

OPTION INTERNATIONALE DU BACCALAUREAT 2003

SECTION BRITANNIQUE

Epreuve de Langue et Littérature

Four hours

Answer **both** Part One and Part Two. You are advised to spend 1 hour 20 minutes **on each question** in Part One and 1 hour 20 minutes on Part Two.

Reminder to all candidates: you will have prepared three texts for the oral examination (a Shakespeare play and two other works). You must not use any of these as the basis for an answer in this written paper.

PART ONE (two thirds of total marks)

Answer **two** questions. The two questions may not be taken from the same section.

SECTION A: DRAMA

Christopher Marlowe: *The Jew of Malta*

- a) "All the central figures are both manipulators and victims." How far would you agree that this is the main reason for the play's dramatic power?
- b) By what means and how effectively does *The Jew of Malta* build up to its dramatic climax in Act 5?

Joe Orton: *Loot*

- a) "At once funny and disturbing ..." How important is the balance between these elements in your reading of *Loot*?
- b) "Orton's plays are more verbal gymnastics than dramatic action." How far, and in what ways, do you think this comment applies to *Loot*?

Brian Friel: *Dancing at Lughnasa*

- a) "In this play women are represented as both *powerful* and *powerless*." How far do you think this is a helpful comment on *Dancing at Lughnasa*?
- b) Explore the play's dramatic portrayal of tensions within and between characters.

SECTION B: POETRY

In your answer in this section you should refer to at least **three** poems.

William Shakespeare: *Sonnets*

- a) Explore Shakespeare's uses of paradox and ambiguity in his Sonnets.
- b) How far and in what ways do you think the Sonnets constitute "meditations on beauty and on time"?

John Keats

- a) How far and in what ways can Keats's work be seen as a poetry of revolt?
- b) How far and in what ways do you think ideas about art and/or dreams contribute to the effectiveness of Keats's poetry?

Gerard Manley Hopkins

- a) How far would you agree that in Hopkins's poetry celebration of the beauty of nature is always a religious experience?
- b) For you, does Hopkins's effectiveness lie more in his technical dexterity or in his expression of feeling?

SECTION C: PROSE FICTION

Thomas Hardy: *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

- a) "Hardy is as interested in communities as he is in individuals." How far and in what ways is this view supported by your reading of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*?
- b) "In Hardy's novels, Character is Fate." How far and in what ways do you think this view applies to *The Mayor of Casterbridge*?

Ernest Hemingway: *For Whom The Bell Tolls*

- a) "Men are for war, women are for love". How far and in what ways do you think the novel supports this view?
- b) What significance do you attach to Hemingway's choice of title for this novel?

Graham Greene: *The Heart of the Matter*

- a) How far, and in what ways, do you think Scobie is presented as a heroic figure?
- b) By what means, and with what effects, does the novel develop the theme of the interconnectedness of people's lives?

PART TWO: Critical Appreciation
(one third of total marks)

EITHER (a)

Write a critical appreciation of the following poem, discussing the poetic methods by which this experience of a train journey is presented.

Here

Swerving east, from rich industrial shadows
And traffic all night north; swerving through fields
Too thin and thistled to be called meadows,
And now and then a harsh-named halt that shields
Workmen at dawn; swerving to solitude 5
Of skies and scarecrows, haystacks, hares and pheasants,
And the widening river's slow presence,
The piled gold clouds, the shining gull-marked mud,

Gathers to the surprise of a large town:
Here domes and statues, spires and cranes cluster 10
Beside grain-scattered streets, barge-crowded water,
And residents from raw estates, brought down
The dead straight miles by stealing flat-faced trolleys¹,
Push through plate-glass swing doors to their desires -
Cheap suits, red kitchen-ware, sharp shoes, iced lollies², 15
Electric mixers, toasters, washers, driers -

A cut-price crowd, urban yet simple, dwelling
Where only salesmen and relations come
Within a terminate and fishy-smelling
Pastoral of ships up streets, the slave museum, 20
Tattoo-shops, consulates, grim head-scarfed wives;
And out beyond its mortgaged half-built edges
Fast-shadowed wheat-fields, running high as hedges,
Isolate villages, where removed lives

Loneliness clarifies. Here silence stands 25
Like heat. Here leaves unnoticed thicken,
Hidden weeds flower, neglected waters quicken,
Luminously-peopled air ascends;
And past the poppies bluish neutral distance
Ends the land suddenly beyond a beach 30
Of shapes and shingle.
Here is unfenced existence:
Facing the sun, untalkative, out of reach.

¹ trolley buses (like trams)

² lollipops

(PART TWO: Critical Appreciation)

OR (b)

The following passage comes from a novel. The first-person narrator, Elaine, is preparing for the first retrospective exhibition of her paintings. Her friend, Cordelia, referred to in the passage, has had a nervous breakdown. Discuss the effectiveness of the writing in the passage in conveying an impression of Elaine's character and anxieties.

Apart from all this, I do of course have a real life. I sometimes have trouble believing in it, because it doesn't seem like the kind of life I could ever get away with, or deserve. This goes along with another belief of mine: that everyone else my age is an adult, whereas I am merely in disguise.

I live in a house, with window curtains and a lawn, in British Columbia, which is as far away from Toronto as I could get without drowning. The unreality of the landscape there encourages me: the greeting-card mountains, of the sunset-and-sloppy-message variety, the cottagy houses that look as if they were built by the Seven Dwarfs in the thirties, the giant slugs, so much larger than a slug needs to be. Even the rain is overdone, I can't take it seriously. I suppose these things are as real, and as oppressive, to the people who grew up there as this place is to me. But on good days it still feels like a vacation, an evasion. On bad days I don't notice it, or much else. 5 10

I have a husband, not my first, whose name is Ben. He is not any sort of an artist, for which I am thankful. He runs a travel agency, specializing in Mexico. Among his other sterling qualities are cheap tickets to the Yucatan. The travel agency is why he hasn't come with me on this trip: the months before Christmas are a hectic time in the travel business. 15

I also have two daughters, by now grown up. Their names are Sarah and Anne, good sensible names. One of them is almost a doctor, the other an accountant. These are sensible choices. I am a believer in sensible choices, so different from many of my own. Also in sensible names for children, because look what happened to Cordelia. 20

Alongside my real life I have a career, which may not qualify as exactly real. I am a painter. I even put that on my passport, in a moment of bravado, since the other choice would have been *housewife*. It's an unlikely thing for me to have become; on some days it still makes me cringe. Respectable people do not become painters: only overblown, pretentious, theatrical people. The word artist embarrasses me; I prefer painter, because it's more like a valid job. An artist is a tawdry, lazy, sort of thing to be, as most people in this country will tell you. If you say you are a painter, you will be looked at strangely. Unless you paint wildlife, or make a lot of money at it, of course. But I only make enough to generate envy, among other painters, not enough so I can tell everyone else to stuff it. 25 30

Most of the time though I exult, and think I have had a narrow escape.

My career is why I'm here, on this futon, under this duvet. I'm having a retrospective, my first. The name of the gallery is Sub-Versions, one of those puns that used to delight me before they became so fashionable. I ought to be pleased by this retrospective, but my feelings are mixed: I don't like admitting I'm old enough and established enough to have such a thing, even at an alternative gallery run by a bunch of women. I find it improbable, and ominous: first the retrospective, then the morgue. But also I'm cheesed off because the Art Gallery of Ontario wouldn't do it. Their bias is towards dead, foreign men. 35 40