
 ground so smooth they resembled rows of pearls. 5

He went broke with whatever it was.
 He held it so carefully in his arms.
 He carried it foundry to foundry.
 I think it was his harp,
 I think it was what he longed to make 10
 with his hands for the world.

He moved it finally from the locked closet
 to the bedroom
 to the garage again
 where he hung it on the wall 15
 until I climbed and pulled it down
 and rubbed it clean
 and tried to make it work.

Bruce Weigl (born 1949)

B

ORNAMENT

My father has few things to protect.
 In our house where laughter flirts
 effortlessly with a history
 of loneliness, sometimes 5
 edifying each other, as two people
 stranded on an island may behave,
 the magnificent koi pond is
 his honour and glory. Cut in black marble,
 water unloosed over imposing
 shoulders of an obsidian¹ wall, it seems, 10
 as I grow older, to be more perfect
 for my father's affections
 than I can ever be, how virtuous
 its talent for turning the commonplace
 beautiful. On nights when 15
 my father is somewhere else
 I stoop over its edge, cautious as
 deer approaching the open, water
 so still it could be land, my body
 ready to navigate a world he has 20
 carved out of absence and longing,
 where we are together again.

Jerrold Yam (born 1991)

¹ *Obsidian*: a hard, black or dark, glasslike volcanic rock formed from cooling lava.

- Or (b) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which language, style and form contribute to each poet's portrayal of childhood.

A CHILDHOOD

How I could see through and through you!
So unconscious, tender, kind,
More than ever was known to you
Of the pure ways of your mind.

We who long to rest from strife 5
Labour sternly as a duty;
But a magic in your life
Charms, unknowing of its beauty.

We are pools whose depths are told;
You are like a mystic fountain, 10
Issuing ever pure and cold
From the hollows of the mountain.

We are men by anguish taught
To distinguish false from true;
Higher wisdom we have not; 15
But a joy within guides you.

George William Russell (1867 – 1935)

B IN CHILDHOOD

things don't die or remain damaged
but return: stumps grow back hands,
a head reconnects to a neck,
a whole corpse rises blushing and newly elastic. 5
Later this vision is not True:
the grandmother remains dead
not hibernating in a wolf's belly.

Or the blue parakeet does not return
from the little grave in the fern garden
though one may wake in the morning 10
thinking mother's call is the bird.

Or maybe the bird is with grandmother
inside light. Or grandmother was the bird
and is now the dog 15
gnawing on the chair leg.

Where do the gone things go
when the child is old enough
to walk herself to school,
her playmates already 20
pumping so high the swing hiccups?

Kimiko Hahn (born 1955)

[Turn over

Section B

JANE AUSTEN: *Pride and Prejudice*

2

- Either (a)** “In *Pride and Prejudice*, marriage as an ideal is exalted, but as a reality is shown to be seriously deficient.”

How far do you agree with this reading of the novel?

- Or (b)** Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the presentation of manners, here and elsewhere in the novel.

Mrs. Bennet, all amazement, though flattered by having a guest of such high importance, received her with the utmost politeness. After sitting for a moment in silence, she said very stiffly to Elizabeth,

“I hope you are well, Miss Bennet. That lady I suppose is your mother.”

Elizabeth replied very concisely that she was.

“And *that* I suppose is one of your sisters?”

“Yes, madam,” said Mrs. Bennet, delighted to speak to a lady Catherine.

“She is my youngest girl but one. My youngest of all, is lately married, and my eldest is somewhere about the grounds, walking with a young man, who I believe will soon become a part of the family.”

“You have a very small park here,” returned Lady Catherine after a short silence.

“It is nothing in comparison of Rosings, my lady, I dare say; but I assure you it is much larger than Sir William Lucas’s.”

“This must be a most inconvenient sitting-room for the evening in summer; the windows are full west.”

Mrs. Bennet assured her that they never sat there after dinner; and then added,

“May I take the liberty of asking your ladyship whether you left Mr. and Mrs. Collins well.”

“Yes, very well. I saw them the night before last.”

Elizabeth now expected that she would produce a letter for her from Charlotte, as it seemed the only probable motive for her calling. But no letter appeared, and she was completely puzzled.

Mrs. Bennet, with great civility, begged her ladyship to take some refreshment; but Lady Catherine very resolutely, and not very politely, declined eating anything; and then rising up said to Elizabeth,

“Miss Bennet, there seemed to be a prettyish kind of a little wilderness on one side of your lawn. I should be glad to take a turn in it, if you will favour me with your company.”

“Go, my dear,” cried her mother, “and shew her ladyship about the different walks. I think she will be pleased with the hermitage.”

Elizabeth obeyed, and, running into her own room for her parasol, attended her noble guest downstairs. As they passed through the hall, Lady Catherine opened the doors into the dining-parlour and drawing-room, and pronouncing them, after a short survey, to be decent looking rooms, walked on.

Her carriage remained at the door, and Elizabeth saw that her waiting-woman was in it. They proceeded in silence along the gravel walk that led to the copse; Elizabeth was determined to make no effort for conversation with a woman, who was now more than usually insolent and disagreeable.

“How could I ever think her like her nephew?” said she, as she looked in her face.

5

10

15

20

25

30

35

40

As soon as they entered the copse, Lady Catherine began in the following manner:—

45

“You can be at no loss, Miss Bennet, to understand the reason of my journey hither. Your own heart, your own conscience, must tell you why I come.”

Elizabeth looked with unaffected astonishment.

“Indeed, you are mistaken, Madam. I have not been at all able to account for the honour of seeing you here.”

50

“Miss Bennet,” replied her ladyship, in an angry tone, “you ought to know, that I am not to be trifled with. But however insincere *you* may choose to be, you shall not find *me* so. My character has ever been celebrated for its sincerity and frankness, and in a cause of such moment as this, I shall certainly not depart from it. A report of a most alarming nature, reached me two days ago. I was told, that not only your sister was on the point of being most advantageously married, but that *you*, that Miss Elizabeth Bennet, would, in all likelihood, be soon afterwards united to my nephew, my own nephew, Mr. Darcy. Though I *know* it must be a scandalous falsehood; though I would not injure him so much as to suppose the truth of it possible, I instantly resolved on setting off for this place, that I might make my sentiments known to you.”

55

60

“If you believed it impossible to be true,” said Elizabeth, colouring with astonishment and disdain, “I wonder you took the trouble of coming so far. What could your ladyship propose by it?”

65

“At once to insist upon having such a report universally contradicted.”

“Your coming to Longbourn, to see me and my family,” said Elizabeth, coolly, “will be rather a confirmation of it; if, indeed, such a report is in existence.”

70

“If! do you then pretend to be ignorant of it? Has it not been industriously circulated by yourselves? Do you not know that such a report is spread abroad?”

(Chapter 56)

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD: *The Great Gatsby*

3

Either (a) 'He found her excitingly desirable.'

Discuss the presentation of desire in *The Great Gatsby*.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the presentation of Gatsby's parties here and elsewhere in the novel.

There was music from my neighbour's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before. 5

Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York—every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back door in a pyramid of pulpless halves. There was a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button was pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb. 15

At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough coloured lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold. In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail was set up, and stocked with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female guests were too young to know one from another. 20

By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five-piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums. The last swimmers have come in from the beach now and are dressing upstairs; the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colours, and hair bobbed in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile. The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names. 25

The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the centre of a group, and then, excited with triumph, glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and colour under the constantly changing light. 30 35 40 45

Suddenly one of these gypsies, in trembling opal, seizes a cocktail out of the air, dumps it down for courage and, moving her hands like Frisco, dances out alone on the canvas platform. A momentary hush; the orchestra leader varies his rhythm obligingly for her, and there is a burst of chatter as the erroneous news goes around that she is Gilda Gray's understudy from the Follies. The party has begun. 50

I believe that on the first night I went to Gatsby's house I was one of the few guests who had actually been invited. People were not invited—they went there. They got into automobiles which bore them out to Long Island, and somehow they ended up at Gatsby's door. Once there they were introduced by somebody who knew Gatsby, and after that they conducted themselves according to the rules of behaviour associated with an amusement park. Sometimes they came and went without having met Gatsby at all, came for the party with a simplicity of heart that was its own ticket of admission. 55 60

(Chapter 3)

[Turn over

Section C

Either (a) “For I am His child, and you are not fit that I should live amongst you.”

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the dramatic presentation of intolerance, here and elsewhere in the play.

Warwick: Precisely. And I shall be the secular arm in this case. Well, my lord, hand over your dead branch; and I will see that the fire is ready for it. If you will answer for The Church's part, I will answer for the secular part.

<i>Cauchon:</i>	[<i>with smouldering anger</i>]: I can answer for nothing. You great lords are too prone to treat The Church as a mere political convenience.	
<i>Warwick:</i>	[<i>smiling and propitiatory</i>]: Not in England, I assure you.	
<i>Cauchon:</i>	In England more than anywhere else. No, my lord: the soul of this village girl is of equal value with yours or your king's before the throne of God; and my first duty is to save it. I will not suffer your lordship to smile at me as if I were repeating a meaningless form of words, and it were well understood between us that I should betray the girl to you. I am no mere political bishop: my faith is to me what your honor is to you; and if there be a loophole through which this baptized child of God can creep to her salvation, I shall guide her to it.	50 55
<i>The Chaplain:</i>	[<i>rising in a fury</i>]: You are a traitor.	60
<i>Cauchon:</i>	[<i>springing up</i>]: You lie, priest. [<i>Trembling with rage</i>] If you dare do what this woman has done — set your country above the holy Catholic Church — you shall go to the fire with her.	
<i>The Chaplain:</i>	My lord: I — I went too far. I —. [<i>he sits down with a submissive gesture</i>].	65

(Scene 4)

BLANK PAGE