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WORLD LITERATURE **0408/23**

Paper 2 Unseen Poetry **May/June 2026**

1 hour 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

9604334328

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- 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 30.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Question 1

Read carefully the poem in which the poet explores how books can change lives.

The Welcome

You were running on broken glass,
a child chased by nightmares
down battered streets, until at last
you came to this door. Here

are rooms made of hope, shelves full *5*
of voices that call you in. They say
you can stop running now, pull
out a chair and sit. For you, they lay

a table with a feast that tastes of places
in your dreams, honey from the hive, *10*
warm bread, words like spices.
This is where people come alive

to speak their stories in ink and blood
on wild nights, dappled afternoons,
telling of fallen tyrants[1], drought and flood *15*
under desert stars and arctic moons.

They spin legends and conjure myths
in mother tongues and other tongues
that give your accent to their dance with death,
their love of life, the songs they sing. *20*

You have been welcomed in
to books that smell like ancient trees,
standing here with broken spines,
opening like thoughts set free

and as the pages turn, your breath *25*
quickens with something you always knew
in your blood like remembered faith.
When you open the book, it opens you.

[1]*tyrants*: unfair or cruel rulers

(a) How does the poet make reading sound so exciting? [15]

(b) How does the poet strikingly convey the power of books? [15]

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