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LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

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Paper 4

May/June 2012

2 hours 15 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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

Answer at least **one** passage-based question (marked *) and at least **one** essay question (marked †).

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

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.



This document consists of **23** printed pages and **5** blank pages.



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SECTION A: DRAMA

ARTHUR MILLER: *Death of a Salesman*

Either *1 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

[From the right, Willy Loman, the Salesman, enters, carrying two large sample cases. The flute plays on. He hears but is not aware of it. He is past sixty years of age, dressed quietly. Even as he crosses the stage to the doorway of the house, his exhaustion is apparent. He unlocks the door, comes into the kitchen, and thankfully lets his burden down, feeling the soreness of his palms. A word-sigh escapes his lips – it might be ‘Oh, boy, oh, boy.’ He closes the door, then carries his cases out into the living-room, through the draped kitchen doorway.]

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Linda, his wife, has stirred in her bed at the right. She gets out and puts on a robe, listening. Most often jovial, she has developed an iron repression of her exceptions to Willy’s behaviour – she more than loves him, she admires him, as though his mercurial nature, his temper, his massive dreams and little cruelties, served her only as sharp reminders of the turbulent longings within him, longings which she shares but lacks the temperament to utter and follow to their end.]

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Linda: *[hearing Willy outside the bedroom, calls with some trepidation]* Willy!

Willy: It’s all right. I came back.

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Linda: Why? What happened? *[Slight pause.]* Did something happen, Willy?

Willy: No, nothing happened.

Linda: You didn’t smash the car, did you?

Willy: *[with casual irritation]* I said nothing happened. Didn’t you hear me?

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Linda: Don’t you feel well?

Willy: I’m tired to the death. *[The flute has faded away. He sits on the bed beside her, a little numb.]* I couldn’t make it. I just couldn’t make it, Linda.

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Linda: *[very carefully, delicately]* Where were you all day? You look terrible.

Willy: I got as far as a little above Yonkers. I stopped for a cup of coffee. Maybe it was the coffee.

Linda: What?

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Willy: *[after a pause]* I suddenly couldn’t drive any more. The car kept going off on to the shoulder, y’know?

Linda: *[helpfully]* Oh. Maybe it was the steering again. I don’t think Angelo knows the Studebaker.

Willy: No, it’s me, it’s me. Suddenly I realize I’m goin’ sixty miles an hour and I don’t remember the last five minutes. I’m – I can’t seem to – keep my mind to it.

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Linda: Maybe it’s your glasses. You never went for your new glasses.

- Willy:* No, I see everything. I came back ten miles an hour . It took me nearly four hours from Yonkers.
- Linda:* [*resigned*] Well, you'll just have to take a rest, Willy, you can't continue this way.
- Willy:* I just got back from Florida.
- Linda:* But you didn't rest your mind. Your mind is overactive, and the mind is what counts, dear. 50
- Willy:* I'll start out in the morning. Maybe I'll feel better in the morning. [*She is taking off his shoes .*] These goddam arch supports are killing me.
- Linda:* Take an aspirin. Should I get you an aspirin? It'll soothe you.
- Willy:* [*with wonder*] I was driving along, you understand? And I was fine. I was even observing the scenery. You can imagine, me looking at scenery, on the road every week of my life. But it's so beautiful up there, Linda, the trees are so thick, and the sun is warm. I opened the windshield and just let the warm air bathe over me. And then all of a sudden I'm going' off the road! I'm tellin' ya, I absolutely forgot I was driving. If I'd've gone the other way over the white line I might've killed somebody. So I went on again – and five minutes later I'm dreamin' again, and I nearly – [*He presses two fingers against his eyes.*] I have such thoughts , I have such strange thoughts. 60 65
- Linda:* Willy, dear. Talk to them again. There's no reason why you can't work in New York.

How does this opening to the play grasp the audience's attention? Support your ideas with details from Miller's writing.

Or †2 Do you think that Miller makes it possible to feel some sympathy for Happy – or is Happy someone to be despised? Support your ideas with details from the writing.

Or 3 You are Charley. You have just heard that Willy has died.

Write your thoughts.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Much Ado About Nothing*

Either *4 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

- Leonato:* My lord, will you walk? Dinner is ready.
- Claudio:* If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.
- Don Pedro:* Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner
- [Exeunt Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato.]*
- Benedick:* *[Coming forward]* This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne; they have the truth of this from Hero; they seem to pity the lady; it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! Why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censur'd: they say I will bear myself proudly if I perceive the love come from her; they say, too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry. I must not seem proud; happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me. By my troth, it is no addition to her wit; nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me because I have railed so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips, and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No; the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady; I do spy some marks of love in her.
- Enter Beatrice.*
- Beatrice:* Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.
- Benedick:* Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.
- Beatrice:* I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.
- Benedick:* You take pleasure, then, in the message?
- Beatrice:* Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior; fare you well.
- [Exit.]*
- Benedick:* Ha! 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner' – there's a double meaning in that. 'I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me' – that's as much as to say 'Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks'. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture. *[Exit.]*

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How does Shakespeare make this such an entertaining moment in the play?

- Or** †5 How far does Shakespeare encourage you to agree with Beatrice's low opinion of Hero? Support your answer by close reference to the play.
- Or** 6 You are Hero. You and Ursula have just tricked Beatrice into thinking that Benedick loves her.

Write your thoughts.

In what ways does Shakespeare vividly convey the feelings of Calphurnia at this moment in the play?

Or †8 What does Shakespeare make you feel about Octavius by the end of the play? Refer to details from Shakespeare's writing as you answer.

Or 9 You are Cassius . You have just left the other conspirators on the night before the assassination of Caesar.

Write your thoughts.

R. C. SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Either *10 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

- Trotter:* (at the left-hand dug-out) 'Ibbert! Raleigh! come on! (He lights a cigarette over the candle, – lingers a moment, and slowly goes up the steps.) Cheero, skipper. See you later.
- Stanhope:* Send your runner down to tell me how things are going.
- Trotter:* Righto. 5
- Trotter disappears into the dark.*
- A vague white line of dawn is broadening above the dark trench wall outside. Stanhope sits at the table and sips his tea. He takes a cigarette and lights it with a quavering hand.* 10
- Raleigh comes from his dug-out.*
- Stanhope lowers his head and writes in his notebook.*
- Raleigh:* Do you want me to go up?
- Stanhope:* (without looking up) Yes. Trotter's gone.
- Raleigh:* Right. (He goes up the steps and turns shyly.) Cheero – Stanhope. 15
- Stanhope:* (still writing with lowered head) Cheero, Raleigh. I shall be coming up soon. (Raleigh goes up the steps.)
- Stanhope stops writing, raises his head, and listens.*
- The shells are falling steadily now. He glances towards the left-hand dug-out and calls.* 20
- Hibbert!*
- There is no reply. He slowly rises and goes to the left-hand dug-out doorway, he calls again – louder.*
- Hibbert!! (He looks into the doorway and says) What are you doing?* 25
- Hibbert appears. He is very pale; he moves as if half asleep.*
- Come along, man!*
- Hibbert:* You want me to go up now?
- Stanhope:* Of course I do. The others have gone. 30
- Hibbert:* Got a drop of water?
- Stanhope:* What d'you want water for?
- Hibbert:* I'm so frightfully thirsty. All that champagne and stuff – dried my mouth up.
- Stanhope pours a drop of water into a mug and gives it to Hibbert.* 35
- Stanhope:* Here you are. Didn't you have any tea?
- Hibbert:* Yes. It was a bit sweet, though.
- The shelling is steadily increasing, and now, above the lighter "crush" of the smaller shells, there comes the deep resounding "boom" of Minenwerfer. Hibbert sips his water very slowly, rinsing his mouth deliberately with each sip. Stanhope is by the doorway, looking up into the trench. He has just turned* 40

away as a sonorous drawn-out call comes floating through the dawn "Stretcher bear-ers!"

Stanhope half turns, then faces Hibbert.

Stanhope: Come on. Buck up.

Hibbert: There's no appalling hurry, is there?

Stanhope: No hurry! Why d'you think the others have gone up?

Hibbert: (slowly) What? Trotter and Raleigh? 50

Stanhope: (sharply) Wake up, man! What the devil's the matter with you?

Hibbert slowly puts down his mug.

Hibbert: Champagne dries the mouth up so. Makes the tongue feel like a bit of paper.

There is a slight pause. 55

Stanhope: The longer you stay here, the harder it'll be to go up.

Hibbert: Good Lord! You don't think I'm –

Stanhope: You're just wasting as much time as you can.

Hibbert: Well, damn it, it's no good going up till I feel fit. Let's just have another spot of water. 60

Hibbert takes the jug and pours out a little more water. He is the picture of misery. Stanhope stands impatiently beside him.

Mason appears from his dug-out, fully dressed for the line, his rifle slung over his shoulder. 65

Mason: I'll go right along sir. I've made up the fire to last a good three hours – if you don't mind me popping down about nine o'clock to 'ave a look at it.

Stanhope: All right, Mason. Mr. Hibbert's coming up now. You can go along with him. 70

Mason: (to Hibbert) I'd like to come along with you if you don't mind, sir. I ain't bin up in this part of the front line. Don't want to get lost.

Stanhope: Mr. Hibbert'll show you the way up. (He turns to Hibbert.) Keep your men against the back wall of the trench as long as the shells are dropping behind. Cheero! 75

How does Sherriff make this moment in the play so sad?

Or †11 How does Sherriff make Raleigh such a dramatically moving character in the play? Support your ideas with details from the writing.

Or 12 You are the Colonel. You are on the way up to the front line to tell Stanhope about the orders for the raid.

Write your thoughts.

SECTION B: POETRY

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON: *Poems*

Either *13 Read this extract from *Maud*, and then answer the question that follows it:

Dead, long dead, Long dead!	
And my heart is a handful of dust, And the wheels go over my head, And my bones are shaken with pain, For into a shallow grave they are thrust, Only a yard beneath the street, And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,	5
The hoofs of the horses beat, Beat into my scalp and my brain, With never an end to the stream of passing feet, Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying, Clamour and rumble, and ringing and clatter, And here beneath it is all as bad,	10
For I thought the dead had peace, but it is not so; To have no peace in the grave, is that not sad? But up and down and to and fro, Ever about me the dead men go; And then to hear a dead man chatter Is enough to drive one mad.	15 20

Show how Tennyson strikingly portrays the speaker's feelings here.

- Or †14 In what ways does Tennyson make you admire the hero Ulysses? Support your answer with details from the poem.
- Or †15 How far does Tennyson make you feel sympathy for the lady in *The Lady of Shalott*? Support your answer with details from the poem.

SONGS OF OURSELVES: *from Part 3*

Either *16 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

On The Grasshopper and The Cricket

The poetry of earth is never dead:
 When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
 And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
 From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
 That is the grasshopper's – he takes the lead 5
 In summer luxury, – he has never done
 With his delights; for when tired out with fun
 He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
 The poetry of earth is ceasing never: 10
 On a lone winter evening, when the frost
 Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
 The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
 And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
 The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.
(by John Keats)

Explore how the words of this poem vividly appeal to your senses.

- Or** †17 How does the poet powerfully convey feelings of despair in **either** *The Voice* (by Thomas Hardy) **or** *Report to Wordsworth* (by Boey Kim Cheng)?
- Or** †18 Explore the ways in which the poets use particularly dramatic words and phrases in **two** of the following poems:

The Flower-Fed Buffaloes (by Vachel Lindsay)
First Love (by John Clare)
Lament (by Gillian Clarke)

SECTION C: PROSE

EMILY BRONTË: *Wuthering Heights*

Either *19 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

He was there – at least a few yards further in the park; leant against an old ash tree, his hat off, and his hair soaked with the dew that had gathered on the budded branches, and fell pattering round him. He had been standing a long time in that position, for I saw a pair of ousels passing and repassing, scarcely three feet from him, busy in building their nest, and regarding his proximity no more than that of a piece of timber. They flew off at my approach, and he raised his eyes and spoke:

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‘She’s dead!’ he said; ‘I’ve not waited for you to learn that. Put your handkerchief away – don’t snivel before me. Damn you all! she wants none of *your* tears!’

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I was weeping as much for him as her: we do sometimes pity creatures that have none of the feeling either for themselves or others; and when I first looked into his face I perceived that he had got intelligence of the catastrophe; and a foolish notion struck me that his heart was quelled, and he prayed, because his lips moved, and his gaze was bent on the ground.

15

‘Yes, she’s dead!’ I answered, checking my sobs, and drying my cheeks. ‘Gone to heaven, I hope, where we may, everyone, join her, if we take due warning, and leave our evil ways to follow good!’

‘Did *she* take due warning, then?’ asked Heathcliff, attempting a sneer. ‘Did she die like a saint? Come, give me a true history of the event. How did –’

20

He endeavoured to pronounce the name, but could not manage it; and compressing his mouth, he held a silent combat with his inward agony, defying, meanwhile, my sympathy with an unflinching, ferocious stare.

‘How did she die?’ he resumed, at last – faint, notwithstanding his hardihood, to have a support behind him, for, after the struggle, he trembled, in spite of himself, to his very finger-ends.

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‘Poor wretch!’ I thought; ‘you have a heart and nerves the same as your brother men! Why should you be so anxious to conceal them? Your pride cannot blind God! You tempt him to wring them, till he forces a cry of humiliation!’

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‘Quietly as a lamb!’ I answered, aloud. ‘She drew a sigh, and stretched herself, like a child reviving, and sinking again to sleep; and five minutes after I felt one little pulse at her heart, and nothing more!’

‘And – and did she ever mention me?’ he asked, hesitating, as if he dreaded the answer to his question would introduce details that he could not bear to hear.

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‘Her senses never returned – she recognised nobody from the time you left her,’ I said. ‘She lies with a sweet smile on her face; and her latest ideas wandered back to pleasant early days. Her life closed in a gentle dream – may she wake as kindly in the other world!’

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‘May she wake in torment!’ he cried, with frightful vehemence, stamping his foot, and groaning in a sudden paroxysm of ungovernable passion. ‘Why, she’s a liar to the end! Where is she? Not *there* – not in heaven – not perished – where? Oh! you said you cared nothing for my sufferings! And I pray one prayer – I repeat it till my tongue stiffens – Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest, as long as I am living! You said I killed you – haunt me, about the murdered, do haunt their murderers, I believe. I know that ghosts

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have wandered on earth. Be with me always – take any form – drive me mad! only *do* not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable! I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!

He dashed his head against the knotted trunk; and, lifting up his eyes, howled, not like a man, but like a savage beast getting goaded to death with knives and spears.

I observed several splashes of blood about the bark of the tree, and his hand and forehead were both stained; probably the scene I witnessed was a repetition of others acted during the night. It hardly moved my compassion – it appalled me; still I felt reluctant to quit him so . But the moment he recollected himself enough to notice me watching, he thundered a command for me to go, and I obeyed. He was beyond my skill to quiet or console!

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What do you find most memorable about this moment in the novel? Support your views with details from Brontë's writing.

- Or** †20 Explore how Brontë's descriptions of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange contribute to the novel's impact on you.
- Or** 21 You are Lockwood on the night after your first meeting with Heathcliff.
Write your thoughts.

KIRAN DESAI: *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*

Either *22 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Upstairs, however, it was as hot as in the room below.
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The sound of his small voice, so bravely singing, cheered him up a little.

Explore the ways in which Desai vividly conveys Sampath's feelings during this night in Shahkot.

Or †23 Choose **two** moments in the novel which you find memorably entertaining and show how Desai's writing has made them so entertaining.

Or 24 You are the Brigadier on the morning when the monkeys are supposed to be captured in nets.

Write your thoughts.

Turn over for Question 25

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD: *The Great Gatsby*

Either *25 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

The evening had made me light-headed and happy; I think I walked into a deep sleep as I entered my front door. So I don't know whether or not Gatsby went to Coney Island, or for how many hours he 'glanced into rooms' while his house blazed gaudily on. I called up Daisy from the office next morning, and invited her to come to tea.

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'Don't bring Tom,' I warned her.

'What?'

'Don't bring Tom.'

'Who is "Tom"?' she asked innocently.

The day agreed upon was pouring rain. At eleven o'clock a man in a raincoat, dragging a lawn-mower, tapped at my front door and said that Mr Gatsby had sent him over to cut my grass. This reminded me that I had forgotten to tell my Finn to come back, so I drove into West Egg Village to search for her among soggy white washed alleys and to buy some cups and lemons and flowers.

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The flowers were unnecessary, for at two o'clock a greenhouse arrived from Gatsby's, with innumerable receptacles to contain it. An hour later the front door opened nervously, and Gatsby, in a white flannel suit, silver shirt, and gold-coloured tie, hurried in. He was pale, and there were dark signs of sleeplessness beneath his eyes.

15

'Is everything all right?' he asked immediately.

'The grass looks fine, if that's what you mean.'

'What grass?' he inquired blankly. 'Oh, the grass in the yard.' He looked out the window at it, but, judging from his expression, I don't believe he saw a thing.

20

'Looks very good,' he remarked vaguely. 'One of the papers said they thought the rain would stop about four. I think it was The Journal. Have you got everything you need in the shape of – of tea?'

25

I took him into the pantry, where he looked a little reproachfully at the Finn. Together we scrutinized the twelve lemon cakes from the delicatessen shop.

30

'Will they do?' I asked.

'Of course, of course! They're fine!' and he added hollowly, '... old sport.'

The rain cooled about half-past three to a damp mist, through which occasional thin drops s wam like dew. Gatsby looked with vacant eyes through a copy of Clay's *Economics*, starting at the Finnish tread that shook the kitchen floor, and peering toward the bleared windows from time to time as if a series of invisible but alarming happenings were taking place outside. Finally he got up and informed me, in an uncertain voice, that he was going home.

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'Why's that?'

'Nobody's coming to tea. It's too late!' He looked at his watch as if there was some pressing demand on his time elsewhere. 'I can't wait all day.'

'Don't be silly; it's just two minutes to four.'

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He sat down miserably, as if I had pushed him.

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Explore how Fitzgerald presents Gatsby at this moment in the novel.

- Or †26 What are your feelings about Fitzgerald's description of Gatsby as 'Great'?
answer with details from the novel.
- Or 27 You are Wilson, on hearing of the death of your wife Myrtle.
Write your thoughts.

BESSIE HEAD: *When Rain Clouds Gather*

Either *28 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

‘Please spare a moment, Rr a Rankoane,’ she said. ‘I want to ask you something.’

Rankoane detached himself from the group and walked towards her with his angry-looking expression. Rankoane was always rude and offhand to women.

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‘What is it?’ he asked impatiently.

‘Your cattle post is near mine,’ Paulina said. ‘Why didn’t you persuade my son to come home with you? What’s the good of him staying in the bush when there is no water and the cattle are dying?’

A queer, guarded look crept into Rankoane’s eyes. ‘So, your son has not come home, Paulina Sebeso?’ he asked quietly.

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‘I don’t understand you, Rankoane,’ she said, wildly. ‘What are you saying?’

The man shrugged. He had more than enough troubles to bear. His whole livelihood had almost vanished before his very eyes.

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‘I told your son to go home two weeks ago,’ he said. ‘I expected him to be here, that’s why I did not stop at your cattle post today.’

He walked away to join the group of men, but then he turned round once and looked back at Paulina with a twisted expression of pain on his face. At the same time he was trying to escape responsibility by not telling the woman why he had ordered her son home two weeks previously. It must have been just about this time too, after he had brought the cattle back to the kraal for the night, that Paulina’s son had come to him.

20

‘I don’t know what’s wrong with me, Uncle,’ the boy had said. ‘I am coughing up blood every day.’

25

But Rankoane knew at one glance what was wrong. Tuberculosis was the one major killer in the country, and the small boy with his red feverish eyes was seriously ill with it. Also, the diet they were eating now, plain porridge with salt and water and no milk, must have brought the boy’s ailment to a serious stage. Rankoane merely smiled because he did not want to alarm the boy who looked like a thin, bony scarecrow in his father’s oversized jacket.

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‘We are all coughing,’ he said. ‘The reason why? There is too much dust and no rain to settle it. Dust in the lungs causes one to cough up blood. The one way to cure it is by drinking beer, but since you are young and cannot drink the beer you must go home tomorrow with the cattle and your mother will take you to hospital.’

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The small boy grinned at him cheerfully, with big, white teeth. He was amused at Rankoane’s reference to beer and the man-to-man tone of his voice. Still, he was worried. He could not take the cattle back to the village and burden his mother with them.

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‘Can’t I leave the cattle in your care until I come back from the hospital, Uncle?’ he asked.

Rankoane had shifted uncomfortably. He was now drawing up a half bucket of water from his well and he could not add to his own worries. Besides, Paulina Sebeso was a resourceful woman and she would know what to do. He explained this to the boy who nodded. The last thing he would get from his mother was a scolding. She made a joke of life and he already knew what she would say when he unexpectedly arrived home: ‘Goodness, Isaac, don’t tell me you have eaten up all your rations.’ And he would say ‘No, Mama, I have come home because I am coughing up

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blood every day.” This would most surely strike his mother as unusual, as she would not know of Rankoane’s story about the dust in the lungs . The thought of his mother and her surprise and concern filled the small boy’s heart with warm comfort. He stood up and walked back happily to his own roughly built hut, and it was the memory of this last conversation he had had with the boy that made Rankoane look back at Paulina Sebeso with a pained expression. He ought not to have done so, for his look froze Paulina to the ground and she could not move, so lifeless and numb was the feeling in her arms and legs.

How does Head make this such a moving moment in the novel?

- Or** †29 What do you think that the white men contribute to society in Golema Mmidi? Support your ideas by close reference to Head’s writing.
- Or** 30 You are Makhaya at the end of the novel, reflecting on your time in Golema Mmidi. Write your thoughts.

EDITH WHARTON: *Ethan Frome*

Either *31 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

All the way down to the village he continued to think of his return to Mattie. The kitchen was a poor place, not “spruce” and shining as his mother had kept it in his boyhood; but it was surprising what a homelike look the mere fact of Zeena’s absence gave it. And he pictured what it would be like that evening, when he and Mattie were there after supper. For the first time they would be alone together indoors, and they would sit there, one on each side of the stove, like a married couple, he in his stocking feet and smoking his pipe, she laughing and talking in that funny way she had, which was always as new to him as if he had never heard her before.

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The sweetness of the picture, and the relief of knowing that his fears of “trouble” with Zeena were unfounded, sent up his spirits with a rush, and he, who was usually so silent, whistled and sang aloud as he drove through the snowy fields. There was in him a slumbering spark of sociability which the long Starkfeld winters had not yet extinguished. By nature grave and inarticulate, he admired recklessness and gaiety in others and was warmed to the marrow by friendly human intercourse. At Worcester, though he had the name of keeping to himself and not being much of a hand at a good time, he had secretly gloried in being clapped on the back and hailed as “Old Ethe” or “Old Stiff”; and the cessation of such familiarities had increased the chill of his return to Starkfeld.

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There the silence had deepened about him year by year. Left alone, after his father’s accident, to carry the burden of farm and mill, he had had no time for convivial loiterings in the village; and when his mother fell ill the loneliness of the house grew more oppressive than that of the fields. His mother had been a talker in her day, but after her “trouble” the sound of her voice was seldom heard, though she had not lost the power of speech. Sometimes, in the long winter evenings, when in desperation her son asked her why she didn’t “say something,” she would lift a finger and answer: “Because I’m listening”; and on stormy nights, when the loud wind was about the house, she would complain, if he spoke to her: “They’re talking so out there that I can’t hear you.”

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It was only when she drew toward her last illness, and his cousin Zenobia Pierce came over from the next valley to help him nurse her, that human speech was heard again in the house. After the mortal silence of his long imprisonment Zeena’s volubility was music in his ears. He felt that he might have “gone like his mother” if the sound of a new voice had not come to steady him. Zeena seemed to understand his case at a glance. She laughed at him for not knowing the simplest sick-bed duties and told him to “go right along out” and leave her to see to things. The mere fact of obeying her orders, of feeling free to go about his business again and talk with other men, restored his shaken balance and magnified his sense of what he owed her. Her efficiency shamed and dazzled him. She seemed to possess by instinct all the household wisdom that his long apprenticeship had not instilled in him. When the end came it was she who had to tell him to hitch up and go for the undertaker, and she thought it “funny” that he had not settled beforehand who was to have his mother’s clothes and the sewing-machine. After the funeral, when he saw her preparing to go away, he was seized with an unreasoning dread of being left alone on the farm; and before he knew what he was doing he had asked her to stay there with him. He had often thought since that it would not have happened if his mother had died in spring instead of winter.

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How, in this passage, does Wharton movingly portray the fact that for Ethan, the future is always out of reach?

- Or** †32 What do you think Wharton's descriptions of the landscape and the climate contribute to the power of the novel? Support your ideas with details from the writing.
- Or** 33 You are Ethan. After seeing the narrator on to the train you find that he has left a book in the sleigh.

Write your thoughts.

Stories of Ourselves

Either *34 Read this extract from *The Signalman*, and then answer the question that follows

I resumed my downward way, and stepping out upon the level of the railroad, and drawing nearer to him, saw that he was a dark sallow man, with a dark beard and rather heavy eyebrows. His post was in as solitary and dismal a place as ever I saw. On either side, a dripping-wet wall of jagged stone, excluding all view but a strip of sky; the perspective one way only a crooked prolongation of this great dungeon; the shorter perspective in the other direction terminating in a gloomy red light, and the gloomier entrance to a black tunnel, in whose massive architecture there was a barbarous, depressing, and forbidding air. So little sunlight ever found its way to this spot, that it had an earthy, deadly smell; and so much cold wind rushed through it, that it struck chill to me, as if I had left the natural world. 5

Before he stirred, I was near enough to him to have touched him. Not even then removing his eyes from mine, he stepped back one step, and lifted his hand. 10

This was a lonesome post to occupy, I said, and it had riveted my attention when I looked down from up yonder. A visitor was a rarity, I should suppose; not an unwelcome rarity, I hoped? In me, he merely saw a man who had been shut up within narrow limits all his life, and who, being at last set free, had a newly-awakened interest in these great works. To such purpose I spoke to him; but I am far from sure of the terms I used; for, besides that I am not happy in opening any conversation, there was something in the man that daunted me. 15

He directed a most curious look towards the red light near the tunnel's mouth, and looked all about it, as if something were missing from it, and then looked at me. 20

That light was part of his charge? Was it not?
He answered in a low voice, 'Don't you know it is?'
The monstrous thought came into my mind, as I perused the fixed eyes and the saturnine face, that this was a spirit, not a man. I have speculated since, whether there may have been infection in his mind. 25

In my turn I stepped back. But in making the action, I detected in his eyes some latent fear of me. This put the monstrous thought to flight.
'You look at me,' I said, forcing a smile, 'as if you had a dread of me.'
'I was doubtful,' he returned, 'whether I had seen you before.'
'Where?' 30

He pointed to the red light he had looked at.
'There?' I said.
Intently watchful of me, he replied (but without sound), 'Yes.'
'My good fellow, what should I do there? However, be that as it may, I never was there, you may swear.' 35

'I think I may,' he rejoined. 'Yes; I am sure I may.'
His manner cleared, like my own. He replied to my remarks with readiness, and in well-chosen words. Had he much to do there? Yes; that was to say, he had enough responsibility to bear; but exactness and watchfulness were what was required of him, and of actual work – manual labour – he had next to none. To change that signal, to trim those lights, and to turn this iron handle now and then, was all he had to do under that head. Regarding those many long and lonely hours of which I seemed to make so much, he could only say that the routine of his life had shaped itself into that form, and he had grown used to it. He had taught himself a language down here – if only to know it by sight, and to have formed his 40

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own crude ideas of its pronunciation, could be called learning it. He had also worked at fractions and decimals, and tried a little algebra; but he was, and had been as a boy, a poor hand at figures. Was it necessary for him when on duty always to remain in that channel of damp air, and could he never rise into the sunshine from between those high stone walls? Why, that depended upon times and circumstances, Under some conditions there would be less upon the Line than under others, and the same held good as to certain hours of the day and night. In bright weather, he did choose occasions for getting a little above those lower shadows; but, being at all times liable to be called by his electric bell, and at such times listening for it with redoubled anxiety, the relief was less than I would suppose.

How does Dickens make this such a striking introduction to the signalman?

- Or †35 Explore the ways in which the writers make you admire strong and determined women in *Secrets* (by Bernard MacLaverty) **and** *On Her Knees* (by Tim Winton).
- Or 36 You are Mala in *The Third and Final Continent*. You are on the flight from Calcutta to Boston.

Write your thoughts.

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