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Western Australian Certificate of Education Examination, 2015

Question Paper

LITERATURE

Stage 3

Time allowed for this paper

Reading time before commencing work: ten minutes

Working time for paper: three hours

Materials required/recommended for this paper

To be provided by the supervisor

This Question Paper

Standard Answer Book

To be provided by the candidate

Standard items: pens (blue/black preferred), pencils (including coloured), sharpener,
correction fluid/tape, eraser, ruler, highlighters

Special items: nil

Important note to candidates

No other items may be taken into the examination room. It is **your** responsibility to ensure that you do not have any unauthorised notes or other items of a non-personal nature in the examination room. If you have any unauthorised material with you, hand it to the supervisor **before** reading any further.

Structure of this paper

Section	Number of questions available	Number of questions to be answered	Suggested working time (minutes)	Marks available	Percentage of exam
Section One: Response – Close reading	1	1	60	25	30
Section Two: Extended response	9	2	120	50	70
Total					100

Instructions to candidates

1. The rules for the conduct of Western Australian external examinations are detailed in the *Year 12 Information Handbook 2015*. Sitting this examination implies that you agree to abide by these rules.
2. Write your answers to each section in the Standard Answer Book.
3. This examination requires you to refer to literary texts you have studied this year. The text(s) discussed in Section Two as the primary reference(s) must be taken from the text list in the Literature syllabus. If you make primary reference to a text not taken from the text list in the Literature syllabus, 10 per cent will be deducted from your total raw examination mark for Literature.
4. This examination requires you to respond to three questions. Each response must make primary reference to a different genre (prose, poetry or drama). In Section One, if you make reference to:
 - (i) Text A (poetry), then in Section Two you must respond to two questions, one response making primary reference to prose and the other to drama.
 - (ii) Text B (prose), then in Section Two you must respond to two questions, one response making primary reference to poetry and the other to drama.
 - (iii) Text C (drama), then in Section Two you must respond to two questions, one response making primary reference to poetry and the other to prose.
5. If you make primary reference to the same genre twice, 15 per cent will be deducted from your total raw examination mark for Literature.
6. For each response that you write in Section Two, indicate the question number and the genre (poetry, prose or drama) that you are using as your primary reference.
7. You must be careful to confine your responses to the specific questions asked and to follow any instructions that are specific to a particular question.

Section One: Response – Close reading

30% (25 Marks)

This section has **one** question. You must answer this question.

Suggested working time: 60 minutes.

Question 1

(25 marks)

Present a close reading of **one** of the following three texts.

Text A

This poem was written by Dorothy Livesay (1909–1996), a Canadian poet. It is featured in her anthology *The Self-Completing Tree*, published in 1999.

Survival Kit—Bluff Park

Daffodils in spring
 shoot up joyous
 on the edge of summer
 edge of the land
 fringe of the sea
 wild rose clammers
 amongst prickly gorse
 gift of the English pioneers
 mauve Scotch thistles
 maintain dominion
 amongst bent-over grasses
 where protection lies
 for the mountain lily
 white prototype
 of Ontario's yellow dog-tooth violet.
 Here Oregon grape St. John's wort
 white marguerites
 find shelter beside rose campion
 hugging the burnt grass cliffs.
 These all all survive
 amongst fir jackpine maple
 and the mothering arbutus
 with its twining arms

Even after our blackened bones are buried
 and the planet's face
 is turned to stone
 these memories of you and me
 will thrive survive
 for, nameless, out of the crevices
 these seeds will spring again
 opening their rainbow colours
 to the sun
 to celebrate
 all we have done
 and undone.

See next page

Text B

Text B is the opening of the novel *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves* by American-born author Karen Joy Fowler and was first published in 2013. The novel was short-listed for the Man Booker Prize in 2014.

Prologue

THOSE WHO KNOW ME NOW will be surprised to learn that I was a great talker as a child. We have a home movie taken when I was two-years old, the old-fashioned kind with no sound track, and by now the colours have bled out — a white sky, my red sneakers a ghostly pink — but you can still see how much I used to talk.

I'm doing a bit of landscaping, picking up one stone at a time from our gravel driveway, carrying it to a large tin washtub, dropping it in, and going back for the next. I'm working hard, but showily. I widen my eyes like a silent film star. I hold up a clear piece of quartz to be admired, put it in my mouth, stuff it into one cheek.

My mother appears and removes it. She steps back then, out of the frame, but I'm speaking emphatically now — you can see this in my gestures — and she returns, drops the stone into the tub. The whole thing lasts about five minutes and I never stop talking.

A few years later, Mom read us that old fairy tale in which one sister (the older) speaks in toads and snakes and the other (the younger) in flowers and jewels, and this is the image conjured for me, this scene from this movie, where my mother puts her hand into my mouth and pulls out a diamond.

I was towheaded back then, prettier as a child than I've turned out, and dolled up for the camera. My flyaway bangs are pasted down with water and held on one side by a rhinestone barrette shaped like a bow. Whenever I turn my head, the barrette blinks in the sunlight. My little hand sweeps over my tub of rocks. All this, I could be saying, all this will eventually be yours someday.

Or something else entirely. The point of the movie isn't the words themselves. What my parents valued was their extravagant abundance, their inexhaustible flow.

Still, there were occasions on which I had to be stopped. When you think of two things to say, pick your favourite and only say that, my mother suggested once, as a tip to polite social behaviour, and the rule was later modified to one in three. My father would come to my bedroom door each night to wish me happy dreams and I would speak without taking a breath, trying desperately to keep him in my room with only my voice. I would see his hand on the doorknob, the door beginning to swing shut. I have something to say! I'd tell him, and the door would stop midway.

Start in the middle then, he'd answer, a shadow with the hall light behind him, and tired in the evenings the way grown-ups are. The light would reflect in my bedroom window like a star you could wish on.

Skip the beginning. Start in the middle.

Part One

The storm which blew me out of my past eased off.

— Franz Kafka, 'A Report for an Academy'

See next page

Chapter 1

SO THE MIDDLE of my story comes in the winter of 1996. By then, we'd long since dwindled to the family that old home movie foreshadowed — me, my mother, and, unseen but evident behind the camera, my father. In 1996, ten years had passed since I'd last seen my brother, seventeen since my sister disappeared. The middle of my story is all about their absence, though if I hadn't told you that, you might not have known. By 1996, whole days went by in which I hardly thought of either one.

1996. Leap year. Year of the Fire Rat. President Clinton had just been reelected; this would all end in tears. Kabul had fallen to the Taliban. The Siege of Sarajevo had ended. Charles had recently divorced Diana.

Hale-Bopp came swinging into our sky. Claims of a Saturn-like object in the comet's wake first surfaced that November. Dolly, the cloned sheep, and Deep Blue, the chess-playing computer program, were superstars. There was evidence of life on Mars. The Saturn-like object in Hale-Bopp's tail was maybe an alien spaceship. In May of '97, thirty-nine people would kill themselves as a prerequisite to climbing aboard.

Against this backdrop, how ordinary I look. In 1996, I was twenty-two years old, meandering through my fifth year at the University of California, Davis, and still maybe only a junior or maybe a senior, but so thoroughly uninterested in the niceties of units or requirements or degrees that I wouldn't be graduating anytime soon. My education, my father liked to point out, was wider than it was deep. He said this often.

But I saw no reason to hurry. I'd no particular ambitions beyond being either widely admired or stealthily influential — I was torn between the two. It hardly mattered, as no major seemed to lead reliably to either.

My parents, who were still paying my expenses, found me aggravating. My mother was often aggravated those days. It was something new for her, analeptic doses of righteous aggravation. She was rejuvenated by it. She'd recently announced that she was through being a translator and go-between for me and my father; he and I had hardly spoken since. I don't remember minding. My father was himself a college professor and a pedant to the bone. Every exchange contained a lesson, like the pit in a cherry. To this day, the Socratic method makes me want to bite someone.

Autumn came suddenly that year, like a door opening. One morning I was bicycling to class when a large flock of Canada geese passed overhead. I couldn't see them, or much of anything else, but I heard the jazzy honking above me. There was a tule fog off the fields and I was wrapped inside it, pedaling through clouds. Tule fogs are not like other fogs, not spotty or drifting, but fixed and substantial. Probably anyone would have felt the risk of moving quickly through an unseen world, but I have — or had as a child — a particular penchant for slapstick and mishap, so I took the full thrill from it.

I felt polished by the wet air and maybe just a little migratory myself, just a little wild. This meant I might flirt a bit in the library if I sat next to anyone flirtable or I might daydream in class. I often felt wild back then; I enjoyed the feeling, but nothing had ever come of it.

At lunchtime I grabbed something, probably grilled cheese, let's say it was grilled cheese, in the school cafeteria. I was in the habit of leaving my books on the chair next to me, where they could be quickly moved if someone interesting came by but would discourage the uninteresting. At twenty-two, I had the callowest possible definition of interesting and, by the measure of my own calipers, was far from interesting myself.

See next page

Text C

American-born playwright Jon Robin Baitz, was raised in Brazil and South Africa. His play, *The Film Society* was first performed in New York in 1988. It is set in the South African city of Durban at a boys' boarding school in 1970, during the years of apartheid¹.

CHARACTERS

Jonathon Balton – Assistant Head Teacher in his 30s
 Nan and Terry Sinclair – a married couple who are teachers
 Neville Sutter – Headmaster
 Hamish Fox – a long-serving teacher

SETTING

The Blenheim School for boys, September, 1970.

ACT ONE

Scene One

Jonathon's classroom. Jonathon sits in the dark, watching the last moments of Touch of Evil.

MAN (Voice over) "Well. Hank was a great detective all right."

WOMAN (Voice over) "And a lousy cop."

(The door is flung open and Hamish Fox enters.)

FOX What the bloody hell is going on in here! Turn on the lights!

BALTON *(Turning off the projector):* Just watching a film, is all, Hamish!

(He turns on the lights.)

FOX What do you mean 'watching a film'? Where are they?

BALTON The boys? They didn't — it's not really film society now, I was just watching it again, you see.

FOX Not the boys! Nan and Terry Sinclair!

BALTON Not here. I don't know, really, with all the fuss and all, when it was over, I just came in here, you see, and —

FOX You have anything to do with this fiasco, Balton?

BALTON Really, I was ... no! I was in charge of the iced tea, I didn't have anything to do with it.

FOX Well, they're your friends! You're always giggling together, it's always no good from you lot!

BALTON No! That's not fair, is it?

FOX Why're you sitting about in the dark watching a film at a time like this, when we've got policemen all over the place, hey?

BALTON I don't know why it's such a bother, it's not like we were invaded, Hamish. Terry brought up one African speaker, I don't see why you had to call the entire Durban military out.

¹ Apartheid in the Republic of South Africa was a rigid policy of segregation which economically and politically oppressed the non-white population from 1948 to 1994.

(Pause.)

FOX *(staring incredulously at Jonathon)*: That's very good! You defend them then and we'll see what happens when we're overrun! This is not some commie summer camp! It's Blenheim! The nerve! Bloody outrageous!

BALTON I had nothing to do with it, don't shout at me!

(Neville Sutter enters.)

SUTTER Any sign of the Sinclairs?

FOX They're hiding.

SUTTER Calm down, Hammy.

FOX Don't tell me to calm down. There's been a lot of lefty nonsense going on here lately ...

SUTTER Jonathon, I expect you didn't have anything to do with this business, did you? I've just spent the past hour with a room full of angry parents and it's an awful bore.

BALTON No, I didn't at all! Because, you see, I had iced tea and meringues and all to organise for after the speeches and prizes and then, in all the fuss and all, I just came back here because, you see, I had ordered *Touch of Mink*, but they sent *Touch of Evil* ... which I quite liked.

SUTTER — Jonathon, it's all right, you needn't —

BALTON — and I wanted to see it again, because the boys didn't quite get it.

FOX Stop going on about your film society this second!

BALTON It was all about Mexicans and corruption.

SUTTER *(Sighing)*: Jonathon, if any of the parents come looking for me, or the Sinclairs for that matter —

FOX — Not bloody likely. They're retreating to Moscow —

SUTTER Tell the Sinclairs, I want to see them up at my house. Joyce tripped over a chair during the commotion. *(He starts to exit)* Come along, Hammy, we'd better finish up with the parents.

FOX *(Following Sutter)*: I told you not to put Sinclair in charge of Centenary Day, but you refused to listen, well, all I can say is ...

SUTTER *(To Fox, off)*: Tell the girl to bring the parents a drink in my office and some ice for Joyce's leg, would you? There's a good chap.

(Pause. Balton sighs. Looks outside after them. Turns off the lights, turns on the projector, and watches the remaining moments of the film.)

MAN "Is that all you have to say for him?"

(Pianola theme on soundtrack.)

WOMAN "He was some kind of man. What does it matter what you say about people?"

MAN "Goodbye, Tanya."

WOMAN "Adios."

(Pianola theme on soundtrack. The door opens. Nan enters as the film credits begin.)

NAN Jonathon? Jonathon? Where's Terry?

See next page

BALTON Get in here! They're looking all over for you and they're mad as hornets!

NAN Terry's not here? God, he just disappeared.

BALTON He went down to Durban jail to see if he could bail out that black priest you two brought up to the podium.

NAN Me? Christ, I had nothing to do with it! You think I'd allow a stupid gesture like that? He got this man arrested! I had nothing to do with it!

BALTON You'll have to tell Neville and Hamish that and then it'll all die down, I'm sure. If you explain that ... as for Terry, well. My. My. You know?

NAN Jonathon, he's done us in! They're going to sack us this time! It's over.

BALTON No they won't! Just tell them how terribly sorry you both are and start to cry for a bit and it'll all be fine. Just like all the other little — episodes.

NAN He's been so furtive, like one of the boys, I knew something was up! Damn it!

BALTON I have a bit of whisky, you know!

NAN Oh hell, sure.

(Jonathon takes two teacups and a bottle of Scotch out of his desk, pours.)

BALTON Yes, this'll calm you down. I was quite rattled by the whole business myself, I must admit. But it'll all blow over, don't you worry. Storm in a tea-thingie, eh?

NAN But you know what this town is like! If they fire us, we'll be dead as cold mutton! I can't stand it anymore, he lies, goes off to these ludicrous little meetings, comes back with new words and books and it's all so childish.

BALTON You'd have thought he'd have learnt his lesson after the parents went mad when he brought in those coloured hippie fellows with the guitars and the big hair. My God.

(Terry enters, smiling.)

TERRY Well. Quite a day, eh?

NAN Terry, you are an idiot!

TERRY No! I know exactly what I am doing. Give me a drink.

BALTON *(Pouring whisky for Terry):* They're quite upset, I think, actually. They want you up at Neville's house, 'cause you somehow managed to trip his wife when you brought that native up. But I wouldn't go for a bit, I'd let it all die down.

NAN What happened to that man you brought up? Who is he? They dragged him off ...

TERRY Reverend Elias Bazewo, and he's been arrested before, I followed him down there — They'll let him go tonight — it's nothing, it's happened before to him, he's fine.

NAN Don't stand there smiling! How do you think it feels? Being dragged into this?

TERRY Oh, it's wonderful! Both of you! This place has got to change and we all know it and someone has to do something. They all listened to him! Until Fox called the cops on him —

NAN They were not listening! They just saw this black man and started screaming, I could have told you what was going to happen.

BALTON I may not have understood all, but the general effect was pretty scary. All those pink faces melting in the sun, tea cakes and meringues sticking to their laps. All they asked you to do was put together a nice dull little Centenary Day thingie and it was meant to be nice and sweet and dull, deathly dull hopefully, like last year when they had the choir sing 'The Halleluiahs Chorus' for six hours straight.

NAN It's supposed to be a celebration of a hundred years of Blenheim, Terry, that's all!

- TERRY Well, they got one. I can't stand the stagnation anymore. He talked about the blessings of education! Not armed revolution!
- NAN I don't care! If you had told me what you were up to I might feel differently, but it's the childish plotting. You jump on these bandwagons, Terry, without really thinking. Do you think these boys give a damn about politics?
- BALTON It's true, Terry. They only like sports. And besides, you forget what it was like when we were boys here! All forced marches and military history and all that navigating by the stars and gutting wildebeests every morning ... much better now! Yes it is!
- TERRY How? Both of you are being so narrow-minded. I'm amazed.
- NAN Where do you think you are? University of Natal debate club? This is Blenheim School for Boys!
- BALTON It's true! Let me give you an example of how things are better, as I see it. My film society, for one.
- TERRY Oh, Jonathon, please. The other day you told me you loved film society because it was a bit of a rest for you. It's not some cultural institution. What'd you show them last week?
- BALTON *Passport to Pimlico*, Terry, see. Perfectly wonderful story and the boys loved it and this week we had *Touch of Evil*.
- TERRY That's not so bad.
- BALTON Actually I had ordered *Touch of Mink*, you see I'm trying to go through it alphabetically ...
- NAN Terry, I'm sick of it. I'm a school teacher, not an activist, and nor are you. It's one thing to have boys over to listen to your new Bob Dylan album and let them smoke on the verandah and to refuse to cane 'em, fine. Treat them like human beings, but not these antagonistic little jabs — you just brought that man here to get attention for yourself.
- BALTON You've always been — when we were boys, Nan, he used to —
- TERRY Are you both honestly so furious at me? *(Pause)* Please don't be angry. Think how it might've been. If instead of calling the police, Hamish Fox had sat there listening. *(He smiles. Goes on calmly)* Elias Bazewo has been teaching black children at a school in Kwamashu for thirty years. He's a man of peace with a great deal of experience and a perspective on education that I thought would remind all of us how privileged we are. How bad would that have been? I guess it wasn't possible.
- (Pause)*

End of Section One

Section Two: Extended response**70% (50 Marks)**

This section has **nine** questions. You are required to respond to **two** questions. Each response must make primary reference to a different genre from that used in Section One. If you make reference in Section One to:

- (i) Text A (poetry), then in this section one response must make primary reference to prose and one response must make primary reference to drama.
- (ii) Text B (prose), then in this section one response must make primary reference to poetry and one response must make primary reference to drama.
- (iii) Text C (drama), then in this section one response must make primary reference to prose and one response must make primary reference to poetry.

The text(s) discussed as the primary reference(s) must be from the text list in the syllabus.

Suggested working time: 120 minutes.

Question 2**(25 marks)**

Discuss the ways in which at least one literary text exposes the conflicts and controls that lead to the perpetuation of human suffering.

Question 3**(25 marks)**

How do the voices and discourses in a text represent a writer's relationship with a particular culture? In your response, you must make reference to at least one literary text.

Question 4**(25 marks)**

A critical and creative reader actively makes connections and observes patterns in the texts they encounter. Discuss this statement, making reference to at least one literary text.

Question 5**(25 marks)**

Explore how a writer uses language and literary devices to invite audiences to change how they view identity and nationhood. In your response, you must make reference to at least one literary text.

Question 6**(25 marks)**

Examine the ways in which writers shape and adapt generic conventions to reflect and expose particular value systems. In your response, you must make reference to at least one literary text.

Question 7**(25 marks)**

In their treatment of ideologies, literary texts are complex, even contradictory. Discuss this statement in the light of your reading of at least one literary text.

Question 8**(25 marks)**

Discuss how the relationship between the aesthetic and contextual functions of setting is necessary to an appreciation of at least one literary text.

Question 9**(25 marks)**

In literary texts, the notion of the educated and the uneducated can be fluid, insightful or judgemental. Discuss how education is represented in at least one literary text.

Question 10**(25 marks)**

Referring to at least one literary text, discuss how the ability to engage with the precision and intricacy of language enables readers to understand the nuances and subtleties of its many meanings.

End of questions

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Section One

- Text A** Livesay, D. (1999). Survival Kit–Bluff Park. In D. Livesay, *The self-completing tree: Selected poems* (p. 12). Toronto, CA: Dundurn. ISBN 0646286080.
- Text B** Excerpt from: Fowler, K.J. (2013). *We are all completely beside ourselves*. London: Serpent's Tail, Prologue; pp. 5–7. ISBN 978—1846689666.
- Text C** Excerpt from: Baitz, J.R. (1993). The film society. In J.R. Baitz, *The substance of fire and other plays*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, Inc.

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