



Cambridge International AS & A Level

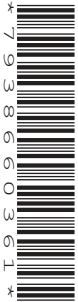
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/22

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen

May/June 2025

2 hours



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:
Section A: answer **one** question.
Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

This document has **12** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Section A: Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

KIRAN DESAI: *The Inheritance of Loss*

- 1 **Either** (a) Discuss some of the effects of the frequent switches between India and America in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on Desai's presentation of Nimi in the following passage.

Nimi did not accompany her husband on tour, unlike the other wives, who went along on horseback or elephantback or camelback or in *palkis* upheld by porters (all of whom would, because of the ladies' fat bottoms, die young), as rattling behind came the pots and pans and the bottle of whiskey and the bottle of port, Geiger counter and Scintillometre, the tuna fish tin and the mad-with-anxiety live chicken.

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The judge found them winging their way across the room,
treading air; he found one strangling a mushroom in his cream of mushroom soup.

(from Chapter 28)

Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1

- 2** **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which the writers of **two** stories present fathers.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage from *Five-Twenty*, considering ways in which Patrick White presents the meeting between Ella and the man from the Holden.

Just as she would sit every evening watching the traffic, evening was the time she liked best to visit the cinerarias, when the icy cold seemed to make the flowers burn their deepest, purest.

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He didn't have to tell me,' she added.

(from Five-Twenty)

EVELYN WAUGH: *A Handful of Dust*

- 3** **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which Waugh presents betrayal in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on Waugh's presentation of Mrs Rattery in the following passage.

Jock's blonde was called Mrs Rattery.

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saw him.'

There's a big fox there, daddy and I

(*from Hard Cheese on Tony, Part 5*)

COLSON WHITEHEAD: *The Underground Railroad*

- 4** **Either** **(a)** Discuss Whitehead's presentation of Royal and his role in the novel.
- Or** **(b)** Comment closely on ways in which Whitehead presents Cora's illness in the following passage.

That night she took ill.

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The wilderness stretched for forty years before others found their promised land.

(*from* North Carolina)

Section B: Unseen

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

- 5 Comment closely on the presentation of the stranger and his treasures in the following passage.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, dialogue and narrative methods.

He showed her a coating of black on the under side of the jar.

'That's not from the firing. See, I can scratch it off. It's soot, from when it was on the cook-fire last – and that was before Columbus landed, I guess. Nothing makes those people seem so real to me as their old pots, with the fire-black on them.' As she gave it back to him, he shook his head. 'That one's for you, Ma'am, if you like it.'

5

'Oh, I couldn't think of letting you give it to me! You must keep it for yourself, or put it in a museum.' But that seemed to touch a sore spot.

'Museums,' he said bitterly, 'they don't care about our things. They want something that came from Crete or Egypt. I'd break my jars sooner than they should get them. But I'd like this one to have a good home, among your nice things' – he looked about appreciatively. 'I've no place to keep them. They're in my way, especially that big one. My trunk is at the station, but I was afraid to leave the pottery. You don't get them out whole like that very often.'

10

'But get them out of what, from where? I want to know all about it.'

'Maybe some day, Ma'am, I can tell you,' he said, wiping his sooty fingers on his handkerchief. His reply was courteous but final. He strapped his bag and picked up his hat, then hesitated and smiled. Taking a buckskin bag from his pocket, he walked over to the window-seat where the children were, and held out his hand to them, saying: 'These I would like to give to the little girls.' In his palm lay two lumps of soft blue stone, the colour of robins' eggs, or of the sea on halcyon¹ days of summer.

15

The children marvelled. 'Oh, what are they?'

'Turquoises, just the way they come out of the mine, before the jewellers have tampered with them and made them look green. The Indians like them this way.'

Again Mrs St Peter demurred. She told him very kindly that she couldn't let him give his stones to the children. 'They are worth a lot of money.'

25

'I'd never sell them. They were given to me by a friend. I have a lot, and they're no use to me, but they'll make pretty playthings for little girls.' His voice was so wistful and winning that there was nothing to do.

'Hold them still a moment,' said [Professor St Peter], looking down, not at the turquoises, but at the hand that held them: the muscular, many-lined palm, the long, strong fingers with soft ends, the straight little finger, the flexible, beautifully shaped thumb that curved back from the rest of the hand as if it were its own master. What a hand! He could see it yet, with the blue stones lying in it.

30

In a moment the stranger was gone, and the St Peter family sat down and looked at one another.

35

¹halcyon: perfect

Or

- 6 Comment closely on the presentation of the ancestors in the following poem.

In your answer, consider the writer's choice of language, structure and poetic methods.

In Praise of the Ancestors

Even now the Forefathers still live

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For indeed life does not begin with us.

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