



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

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LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/33

Paper 3 Unseen

October/November 2011

1 hour 15 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

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

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

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

Both questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **5** printed pages and **3** blank pages.



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

EITHER

1 Read carefully the following poem.

How does the poet create memorable images of the fish shop?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how she describes the appearance and behaviour of the boys at work
- the way the fish are described
- the overall impression the boys make on the poet and on you.

The Boys in the Fish Shop

This one winds a string of plastic parsley¹
around the rainbow trout,
punnets² of squat lobster and marinated anchovy,
the dish of jellied eels
in which a spoon stands erect.
He's young, eighteen perhaps,
with acne like the mottled skin of some pink fish,
and there's gold in his ear, the hoop of a lure.
The others aren't much older
bantering in the back room,
that den of stinking mysteries
where boxes are carried.

The fish lie around all day,
washed-up movie stars
stunned on their beds of crushed ice.
The boys take turns to stare
through the wide glass window,
hands on hips, an elbow on a broom,
lost for a moment in warm waters until
Yes darling, what can I get you?
and their knives return to the task,
scraping scales in a sequin shower,
splitting parcels of scarlet and manganese.³
Their fingers know a pound by guesswork,
how to unpeel smoked salmon,
lay it fine as lace on cellophane.
A girl walks past, hair streaming,
and the boy looks up,
still gripping his knife, lips parting in a slack O.

¹ *plastic parsley* is used to decorate fish for sale

² *punnets*: small baskets

³ *manganese*: (literally) a black mineral

OR

2 Read carefully the following extract from a novel set in North London.

Clara, from Jamaica, has married Archibald (Archie) Jones, a much older English man. Three months later, she is reflecting on their unusual partnership.

How does the writing strikingly portray the nature of their relationship?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the writing communicates to you Clara's thoughts about Archie since they got married
- the description of Clara and Archie on their wedding day
- the ways in which the writer brings out the differences between them.

Clara understood that Archibald Jones was no romantic hero. Three months spent in one stinking room in Cricklewood¹ had been sufficient revelation. Oh, he could be affectionate and sometimes even charming, he could whistle a clear, crystal note first thing in the morning, he drove calmly and responsibly and he was a surprisingly competent cook, but romance was beyond him, passion, unthinkable. And if you are saddled with a man as average as this, Clara felt, he should at least be utterly devoted to *you* – to your beauty, to your youth – that's the *least* he could do to make up for things. But not Archie. One month into their marriage and he already had that funny glazed look men have when they are looking through you. He had already reverted back into his bachelorhood: drinks with Samad Iqbal, dinner with Samad Iqbal, Sunday breakfasts with Samad Iqbal, every spare moment with the man in that bloody place, *O'Connell's*, in that bloody dive.² She tried to be reasonable. She asked him: *Why are you never here? Why do you spend so much time with the Indian?* But a pat on the back, a kiss on the cheek, he's grabbing his coat, his foot's out the door and always the same old answer: *Me and Sam? We go way back.* She couldn't argue with that. They went back to before she was born.

No white knight, then, this Archibald Jones. No aims, no hopes, no ambitions. A man whose greatest pleasures were English breakfasts and DIY.³ A dull man. An *old* man. And yet...good. He was a good man. And *good* might not amount to much, *good* might not light up a life, but it is something. She spotted it in him that first time on the stairs, simply, directly, the same way she could point out a good mango on a market stall without so much as touching the skin.

These were the thoughts Clara clung to as she leant on her garden gate, three months after her wedding, silently watching the way her husband's brow furrowed and shortened like an accordion, the way his stomach hung pregnant over his belt, the whiteness of his skin, the blueness of his veins, the way his 'elevens' were up – those two ropes of flesh that appear on a man's gullet (so they said in Jamaica) when his time was drawing to a close.

Clara frowned. She hadn't noticed these afflictions at the wedding. Why not? He had been smiling and he wore a white polo-neck, but, no, that wasn't it – she hadn't been looking for them then, that was it. Clara had spent most of her wedding day looking at her feet. It had been a hot day, 14 February, but unusually warm, and there had been a wait because the world had wanted to marry that day in a little registry office on Ludgate Hill.⁴ Clara remembered slipping off the petite brown heels she was wearing and placing her bare feet on the chilly floor, making sure to keep them firmly planted either side of a dark crack in the tile, a balancing act upon which she had randomly staked her future happiness.

Archie meanwhile had wiped some moisture from his upper lip and cursed a persistent sunbeam that was sending a trickle of salty water down his inside leg. For his second marriage he had chosen a mohair suit with a white polo-neck and both were proving problematic. The heat prompted rivulets of sweat to ooze out all over his body.

seeping through the polo-neck to the mohair and giving off an unmistakable odour of a damp dog. Clara, of course, was all cat. She wore a long brown woollen Jeff Banks dress and a perfect set of false teeth; the dress was backless, the teeth were white, and the overall effect was feline; a panther in evening dress; where the wool stopped and Clara's skin started was not clear to the naked eye. And like a cat she responded to the dusty sunbeam that was coursing through a high window onto the waiting couples. She warmed her bare back in it, she almost seemed to *unfurl*. Even the registrar, who had seen it all – horsy women marrying weaselly men, elephantine men marrying owlsh women – raised an eyebrow at this most unnatural of unions as they approached his desk. Cat and dog.

¹ *Cricklewood*: a London suburb

² *dive*: bar (a slang word)

³ *DIY*: do-it-yourself decorating and repairs

⁴ *Ludgate Hill*: central London address

⁵ *Jeff Banks*: a fashion designer

Copyright Acknowledgements:

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Question 2 © Zadie Smith; *White Teeth*; Random House; 2000.

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