



LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen

February/March 2025

2 hours

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

- Answer **two** questions in total:
Section A: answer **one** question.
Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

This document has **12** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Section A: Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

KIRAN DESAI: *The Inheritance of Loss*

- 1 **Either** (a) Discuss the presentation and significance of independence in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which Desai presents Sai and Gyan in the following passage.

Gyan and Sai.

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'Toes?'

(from Chapter 20)

Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1

- 2** **Either** **(a)** Discuss ways in which the writers of **two** stories make mystery important.
- Or** **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage from Bernard Malamud's *The Prison*, considering its effectiveness as the ending of the story.

At the same time he figured he would have to do something sure soon, or it would get harder for the girl to stop her stealing.

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The girl, like a grotesque dancer, half ran, half fell forward, but at the door she managed to turn her white face and thrust out at him her red tongue.

(from The Prison)

EVELYN WAUGH: *A Handful of Dust*

- 3 Either** (a) Discuss ways in which Waugh presents greed in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, considering ways in which Waugh presents the work on the canoes.

They cut four trees and worked on them where they lay, clearing the bush for a few feet round them. They stripped the bark with their broad-bladed knives; that took another week. They worked patiently but clumsily; one woodskin was split in getting it off the trunk. There was nothing Tony and Dr Messinger could do to help. They spent that week guarding the sugar from the women. As the men moved about the camp and the surrounding bush, their steps were soundless; their bare feet seemed never to disturb the fallen leaves, their bare shoulders made no rustle in the tangled undergrowth; their speech was brief and scarcely audible, they never joined in the chatter and laughter of their women; sometimes they gave little grunts as they worked; only once they were merry, when one of them let his knife slip as he was working on the tree trunk and cut deeply into the ball of his thumb. Dr Messinger dressed the wound with iodine, lint and bandages. After that the women constantly solicited him, showing him little scratches on their arms and legs and asking for iodine. 5

Two of the trees were finished on one day, then another next day (that was the one which split) and the fourth two days after that; it was a larger tree than the others. When the last fibre was severed four men got round the trunk and lifted the skin clear. It curled up again at once making a hollow cylinder, which the men carried down to the waterside and set afloat, fastening it to a tree with a loop of vinerope. 10

When all the woodskins were ready it was an easy matter to make canoes of them. Four men held them open while two others fixed the struts. The ends were left open, and curled up slightly so as to lift them clear (when the craft was fully laden it drew only an inch or two of water). Then the men set about fashioning some single-bladed paddles; that, too, was an easy matter. 15

Every day Dr Messinger asked Rosa, 'When will the boats be ready? Ask the men,' and she replied, 'Just now.'

'How many days – four? – five? – how many?'

'No, not many. Boats finish just now.'

At last when it was clear that the work was nearly complete, Dr Messinger busied himself with arrangements. He sorted out the stores, dividing the necessary freight into two groups; he and Tony were to sit in separate boats and each had with him a rifle and ammunition, a camera, tinned rations, trade goods and his own luggage. The third canoe which would be manned solely by Indians was to hold the flour and rice, sugar and farine, and the rations for the men. The canoes would not hold all the stores and an 'emergency dump' was made a little way up the bank. 20 25 30 35

(from In Search of a City, Part 3)

COLSON WHITEHEAD: *The Underground Railroad*

- 4** **Either** **(a)** Discuss some of the ways in which Whitehead makes the idea of a journey important in the novel.
- Or** **(b)** Comment closely on the following passage, considering ways in which Whitehead presents Cora's refuge in Martin's attic.

The heat was impossible most days.

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nothing for him to do.

By his lights, there was

(*from* North Carolina)

Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

- 5** Discuss ways in which the writer presents work on the docks in the following passage.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, structure and narrative methods.

Graspo started them unloading bananas, great green claws of fruit as heavy as stone, of brutal weight even for the accordion maker's muscular and broad shoulders.

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The screwmen seized the bales, stacked them high and tight, forced them into impossibly cramped spaces, odd crannies and corners, through the use of boards and their expanding jackscrews, until the ship nearly split; yet the cargo was perfectly balanced, the ship unsinkable.

Or

- 6 Discuss the presentation of the weather in the following extract from a longer poem.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, structure and poetic methods.

from *That Summer*

That summer it was dangerous to put wet laundry in the dryer
because of flash floods that would erupt along the venting hose
and occasion short circuits.

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late at night from the sky on the other side of the world.

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