



VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2025
HIGHER 2

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9539/01

Paper 1

3 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

Set texts may be taken into the examination room. They may bear underlining, highlighting or vertical lines.

Pages can be flagged with paper clips or by folding the page corners. Any other kind of folding or flagging of pages in texts (for example, use of sticky notes or tape flags) is not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Begin each answer on a **FRESH 4-PAGE BOOKLET**.

If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet and **label appropriately**.

Answer **three** questions: one question from Section A, one question from Section B, and one question from Section C.

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

At the end of the examination, ensure your name and class is written at the beginning of each answer.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **9** printed pages

[Turn over

Section A

1

- Either (a)** Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which language, style and form contribute to each poet's presentation of national monuments.

A *Us by the Merlion*

When I told you there were many islands
 that could be loved by you other than this,
 you shook your head and Mona-Lisa-smiled.
 I dry-heaved till I merlioned. Take that,
 it seemed to say, the puke stain on your shoe, 5
 so much for claiming to be well-travelled
 and worldly-wise. Who could love a prison?
 Did swallowing myths morph away your mind?
Of course not. But how else could you account
 for loyalty instead of turning tail? 10
Because what we hate is but a brief slice,
when there are many more days it has seen.
 In the distance, the creature spewed, its spray
 never quite reaching us here where we stood.

Ian Chung

B *The New Colossus*¹

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
 With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
 Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
 A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
 Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name 5
 Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
 Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
 The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
 "Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
 With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor, 10
 Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
 The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
 Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
 I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Emma Lazarus

¹ *Colossus*: refers to the ancient Colossus of Rhodes, a massive bronze statue of the Greek sun god Helios. *New Colossus*: refers to the Statue of Liberty in New York, modelled after the Roman goddess of liberty.

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- Or (b) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which language, style and form contribute to each poet's portrayal of her mother tongue.

A *A Poet's Confession*

'I did it. I killed my mother tongue. I shouldn't have left her there on my own. All I wanted was a bit of fun with another body but now that she's gone - it's a terrible silence.	5
 She was highly strung, quite possibly jealous. After all, I'm young and she, the beauty, had become a crone despite all the surgery.	10
 Could I have saved her? made her feel at home?	15
 Without her reproaches. I feel so numb, not free, as I'd thought...	
 Tell my lawyer to come. Until he's with me, I'm keeping mum.'	20

Gwyneth Lewis

B *The Way My Mother Speaks*

I say her phrases to myself
 in my head
 or under the shallows of my breath,
 restful shapes moving.
*The day and ever*². *The day and ever.* 5

The train this slow evening
 goes down England
 browsing for the right sky,
 too blue swapped for a cool grey.
 For miles I have been saying 10
What like is it.
 The way I say things when I think.
 Nothing is silent. Nothing is not silent.
What like is it.

Only tonight 15
 I am happy and sad
 like a child
 who stood at the end of summer
 and dipped a net
 in a green, erotic pond. *The day* 20
and ever. The day and ever.
 I am homesick, free, in love
 with the way my mother speaks.

Carol Ann Duffy

² *The day and ever*. Scottish phrase meaning "today and forever".

Section B

TAN TWAN ENG: *The Garden of Evening Mists*

2

Either (a) 'Everywhere I turn, I hear echoes of sounds made long ago.' (Chapter 1)

With this comment in mind, explore Tan's presentation of the past in the novel.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the portrayal of Yun Ling, here and elsewhere in the novel.

Leaving the study, I walk past the ink painting of Lao Tzu. Its emptiness glows in the shadows. I stop and look at it, this drawing made by Aritomo's father.

Lao Tzu, the disillusioned philosopher from China, had gone to the west and was never seen or heard from again. Aritomo also set down his thoughts and his teachings before he left: he had recorded them in his garden, and he 5
had painted them on my body.

My decision to restore the garden is the correct one, the only one I can make. I will ensure that Yugiri will remain. For my sister. When the garden is ready, I will open it to the public. I will put up a plaque by the Pavilion of Heaven, describing Yun Hong's life. The garden will also be a living memory of 10
what Aritomo has made. I have told Tatsuji that Aritomo's *ukiyo-e* must be returned to Yugiri. I will put them on permanent exhibition here. The house will have to be repaired as well. And I have to write down as many instructions as I can for Vimalya. I must look for Aritomo's *Sakuteiki* and give it to her. So many 15
things to do. I will be kept busy in the coming weeks and months. I remind myself to ask my secretary – my former secretary – to go to my house in KL and send Yun Hong's watercolour to me. It will be on display to the visitors who come to see the garden.

It is right that Yun Hong will be remembered as I gradually forget and, in time, become forgotten. 20

The garden must continue to exist. For that to happen, the *horimono* has to be destroyed after my death. I cannot entrust that responsibility to anyone, not Tatsuji, and not Frederik. I will have to do it myself.

The darkness in the sky is thinning when I go out to Usugumo Pond. A bird flies across the sky, returning to the mountains. A memory comes to me of the 25
cave where Aritomo took me to see the swiftlets. I wonder if the aborigines are still harvesting the nests there, if the bamboo scaffolding they used is still pinned to the walls; I wonder if I can find the cave again.

Perhaps the blind old monk Aritomo spoke to on his walk across the countryside when he was a young man was correct: *there is no wind; the flag 30
does not move; it is only the hearts and minds of men that are restless*. But I think that, slowly and surely, the turbulent heart will soon also come to a stillness, the quiet stillness it has been beating toward all its life.

Even as I am losing myself, the garden will come back to life again. I will work in the garden, and I will visit Frederik. We will talk and laugh and weep like 35
only old friends can. And in the evenings I will walk in the hills. Ah Cheong will be waiting at the front door, holding out Aritomo's walking stick to me. I will take it, of course. But I know there will come a day when I will tell him that I do not want it.

Before me lies a voyage of a million miles, and memory is the moonlight I 40
will borrow to illuminate my way.

The lotus flowers are opening in the first rays of the sun. Tomorrow's rain
lies on the horizon, but high up in the sky something pale and small is
descending, growing in size as it falls. I watch the heron circle the pond, a leaf
spiraling down to the water, setting off silent ripples across the garden. 45

(Chapter 26)

Section C

THOMAS MIDDLETON & WILLIAM ROWLEY: *The Changeling*

3

Either (a) Discuss how Middleton and Rowley make the play's title significant.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the dramatic portrayal of tension, here and elsewhere in the play.

Enter Beatrice. A clock strikes one

BEATRICE. One struck, and yet she lies by't! O my fears!
 This strumpet serves her own ends, 'tis apparent now,
 Devours the pleasure with a greedy appetite,
 And never minds my honour or my peace,
 Makes havoc of my right; but she pays dearly for't – 5
 No trusting of her life with such a secret,
 That cannot rule her blood to keep her promise.
 Beside, I have some suspicion of her faith to me,
 Because I was suspected of my lord,
 And it must come from her. – Hark, by my horrors, 10
 Another clock strikes two! [Clock strikes two]

Enter Deflores.

DEFLORES. Psst! Where are you?

BEATRICE. Deflores!

DEFLORES. Ay – is she not come from him yet?

BEATRICE. As I am a living soul not.

DEFLORES. Sure the devil
 Hath sowed his itch within her! Who'd trust
 A waiting-woman? 15

BEATRICE. I must trust somebody.

DEFLORES. Push! They are termagants;
 Especially when they fall upon their masters
 And have their ladies' first-fruits, they're mad whelps,
 You cannot stave 'em off from game royal. Then 20
 You are so harsh and hardy, ask no counsel –
 And I could have helped you to a 'pothecary's daughter
 Would have fallen off before eleven, and thanked you too.

BEATRICE. O me! Not yet? This whore forgets herself.

DEFLORES. The rascal fares so well – look, you're undone, 25
 The day-star by this hand! See Phosphorus plain yonder.

BEATRICE. Advise me how to fall upon some ruin;
 There is no counsel safe else.

DEFLORES. Peace! I ha't now,
 For we must force a rising, there's no remedy.

BEATRICE. How? Take heed of that.

DEFLORES. Tush! Be you quiet, 30
 Or else give over all.

BEATRICE. Prithee, I ha' done then.

DEFLORES. This is my reach: I'll set some part a-fire
 Of Diaphanta's chamber.

BEATRICE. How? Fire, sir?
That may endanger the whole house.

DEFLORES. You talk of danger when your fame's on fire? 35

BEATRICE. That's true, do what thou wilt now.

DEFLORES. Push! I aim
At a most rich success, strikes all dead sure:
The chimney being a-fire, and some light parcels
Of the least danger in her chamber only,
If Diaphanta should be met by chance then, 40
Far from her lodging – which is now suspicious –
It would be thought her fears and affrights then,
Drove her to seek for succour; if not seen
Or met at all – as that's the likeliest –
For her own shame she'll hasten towards her lodging. 45
I will be ready with a piece high-charged,
As 'twere to cleanse the chimney – there 'tis proper,
But she shall be the mark.

BEATRICE. I'm forced to love thee now.
'Cause thou provid'st so carefully for my honour.

DEFLORES. 'Slid! It concerns the safety of us both, 50
Our pleasure and continuance.

BEATRICE. One word now:
Prithee, how for the servants?

DEFLORES. I'll dispatch them,
Some one way, some another in the hurry,
For buckets, hooks, ladders. Fear not you:
The deed shall find its time, and I've thought since 55
Upon a safe conveyance for the body too.
How this fire purifies wit! Watch you your minute.

BEATRICE. Fear keeps my soul upon't, I cannot stray from't.

Enter Alonzo's ghost.

DEFLORES. Ha! What art thou that tak'st away the light
'Twixt that star and me? I dread thee not: 60
'Twas but a mist of conscience – all's clear again.

BEATRICE. Who's that, Deflores? Bless me! It slides by. *Exit.*
Some ill thing haunts the house, 't has left behind it *[Exit ghost]*
A shivering sweat upon me – I'm afraid now.
This night hath been so tedious. Oh, this strumpet! 65
Had she a thousand lives, he should not leave her
Till he had destroyed the last – *[Clock strikes three]*
List! O my terrors,
Three struck by St Sebastian's!

[VOICES] *Within* Fire, fire, fire!

BEATRICE. Already! How rare is that man's speed!
How heartily he serves me! His face loathes one, 70
But look upon his care, who would not love him?
The east is not more beauteous than his service.

[VOICES] *Within*
Fire, fire, fire!

END OF PAPER