



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

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**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

**9695/31**

Paper 3 Poetry and Prose

**October/November 2009**

**2 hours**

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions, one from Section A and one from Section B.

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

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.



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This document consists of **10** printed pages and **2** blank pages.



## Section A: Poetry

SUJATA BHATT: *Point No Point*

- 1 **Either** (a) 'I want to return  
to her moment of birth.'

Discuss ways in which Bhatt presents motherhood in her poetry, referring to **two** or **three** poems you have studied.

- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following poem, paying particular attention to ways in which it explores the relationship between art and history.

*3 November 1984*

I won't buy  
*The New York Times* today.  
I can't. I'm sorry.  
But when I walk into the bookstore  
I can't help reading the front page  
and I stare at the photographs  
of dead men and women  
I know I've seen alive. 5

Today I don't want to think  
of Hindus cutting open  
Sikhs – and Sikhs cutting open  
Hindus – and Hindus cutting open 10

Today I don't want to think  
of Amrit and Arun and Gunwant Singh,  
nor of Falguni and Kalyan. 15

I've made up my mind: today I'll write  
in peacock-greenish-sea-green ink I'll write  
poems about everything else.  
I'll think of the five Americans  
who made it  
to Annapurna without Sherpa help.  
I won't think of haemorrhaging trains  
I'll get my homework done. 20

Now instead of completing this poem  
I'm drawing imlee fronds  
all over this page  
and thinking of Amrit when we were six  
beneath the imlee tree  
his long hair just washed  
just as long as my hair just washed. 25

Our mothers sent us outside in the sun  
to play, to dry our hair.  
Now instead of completing this poem  
I'm thinking of Amrit. 30

*Songs of Ourselves*

- 2 **Either** (a) A number of the poems in your selection deal with personal doubt or anguish. Discuss the ways in which the poets treat this subject matter in **two** or **three** poems.
- Or** (b) Discuss the effects of Murray's writing in his narration of the story of Bill Tuckett in the following poem.

*Morse*

Tuckett. Bill Tuckett. Telegraph operator, Hall's Creek  
 which is way out back of the Outback, but he stuck it,  
 quite likely liked it, despite heat, glare, dust and the lack  
 of diversion or doctors. Come disaster you trusted to luck,  
 ingenuity and pluck. This was back when nice people said pluck, 5  
 the sleeve-link and green eyeshade epoch.

Faced, though, like Bill Tuckett

with a man needing surgery right on the spot, a lot  
 would have done their dashes. It looked hopeless (dot dot dot)  
 Lift him up on the table, said Tuckett, running the key hot 10  
 till Head Office turned up a doctor who coolly instructed  
 up a thousand miles of wire, as Tuckett advanced slit by slit  
 with a safety razor blade, pioneering on into the wet,  
 copper-wiring the rivers off, in the first operation conducted  
 along dotted lines, with rum drinkers gripping the patient: 15  
 d-d-dash it, take care, Tuck!

And the vital spark stayed unshorted.

Yallah! Breathed the camelmen. Tuckett, you did it, you did it!  
 cried the spattered la-de-dah jodhpur-wearing Inspector of Stock.  
 We imagine, some weeks later, a properly laconic 20  
 convalescent averring Without you, I'd have kicked the bucket ...  
 From Chungking to Burrenjuck, morse keys have mostly gone silent  
 and only old men meet now to chit-chat in their electric  
 bygone dialect. The last letter many will forget  
 is dit-dit-dit-dah, V for Victory. The coders' hero had speed, 25  
 resource and a touch. So ditditdit daah for Bill Tuckett.

*Les Murray*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: *Selected Poems*

- 3 **Either** (a) Wordsworth wrote about 'spots of time', key moments in life when 'our minds/Are nourished and invisibly repaired'. With reference to **two** poems, discuss ways in which Wordsworth writes about such moments.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the language, tone and content of the following poem.

*To the Cuckoo*

O blithe New-comer! I have heard,  
I hear thee and rejoice:  
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass, 5  
I hear thy restless shout:  
From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
About, and all about!

To me, no Babbler with a tale 10  
Of sunshine and of flowers,  
Thou tellest, Cuckoo! in the vale  
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, Darling of the Spring!  
Even yet thou art to me 15  
No Bird; but an invisible Thing,  
A voice, a mystery.

The same whom in my School-boy days  
I listened to; that Cry 20  
Which made me look a thousand ways;  
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove  
Through woods and on the green;  
And thou wert still a hope, a love;  
Still longed for, never seen!

And I can listen to thee yet; 25  
Can lie upon the plain  
And listen, till I do beget  
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace 30  
Again appears to be  
An unsubstantial, faery place;  
That is fit home for Thee!

**Turn to page 6 for Question 4.**

## Section B: Prose

CHINUA ACHEBE: *Anthills of the Savannah*

- 4 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which Achebe presents personal relationships affected by politics in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, considering in particular Achebe's characterisation of Beatrice here.

Looking back on it I am sometimes amazed at the near-conspiracy in which they circled me most of the time. I had this strong suspicion nevertheless, which I could neither confirm nor deny because on those occasions my father always took the precaution to lock the door of their room. She would come out afterwards (having unlocked the door, or perhaps he did) wiping her eyes with one corner of her wrapper, too proud or too adult to cry aloud like us. It didn't happen too often, though. But it always made me want to become a sorceress that could say 'Die!' to my father and he would die as in the folk-tale. And then, when he had learnt his lesson, I would bring him back to life and he would never touch his whip again. 5

And then one day as my mother came out wiping her eyes I rushed to her and hugged her legs but instead of pressing me to herself as I had expected she pushed me away so violently that I hit my head against the wooden mortar. After that I didn't feel any more like telling my father to die. I couldn't have been more than seven or eight at the time but I know I had this strong feeling then – extraordinary, powerful and adult – that my father and my mother had their own world, my three sisters had theirs and I was alone in mine. And it didn't bother me at all then, my aloneness, nor has it done so since. 10 15

I didn't realize until much later that my mother bore me a huge grudge because I was a girl – her fifth in a row though one had died – and that when I was born she had so desperately prayed for a boy to give my father. This knowledge came to me by slow stages which I won't go into now. But I must mention that in addition to Beatrice they had given me another name at my baptism, Nwanyibuife – A female is also something. Can you beat that? Even as a child I disliked the name most intensely without being aware of its real meaning. It merely struck me at that point that I knew of nobody else with the name; it seemed fudged! Somehow I disliked it considerably less in its abridged form, Buife. Perhaps it was the *nwanyi*, the female half of it that I particularly resented. My father was so insistent on it. 'Sit like a female!' or 'Female soldier' which he called me as he lifted me off the ground with his left hand and gave me three stinging smacks on the bottom with his right the day I fell off the cashew tree. 20 25 30

But I didn't set out to write my autobiography and I don't want to do so. Who am I that I should inflict my story on the world? All I'm trying to say really is that as far as I can remember I have always been on my own and never asked to be noticed by anybody. Never! And I don't recall embarking ever on anything that would require me to call on others. Which meant that I never embarked on anything beyond my own puny powers. Which meant finally that I couldn't be ambitious. 35

I am very, very sensitive about this – I don't mind admitting it.

That I got involved in the lives of the high and mighty was purely accidental and was not due to any scheming on my part. In the first place, they all became high and mighty *after* I met them; not before. 40

Chris was not a Commissioner when I met him but a mere editor of the *National Gazette*. That was way back in civilian days. And if I say that Chris did all the chasing I am not boasting or anything. That was simply how it was. And I wasn't being coy either. It was a matter of experience having taught me in my little lonely world that

I had to be wary. Some people even say I am suspicious by nature. Perhaps I am. 45  
Being a girl of maybe somewhat above average looks, a good education, a good  
job you learn quickly enough that you can't open up to every sweet tongue that  
comes singing at your doorstep. Nothing very original really. Every girl knows that  
from her mother's breast although thereafter some may choose to be dazzled into  
forgetfulness for one reason or another. Or else they panic and get stampeded by 50  
the thought that time is passing them by. That's when you hear all kinds of nonsense  
talk from girls: Better to marry a rascal than grow a moustache in your father's  
compound; better an unhappy marriage than an unhappy spinsterhood; better marry  
Mr Wrong in this world than wait for Mr Right in heaven; all marriage is *how-for-do*;  
all men are the same; and a whole baggage of other foolishnesses like that. 55  
I was determined from the very beginning to put my career first and, if need be,  
last.

Chapter 7

CHARLOTTE BRONTË: *Jane Eyre*

- 5 **Either** (a) Discuss the contribution of Helen Burns to your understanding of the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, discussing in particular the first impression Rochester might make on the reader.

He passed, and went on; a few steps, and I turned; a sliding sound and an exclamation of 'What the deuce is to do now?' and a clattering tumble, arrested my attention. Man and horse were down; they had slipped on the sheet of ice which glazed the causeway. The dog came bounding back, and seeing his master in a predicament, and hearing the horse groan, barked till the evening hills echoed the sound, which was deep in proportion to his magnitude. He sniffed round the prostrate group, and then he ran up to me; it was all he could do – there was no other help at hand to summon. I obeyed him, and walked down to the traveller, by this time struggling himself free of his steed. His efforts were so vigorous, I thought he could not be much hurt; but I asked him the question – 5

'Are you injured, sir?' 10

I think he was swearing, but I am not certain; however, he was pronouncing some formula which prevented him from replying to me directly.

'Can I do anything?' I asked again.

'You must just stand on one side,' he answered as he rose, first to his knees, and then to his feet. I did; whereupon began a heaving, stamping, clattering process, accompanied by a barking and baying which removed me effectually some yards distance; but I would not be driven quite away till I saw the event. This was finally fortunate; the horse was re-established, and the dog was silenced with a 'Down Pilot!' The traveller now, stooping, felt his foot and leg, as if trying whether they were sound; apparently something ailed them, for he halted to the stile whence I had just risen, and sat down. 15

I was in the mood for being useful, or at least officious, I think, for I now drew near him again.

'If you are hurt, and want help, sir, I can fetch some one either from Thornfield Hall or from Hay.' 25

'Thank you; I shall do: I have no broken bones – only a sprain'; and again he stood up and tried his foot, but the result extorted an involuntary 'Ugh!'

Something of daylight still lingered, and the moon was waxing bright; I could see him plainly. His figure was enveloped in a riding cloak, fur collared and steel clasped; its details were not apparent, but I traced the general points of middle height, and considerable breadth of chest. He had a dark face, with stern features and a heavy brow; his eyes and gathered eyebrows looked ireful and thwarted just now; he was past youth, but had not reached middle age; perhaps he might be thirty-five. I felt no fear of him, and but little shyness. Had he been a handsome, heroic-looking young gentleman, I should not have dared to stand thus questioning him against his will, and offering my services unasked. I had hardly ever seen a handsome youth; never in my life spoken to one. I had a theoretical reverence and homage for beauty, elegance, gallantry, fascination; but had I met those qualities incarnate in masculine shape, I should have known instinctively that they neither had nor could have sympathy with anything in me, and should have shunned them as one would fire, lightning, or anything else that is bright but antipathetic. 30

If even this stranger had smiled and been good-humoured to me when I addressed him; if he had put off my offer of assistance gaily and with thanks, I should have gone on my way and not felt any vocation to renew inquiries: but the frown, the roughness of the traveller set me at my ease: I retained my station when he waved to me to go, and announced – 35

'I cannot think of leaving you, sir, at so late an hour, in this solitary lane, till I see you are fit to mount your horse.' 45



He looked at me when I said this: he had hardly turned his eyes in my direction before. 50

'I should think you ought to be at home yourself,' said he, 'if you have a home in this neighbourhood. Where do you come from?'

'From just below; and I am not at all afraid of being out late when it is moonlight. I will run over to Hay for you with pleasure, if you wish it; indeed, I am going there to post a letter.' 55

'You live just below – do you mean at that house with the battlements?' pointing to Thornfield Hall, on which the moon cast a hoary gleam, bringing it out distinct and pale from the woods, that, by contrast with the western sky, now seemed one mass of shadow. 60

'Yes, sir.'

Chapter 12

KATHERINE MANSFIELD: *Short Stories*

- 6 **Either** (a) How far do you find the oppression of women an important element in Mansfield's stories? You should refer to **two** stories in your answer.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, paying particular attention to the presentation of the relationship between the husband and his wife.

It is evening. Supper is over. We have left the small, cold dining-room, we have come back to the sitting room where there is a fire. All is as usual. I am sitting at my writing-table which is placed across a corner so that I am behind it, as it were, and facing the room. The lamp with the green shade is alight; I have before me two large books of reference, both open, a pile of papers ... All the paraphernalia, in fact, of an extremely occupied man. My wife, with her little boy on her lap, is in a low chair before the fire. She is about to put him to bed before she clears away the dishes and piles them up in the kitchen for the servant girl tomorrow morning. But the warmth, the quiet, and the sleepy baby, have made her dreamy. One of his red woollen boots is off, one is on. She sits, bent forward, clasping the little bare foot, staring into the glow, and as the fire quickens, falls, flares again, her shadow – an immense Mother and Child – is here and gone again upon the wall ...

Outside it is raining. I like to think of that cold drenched window behind the blind, and beyond, the dark bushes in the garden, their broad leaves bright with rain, and beyond the fence, the gleaming road with the two hoarse little gutters singing against each other, and the wavering reflections of the lamps, like fishes' tails. While I am here, I am there, lifting my face to the dim sky, and it seems to me it must be raining all over the world – that the whole earth is drenched, is sounding with a soft, quick patter or hard, steady drumming, or gurgling and something that is like sobbing and laughing mingled together, and that light, playful splashing that is of water falling into still lakes and flowing rivers. And all at once and the same moment I am arriving in a strange city, slipping under the hood of the cab while the driver whips the cover off the breathing horse, running from shelter to shelter, dodging someone, swerving by someone else. I am conscious of tall houses, their doors and shutters sealed against the night, of dripping balconies and sodden flower-pots. I am brushing through deserted gardens and falling into moist smelling summer-houses (you know how soft and almost crumbling the wood of a summer-house is in the rain); I am standing on the dark quayside giving my ticket into the wet, red hand of the old sailor in an oilskin. How strong the sea smells! How loudly the tied-up boats knock against one another! I am crossing the wet stackyard, hooded in an old sack, carrying a lantern, while the house-dog, like a soaking doormat, springs, shakes himself over me. And now I am walking along a deserted road – it is impossible to miss the puddles, and the trees are stirring – stirring.

But one could go on with such a catalogue for ever – on and on – until one lifted the single arum lily leaf and discovered the tiny snails clinging, until one counted ... and what then? Aren't those just the signs, the traces of my feeling? The bright green streaks made by someone who walks over the dewy grass? Not the feeling itself. And as I think that a mournful, glorious voice begins to sing in my bosom. Yes, perhaps that is nearer what I mean. What a voice! What power! What velvety softness! Marvellous!

Suddenly my wife turns round quickly. She knows – how long has she known? – that I am not 'working'. It is strange that with her full, open gaze she should smile so timidly – and that she should say in such a hesitating voice, 'What are you thinking?'

I smile and draw two fingers across my forehead in the way I have. 'Nothing,' I answer softly.

At that she stirs and, still trying not to make it sound important, she says, 'Oh, but you must have been thinking of something!'

Then I really meet her gaze, meet it fully, and I fancy her face quivers. Will she never grow accustomed to these simple – one might say – everyday lies? Will she never learn not to expose herself – or to build up defences? 50

‘Truly, I was thinking of nothing.’

‘A Married Man’s Story’

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