



Cambridge IGCSE™ (9-1)

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

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Paper 4 Unseen

October/November 2023

1 hour 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question: **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 25.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer.

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

Either

- 1 Read carefully the poem on page 3. The poet's family were refugees from Vietnam after a war.

How does the poet strikingly convey what his grandmother's kisses mean to him?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- the comparisons he makes for the kisses
- the contrast between his grandmother's kisses and western kisses
- how his grandmother's kisses remind him of his family history.

Kissing in Vietnamese

My grandmother kisses

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falling apart.

Or

- 2 Read carefully the following extract from a novel. It is set in India where a man of Indian origin, now living in the USA, is on holiday with his young son. He is attempting to visit two tourist sites, the Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri, in one day.

How does the writer memorably convey the father's feelings about this trip?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- the father's feelings while in the car
- the boy's response to the trip
- how he conveys the father's anxieties about his relationship with his son.

When he mentioned part of this plan to the driver of his hired car, the young man, all longish hair and golden chain around his neck and golden wristlet and chunky watch, took it as a veiled order to go about the business in record time. He revelled in the opportunity to drive along the dusty, cratered slip road to Fatehpur Sikri at organ-jostling speed, punctuated by abrupt jerking into rest when impeded, and launching as suddenly into motion again. They passed a string of dingy roadside eateries, tea-shops, cigarette-and-snacks shacks. The bigger ones boasted signboards and names. There were the predictable 'Akbar', 'Shahjahan', 'Shahenshah', a 'Jodha Bai', even a 'Tansen'¹, which was '100% VEGETARIAN'. There had been a speed-warning sign earlier: 'Batter late than never.' Not for the first time he wondered, in a country given over to a dizzying plenitude of signs, how unsettled their orthography was. A Coca-Cola hoarding adorned the top of one small shop, the brand name and shout line written in Hindi script.

'Coca-Cola,' the boy said, able to read that trademark universal wave even though he couldn't read the language.

'We can have one after we've done our tour,' he said, his mind occupied by trying to work out if another order to the driver to slow down to prevent the boy from being car-sick would be taken as wilfully contradictory; he worried about these things.

The boy seemed subdued; he didn't move from the bare identification of the familiar brand to wanting it. Ordinarily, he would have been compulsively spelling out and trying to read the names written in English on shopfronts and billboards. While he was grateful for his son's uncharacteristic placidity, he wondered if he hadn't imposed too much on a six-year-old, dragging him from one historical monument to another. He now read a kind of polite forbearance in the boy's quietness, a way of letting him know that this kind of tourism was wholly outside his sphere of interest but he was going to tolerate his father indulging in it. After a few questions at the Taj Mahal, which began as enthusiastic, then quickly burned out into perfunctory – 'Baba, what is a mau-so-le-um?'², 'Is Moom-taz under this building?'. 'Was she walking and moving and talking when Shajjy-han built this over her?' – they had stopped altogether. Was it wonder that had silenced him or boredom? He had tried to keep the child interested by spinning stories that he thought would catch the boy's imagination: 'Do you see how white the building is?

Do you know that the emperor who had it built, Shahjahan, had banquets on the terrace on full-moon nights where everything was white? The moonlight, the clothes the courtiers and the guests wore, the flowers, the food – everything was white, to go with the white of the marble and the white light of the full moon.’ The boy had nodded, seemingly absorbing the information, but had betrayed no further curiosity.

Now he wondered if his son had not found all this business of tombs and immortal grief and erecting memorials to the dead macabre, unsettling. His son was American, so he was not growing up, as his father had, with the gift of ghost stories, first heard sitting on the laps of servants and aunts in his childhood home in Calcutta, then, when he was a little older, read in children’s books. As a result, he did not understand quite what went on inside the child’s head when novelties, such as the notion of an order of things created by the imagination residing *under* the visible world and as vivid as the real one, were introduced to him. He made a mental note to stick to historical facts only when they reached Fatehpur Sikri.

¹*Akbar, Shahjahan, Shahenshah, Jodha Bai, Tansen*: the names of famous historical characters associated with the tourist sites

²*mau-so-le-um*: the Taj Mahal is a mausoleum (tomb)

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