
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 7 Comment and Appreciation

9695/72

May/June 2016

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.

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 **6** printed pages, **2** blank pages and **1** insert.

1 Write a critical commentary on the following poem by Dom Moraes (published in 2001).

Gondwana Rocks

Heavy the climbing wind,
burdened with coming rain.
At the road's edge are
black stands of conifer. 5
Above, anarchic rocks,
grotesque in disarray,
left by a continent
which slowly disappeared;
scoured and depleted by
a hundred million rains. 10

They stand in silhouette
above the wind-warped pines,
more corpsed with memories than
ruins which castles leave. 15
Though they have stood much wear,
have endured more than grief
and survived more than war,
these rocks now bear no runes¹
more than those worked by wind,
great shifts of earth, and rains. 20

But these gnarled outcrops are
connections with what is.
The cold salacities²
of night, day's fall and flare, 25
unending cycles, pass
at the same charted³ pace.
Forest on forest dies
at charted pace, beneath
the scarred rocks which maintain
a stillness not of death. 30

The constant wheel of stars
turns over them in time.
Glaciers, tidal waves,
sandstorms and human hands 35
have paused on them, then passed.
Ghosts follow other ghosts
up climbing stairs of wind,
across black stands of pine
to the last source of loss:
the rocks, the coming rain. 40

¹ *runes*: ancient writings

² *salacities*: immoral behaviours

³ *charted*: mapped and measured

Turn to page 4 for Question 2

- 2 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from the play, *The Matchmaker* (1954) by Thornton Wilder.

Mr Vandergelder is having a hair cut and a shave by Joe Scanlon. Ambrose Kemper wishes to marry Ermengarde, Mr Vandergelder's niece.

Vandergelder [loudly]: I tell you for the hundredth time you will never marry my niece.

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[Exit AMBROSE, to the street.]

3 Write a critical commentary on the following poem by Vikram Seth (published in 1990).

Suzhou Park

Magnolia Trees float out their flowers,
 Vast, soft, upon a rubbish heap.
 The grandfather sits still for hours:
 His lap-held grandson is asleep. 5
 Above him plane trees¹ fan the sky.
 Nearby, a man in muted dance
 Does tai-qi-quan.² A butterfly
 Flies whitely past his easy trance.
 A magpie flaps back to its pine.
 A sparrow dust-rolls, fluffs, and cheeps. 10
 The humans rest in a design:
 One writes, one thinks, one moves, one sleeps.
 The leaves trace out the stencilled stone,
 And each is in his dream alone.

¹ *plane trees*: a type of broad-leaved tree

² *tai-qi-quan*: a slow-moving Chinese exercise

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