
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/31

Paper 3 Poetry and Prose

October/November 2018

2 hours

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer **two** questions, each from a different section.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.



This document consists of **11** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** insert.

Section A: Poetry

ROBERT FROST: *Selected Poems*

- 1 **Either** (a) With reference to **two** poems, discuss ways in which Frost creates moments of tension by using speech.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following poem, considering ways in which it presents the activity of mowing and the speaker's response to it.

Mowing

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
 And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
 What was it it whispered? I knew not well myself;
 Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
 Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound— 5
 And that was why it whispered and did not speak.
 It was no dream of the gift of idle hours,
 Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf:
 Anything more than the truth would have seemed too weak
 To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows, 10
 Not without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers
 (Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.
 The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows.
 My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS: *Selected Poems*

- 2 **Either** (a) With reference to **two** poems, compare Jennings's presentation and use of specific places in her poetry.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the presentation of the relationship between the parents in the following poem.

One Flesh

Lying apart now, each in a separate bed,
 He with a book, keeping the light on late,
 She like a girl dreaming of childhood,
 All men elsewhere—it is as if they wait
 Some new event: the book he holds unread, 5
 Her eyes fixed on the shadows overhead.

Tossed up like flotsam from a former passion,
 How cool they lie. They hardly ever touch,
 Or if they do it is like a confession
 Of having little feeling—or too much. 10
 Chastity faces them, a destination
 For which their whole lives were a preparation.

Strangely apart, yet strangely close together,
 Silence between them like a thread to hold
 And not wind in. And time itself's a feather 15
 Touching them gently. Do they know they're old,
 These two who are my father and my mother
 Whose fire from which I came, has now grown cold?

Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2

- 3 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which **two** poems express disappointment and disillusionment.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which Donne uses language and form to develop the ideas in the following poem.

This is My Play's Last Scene

This is my play's last scene, here heavens appoint
 My pilgrimage's last mile; and my race
 Idly, yet quickly run, hath this last pace,
 My span's last inch, my minute's latest point,
 And gluttonous death, will instantly unjoint 5
 My body, and soul, and I shall sleep a space,
 But my'ever-waking part shall see that face,
 Whose fear already shakes my every joint:
 Then, as my soul, to heaven her first seat, takes flight,
 And earth-born body, in the earth shall dwell, 10
 So, fall my sins, that all may have their right,
 To where they are bred, and would press me, to hell.
 Impute me righteous, thus purged of evil,
 For thus I leave the world, the flesh, and devil.

John Donne

Turn over for Section B.

Section B: Prose

JHUMPA LAHIRI: *The Namesake*

- 4 **Either** (a) ‘And though she still does not feel fully at home within these walls on Pemberton Road she knows that this is home nevertheless –’.

In the light of this comment, discuss some of the ways in which the novel explores ideas of home.

- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, considering the presentation of Gogol’s response to the book and the importance of this extract to the novel.

“Come in,” he hollers, expecting it to be Sonia in her pajamas, asking if she can borrow his Magic 8 Ball or his Rubik’s Cube. He is surprised to see his father, standing in stocking feet, a small potbelly visible beneath his oat-colored sweater vest, his mustache turning gray. Gogol is especially surprised to see a gift in his father’s hands. His father has never given him birthday presents apart from whatever his mother buys, but this year, his father says, walking across the room to where Gogol is sitting, he has something special. The gift is covered in red-and-green-and-gold-striped paper left over from Christmas the year before, taped awkwardly at the seams. It is obviously a book, thick, hardcover, wrapped by his father’s own hands. Gogol lifts the paper slowly, but in spite of this the tape leaves a scab. *The Short Stories of Nikolai Gogol*, the jacket says. Inside, the price has been snipped away on the diagonal. 5

“I ordered it from the bookstore, just for you,” his father says, his voice raised in order to be heard over the music. “It’s difficult to find in hardcover these days. It’s a British publication, a very small press. It took four months to arrive. I hope you like it.” 15

Gogol leans over toward the stereo to turn the volume down a bit. He would have preferred *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, or even another copy of *The Hobbit* to replace the one he lost last summer in Calcutta, left on the rooftop of his father’s house in Alipore and snatched away by crows. In spite of his father’s occasional suggestions, he has never been inspired to read a word of Gogol, or any Russian writer, for that matter. He has never been told why he was really named Gogol, doesn’t know about the accident that had nearly killed his father. He thinks his father’s limp is the consequence of an injury playing soccer in his teens. He’s been told only half the truth about Gogol: that his father is a fan. 20

“Thanks, Baba,” Gogol says, eager to return to his lyrics. Lately he’s been lazy, addressing his parents in English though they continue to speak to him in Bengali. Occasionally he wanders through the house with his running sneakers on. At dinner he sometimes uses a fork. 25

His father is still standing there in his room, watching expectantly, his hands clasped together behind his back, so Gogol flips through the book. A single picture at the front, on smoother paper than the rest of the pages, shows a pencil drawing of the author, sporting a velvet jacket, a billowy white shirt and cravat. The face is foxlike, with small, dark eyes, a thin, neat mustache, an extremely large pointy nose. Dark hair slants steeply across his forehead and is plastered to either side of his head, and there is a disturbing, vaguely supercilious smile set into long, narrow lips. Gogol Ganguli is relieved to see no resemblance. True, his nose is long but not so long, his hair dark but surely not so dark, his skin pale but certainly not so pale. The style of his own hair is altogether different—thick Beatle-like bangs that conceal his brows. Gogol Ganguli wears a Harvard sweatshirt and gray Levi’s corduroys. 30

He has worn a tie once in his life, to attend a friend's bar mitzvah. No, he concludes confidently, there is no resemblance at all.

For by now, he's come to hate questions pertaining to his name, hates having constantly to explain. He hates having to tell people that it doesn't mean anything "in Indian."

45

Chapter 4

EDITH WHARTON: *The House of Mirth*

- 5 **Either** (a) How far, and in what ways, does Wharton's presentation of Lily lead you to sympathise with her?
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the presentation of Selden and his attitude to Lily in the following passage.

Selden's sense of the privilege of being included in such company brought him early in the evening to the door of the restaurant, where he paused to scan the ranks of diners approaching down the brightly lit terrace. There, while the Brys hovered within over the last agitating alternatives of the menu, he kept watch for the guests from the *Sabrina*, who at length rose on the horizon in company with the Duchess, Lord and Lady Skiddaw, and the Stepneys. From this group it was easy to detach Miss Bart on the pretext of a moment's glance into one of the brilliant shops along the terrace, and to say to her, while they lingered together in the white dazzle of a jeweller's window: 'I stopped over to see you – to beg of you to leave the yacht.' 5

The eyes she turned on him showed a quick gleam of her former fear. 'To leave –? What do you mean? What has happened?' 10

'Nothing. But if anything should, why be in the way of it?'

The glare from the jeweller's window, deepening the pallor of her face, gave to its delicate lines the sharpness of a tragic mask. 'Nothing will, I am sure; but while there's even a doubt left, how can you think I would leave Bertha?' 15

The words rang out on a note of contempt – was it possibly of contempt for himself? Well, he was willing to risk its renewal to the extent of insisting, with an undeniable throb of added interest: 'You have yourself to think of, you know –' to which, with a strange fall of sadness in her voice, she answered, meeting his eyes: 'If you knew how little difference that makes!' 20

'Oh, well nothing *will* happen,' he said, more for his own reassurance than for hers; and, 'Nothing, nothing, of course!' she valiantly assented, as they turned to overtake their companions.

In the thronged restaurant, taking their places about Mrs Bry's illuminated board, their confidence seemed to gain support from the familiarity of their surroundings. Here were Dorset and his wife once more presenting their customary faces to the world, she engrossed in establishing her relation with an intensely new gown, he shrinking with dyspeptic dread from the multiplied solicitations of the menu. The mere fact that they thus showed themselves together, with the utmost openness the place afforded, seemed to declare beyond a doubt that their differences were composed. How this end had been attained was still matter for wonder, but it was clear that for the moment Miss Bart rested confidently in the result: and Selden tried to achieve the same view by telling himself that her opportunities for observation had been ampler than his own. 25 30 35

Meanwhile, as the dinner advanced through a labyrinth of courses, in which it became clear that Mrs Bry had occasionally broken away from Lord Hubert's restraining hand, Selden's general watchfulness began to lose itself in a particular study of Miss Bart. It was one of the days when she was so handsome that to be handsome was enough, and all the rest – her grace, her quickness, her social felicities – seemed the overflow of a bounteous nature. But what especially struck him was the way in which she detached herself, by a hundred indefinable shades, from the persons who most abounded in her own style. It was in just such company, the fine flower and complete expression of the state she aspired to, that the differences came out with special poignancy, her grace cheapening the other women's smartness as her finely-discriminated silences made their chatter dull. The strain of the last hours had restored to her face the deeper eloquence 40 45

which Selden had lately missed in it, and the bravery of her words to him still fluttered in her voice and eyes. Yes, she was matchless – it was the one word for her; and he could give his admiration the freer play because so little personal feeling remained in it. 50

Book 2, Chapter 3

Stories of Ourselves

- 6 **Either** (a) Compare ways in which **two** stories present old age.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage from *Games at Twilight*, considering its presentation of Ravi and his situation.

It grew darker in the shed as the light at the door grew softer, fuzzier, turned to a kind of crumbling yellow pollen that turned to yellow fur, blue fur, grey fur. Evening. Twilight. The sound of water gushing, falling. The scent of earth receiving water, slaking its thirst in great gulps and releasing that green scent of freshness, coolness. Through the crack Ravi saw the long purple shadows of the shed and the garage lying still across the yard. Beyond that, the white walls of the house. The bougainvillea had lost its lividity, hung in dark bundles that quaked and twittered and seethed with masses of homing sparrows. The lawn was shut off from his view. Could he hear the children's voices? It seemed to him that he could. It seemed to him that he could hear them chanting, singing, laughing. But what about the game? What had happened? Could it be over? How could it when he was still not found? 5 10

It then occurred to him that he could have slipped out long ago, dashed across the yard to the veranda and touched the 'den'. It was necessary to do that to win. He had forgotten. He had only remembered the part of hiding and trying to elude the seeker. He had done that so successfully, his success had occupied him so wholly that he had quite forgotten that success had to be clinched by that final dash to victory and the ringing cry of 'Den!' 15

With a whimper he burst through the crack, fell on his knees, got up and stumbled on stiff, benumbed legs across the shadowy yard, crying heartily by the time he reached the veranda so that when he flung himself at the white pillar and bawled, 'Den! Den! Den!' his voice broke with rage and pity at the disgrace of it all and he felt himself flooded with tears and misery. 20

Out on the lawn, the children stopped chanting. They all turned to stare at him in amazement. Their faces were pale and triangular in the dusk. The trees and bushes around them stood inky and sepulchral, spilling long shadows across them. They stared, wondering at his reappearance, his passion, his wild animal howling. Their mother rose from her basket chair and came towards him, worried, annoyed, saying, 'Stop it, stop it, Ravi. Don't be a baby. Have you hurt yourself?' Seeing him attended to, the children went back to clasping their hands and chanting 'The grass is green, the rose is red ...' 25 30

But Ravi would not let them. He tore himself out of his mother's grasp and pounded across the lawn into their midst, charging at them with his head lowered so that they scattered in surprise. 'I won, I won, I won,' he bawled, shaking his head so that the big tears flew. 'Raghu didn't find me. I won, I won—'

It took them a minute to grasp what he was saying, even who he was. They had quite forgotten him. Raghu had found all the others long ago. There had been a fight about who was to be It next. It had been so fierce that their mother had emerged from her bath and made them change to another game. Then they had played another and another. Broken mulberries from the tree and eaten them. Helped the driver wash the car when their father returned from work. Helped the gardener water the beds till he roared at them and swore he would complain to their parents. The parents had come out, taken up their positions on the cane chairs. They had begun to play again, sing and chant. All this time no one had remembered Ravi. Having disappeared from the scene, he had disappeared from their minds. Clean. 35 40

'Don't be a fool,' Raghu said roughly, pushing him aside, and even Mira said, 'Stop howling, Ravi. If you want to play, you can stand at the end of the line,' and she put him there very firmly. 45

The game proceeded. Two pairs of arms reached up and met in an arc. The

children trooped under it again and again in a lugubrious circle, ducking their heads and intoning 50

‘The grass is green,
The rose is red;
Remember me
When I am dead, dead, dead, dead ...’

And the arc of thin arms trembled in the twilight, and the heads were bowed so sadly, and their feet tramped to that melancholy refrain so mournfully, so helplessly, that Ravi could not bear it. He would not follow them, he would not be included in this funereal game. He had wanted victory and triumph – not a funeral. But he had been forgotten, left out and he would not join them now. The ignominy of being forgotten – how could he face it? He felt his heart go heavy and ache inside him unbearably. He lay down full length on the damp grass, crushing his face into it, no longer crying, silenced by a terrible sense of his insignificance. 55 60

Games at Twilight

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