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International General Certificate of Secondary Education

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LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/31

Paper 3 Unseen

October/November 2012

1 hour 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 **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.

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



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

EITHER

- 1 Read carefully the poem opposite. In it a group of boys want to ride their bikes on a frozen canal. As people have been drowned playing on ice, a boat called an ice-breaker is sent to destroy the canal's icy surface.

How does the poet's writing make the scene so vivid for you?

To help you answer this question you might consider:

- the description of the canal and the boys' activities on it
- the description of the ice-breaker and the water beneath the ice
- what the boys' reactions to the helmsman (the man steering the ice-breaker) suggest to you.

Frozen Canal

After three days of frost a boy on a bike
Is daringly first to prove the black

Top of the iced canal a highway now,
Slick¹ between banks off-white with old snow.

Dodging a bottle buried to its snout
And an iceberg tyre one-ninth out

He spins with an Indian whoop² under a bridge
Past his companions fringing the timid edge,

And they follow, all of them, to ride and skitter and glide
Along the hissing crown of this new road.

Then a heavy drumming in the frosted air
Brings the butting³ shoulders of the ice-breaker,

The spoil-sport barge⁴ labouring to thump and crack
Leaving brick-sized ice-blocks jumbled in its wake.

Deliberate this. Under unreflecting ice
The sepia⁵ water waits for a shocked face

To splinter and blunder in, waits for a mouth
It can fill with sludge to silence, throttling the breath.

It happens – often enough for a barge to be sent
Whenever the ice will hold a footstep, blunt

Prow pushing the games away to the thrum
Of diesels. The boys stand with their beached bike, dumb

Till the devastating passage has rumbled through,
Then shrilling at the helmsman⁶, hurling futile snow.

But he, indifferent, steers on his ordered track,
While they, saved, desolated, swear at his crouched back.

¹*slick*: smooth, shiny, sleek

²*Indian whoop*: the loud cry of a native American

³*butting*: pushing forward

⁴*barge*: a canal boat

⁵*sepia*: reddish-brown colour

⁶*helmsman*: the man steering the ice-breaker

OR

- 2 Read carefully the following passage from a novel set in India. Dr Aziz has had a busy and frustrating morning, so he has gone into a mosque to rest. Mrs Moore, an elderly English lady who has just arrived in India, disturbs his peace and quiet.

How does the writer engage your interest in the relationship between Dr Aziz and Mrs Moore?

To help you answer this question you might consider:

- Dr Aziz's mood before Mrs Moore appears
- how he behaves towards Mrs Moore at first
- how their relationship develops through the course of their conversation.

Some day he too would build a mosque, smaller than this but in perfect taste, so that all who passed by should experience the happiness he felt now. And near it, under a low dome, should be his tomb, with a Persian inscription:

*Alas, without me for thousands of years
The Rose will blossom and the Spring will bloom,
But those who have secretly understood my heart –
They will approach and visit the grave where I lie.*

He had seen the verse on the tomb of a king and regarded it as profound philosophy – he always held pathos to be profound. The secret understanding of the heart! He repeated the phrase with tears in his eyes, and as he did so one of the pillars of the mosque seemed to quiver. It swayed in the gloom and detached itself. Belief in ghosts ran in his blood, but he sat firm. Another pillar moved, a third, and then an Englishwoman stepped out into the moonlight. Suddenly he was furiously angry and shouted: 'Madam! Madam! Madam!'

'Oh! Oh!' the woman gasped.

'Madam, this is a mosque, you have no right here at all; you should have taken off your shoes; this is a holy place for Moslems.'

'I have taken them off.'

'You have?'

'I left them at the entrance.'

'Then I ask your pardon.'

Still startled, the woman moved out, keeping the ablution-tank¹ between them. He called after her, 'I am truly sorry for speaking.'

'Yes, I was right, was I not? If I remove my shoes, I am allowed?'

'Of course, but so few ladies take the trouble, especially if thinking no one is there to see.'

'That makes no difference. God is here.'

'Madam!'

'Please let me go.'

'Oh, can I do you some service now or at any time?'

'No, thank you, really none – good night.'

'May I know your name?'

She was now in the shadow of the gateway, so that he could not see her face, but she saw his, and she said with a change of voice, 'Mrs Moore.'

'Mrs –' Advancing, he found that she was old. A fabric bigger than the mosque fell to pieces, and he did not know whether he was glad or sorry. She was older than he had expected, with a red face and white hair. Her voice had deceived him.

'Mrs Moore, I am afraid I startled you. I shall tell our community – my friends – about you. That God is here – very good, very fine indeed. I think you are newly arrived in India.'

'Yes – how did you know?'

'By the way you address me. No, but can I call you a carriage?'

'I have only come from the Club. They are doing a play that I have seen in London, and it was so hot.'

'What was the name of the play?'

'*Cousin Kate*.'

'I think you ought not to walk at night alone, Mrs Moore. There are bad characters about and leopards may come across from the Marabar Hills. Snakes also.'

She exclaimed; she had forgotten the snakes.

'For example, a six-spot beetle,' he continued. 'You pick it up, it bites, you die.'

'But you walk alone yourself.'

'Oh, I am used to it.'

'Used to snakes?'

They both laughed. 'I'm a doctor,' he said. 'Snakes don't dare bite me.' They sat down side by side in the entrance, and slipped on their evening shoes. 'Please may I ask you a question now? Why do you come to India at this time of year, just as the cold weather is ending?'

'I intended to start earlier, but there was an unavoidable delay.'

'It will soon be so unhealthy for you! And why ever do you come to Chandrapore?'²

'To visit my son. He is the City Magistrate here.'

'Oh no, excuse me, that is quite impossible. Our City Magistrate's name is Mr Heaslop. I know him intimately.'

'He's my son all the same,' she said, smiling.

'But, Mrs Moore, how can he be?'

'I was married twice.'

'Yes, now I see, and your first husband died.'

'He did, and so did my second husband.'

'Then we are in the same box,' he said cryptically. 'Then is the City Magistrate the entire of your family now?'

'No, there are the younger ones – Ralph and Stella in England.'

'And the gentleman here, is he Ralph and Stella's half-brother?'

'Quite right.'

'Mrs Moore, this is all extremely strange, because like yourself I have also two sons and a daughter. Is not this the same box with a vengeance?'

'What are their names? Not also Ronny, Ralph and Stella, surely?'

The suggestion delighted him. 'No, indeed. How funny it sounds! Their names are quite different and will surprise you. Listen, please. I am about to tell you my children's names. The first is called Ahmed, the second is called Karim, the third – she is the eldest – Jamila. Three children are enough. Do not you agree with me?'

'I do.'

They were both silent for a little, thinking of their respective families. She sighed and rose to go.

¹*ablution tank*: ceremonial water tank in a mosque

²*Chandrapore*: the city in which the novel is set.

Copyright Acknowledgements:

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