
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9765/03

Paper 3 Comment and Analysis

May/June 2011

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.

Answer Question 1 and **one** other Question.



This document consists of **6** printed pages and **2** blank pages.



Answer Question 1 and **one** other question.

All questions carry equal marks.

In your answers you should comment closely on the effects of language, style and form in the passages, and pay attention to features that are characteristic of their period and context.

- 1 Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which your responses are shaped by the writers' language, form and style.

A THE OVEN BIRD

There is a singer everyone has heard,
Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,
Who makes the solid tree trunks sound again.
He says that leaves are old and that for flowers
Mid-summer is to spring as one to ten. 5
He says the early petal-fall is past,
When pear and cherry bloom went down in showers
On sunny days a moment overcast;
And comes that other fall we name the fall.
He says the highway dust is over all. 10
The bird would cease and be as other birds
But that he knows in singing not to sing.
The question that he frames in all but words
Is what to make of a diminished thing.

Robert Frost (1874–1963)

B A BLACKBIRD SINGING

It seems wrong that out of this bird,
Black, bold, a suggestion of dark
Places about it, there yet should come
Such rich music, as though the notes'
Ore were changed to a rare metal 5
At one touch of that bright bill.

You have heard it often, alone at your desk
In a green April, your mind drawn
Away from its work by sweet disturbance
Of the mild evening outside your room. 10

A slow singer, but loading each phrase
With history's overtones, love, joy
And grief learned by his dark tribe
In other orchards and passed on
Instinctively as they are now, 15
But fresh always with new tears.

R. S. Thomas (1913–2000)

BLANK PAGE

Turn over for Question 2

- 2 Write a critical appreciation of the following passage, taken from *Joseph Andrews* (1742) by Henry Fielding. Joseph, against advice, has walked off into the night, only to be beaten, robbed, stripped and flung into the ditch.

The poor Wretch, who lay motionless a long time, just began to recover his Senses as a Stage-Coach came by. The Postillion hearing a Man's Groans, stopt his Horses, and told the Coachman, 'he was certain there was a *dead* Man lying in the Ditch, for he heard him groan.' 'Go on, Sirrah,' says the Coachman, 'we are confounded late, and have no time to look after dead Men.' A Lady, who heard what the Postillion said, and likewise heard the Groan, called eagerly to the Coachman, 'to stop and see what was the matter.' Upon which he bid the Postillion 'alight, and look into the Ditch.' He did so, and returned, 'that there was a Man sitting upright as naked as ever he was born.' – 'O *J-sus*,' cry'd the Lady, 'A naked Man! Dear Coachman, drive on and leave him.' Upon this the Gentlemen got out of the Coach; and *Joseph* begged them, 'to have Mercy upon him: For that he had been robbed, and almost beaten to death.' 'Robbed,' cries an old Gentleman; 'Let us make all the haste imaginable, or we shall be robbed too.' A young Man, who belonged to the Law answered, 'he wished they had past by without taking any Notice: But that now they might be proved to have been *last in his Company*; if he should die, they might be called to some account for his Murther. He therefore thought it adviseable to save the poor Creature's Life, for their own sakes, if possible; at least, if he died, to prevent the Jury's finding *that they fled for it*. He was therefore *of Opinion*, to take the Man into the Coach, and carry him to the next Inn.' The Lady insisted, 'that he should not come into the Coach. That if they lifted him in, she would herself alight: for she had rather stay in that Place to all Eternity, than ride with a naked Man.' The Coachman objected, 'that he could not suffer him to be taken in, unless somebody would pay a Shilling for his Carriage the four Miles.' Which the two Gentlemen refused to do; but the Lawyer, who was afraid of some Mischief happening to himself if the Wretch was left behind in that Condition, saying, 'no Man could be too cautious in these Matters, and that he remembered very extraordinary Cases in the Books,' threatned the Coachman, and bid him deny taking him up at his Peril; 'for that if he died, he should be indicted for his Murther, and if he lived, and brought an Action against him, he would willingly take a Brief in it.' These Words had a sensible Effect on the Coachman, who was well acquainted with the Person who spoke them; and the old Gentleman abovementioned, thinking the naked Man would afford him frequent Opportunities of shewing his Wit to the Lady, offered to join with the Company in giving a Mug of Beer for his Fare; till partly alarmed by the Threats of the one, and partly by the Promises of the other, and being perhaps a *little* moved with Compassion at the poor Creature's Condition, who stood bleeding and shivering with the Cold, he at length agreed; and *Joseph* was now advancing to the Coach, where seeing the Lady, who held the Sticks of her Fan before her Eyes, he absolutely refused, miserable as he was, to enter, unless he was furnished with sufficient Covering, to prevent giving the least Offence to Decency. So perfectly modest was this young Man; such mighty Effects had the spotless Example of the amiable *Pamela*, and the excellent Sermons of Mr. *Adams* wrought upon him.

Though there were several great Coats about the Coach, it was not easy to get over this Difficulty which *Joseph* had started. The two Gentlemen complained they were cold, and could not spare a Rag; the Man of Wit saying, with a Laugh, *that Charity began at home*; and the Coachman, who had two great Coats spread under him, refused to lend either, lest they should be made bloody; the Lady's Footman desired to be excused for the same Reason, which the Lady herself, notwithstanding her Abhorrence of a naked Man, approved: and it is more than probable, poor *Joseph*, who obstinately adhered to his modest Resolution, must have perished, unless the Postillion, (a Lad who hath been since transported for robbing a Hen-roost) had voluntarily stript off a great Coat, his only Garment, at the same time swearing a great Oath, (for which he was rebuked by the Passengers) 'that he would rather ride in his Shirt all his Life, than suffer a Fellow-Creature to lie in so miserable a Condition.'

45

50

- 3 Write a critical commentary on the following extract, which is the opening of *A Voyage Round My Father* (1971) by John Mortimer, making clear your view of its dramatic effectiveness.

There is a trellis up centre wider at the top than the base, sweeping from the floor until it is out of sight in the flies; a bench, a ladder and a table with three chairs. Otherwise the stage is bare.

As the curtain rises, the SON (grown up) is sitting at the table reading his diary. The FATHER enters.

5

Father: Roses – not much of a show of roses.

Son: (*Grown up.*) Not bad.

Father: Onions – hardly a bumper crop would you say?

Son: (*Grown up.*) I suppose not,

(The FATHER, a man in his sixties, wearing a darned tweed suit, and carrying a clouded malacca walking-stick is, with blind eyes, inspecting his garden.)

10

Father: Earwigs at the dahlias. You remember, when you were a boy, you remember our great slaughter of earwigs?

Son: I remember.

15

Father: You see the dahlias?

Son: Yes.

Father: Describe them for me. Paint me the picture.

Son: Well, they're red – and yellow. And blowsy...

Father: (*Puzzled.*) Blowsy?

20

Son: They look sort of middle-aged – over-ripe.

Father: Earwig traps in place, are they?

Son: Yes. They're in place.

Father: When you were a boy, we often bagged a hundred earwigs in a single foray! Do you remember?

25

Son: I remember.

(The SON moves away from the FATHER and speaks to the audience.)

My father wasn't always blind. The three of us lived in a small house surrounded, as if for protection, by an enormous garden...

30

(The MOTHER enters.)

Father: Where's the boy got to?

Mother: Disappeared apparently.

Father: He's running wild.

Son: He was driven to the station, where he caught a train to London and the Law Courts, to his work as a barrister in a great hearse-like motor which he would no more have thought of replacing every year than he would have accepted a different kind of suit or a new gardening hat. As soon as possible he returned to the safety of the dahlias, and the ritual of the evening earwig hunt. Visitors were rare and, if spotted, my father would move deeper into the foliage until the danger was past. Those were the days when my father could see – before I went away to school. When it was always a hot afternoon and a girl called Iris taught me to whistle.

35

(The SON, as a boy, and a small girl called IRIS run on.)

40

Iris: Stick out your lips. Stick them out far. Go on. Farther. Much farther. Now blow. Not too hard. Blow gently. Gently. Don't laugh. Take it serious. Blow!

(There is the sound of a whistle.)

Son: What was that?

50

Iris: What do you mean – what was that?

- Son: Someone whistled.
- Iris: It was you.
- Son: Me?
- Iris: It was you whistling! 55
- Son: I can do it! I know how to do it!
- Iris: Well, you've learnt something...
- Father: The boy's running wild again.
- Mother: Oh, I don't think so.
- Father: Oh, yes, he is. And a good thing, too. When I was a boy in Africa, 60
they sent me off – all by myself – to a small hotel up country to run
wild for three months. I took my birthday cake with me and kept it
under my bed. I well remember – (*He laughs.*) – when my birthday
came round I took the cake out, sat on my bed, and ate it. That was
my celebration! 65
- Mother: He'll soon be going away to school...
- Father: What did you say?
- Mother: He'll be going away to school. We can't expect him to stay here – for
ever...
(*The FATHER gets a step-ladder and starts to walk up it, singing to
himself.*) 70
- Father: (*Singing.*) 'She was as bee-eautiful as a butterfly
And as proud as a queen
Was pretty little Polly Perkins of Paddington Green.
I'm a broken-hearted milkman, 75
In grief I'm arrayed,
Through the keeping of the company
Of a young servant maid.'
- Son: (*Grown up.*) One day he bought a step-ladder for pruning the apple
trees. He hit his head on the branch of a tree and the retinas left the
balls of his eyes. 80
(*Sudden, total black-out in which we hear the SON's voice.*)
That's the way I looked to my father from childhood upwards. That's
how my wife and his grandchildren looked. My father was blind but
we never mentioned it. 85
(*The lights fade up slowly to reveal the FATHER and MOTHER
sitting around a breakfast table. The FATHER is clearly totally blind,
the MOTHER is helping him cut up his toast.*)
(*Grown up.*) He had a great disinclination to mention anything
unpleasant. What was that? Courage, cowardice, indifference or 90
caring too completely? Why didn't he blaspheme, beat his head
against the pitch black sitting-room walls? Why didn't he curse God?
He had a great capacity for rage – but never at the universe.

BLANK PAGE

Copyright Acknowledgements:

- Question 1a © Robert Frost; 'The Oven Bird', in *Selected Poems*; Oxford University Press; 1998.
Question 1b © R. S. Thomas; 'A Blackbird Singing', in *Collected Poems*; Orion Books; 2004.
Question 3 © Reproduced from *A Voyage Round my Father* by John Mortimer (Copyright (c) Advanpress Ltd 1970) by permission of PFD (www.pfd.co.uk) on behalf of Advanpress Ltd.

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

University of Cambridge International Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.