

LITERATURE (ENGLISH)
Paper 1 Poetry and Prose

0486/12
February/March 2018

Section A: Poetry

text	question numbers	page[s]
<i>Songs of Ourselves Volume 1: from Part 5</i>	1, 2	pages 4–5
<i>Songs of Ourselves Volume 2: from Part 1</i>	3, 4	pages 6–7
Gillian Clarke: from <i>Collected Poems</i>	5, 6	pages 8–9

SECTION A: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 1: from Part 5

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 1 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Reservist

Time again for the annual joust, the regular fanfare,
a call to arms, the imperative letters stern
as clarion notes, the king's command, upon
the pain of court-martial, to tilt
at the old windmills. With creaking bones 5
and suppressed grunts, we battle-weary knights
creep to attention, ransack the wardrobes
for our rusty armour, tuck the pot bellies
with great finesse into the shrinking gear,
and with helmets shutting off half our world, 10
report for service. We are again united
with sleek weapons we were betrothed to
in our active cavalier days.

We will keep charging up the same hills, plod
through the same forests, till we are too old, 15
too ill-fitted for life's other territories.
The same trails will find us time and again,
and we quick to obey, like children placed
on carousels they cannot get off from, borne
along through somebody's expensive fantasyland, 20
with an oncoming rush of tedious rituals, masked threats
and monsters armed with the same roar.

In the end we will perhaps surprise ourselves
and emerge unlikely heroes with long years
of braving the same horrors 25
pinned on our tunic fronts.
We will have proven that Sisyphus is not a myth.
We will play the game till the monotony
sends his lordship to sleep.
We will march the same paths till they break 30
onto new trails, our lives stumbling
onto the open sea, into daybreak.

(Boey Kim Cheng)

Explore the ways in which Boey uses language to memorable effect in this poem.

- Or 2 How does Baxter convey a sense of admiration for his grandfather in *Elegy For My Father's Father*?

Elegy For My Father's Father

He knew in the hour he died
 That his heart had never spoken
 In eighty years of days.
 O for the tall tower broken
 Memorial is denied: 5
 And the unchanging cairn
 That pipes could set ablaze
 An aaronsrod and blossom.
 They stood by the graveside
 From his bitter veins born 10
 And mourned him in their fashion.
 A chain of sods in a day
 He could slice and build
 High as the head of a man
 And a flowering cherry tree 15
 On his walking shoulder held
 Under the lion sun.
 When he was old and blind
 He sat in a curved chair
 All day by the kitchen fire. 20
 Many hours he had seen
 The stars in their drunken dancing
 Through the burning-glass of his mind
 And sober knew the green
 Boughs of heaven folding 25
 The winter world in their hand.
 The pride of his heart was dumb.
 He knew in the hour he died
 That his heart had never spoken
 In song or bridal bed. 30
 And the naked thought fell back
 To a house by the waterside
 And the leaves the wind had shaken
 Then for a child's sake:
 To the waves all night awake 35
 With the dark mouths of the dead.
 The tongues of water spoke
 And his heart was unafraid.

(James K Baxter)

SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 2: from Part 1

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 3 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Passion

Full of desire I lay, the sky wounding me,
Each cloud a ship without me sailing, each tree
Possessing what my soul lacked, tranquillity.

Waiting for the longed-for voice to speak
Through the mute telephone, my body grew weak
With the well-known and mortal death, heartbreak. 5

The language I knew best, my human speech
Forsook my fingers, and out of reach
Were Homer's ghosts, the savage conches of the beach.

Then the sky spoke to me in language clear, 10
Familiar as the heart, than love more near.
The sky said to my soul, "You have what you desire.

'Know now that you are born along with these
Clouds, winds, and stars, and ever-moving seas
And forest dwellers. This your nature is. 15

Lift up your heart again without fear,
Sleep in the tomb, or breathe the living air,
This world you with the flower and with the tiger share.'

Then I saw every visible substance turn
Into immortal, every cell new born
Burned with the holy fire of passion. 20

This world I saw as on her judgment day
When the war ends, and the sky rolls away,
And all is light, love and eternity.

(Kathleen Raine)

How does Raine movingly convey a powerful experience in this poem?

-----**END OF PAPER**-----

SECTION A: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 1: from Part 5

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 1 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Cold In The Earth

Cold in the earth, and the deep snow piled above thee!
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my Only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-wearing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains on Angora's shore;
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
That noble heart for ever, ever more?

5

Cold in the earth, and fifteen wild Decembers
From those brown hills have melted into spring –
Faithful indeed is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

10

Sweet Love of youth, forgive if I forget thee
While the World's tide is bearing me along:
Stern desires and darker hopes beset me,
Hopes which obscure but cannot do thee wrong.

15

No other Sun has lightened up my heaven;
No other Star has ever shone for me:
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given –
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

20

But when the days of golden dreams had perished
And even Despair was powerless to destroy,
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened and fed without the aid of joy;

Then did I check the tears of useless passion,
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
Down to that tomb already more than mine!

25

And even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in Memory's rapturous pain;
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

30

(Emily Brontë)

How does Brontë powerfully convey strong emotions in this poem?

Or 2 What does Adcock's writing make you feel towards Heidi in *For Heidi With Blue Hair*?

For Heidi With Blue Hair

When you dyed your hair blue
(or, at least, ultramarine
for the clipped sides, with a crest
of jet-black spikes on top)
you were sent home from school 5

because, as the headmistress put it,
although dyed hair was not
specifically forbidden, yours
was, apart from anything else,
not done in the school colours. 10

Tears in the kitchen, telephone-calls
to school from your freedom-loving father:
'She's not a punk in her behaviour;
it's just a style.' (You wiped your eyes,
also not in a school colour.) 15

'She discussed it with me first –
we checked the rules.' 'And anyway, Dad,
it cost twenty-five dollars.
Tell them it won't wash out –
not even if I wanted to try.' 20

It would have been unfair to mention
your mother's death, but that
shimmered behind the arguments.
The school had nothing else against you;
the teachers twittered and gave in. 25

Next day your black friend had hers done
in grey, white and flaxen yellow –
the school colours precisely:
an act of solidarity, a witty
tease. The battle was already won. 30

(*Fleur Adcock*)

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SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 2: from Part 2

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 3 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

The Caged Skylark

As a dare-gale skylark scanted in a dull cage,
Man's mounting spirit in his bone-house, mean house, dwells –
That bird beyond the remembering his free fells;
This in drudgery, day-labouring-out life's age. 5
Though aloft on turf or perch or poor low stage
Both sing sometimes the sweetest, sweetest spells,
Yet both droop deadly sometimes in their cells
Or wring their barriers in bursts of fear or rage.

Not that the sweet-fowl, song-fowl, needs no rest –
Why, hear him, hear him babble and drop down to his nest, 10
But his own nest, wild nest, no prison.

Man's spirit will be flesh-bound when found at best,
But uncumberèd: meadow-down is not distressed
For a rainbow footing it nor he for his bones risen.

(Gerard Manley Hopkins)

How does Hopkins vividly convey thoughts and feelings about the bird in this poem?

Or 4 How does Awoonor make *The Sea Eats the Land at Home* such a moving poem?

The Sea Eats the Land at Home

At home the sea is in the town,
Running in and out of the cooking places,
Collecting the firewood from the hearths
And sending it back at night;
The sea eats the land at home. 5
It came one day at the dead of night,
Destroying the cement walls,
And carried away the fowls,
The cooking-pots and the ladies,
The sea eats the land at home; 10
It is a sad thing to hear the wails,
And the mourning shouts of the women,
Calling on all the gods they worship,
To protect them from the angry sea.
Aku stood outside where her cooking-pot stood, 15
With her two children shivering from the cold,
Her hands on her breast,
Weeping mournfully.
Her ancestors have neglected her,
Her gods have deserted her, 20
It was a cold Sunday morning,
The storm was raging,
Goats and fowls were struggling in the water,
The angry water of the cruel sea;
The lap-lapping of the bark water at the shore, 25
And above the sobs and the deep and low moans,
Was the eternal hum of the living sea.
It has taken away their belongings
Adena has lost the trinkets which
Were her dowry and her joy, 30
In the sea that eats the land at home,
Eats the whole land at home.

(Kofi Awoonor)

-----END OF PAPER-----

LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

Paper 4 Unseen

0486/42

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Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

EITHER

1 Read carefully the poem opposite. It is about a boy helping his grandmother with her knitting.

How does the poet vividly convey the experience of visiting his grandmother?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- his thoughts and feelings about his grandmother's room
- how he portrays his grandmother
- how he conveys ideas about time and memory.

At My Grandmother's

An afternoon late summer in a room
shuttered against the bright envenomed leaves;
an underwater world where time like water
was held in the wide arms of a gilded clock,
and my grandmother, turning in the still sargasso¹
of memory, wound out her griefs and held
a small boy prisoner to weeds and corals
while summer leaked its daylight through his head.

I feared that room: the parrot screeching soundless
in its dome of glass, the faded butterflies
like jewels pinned against a sable² cloak;
and my grandmother, winding out the skeins³ I held
like trickling time between my outstretched arms.

Feared most of all the stiff, bejewelled fingers
pinned at her throat or moving on grey wings
from word to word; and feared her voice that called
down from their gilded frames the ghosts of children
who played at hoop and ball, whose spindrift⁴ faces
(the drowned might wear such smiles) looked out across
the wrack⁵ and debris of the years to where
a small boy sat, as they once sat, and held
in the wide ache of his arms all time like water,
and watched the old grey hands wind out his blood.

¹ *sargasso*: a stagnant tropical sea

² *sable*: dark fur

³ *skeins*: threads of wool

⁴ *spindrift*: sea spray

⁵ *wrack*: seaweed

OR

- 2 Read carefully the following extract from the beginning of a novel. It describes a man who makes money from searching a river in London for whatever he might find. His boat is being rowed by his daughter, Lizzie.

How does the writer create such a disturbing atmosphere in this passage?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how he portrays the father
- how he portrays the daughter and her feelings
- how the description of the scene contributes to the dark and ominous atmosphere.

Allied to the bottom of the river rather than the surface, by reason of the slime and ooze with which it was covered, and its sodden state, this boat and the two figures in it obviously were doing something that they often did, and were seeking what they often sought. Half savage as the man showed, with no covering on his matted head, with his brown arms bare to between the elbow and the shoulder, with the loose knot of a looser kerchief¹ lying low on his bare breast in a wilderness of beard and whisker, with such dress as he wore seeming to be made out of the mud that begrimed his boat, still there was business-like usage in his steady gaze. So with every lithe action of the girl, with every turn of her wrist, perhaps most of all with her look of dread or horror; they were things of usage.

'Keep her out, Lizzie. Tide runs strong here. Keep her well afore² the sweep of it.'

Trusting to the girl's skill and making no use of the rudder, he eyed the coming tide with an absorbed attention. So the girl eyed him. But, it happened now, that a slant of light from the setting sun glanced into the bottom of the boat, and, touching a rotten stain there which bore some resemblance to the outline of a muffled human form, coloured it as though with diluted blood. This caught the girl's eye, and she shivered.

'What ails³ you?' said the man, immediately aware of it, though so intent on the advancing waters; 'I see nothing afloat.'

The red light was gone, the shudder was gone, and his gaze, which had come back to the boat for a moment, travelled away again. Wheresoever the strong tide met with an impediment⁴, his gaze paused for an instant. At every mooring-chain and rope, at every stationary boat or barge that split the current into a broad-arrowhead, at the offsets from the piers of Southwark Bridge, at the paddles of the river steamboats as they beat the filthy water, at the floating logs of timber lashed together lying off certain wharves, his shining eyes darted a hungry look. After a darkening hour or so, suddenly the rudder-lines tightened in his hold, and he steered hard towards the Surrey shore.

Always watching his face, the girl instantly answered to the action in her sculling⁵; presently the boat swung round, quivered as from a sudden jerk, and the upper half of the man was stretched out over the stern⁶.

The girl pulled the hood of a cloak she wore, over her head and over her face, and, looking backward so that the front folds of this hood were turned down the river, kept the boat in that direction going before the tide. Until now, the boat had barely held her own, and had hovered about one spot; but now, the banks changed swiftly, and the deepening shadows and the kindling lights of London Bridge were passed, and the tiers of shipping lay on either hand.

It was not until now that the upper half of the man came back into the boat. His arms were wet and dirty, and he washed them over the side. In his right hand he held something, and he washed that in the river too. It was money. He chinked it once, and he blew upon it once, and he spat upon it once, – ‘for luck,’ he hoarsely said – before he put it in his pocket.

‘Lizzie!’

The girl turned her face towards him with a start, and rowed in silence. Her face was very pale. He was a hook-nosed man, and with that and his bright eyes and his ruffled head, bore a certain likeness to a roused bird of prey.

¹ *kerchief*: neck scarf

² *Keep her well afore*: keep the boat ahead of

³ *ails*: disturbs

⁴ *impediment*: obstacle in the river

⁵ *sculling*: rowing

⁶ *stern*: the rear end of the boat

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