



ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
January 2010

English Literature
Assessment Unit A2 2a
assessing
Module 5: the Study of
Twentieth-Century Prose
[A2L21]



FRIDAY 22 JANUARY, MORNING

TIME

1 hour 10 minutes.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklet provided.
Answer **one** question.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The total mark for this paper is 30.
Quality of written communication will be assessed in your answer.
You should have with you your copies of the prescribed texts for this examination.

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Read all of this page first – carefully

In this paper you will be marked on your ability to

- communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent written expression (AO1)
- articulate independent opinions and judgements, informed by different interpretations of literary texts by different readers (AO4)
- evaluate the significance of cultural, historical and other contextual influences on literary texts and study (AO5ii).

This means that

in your answer, you must

- express your ideas in a clear and well-organised way, paying careful attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar **and** using appropriate literary terms
- develop an argument in response to a statement about the text given at the beginning of the question
- provide information from outside the text, **relevant to the question**, about the context; this could be
 - historical, social, cultural circumstances in which the text was written
 - literary context concerned with the type of text – e.g. satirical novel, short story or with a particular literary notion such as the hero.

1 Conrad: *The Secret Agent*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) This gloomy and despairing novel fails as satire because, unlike the satirist, Conrad offers no possibility of a better world.

Using the final chapter, Chapter 13, as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to this view.

N.B.

1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of satire that is relevant to the question.
2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.

- (b) The terrorist theme makes *The Secret Agent* as relevant to today's reader as it was to Conrad's contemporary readership in 1907, the date of the novel's first publication.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about twelve pages into Chapter 2 with the words,

This was then the famous and trusty secret agent, so secret that he was never designated otherwise but by the symbol ...

It ends about seven or eight pages later with,

‘... Nothing better, and nothing easier, I should think.’

N.B.

1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.
2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.

2 Gibbons: *Cold Comfort Farm*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) *Cold Comfort Farm* fails as satire because the characters and events are so comical that the reader loses sight of the underlying serious purpose of the novel.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about five pages from the end of Chapter 8 with the words,

She was reminded of Mr Neck, as she stood pensively watching the Brethren going into the chapel, by the spectacle of the Majestic Cinema immediately opposite.

It goes on to the end of the chapter.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of satire that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

- (b) The twenty-first-century reader cannot hope to find anything relevant or amusing in the novel as it is so remote from modern life.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about five pages from the end of Chapter 6 with the words,

There was only a young woman whom she presumed to be Meriam, the hired girl, sitting over an oil stove ...

It goes on to the end of the chapter.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

3 Hemingway: *A Farewell to Arms*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) As an example of what has become known as the “Hemingway Hero”, Fredric Henry is a deserter who abandons duty and honour – is an odd kind of hero by any standards.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about eight pages into Chapter 30 with the words,
That was a very strange night.
It goes on to the end of the chapter.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the hero that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

- (b) *A Farewell to Arms* is not so much an Anti-war Novel, as a Protest Novel written against the very conditions of human existence.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about four or five pages into Chapter 41 with the words,
We had gone to the hospital about three o'clock in the morning.
It ends about ten pages later with,
... I think the cup of water on the burning log only steamed the ants.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the Anti-war Novel and the Protest Novel that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

4 Ishiguro: *The Remains of the Day*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) The novel accurately reflects the decline of Britain as a major world influence in the second half of the twentieth century.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about ten or eleven pages before the end of “Day Two – Morning” with the words,

There was a ripple of applause, and I saw his lordship exchange a look with Sir David ...

It ends about three pages later with,

This was met by the loudest burst of approval yet, followed by warm and sustained applause.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

- (b) The novel is a bitter satire on the British upper class.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about thirty pages from the end of “Day Two – Morning” with the words,

It was in the midst of these preliminary discussions that his lordship entrusted me with a mission ...

It ends about four pages further on with,

... ‘Well, I think I’ll go and take a little fresh air. Thanks for your help, Stevens.’

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of satire that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

5 McGahern: *That They May Face the Rising Sun*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) Set in a rural backwater, the novel offers only a very narrow, unrepresentative view of Irish life in the late twentieth century.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to this view.

* The extract begins on page 106 of the hardback edition or page 111 of the paperback edition with the words,

“I’m hurrying,” Rutledge said as he had tea and a sandwich in the house.

It ends about eight pages later, on page 114 of the hardback edition or page 120 of the paperback edition with,

... Nobody wanted to sit at the table.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your treatment of the extract.**

- (b) *That They May Face the Rising Sun* offers a deeply satisfying vision of “home” – an alternative existence to the pressures of modern urban life.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to this view.

* The extract begins on page 14 of the hardback edition or page 15 of the paperback edition with the words,

They walked together between the steep banks of the lane.

It ends about six pages later, on page 20 of the hardback edition or page 21 of the paperback edition with,

‘... added to the chill on that wet hillside.’

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your treatment of the extract.**

6 Madden: *Authenticity*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) Since all of its male characters are portrayed in a negative light, *Authenticity* may be described as a Feminist Novel.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to this view.

* The extract begins about six pages into Chapter 29 with the words,

‘Do you remember’, he said to her now, ‘do you remember when you were a little girl?’

It ends about four pages later with,

... As he descended in the lift, however, he still felt weary and unrefreshed, in no way ready for what was ahead.

N.B.

1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the Feminist Novel that is relevant to the question.
2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.

- (b) *Authenticity* is less concerned with conveying an accurate picture of twenty-first-century urban life than it is with exploring personal relationships.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to this view.

* The extract begins at the opening of the novel with the words,

‘A strange thing happened to me yesterday.’

It ends about four pages later with,

‘Don’t mention it,’ Julia said, embarrassed, and now it was she who turned to stare out of the window.

N.B.

1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.
2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.

7 O'Connor: *Classic Irish Short Stories*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) The Irish short story has little appeal to an audience outside Ireland.

By close examination of “Going into Exile” by Liam O’Flaherty, give your response to the above view.

N.B.

You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the short story that is relevant to the question.

- (b) The short stories in this collection give a view of Irish life that is entertaining, but not accurate.

By close examination of “The Jury Case” by Eric Cross, and with reference to one other appropriately selected story, give your response to the above view.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the story which you select for reference.**

8 Salinger: *The Catcher in the Rye*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) Although Salinger was writing about American society in the 1940s, *The Catcher in the Rye* is as relevant today as it was at the time of its publication. (The novel was published in 1951.)

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above statement.

* The extract begins about a page into Chapter 22 with the words,
Then all of a sudden, she said, 'Oh, why did you *do* it?'
It ends just over three pages later with,
... They didn't even go to jail.

N.B.

1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.
2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.

- (b) *The Catcher in the Rye* fails as an Historical Novel because it presents such an exaggerated view of American society in the 1940s.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above statement.

* The extract begins about seven pages into Chapter 17 with the words,
'Did you ever get fed up?' I said.
It ends about four pages later with,
'... You don't see what I mean at all.'

N.B.

1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the Historical Novel that is relevant to the question.
2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.

9 Trevor: *Collected Stories of William Trevor*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) The problems encountered by some of the characters in Trevor's stories are so different from those encountered in twenty-first-century life that it is difficult for the modern reader to find them of any interest.

By close examination of "Sunday Drinks", and with reference to one other appropriately selected story, give your response to this view.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the story which you select for reference.**

- (b) Since the short story deals with little people and little events in their lives, it can have little significance for the reader.

By close examination of "Mr McNamara", and with reference to one other appropriately selected story, give your response to this view.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the short story that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the story which you select for reference.**

10 Walker: *The Color Purple*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) *The Color Purple* is more a Symbolic than a Realist Novel: its themes and ideas are more important than its characters.

Using all of Letter 76* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your reaction to the above view.

* The letter is about three quarters of the way through the novel and begins with,
Dear Nettie,
So what is it like in Memphis? Shug's house is big and pink and look sort of like a barn.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the Symbolic Novel and the Realist Novel that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

- (b) Walker's positive portrayal of female relationships and her negative portrayal of male-female relationships compel us to see *The Color Purple* as a Feminist Novel.

Using the first four letters as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the Feminist Novel that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

11 Wharton: *The Age of Innocence*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) Newland Archer cannot be described as a hero because he is too willing to conform to the values and expectations of his society.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins at the start of Chapter 31.

It ends about five pages into the chapter with,

‘She’ll come!’ he said to himself, almost contemptuously.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer external contextual material on the nature of the hero that is relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

- (b) *The Age of Innocence* is an accurate reflection of upper-class New York society in the late nineteenth century.

Using the given extract* as a starting-point, and with reference to other appropriately selected parts of the novel, give your response to the above view.

* The extract begins about five pages into Chapter 33 with the words,

When he entered the drawing-room before dinner ...

It ends four to five pages later with,

And at this point the ladies went up to the drawing-room.

N.B.

- 1. You must include in your answer contextual material from outside the text and relevant to the question.**
- 2. One quarter of the marks for this question are available for your use of the extract.**

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTION PAPER

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