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ENGLISH A: LITERATURE – STANDARD LEVEL – PAPER 1
ANGLAIS A : LITTÉRATURE – NIVEAU MOYEN – ÉPREUVE 1
INGLÉS A: LITERATURA – NIVEL MEDIO – PRUEBA 1

Tuesday 4 November 2014 (morning)
Mardi 4 novembre 2014 (matin)
Martes 4 de noviembre de 2014 (mañana)

1 hour 30 minutes / 1 heure 30 minutes / 1 hora 30 minutos

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a guided literary analysis on one passage only. In your answer you must address both of the guiding questions provided.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is *[20 marks]*.

INSTRUCTIONS DESTINÉES AUX CANDIDATS

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez une analyse littéraire dirigée d'un seul des passages. Les deux questions d'orientation fournies doivent être traitées dans votre réponse.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est *[20 points]*.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ALUMNOS

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un análisis literario guiado sobre un solo pasaje. Debe abordar las dos preguntas de orientación en su respuesta.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es *[20 puntos]*.

Write a guided literary analysis on **one** passage only. In your answer you must address both of the guiding questions provided.

1.

Murad Badshah, MA, rickshaw fleet captain and land pirate, at your service. Allow me to begin at the outside and move in.

Huge (and also massive, enormous, and gigantic) describes me well. I am very, very rarely called fat. Perhaps you smile thinking this is because I inspire a certain sense of caution in more modestly proportioned persons? I must most respectfully take issue with you on this matter, and I beg your indulgence as I present a simple proof.

What is fat?

“Fat” is a small word which belies its size in the girth of its connotations. Fat implies a certain ungainliness, an inefficiency, a sense of immobility, a lack of industry, an unpleasant, unaesthetic quality; unmotivated, unloved, unnatural, unusual, uninspired, unhappy, unlikely to go places or to fit, under the ground with a heart attack at fifty-five. In short, fat somewhat paradoxically involves the lack of many attributes which, you must concede, are generally held to be good.

When the word “fat” is mentioned, people do not tend to think of the awesomely powerful rhinoceros, the supremely efficient and magnificent sperm whale, the deadly grizzly of North America. They do not say, “fat as a well-fed tiger.” No, they say, “fat as a pig,” a creature which eats its own feces and has never in our literature been a symbol of dignity.

Very well, then. The collective consciousness has assigned to fat a meaning, and as I speak this language I must accept fat on these terms. Fat is bad.

And so I am certain you will not disagree when I say the word can hardly be considered to apply to me. I am weighty, yes, but I carry my mass wonderfully. I am quick, light on my feet, and graceful. I have poise; delicacy and elegance characterize my every movement. My fingers are nimble, my hands deft. It is no secret that I dance well and most willingly. Furthermore, I possess those very qualities the lack of which is assumed by the word “fat”: industry, drive, dexterity, cunning. I am the living embodiment of so many unfat qualities that their enumeration would be a project of enormous scope.

If A has fundamental characteristics the very absence of which characterize B, it cannot be said with any degree of accuracy (or, may I add, sophistication) that A is B.

Thus, I am not fat. *Quod erat demonstrandum**

But I do stutter, it is true.

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* *Quod erat demonstrandum*: thus it is demonstrated

- (a) What do you understand to be the argument of this passage?
- (b) Explore the effects of such authorial choices as voice and diction in this passage.

2.

Nighttime Fires

When I was five in Louisville
we drove to see nighttime fires. Piled seven of us,
all pajamas and running noses, into the Olds*,
drove fast toward smoke. It was after my father
5 lost his job, so not getting up in the morning
gave him time: awake past midnight, he read old newspapers
with no news, tried crosswords until he split the pencil
between his teeth, mad. When he heard
the wolf whine of the siren, he woke my mother,
10 and she pushed and shoved
us all into waking. Once roused we longed for burnt wood
and a smell of flames high into the pines. My old man liked
driving to rich neighborhoods best, swearing in a good mood
as he followed fire engines that snaked like dragons
15 and split the silent streets. It was festival, carnival.

If there were a Cadillac or any car
in a curved driveway, my father smiled a smile
from a secret, brittle heart.
His face lit up in the heat given off by destruction
20 like something was being made, or was being set right.
I bent my head back to see where sparks
ate up the sky. My father who never held us
would take my hand and point to falling cinders that
covered the ground like snow, or, excited, show us
25 the swollen collapse of a staircase. My mother
watched my father, not the house. She was happy
only when we were ready to go, when it was finally over
and nothing else could burn.
Driving home, she would sleep in the front seat
30 as we huddled behind. I could see his quiet face in the
rearview mirror, eyes like hallways filled with smoke.

Regina Barreca, *The Minnesota Review* (1986)
First published in the "Minnesota Review".

* Olds: Oldsmobile, often an American family car

- (a) What does the point of view tell us about the family's interpersonal and social situation?
- (b) How do such features as comparison and description strengthen the effectiveness of the poem?