

**OPTION INTERNATIONALE DU BACCALAUREAT
SESSION DE JUIN 2005**

SECTION : BRITANNIQUE

EPREUVE : LANGUE ET LITTERATURE

DUREE TOTALE : 4 HEURES

SUJETS PRINCIPAUX

Le candidat devra traiter UN des deux sujets proposés

OPTION INTERNATIONALE DU BACCALAUREAT 2005

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 works for the oral examination. 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

Henrik Ibsen: *Hedda Gabler*

1. When Hedda first enters, she exclaims, 'The room needs some fresh air'. How important is the idea of oppression and confinement to the drama of the play?
2. How far and in what ways does Ibsen's stagecraft in *Hedda Gabler* produce the effect of a tragic ending that is inescapable for its heroine?

Richard Sheridan: *School for Scandal*

1. 'The audience is irresistibly drawn to the guilty pleasures of scandal and gossip.' How far do you agree that Sheridan's play endorses the kind of behaviour it seeks to satirise?
2. To what extent is the absence of a single hero or heroine a strength rather than a weakness in this play?

Arthur Miller: *Death of a Salesman*

1. How important are the scenery, props and sound effects in helping the audience to understand the play's issues?
2. 'This play is Miller's condemnation of a world in which everything, including the human being, exists to be consumed.'
How far would you agree with this statement of the play's purpose?

Section B: Poetry

In your answer in this section you should refer to at least **two** poems; consider the effects of the writing in the poems you discuss.

Seamus Heaney: *Selected Poems*

1. How far is Heaney's poetry about 'returning to the origins and bringing something back'?
2. How effectively does Heaney give personal voice to matters of a political nature?

William Wordsworth: *Selected Poems*

1. To what extent does Wordsworth's poetry present the idea that 'pleasure at the sight of nature is not enough; it must be mixed with and transformed by thought'?
2. How important is the role of the past in Wordsworth's poetry?

Sylvia Plath: *Selected Poems*

1. 'It is the sense of threat that gives her work its distinction.' How far does your reading of Plath's poetry lead you to agree?
2. How far do you agree that Plath's style and themes are essentially feminine?

Section C: Prose

E.M. Forster: *A Passage to India*

1. 'India is more than just a setting for the novel.' How far do you agree with this view?
2. How far does the organisation of the novel in three sections contribute to the reader's understanding of the main themes?

Emily Brontë: *Wuthering Heights*

1. How far do you agree that the multiplicity of narrative voices is central to the effects of this novel?
2. How, and with what effects, does the novel explore ideas of confinement and escape?

Charles Dickens: *Hard Times*

1. 'People must be amused!' Explain the background of this comment by Mr Sleary and assess its implications in the novel.
2. How and to what purpose does Dickens use a range of narrative styles in *Hard Times*?

Part Two: Critical Appreciation (one third of total marks)

Answer **ONE** question.

1. Write a critical appreciation of the following poem, discussing the effects of the way a memorable event is recalled here.

At Castle Boterel

As I drive to the junction of lane and highway,
And the drizzle bedrenches the waggonette,
I look behind at the fading byway,
And see on its slope, now glistening wet,
Distinctly yet

5

Myself and a girlish form benighted
In dry March weather. We climb the road
Beside a chaise. We had just alighted
To ease the sturdy pony's load
When he sighed and slowed.

10

What we did as we climbed, and what we talked of
Matters not much, nor to what it led, -
Something that life will not be balked of
Without rude reason till hope is dead,
And feeling fled.

15

It filled but a minute. But was there ever
A time of such quality, since or before,
In that hill's story? To one mind never,
Though it has been climbed, foot-swift, foot-sore,
By thousands more.

20

Primaeval rocks form the road's steep border,
And much have they faced there, first and last,
Of the transitory in Earth's long order;
But what they record in colour and cast
Is - that we two passed.

25

And to me, though Time's unflinching rigour,
In mindless rote, has ruled from sight
The substance now, one phantom figure
Remains on the slope, as when that night
Saw us alight.

30

I look and see it there, shrinking, shrinking,
I look back at it amid the rain
For the very last time; for my sand is sinking,
And I shall traverse old love's domain
Never again.

35

2. Write a critical appreciation of the following passage from a novel, focusing on the way the narrator presents ideas about modern immigrant life in London.

It is only this late in the day, and possibly only in Willesden, that you can find best friends Sita and Sharon, constantly mistaken for each other because Sita is white (her mother liked the name) and Sharon is Pakistani (her mother thought it best - less trouble). Yet, despite all the mixing up, despite the fact that we have finally slipped into each other's lives with reasonable comfort (like a man returning to his lover's bed after a midnight walk), despite all this, it is still hard to admit that there is no one more English than the Indian, no one more Indian than the English. There are still young white men who are *angry* about that; who will roll out at closing time into the poorly lit streets with a kitchen knife wrapped in a tight fist. 5

But it makes an immigrant laugh to hear the fears of the nationalist, scared of infection, penetration, miscegenation, when this is small fry, *peanuts*, compared to what the immigrant fears - dissolution, *disappearance*. Even the unflappable Alsana Iqbal would regularly wake up in a puddle of her own sweat after a night visited by visions of Millat (genetically *BB*; where *B* stands for Bengali-ness) marrying someone called Sarah (*aa* where 'a' stands for Aryan), resulting in a child called Michael (*Ba*), who in turn marries somebody called Lucy (*aa*), leaving Alsana with a legacy of unrecognizable great-grandchildren (*Aaaaaaa!*), their Bengali-ness thoroughly diluted, genotype hidden by phenotype. It is both the most irrational and natural feeling in the world. In Jamaica it is even in the grammar: there is no choice of personal pronoun, no splits between *me* or *you* or *they*, there is only the pure, homogenous *I*. When Hortense Bowden, half white herself, got to hearing about Clara's marriage, she came round to the house, stood on the doorstep, said, 'Understand: I and I don't speak from this moment forth,' turned on her heel and was true to her word. Hortense hadn't put all that effort into marrying black, into dragging her genes back from the brink, just so her daughter could bring yet more high-coloured children into the world. 10 15 20

Likewise, in the Iqbal house the lines of battle were clearly drawn. When Millat brought an Emily or a Lucy back home, Alsana quietly wept in the kitchen, Samad went into the garden to attack the coriander. The next morning was a waiting game, a furious biting of tongues until the Emily or Lucy left the house and the war of words could begin. But with Irie and Clara the issue was mostly unspoken, for Clara knew she was not in a position to preach. Still, she made no attempt to disguise her disappointment or the aching sadness. From Irie's bedroom shrine of green-eyed Hollywood idols to the gaggle of white friends who regularly trooped in and out of her bedroom, Clara saw an ocean of pink skins surrounding her daughter and she feared the tide that would take her away. 25 30

It was partly for this reason that Irie didn't mention the Chalfens to her parents. It wasn't that she intended to *mate* with the Chalfens . . . but the instinct was the same. She had a nebulous fifteen-year-old's passion for them, overwhelming, yet with no real direction or object. She just wanted to, well, kind of, *merge* with them. She wanted their Englishness. Their Chalfishness. The *purity* of it. It didn't occur to her that the Chalfens were, after a fashion, immigrants too (third generation, by way of Germany and Poland, née Chalfenovsky), or that they might be as needy of her as she was of them. To Irie, the Chalfens were more English than the English. When Irie stepped over the threshold of the Chalfen house, she felt an illicit thrill, like a Jew munching a sausage or a Hindu grabbing a Big Mac. She was crossing borders, sneaking into England; it felt like some terribly mutinous act, wearing somebody else's uniform or somebody else's skin. 35 40