



Victorian Certificate of Education 2006

LITERATURE

Written examination

Thursday 2 November 2006

Reading time: 3.00 pm to 3.15 pm (15 minutes)

Writing time: 3.15 pm to 5.15 pm (2 hours)

TASK BOOK

Structure of book

<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Marks</i>
1	20
2	20
	Total 40

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or white out liquid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

Materials supplied

- Task book of 64 pages, including the **Assessment criteria** and a checklist on page 64.
- One or more script books. All script books contain unruled (rough work only) pages for making notes, plans and drafts if you wish.

The task

- You are required to complete **two** pieces of writing based on **two texts** selected from the list on pages 2 and 3 of this task book.

Each text must be chosen from a different part.

- Each piece of writing is worth half of the total assessment for the examination.
- Write your **student number** in the space provided on the front cover(s) of the script book(s).
- Write the **part numbers** and **text numbers** of your selected texts on the front cover(s) of your script book(s).
- All written responses must be in English.

At the end of the task

- Place all other used script books inside the front cover of one of the used script books.
- You may keep this task book.

Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

Instructions

You are required to complete two pieces of writing based on **two texts** selected from the list on pages 2 and 3.

The list is divided into five parts.

The texts you select must be chosen from different parts. **You must not write on two texts from the same part.** If you answer on two texts from the same part, one of the pieces will be awarded zero marks.

1. Find the passages for the texts on which you wish to write.
2. Three passages have been set for every text.
3. The passages are printed in the order in which they appear in the texts.
4. For each of your selected texts, you must use one or more of the passages as the basis for a discussion of that text.
5. In your pieces of writing, refer in detail to the passage or passages and the texts. You may include minor references to other texts.
6. As a guide, each piece of writing should be between 400–1000 words. However, length will not be a major consideration in the assessment.

Table of contents

Part 1:	Novels		Page
1 – 1	Jane Austen	<i>Sense and Sensibility</i>	4–5
1 – 2	Joseph Conrad	<i>Heart of Darkness</i>	6–7
1 – 3	Michelle de Kretser	<i>The Hamilton Case</i>	8–9
1 – 4	E L Doctorow	<i>Ragtime</i>	10–11
1 – 5	F Scott Fitzgerald	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	12–13
1 – 6	E M Forster	<i>Howards End</i>	14–15
1 – 7	Helen Garner	<i>The Children's Bach</i>	16–17
1 – 8	Henry James	<i>Washington Square</i>	18–19
1 – 9	Ann Patchett	<i>Bel Canto</i>	20–21
Part 2:	Plays		
2 – 1	Anton Chekhov	<i>Three Sisters</i>	22–23
2 – 2	Euripides	<i>The Women of Troy</i>	24–25
2 – 3	Joanna Murray-Smith	<i>Honour</i>	26–27
2 – 4	Yasmina Reza	<i>'Art'</i>	28–29
2 – 5	William Shakespeare	<i>King Lear</i>	30–31
2 – 6	William Shakespeare	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	32–33
2 – 7	Sam Shepard	<i>True West</i>	34–35
2 – 8	Dylan Thomas	<i>Under Milk Wood</i>	36–37

Part 3:	Short stories		
3 – 1	Thea Astley	<i>Hunting the Wild Pineapple</i>	38–39
3 – 2	Raymond Carver	<i>Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?</i>	40–41
3 – 3	James Joyce	<i>Dubliners</i>	42–43
Part 4:	Other literature		
4 – 1	William Dalrymple	<i>City of Djinns</i>	44–45
4 – 2	Robert Drewe	<i>The Shark Net</i>	46–47
4 – 3	Drusilla Modjeska	<i>Timepieces</i>	48–49
Part 5:	Poetry		
5 – 1	Robert Adamson	<i>Mulberry Leaves</i>	50–51
5 – 2	W H Auden	<i>Selected Poems</i>	52–53
5 – 3	John Donne	<i>Selected Poetry</i>	54–55
5 – 4	Gwen Harwood	<i>Selected Poems</i>	56–57
5 – 5	John Kinsella	<i>Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems</i>	58–59
5 – 6	Adrienne Rich	<i>The Fact of a Doorframe</i>	60–61
5 – 7	Judith Wright	<i>Collected Poems</i>	62–63
	Assessment criteria		64
	A checklist for planning and revising		64

1: Novels

1 – 1 Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Sense and Sensibility*.

1.

“I think Edward,” said Mrs. Dashwood, as they were at breakfast the last morning, “you would be a happier man if you had any profession to engage your time and give an interest to your plans and actions. Some inconvenience to your friends, indeed, might result from it—you would not be able to give them so much of your time. But (with a smile) you would be materially benefited in one particular at least. You would know where to go when you left them.”

“I do assure you,” he replied, “that I have long thought on this point, as you think now. It has been, and is, and probably will always be a heavy misfortune to me, that I have had no necessary business to engage me, no profession to give me employment, or afford me any thing like independance. But unfortunately my own nicety, and the nicety of my friends, have made me what I am, an idle, helpless being. We never could agree in our choice of a profession. I always preferred the church as I still do. But that was not smart enough for my family. They recommended the army. That was a great deal too smart for me. The law was allowed to be genteel enough; many young men, who had chambers in the Temple, made a very good appearance in the first circles, and drove about town in very knowing gigs. But I had no inclination for the law, even in this less abstruse study of it, which my family approved. As for the navy, it had fashion on its side, but I was too old when the subject was first started to enter it—and, at length, as there was no necessity for my having any profession at all, as I might be as dashing and expensive without a red coat on my back as with one, idleness was pronounced on the whole to be the most advantageous and honourable, and a young man of eighteen is not in general so earnestly bent on being busy as to resist the solicitations of his friends to do nothing. I was therefore entered at Oxford and have been properly idle ever since.”

“The consequence of which, I suppose, will be,” said Mrs. Dashwood, “since leisure has not promoted your own happiness, that your sons will be brought up to as many pursuits, employments, professions, and trades as Columella’s.”

“They will be brought up,” said he, in a serious accent, “to be as unlike myself as is possible. In feeling, in action, in condition, in every thing.”

“Come, come; this is all an effusion of immediate want of spirits, Edward. You are in a melancholy humour, and fancy that any one unlike yourself must be happy. But remember that the pain of parting from friends will be felt by every body at times, whatever be their education or state. Know your own happiness. You want nothing but patience—or give it a more fascinating name, call it hope. Your mother will secure to you, in time, that independance you are so anxious for; it is her duty, and it will, it must ere long become her happiness to prevent your whole youth from being wasted in discontent. How much may not a few months do?”

“I think,” replied Edward, “that I may defy many months to produce any good to me.”

* * * *

2.

“I understand you.—You do not suppose that I have ever felt much.—For four months, Marianne, I have had all this hanging on my mind, without being at liberty to speak of it to a single creature; knowing that it would make you and my mother most unhappy whenever it were explained to you, yet unable to prepare you for it in the least.—It was told me,—it was in a manner forced on me by the very person herself, whose prior engagement ruined all my prospects; and told me, as I thought, with triumph.—This person’s suspicions, therefore, I have had to oppose, by endeavouring to appear indifferent where I have been most deeply interested;—and it has not been only once;—I have had her hopes and exultation to listen to again and again.— I have known myself to be divided from Edward for ever, without hearing one circumstance that could make me less desire the connection.—Nothing has proved him unworthy; nor has any thing declared him indifferent to me. —I have had to contend against the unkindness of his sister, and the insolence of his mother; and have suffered the punishment of an attachment, without enjoying its advantages.—And all this has been going on at a time, when, as you too well know, it has not been my only unhappiness.—If you can think me capable of ever feeling—surely you may suppose that I have suffered *now*. The composure of mind with which I have brought myself at present to consider the matter, the consolation that I have been willing to admit, have been the effect of constant and painful exertion; they did not spring up of themselves;—they did not occur to relieve my spirits at first—No, Marianne.—*Then*, if I had not been bound to silence, perhaps nothing could have kept me entirely—not even what I owed to my dearest friends—from openly shewing that I was *very* unhappy.”—

Marianne was quite subdued.—

“Oh! Elinor,” she cried, “you have made me hate myself for ever. —How barbarous have I been to you!—you, who have been my only comfort, who have borne with me in all my misery, who have seemed to be only suffering for me!—Is this my gratitude?—Is this the only return I can make you?—Because your merit cries out upon myself, I have been trying to do it away.”

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 1 Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility* – continued

3.

“Well, Miss Dashwood,” said Mrs. Jennings, sagaciously smiling, as soon as the gentleman had withdrawn, “I do not ask you what the Colonel has been saying to you; for though, upon my honour, I *tried* to keep out of hearing, I could not help catching enough to understand his business. And I assure you I never was better pleased in my life, and I wish you joy of it with all my heart.”

“Thank you, ma’am,” said Elinor. “It *is* a matter of great joy to me; and I feel the goodness of Colonel Brandon most sensibly. There are not many men who would act as he has done. Few people have so compassionate an heart! I never was more astonished in my life.”

“Lord! my dear, you are very modest! I an’t the least astonished at it in the world, for I have often thought of late, there was nothing more likely to happen.”

“You judged from your knowledge of the Colonel’s general benevolence; but at least you could not foresee that the opportunity would so very soon occur.”

“Opportunity!” repeated Mrs. Jennings—“Oh! as to that, when a man has once made up his mind to such a thing, somehow or other he will soon find an opportunity. Well, my dear, I wish you joy of it again and again; and if ever there was a happy couple in the world, I think I shall soon know where to look for them.”

“You mean to go to Delaford after them I suppose,” said Elinor, with a faint smile.

“Aye, my dear, that I do, indeed. And as to the house being a bad one, I do not know what the Colonel would be at, for it is as good a one as ever I saw.”

“He spoke of its being out of repair.”

“Well, and whose fault is that? why don’t he repair it?—who should do it but himself?”

They were interrupted by the servant’s coming in, to announce the chariot’s being at the door; and Mrs. Jennings immediately preparing to go, said—

“Well, my dear, I must be gone before I have had half my talk out. But, however, we may have it all over in the evening, for we shall be quite alone. I do not ask you to go with me, for I dare say your mind is too full of the matter to care for company; and besides, you must long to tell your sister all about it.”

Marianne had left the room before the conversation began.

“Certainly, ma’am, I shall tell Marianne of it; but I shall not mention it at present to anybody else.”

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 2 Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Heart of Darkness*.

1.

Once, I remember, we came upon a man-of-war anchored off the coast. There wasn't even a shed there, and she was shelling the bush. It appears the French had one of their wars going on thereabouts. Her ensign dropped limp like a rag; the muzzles of the long eight-inch guns stuck out all over the low hull; the greasy, slimy swell swung her up lazily and let her down, swaying her thin masts. In the empty immensity of earth, sky, and water, there she was, incomprehensible, firing into a continent. Pop, would go one of the eight-inch guns; a small flame would dart and vanish, a little white smoke would disappear, a tiny projectile would give a feeble screech – and nothing happened. Nothing could happen. There was a touch of insanity in the proceeding, a sense of lugubrious drollery in the sight; and it was not dissipated by somebody on board assuring me earnestly there was a camp of natives – he called them enemies! – hidden out of sight somewhere.

‘We gave her her letters (I heard the men in that lonely ship were dying of fever at the rate of three a-day) and went on. We called at some more places with farcical names, where the merry dance of death and trade goes on in a still and earthy atmosphere as of an overheated catacomb; all along the formless coast bordered by dangerous surf, as if Nature herself had tried to ward off intruders; in and out of rivers, streams of death in life, whose banks were rotting into mud, whose waters, thickened into slime, invaded the contorted mangroves, that seemed to writhe at us in the extremity of an impotent despair. Nowhere did we stop long enough to get a particularised impression, but the general sense of vague and oppressive wonder grew upon me. It was like a weary pilgrimage amongst hints for nightmares.

* * * *

2.

They say the hair goes on growing sometimes, but this – ah – specimen was impressively bald. The wilderness had patted him on the head, and, behold, it was like a ball – an ivory ball; it had caressed him, and – lo! – he had withered; it had taken him, loved him, embraced him, got into his veins, consumed his flesh, and sealed his soul to its own by the inconceivable ceremonies of some devilish initiation. He was its spoiled and pampered favourite. Ivory? I should think so. Heaps of it, stacks of it. The old mud shanty was bursting with it. You would think there was not a single tusk left either above or below the ground in the whole country. “Mostly fossil,” the manager had remarked disparagingly. It was no more fossil than I am; but they call it fossil when it is dug up. It appears these niggers do bury the tusks sometimes – but evidently they couldn't bury this parcel deep enough to save the gifted Mr Kurtz from his fate. We filled the steamboat with it, and had to pile a lot on the deck. Thus he could see and enjoy as long as he could see, because the appreciation of this favour had remained with him to the last. You should have heard him say, “My ivory.” Oh yes, I heard him. “My Intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my—” everything belonged to him. It made me hold my breath in expectation of hearing the wilderness burst into a prodigious peal of laughter that would shake the fixed stars in their places. Everything belonged to him – but that was a trifle. The thing was to know what he belonged to, how many powers of darkness claimed him for their own. That was the reflection that made you creepy all over. It was impossible – it was not good for one either – trying to imagine. He had taken a high seat amongst the devils of the land – I mean literally. You can't understand. How could you?

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 2 Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness* – continued

3.

‘She walked with measured steps, draped in striped and fringed cloths, treading the earth proudly, with a slight jingle and flash of barbarous ornaments. She carried her head high; her hair was done in the shape of a helmet; she had brass leggings to the knee, brass wire gauntlets to the elbow, a crimson spot on her tawny cheek, innumerable necklaces of glass beads on her neck; bizarre things, charms, gifts of witch-men, that hung about her, glittered and trembled at every step. She must have had the value of several elephant tusks upon her. She was savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her deliberate progress. And in the hush that had fallen suddenly upon the whole sorrowful land, the immense wilderness, the colossal body of the fecund and mysterious life seemed to look at her, pensive, as though it had been looking at the image of its own tenebrous and passionate soul.

‘She came abreast of the steamer, stood still, and faced us. Her long shadow fell to the water’s edge. Her face had a tragic and fierce aspect of wild sorrow and of dumb pain mingled with the fear of some struggling, half-shaped resolve. She stood looking at us without a stir, and like the wilderness itself, with an air of brooding over an inscrutable purpose. A whole minute passed, and then she made a step forward. There was a low jingle, a glint of yellow metal, a sway of fringed draperies, and she stopped as if her heart had failed her. The young fellow by my side growled. The pilgrims murmured at my back. She looked at us all as if her life had depended upon the unswerving steadiness of her glance. Suddenly she opened her bared arms and threw them up rigid above her head, as though in an uncontrollable desire to touch the sky, and at the same time the swift shadows darted out on the earth, swept around on the river, gathering the steamer in a shadowy embrace.

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 3 Michelle de Kretser: *The Hamilton Case*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Hamilton Case*.

1.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*,
Knopf, 2003
pp 42–43

2.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*,
Knopf, 2003
pp 146–147

1: Novels

1 – 3 Michelle de Kretser: *The Hamilton Case* – continued

3.

Michelle de Kretser, *The Hamilton Case*,
Knopf, 2003
pp 331–332

1: Novels

1 – 4 E L Doctorow: *Ragtime*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Ragtime*.

1.

E L Doctorow, *Ragtime*,
Picador, 1985
pp 68–69

2.

E L Doctorow, *Ragtime*,
Picador, 1985
pp 120–121

1: Novels

1 – 4 E L Doctorow: *Ragtime* – continued

3.

E L Doctorow, *Ragtime*,
Picador, 1985
pp 235–236

1: Novels

1 – 5 F Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Great Gatsby*.

1.

I looked at Miss Baker, wondering what it was she ‘got done’. I enjoyed looking at her. She was a slender, small-breasted girl, with an erect carriage, which she accentuated by throwing her body backward at the shoulders like a young cadet. Her grey sun-strained eyes looked back at me with polite reciprocal curiosity out of a wan, charming, discontented face. It occurred to me now that I had seen her, or a picture of her, somewhere before.

‘You live in West Egg,’ she remarked contemptuously. ‘I know somebody there.’

‘I don’t know a single –’

‘You must know Gatsby.’

‘Gatsby?’ demanded Daisy. ‘What Gatsby?’

Before I could reply that he was my neighbour dinner was announced; wedging his tense arm imperatively under mine, Tom Buchanan compelled me from the room as though he were moving a checker to another square.

Slenderly, languidly, their hands set lightly on their hips, the two young women preceded us out on to a rosy-coloured porch, open toward the sunset, where four candles flickered on the table in the diminished wind.

‘Why *candles*?’ objected Daisy, frowning. She snapped them out with her fingers. ‘In two weeks it’ll be the longest day in the year.’ She looked at us all radiantly. ‘Do you always watch for the longest day of the year and then miss it? I always watch for the longest day in the year and then miss it.’

‘We ought to plan something,’ yawned Miss Baker, sitting down at the table as if she were getting into bed.

‘All right,’ said Daisy. ‘What’ll we plan?’ She turned to me helplessly: ‘What do people plan?’

Before I could answer her eyes fastened with an awed expression on her little finger.

‘Look!’ she complained; ‘I hurt it.’

We all looked – the knuckle was black and blue.

‘You did it, Tom,’ she said accusingly. ‘I know you didn’t mean to, but you *did* do it. That’s what I get for marrying a brute of a man, a great, big, hulking physical specimen of a –’

‘I hate that word hulking,’ objected Tom crossly, ‘even in kidding.’

‘Hulking,’ insisted Daisy.

* * * *

2.

We talked for a moment about some wet, grey little villages in France. Evidently he lived in this vicinity, for he told me that he had just bought a hydroplane, and was going to try it out in the morning.

‘Want to go with me, old sport? Just near the shore along the Sound.’

‘What time?’

‘Any time that suits you best.’

It was on the tip of my tongue to ask his name when Jordan looked around and smiled.

‘Having a gay time now?’ she inquired.

‘Much better.’ I turned again to my new acquaintance.

‘This is an unusual party for me. I haven’t even seen the host. I live over there –’ I waved my hand at the invisible hedge in the distance, ‘and this man Gatsby sent over his chauffeur with an invitation.’

For a moment he looked at me as if he failed to understand.

‘I’m Gatsby,’ he said suddenly.

‘What!’ I exclaimed. ‘Oh, I beg your pardon.’

‘I thought you knew, old sport. I’m afraid I’m not a very good host.’

He smiled understandingly – much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced – or seemed to face – the whole eternal world for an instant, and then concentrated on *you* with an irresistible prejudice in your favour. It understood you just so far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey. Precisely at that point it vanished – and I was looking at an elegant young rough-neck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd. Some time before he introduced himself I’d got a strong impression that he was picking his words with care.

Almost at the moment when Mr Gatsby identified himself a butler hurried toward him with the information that Chicago was calling him on the wire. He excused himself with a small bow that included each of us in turn.

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 5 F Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* – continued

3.

When I passed the ashheaps on the train that morning I had crossed deliberately to the other side of the car. I supposed there'd be a curious crowd around there all day with little boys searching for dark spots in the dust, and some garrulous man telling over and over what had happened, until it became less and less real even to him and he could tell it no longer, and Myrtle Wilson's tragic achievement was forgotten. Now I want to go back a little and tell what happened at the garage after we left there the night before.

They had difficulty in locating the sister, Catherine. She must have broken her rule against drinking that night, for when she arrived she was stupid with liquor and unable to understand that the ambulance had already gone to Flushing. When they convinced her of this, she immediately fainted, as if that was the intolerable part of the affair. Someone, kind or curious, took her in his car and drove her in the wake of her sister's body.

Until long after midnight a changing crowd lapped up against the front of the garage, while George Wilson rocked himself back and forth on the couch inside. For a while the door of the office was open, and everyone who came into the garage glanced irresistibly through it. Finally someone said it was a shame, and closed the door. Michaelis and several other men were with him; first, four or five men, later two or three men. Still later Michaelis had to ask the last stranger to wait there fifteen minutes longer, while he went back to his own place and made a pot of coffee. After that, he stayed there alone with Wilson until dawn.

About three o'clock the quality of Wilson's incoherent muttering changed – he grew quieter and began to talk about the yellow car. He announced that he had a way of finding out whom the yellow car belonged to, and then he blurted out that a couple of months ago his wife had come from the city with her face bruised and her nose swollen.

But when he heard himself say this, he flinched and began to cry 'Oh, my God!' again in his groaning voice. Michaelis made a clumsy attempt to distract him.

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 6 E M Forster: *Howards End*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Howards End*.

1.

‘Now, Dolly, I can attend to you. Miss Schlegel? What does she want?’

When people wrote a letter Charles always asked what they wanted. Want was to him the only cause of action. And the question in this case was correct, for his wife replied: ‘She wants Howards End.’

‘Howards End? Now, Crane, just don’t forget to put on the Stepney wheel.’

‘No, sir.’

‘Now, mind you don’t forget, for I – come, little woman.’

When they were out of the chauffeur’s sight he put his arm round her waist and pressed her against him. All his affection and half his attention – it was what he granted her throughout their happy married life.

‘But you haven’t listened, Charles –’

‘What’s wrong?’

‘I keep on telling you – Howards End. Miss Schlegel’s got it.’

‘Got what?’ said Charles, unclasping her. ‘What the dickens are you talking about?’

‘Now, Charles, you promised not to say those naughty –’

‘Look here, I’m in no mood for foolery. It’s no morning for it either.’

‘I tell you – I keep on telling you – Miss Schlegel – she’s got it – your mother’s left it to her – and you’ve all got to move out!’

‘*Howards End?*’

‘*Howards End!*’ she screamed, mimicking him, and as she did so Evie came dashing out of the shrubbery.

‘Dolly, go back at once! My father’s much annoyed with you. Charles’ – she hit herself wildly – ‘come in at once to father. He’s had a letter that’s too awful.’

Charles began to run, but checked himself, and stepped heavily across the gravel path. There the house was – the nine windows, the unprolific vine. He exclaimed ‘Schlegels again!’ and, as if to complete chaos, Dolly said: ‘Oh no, the matron of the nursing-home has written instead of her.’

‘Come in, all three of you!’ cried his father, no longer inert. ‘Dolly, why have you disobeyed me?’

‘Oh, Mr Wilcox –’

‘I told you not to go out to the garage. I’ve heard you all shouting in the garden. I won’t have it. Come in.’

He stood in the porch, transformed, letters in his hand.

‘Into the dining-room, every one of you. We can’t discuss private matters in the middle of all the servants. Here, Charles, here; read these. See what you make.’

Charles took two letters, and read them as he followed the procession. The first was a covering note from the matron. Mrs Wilcox had desired her, when the funeral should be over, to forward the enclosed. The enclosed – it was from his mother herself. She had written: ‘To my husband: I should like Miss Schlegel (Margaret) to have Howards End.’

* * * *

2.

Margaret went forward, smiling socially. She supposed that these were unpunctual guests, who would have to be content with vicarious civility, since Evie and Charles were gone, Henry tired, and the others in their rooms. She assumed the airs of a hostess; not for long. For one of the group was Helen – Helen in her oldest clothes, and dominated by that tense, wounding excitement that had made her a terror in their nursery days.

‘What is it?’ she called. ‘Oh, what’s wrong? Is Tibby ill?’

Helen spoke to her two companions, who fell back. Then she bore forward furiously.

‘They’re starving!’ she shouted. ‘I found them starving!’

‘Who? Why have you come?’

‘The Bastards.’

‘Oh, Helen!’ moaned Margaret. ‘What ever have you done now?’

‘He has lost his place. He has been turned out of his bank. Yes, he’s done for. We upper classes have ruined him, and I suppose you’ll tell me it’s the battle of life. Starving. His wife is ill. Starving. She fainted in the train.’

‘Helen, are you mad?’

‘Perhaps. Yes. If you like, I’m mad. But I’ve brought them. I’ll stand injustice no longer. I’ll show up the wretchedness that lies under this luxury, this talk of impersonal forces, this cant about God doing what we’re too slack to do ourselves.’

‘Have you actually brought two starving people from London to Shropshire, Helen?’

Helen was checked. She had not thought of this, and her hysteria abated. ‘There was a restaurant car on the train,’ she said.

‘Don’t be absurd. They aren’t starving, and you know it. Now, begin from the beginning. I won’t have such theatrical nonsense. How dare you! Yes, how dare you!’ she repeated, as anger filled her, ‘bursting into Evie’s wedding in this heartless way. My goodness! but you’ve a perverted notion of philanthropy. Look’ – she indicated the house – ‘servants, people out of the windows. They think it’s some vulgar scandal, and I must explain. “Oh no, it’s only my sister screaming, and only two hangers-on of ours, whom she has brought here for no conceivable reason.”’

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 6 E M Forster: *Howards End* – continued

3.

And the other bright spot was his tenderness for Jacky. He pitied her with nobility now – not the contemptuous pity of a man who sticks to a woman through thick and thin. He tried to be less irritable. He wondered what her hungry eyes desired – nothing that she could express, or that he or any man could give her. Would she ever receive the justice that is mercy – the justice for by-products that the world is too busy to bestow? She was fond of flowers, generous with money, and not revengeful. If she had borne him a child he might have cared for her. Unmarried, Leonard would never have begged; he would have flickered out and died. But the whole of life is mixed. He had to provide for Jacky, and went down dirty paths that she might have a few feathers and the dishes of food that suited her.

One day he caught sight of Margaret and her brother. He was in St Paul's. He had entered the cathedral partly to avoid the rain and partly to see a picture that had educated him in former years. But the light was bad, the picture ill-placed, and Time and Judgement were inside him now. Death alone still charmed him, with her lap of poppies, on which all men shall sleep. He took one glance, and turned aimlessly away towards a chair. Then down the nave he saw Miss Schlegel and her brother. They stood in the fairway of passengers, and their faces were extremely grave. He was perfectly certain that they were in trouble about their sister.

Once outside – and he fled immediately – he wished that he had spoken to them. What was his life? What were a few angry words, or even imprisonment? He had done wrong – that was true terror. Whatever they might know, he would tell them everything he knew. He re-entered St Paul's. But they had moved in his absence, and had gone to lay their difficulties before Mr Wilcox and Charles.

The sight of Margaret turned remorse into new channels. He desired to confess, and though the desire is proof of a weakened nature, which is about to lose the essence of human intercourse, it did not take an ignoble form. He did not suppose that confession would bring him happiness. It was rather that he yearned to get clear of the tangle.

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 7 Helen Garner: *The Children's Bach*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Children's Bach*.

1.

Dexter flooded in on a tide of cold air. He loved coming home.

'Athena! Look who's here!'

The three women stood still and stared at one another.

'Sisters,' thought Athena, with that start of wonder which family resemblance provokes. 'Big one's tough. Little one's miserable.'

'She's beautiful,' thought Vicki. 'It's warm. I wish I could live here.' Her chest loosened and she began to breathe.

'She's a frump,' thought Elizabeth with relief; but Athena stepped forward and held out her hand, and Elizabeth saw the cleverly mended sleeve of her jumper and was suddenly not so sure.

'Come in,' said Athena. 'Dexter, can't you close that door?'

Because it had only one source of light, a yellow-shaded standard lamp at head-height against a wall, the Fox family's kitchen was like a burrow, rounded rather than cubed, as if its corners had been stuffed with dry grass. The air shimmered with warmth. The table, large, wooden, scarred, was laid at one end with a bleached cotton cloth, a pile of bowls, a fistful of spoons. All the objects in the room looked like cartoons of themselves: the flap-handled fridge, the brown piano grinning, the dresser where plates leaned and cups hung.

Dexter made the presentations.

'We can't stay, I'm afraid,' said Elizabeth in her grand manner. The closed door next to the stove must lead to the bathroom: she could hear the dull splatter of a leaking shower tap.

'Yes you can,' said Dexter. He took the lid off the saucepan. 'Soup! Soup, Billy. Soup means lots. Sit up, everyone. Where's Arthur?'

'At the Papantuanos', said Athena.

'I hope he's not watching TV.'

'They're making suits of armour in the shed.'

'I'll go and get him,' said Dexter. 'Athena – Vicki must be sat near the warmth. She's from sunnier climes, aren't you, Vicki.' He rounded her up, sidling and dancing with his arms out in their big curve. Vicki scowled with embarrassment, but obeyed. Elizabeth abandoned her plan to watch 'Sale of the Century', and allowed herself to be shuffled to a chair. She drew off her gloves.

A bigger boy ran in the back door, and kicked it to. He had the same home-cut hair as Billy's, a helmet of blond silk.

'Sit Billy up, Arthur,' said Dexter.

* * * *

2.

She lies on dry grass in parks, she falls asleep for seconds and wakes thinking she is in her bed and that the wind on her face has come in through the open window. On breathless summer evenings, when men in white trousers loll in doorways, she goes alone to the Paradise, and to the throbbing of the strange music there, the tangos, stern, passionate, intellectual music, the waiter kisses her on the mouth and glides away. In some other stifling bar at midnight the Italians set down their cues and turn in mid-breath to the TV set high above the doorway: 'Oh! ah!' She cries with them, watching the Olympic skier flash, lime-green, alone and perfect, over the whiteness, somewhere on the other side of the world. She passes a lane in which a pale disc shimmers, a man's face, her stomach oozes; he lunges, he takes hold of her, she smells his breath, she opens her mouth to scream and yes! she screams! It is not a woman's dream where she stretches wide but cannot utter: she kicks him, her foot meets bone, she throws his arms back, she screams so loudly and so well that a car stops, doors fly open, people run shouting to her aid. She opens the back gate, can it be still the same summer night? and finds they have dragged their mattresses out into the garden for the heat and are sleeping under the dimming stars, heedless of dew, with sheets drawn over their heads against the mosquitoes. She chooses Arthur, finds him, fits herself to the hard beads of his spine, smells his stalky neck, hears from under the fig tree the tireless scraping of a cricket. The first train, a row of lit boxes, clatters empty over the Merri bridge. Arthur stirs, flings up one arm, shrugs her off. The early wind brings a branch crashing down off one of the elms along the creek: she hears it rustle and thump. The same wind moves in the hall and turns over a page of the telephone directory. She sits at Dexter's table. An orange rests on his papers to prevent them from blowing away.

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 7 Helen Garner: *The Children's Bach* – continued

3.

Out she came, splendid as the Queen of Sheba, wreathed in pink steam, wet-headed, and wrapped in a threadbare towel. He held his breath for the moral crisis.

She smiled at him. 'I bet I lost half a stone with all that spewing,' she said. 'See how my hip bones are sticking out? I look fabulous! But boy, have I got a headache.'

'Vicki. Listen. I feel terrible about last night.'

'Oh, I know. I must have been foul.'

She rubbed herself with the rag of a towel. Her bottom was flushed, her flesh was so new and firm that even vigorous movement did not make it jiggle.

'No – I mean *I* feel terrible. About what I did.'

She was not even listening. 'I get this thing, you know? where I think I'm going to die if I fall asleep? Must be a neurosis or something. You were really nice to me.'

'Nice?' The young savage, thought Dexter. I am as irrelevant as a missionary. I am being ridiculous. 'But we'll have to tell Athena, of course,' he said.

She looked up. 'What? Don't be stchoopid. It was just a one-night stand. We're not in love, or anything! I'm not, anyway.' She gave a gay laugh and put one foot up on a chair to dry it. 'You can tell her if you *like*. But it might make her feel worse. Like a sort of punishment for going away.'

He had nothing to say.

'Anyway,' said Vicki, 'Athena can hardly complain. That would be hypocritical.'

He sat at the ravaged table and watched the girl dry herself with efficient strokes, sawing between her toes and twisting her shoulders to reach the backs of her thighs. This was modern life, then, this seamless logic, this common sense, this silent tit-for-tat. This was what people did. He did not like it. He hated it. But he was in its moral universe now, and he could never go back.

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 8 Henry James: *Washington Square*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Washington Square*.

1.

Her cousin took her by the arm, and made her walk about. 'I needn't ask you what you think of Morris,' the young girl exclaimed.

'Is that his name?'

'I don't ask you what you think of his name, but what you think of himself,' said Marian.

'Oh, nothing particular,' Catherine answered, dissembling for the first time in her life.

'I have half a mind to tell him that!' cried Marian. 'It will do him good; he's so terribly conceited.'

'Conceited?' said Catherine, staring.

'So Arthur says, and Arthur knows about him.'

'Oh, don't tell him!' Catherine murmured, imploringly.

'Don't tell him he's conceited! I have told him so a dozen times.'

At this profession of audacity Catherine looked down at her little companion in amazement. She supposed it was because Marian was going to be married that she took so much on herself; but she wondered too, whether, when she herself should become engaged, such exploits would be expected of her.

Half an hour later she saw her aunt Penniman sitting in the embrasure of a window, with her head a little on one side, and her gold eye-glass raised to her eyes, which were wandering about the room. In front of her was a gentleman, bending forward a little, with his back turned to Catherine. She knew his back immediately, though she had never seen it; for when he left her, at Marian's instigation, he had retreated in the best order, without turning round. Morris Townsend – the name had already become very familiar to her, as if some one had been repeating it in her ear for the last half hour – Morris Townsend was giving his impressions of the company to her aunt, as he had done to herself; he was saying clever things, and Mrs Penniman was smiling, as if she approved of them. As soon as Catherine had perceived this she moved away; she would not have liked him to turn round and see her. But it gave her pleasure – the whole thing. That he should talk with Mrs Penniman, with whom she lived and whom she saw and talked with every day – that seemed to keep him near her, and to make him even easier to contemplate than if she herself had been the object of his civilities; and that Aunt Lavinia should like him, should not be shocked or startled by what he said, this also appeared to the girl a personal gain; for Aunt Lavinia's standard was extremely high, planted as it was over the grave of her late husband, in which, as she had convinced every one, the very genius of conversation was buried.

* * * *

2.

'I don't know what you mean by once. You must either give him up or continue the acquaintance.'

'I wish to explain – to tell him to wait.'

'To wait for what?'

'Till you know him better – till you consent.'

'Don't tell him any such nonsense as that. I know him well enough, and I shall never consent.'

'But we can wait a long time,' said poor Catherine, in a tone which was meant to express the humblest conciliation, but which had upon her father's nerves the effect of an iteration not characterized by tact.

The Doctor answered, however, quietly enough: 'Of course; you can wait till I die, if you like.'

Catherine gave a cry of natural horror.

'Your engagement will have one delightful effect upon you; it will make you extremely impatient for that event.'

Catherine stood staring, and the Doctor enjoyed the point he had made. It came to Catherine with the force – or rather with the vague impressiveness – of a logical axiom which it was not in her province to controvert; and yet, though it was a scientific truth, she felt wholly unable to accept it.

'I would rather not marry, if that were true,' she said.

'Give me a proof of it, then; for it is beyond a question that by engaging yourself to Morris Townsend you simply wait for my death.'

She turned away, feeling sick and faint; and the Doctor went on: 'And if you wait for it with impatience, judge, if you please, what *his* eagerness will be.'

Catherine turned it over – her father's words had such an authority for her that her very thoughts were capable of obeying him. There was a dreadful ugliness in it, which seemed to glare at her through the interposing medium of her own feeble reason. Suddenly, however, she had an inspiration – she almost knew it to be an inspiration.

'If I don't marry before your death, I will not after,' she said.

To her father, it must be admitted, this seemed only another epigram; and as obstinacy, in unaccomplished minds, does not usually select such a mode of expression, he was the more surprised at this wanton play of a fixed idea.

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 8 Henry James: *Washington Square* – continued

3.

He looked at her again in silence. ‘I see; my presence troubles you and pains you. I will go away; but you must give me leave to come again.’

‘Please don’t come again,’ she said.

‘Never? – never?’

She made a great effort; she wished to say something that would make it impossible he should ever again cross her threshold. ‘It is wrong of you. There is no propriety in it – no reason for it.’

‘Ah, dearest lady, you do me injustice!’ cried Morris Townsend. ‘We have only waited, and now we are free.’

‘You treated me badly,’ said Catherine.

‘Not if you think of it rightly. You had your quiet life with your father – which was just what I could not make up my mind to rob you of.’

‘Yes; I had that.’

Morris felt it to be a considerable damage to his cause that he could not add that she had had something more besides; for it is needless to say that he had learned the contents of Doctor Sloper’s will. He was, nevertheless, not at a loss. ‘There are worse fates than that!’ he exclaimed, with expression; and he might have been supposed to refer to his own unprotected situation. Then he added, with a deeper tenderness, ‘Catherine, have you never forgiven me?’

‘I forgave you years ago, but it is useless for us to attempt to be friends.’

‘Not if we forget the past. We have still a future, thank God!’

‘I can’t forget – I don’t forget,’ said Catherine. ‘You treated me too badly. I felt it very much; I felt it for years.’ And then she went on, with her wish to show him that he must not come to her this way, ‘I can’t begin again – I can’t take it up. Everything is dead and buried. It was too serious; it made a great change in my life. I never expected to see you here.’

‘Ah, you are angry!’ cried Morris, who wished immensely that he could extort some flash of passion from her calmness. In that case he might hope.

‘No, I am not angry. Anger does not last that way for years. But there are other things. Impressions last, when they have been strong. But I can’t talk.’

Morris stood stroking his beard, with a clouded eye. ‘Why have you never married?’ he asked, abruptly. ‘You have had opportunities.’

‘I didn’t wish to marry.’

‘Yes you are rich, you are free; you had nothing to gain.’

‘I had nothing to gain,’ said Catherine.

Morris looked vaguely round him, and gave a deep sigh. ‘Well, I was in hopes that we might still have been friends.’

‘I meant to tell you, by my aunt, in answer to your message – if you had waited for an answer – that it was unnecessary for you to come in that hope.’

* * * *

1: Novels

1 – 9 Ann Patchett: *Bel Canto*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Bel Canto*.

1.

Ann Patchett, *Bel Canto*,
Fourth Estate, 2002
pp 26–27

2.

Ann Patchett, *Bel Canto*,
Fourth Estate, 2002
pp 128–129

1: Novels

1 – 9 Ann Patchett: *Bel Canto* – continued

3.

Ann Patchett, *Bel Canto*,
Fourth Estate, 2002

pp 293–294

2: Plays

2 – 1 Anton Chekhov: *Three Sisters*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Three Sisters*.

1.

VERSHININ [*gaily*]: How pleased I am, how pleased! But you are three sisters. I remember – three little girls. I don't remember the faces any longer, but I do remember very well that your father, Colonel Prozorov, had three little girls and I saw them with my own eyes. How time passes! Oh yes, how time passes!

TUZENBAKH: Aleksandr Ignatyevich is from Moscow.

IRINA: From Moscow? You are from Moscow?

VERSHININ: Yes, from Moscow. Your late father commanded a battery there and I was an officer in the same brigade. [*To Masha*] Now I think I remember your face a little.

MASHA: But I don't remember you.

IRINA: Olya! Olya! [*Shouts to the hall*] Olya, come here!

[*Olga comes from the hall into the drawing-room.*]

It turns out Colonel Vershinin is from Moscow.

VERSHININ: You must be Olga Sergeyevna, the eldest . . . And you Mariya . . . And you are Irina – the youngest . . .

OLGA: You're from Moscow?

VERSHININ: Yes. I studied in Moscow and I went into the army in Moscow, I served there a long time, finally I got a battery here – I've moved here as you can see. I don't remember you clearly, I remember only that you were three sisters. Your father has stayed in my memory, I just have to close my eyes and I see him as if he were alive. I used to come to your house in Moscow . . .

OLGA: I thought I remembered everyone, and now . . .

VERSHININ: My name is Aleksandr Ignatyevich . . .

IRINA: Aleksandr Ignatyevich, you are from Moscow . . . What a surprise!

OLGA: You see, we're moving there.

IRINA: We think we'll be there by the autumn. It's our home town, we were born there . . . In Staraya Basmannaya Street . . .

[*Both of them laugh with happiness.*]

masha: What a surprise to see someone else from Moscow. [*Animatedly*] Now I remember! Do you remember, Olya, we used to talk of 'the Lovesick Major'? You were a subaltern then and in love with someone, and everyone used to tease you for some reason as 'Major' . . .

VERSHININ [*laughing*]: Yes, yes . . . The Lovesick Major, exactly . . .

MASHA: Only then you had a moustache . . . Oh how you've aged! [*With tears in her eyes*] How you've aged!

VERSHININ: Yes, when you used to call me the Lovesick Major, I was still young, I was in love. It's different now.

* * * *

2.

OLGA [*ringing*]: No one hears the bell . . . [*Through the door*] Come in here, anyone who's there!

[*Through the open door a window can be seen glowing red with the fire; the sound of a fire engine passing.*]

What a terrible thing! I've just had enough!

[*Enter FERAPONT.*]

Take these things and carry them downstairs . . . The Kolotilin young ladies are standing by the stairs . . . give them to them. And give them this . . .

FERAPONT: I will. In 1812 Moscow burnt down too. Good Lord above! The French were amazed.

OLGA: Go down, get on.

FERAPONT: I will. [*Goes out.*]

OLGA: Nyanya dear, give everything away. We don't need anything, give it all away, Nyanya . . . I'm tired, I can hardly stand on my feet . . . We mustn't let the Vershinins go home . . . The girls can sleep in the drawing-room and Aleksandr Ignatyich can go downstairs with the Baron . . . Fedotik too can go with the Baron or we can have him in the reception hall . . . The Doctor is drunk, terribly drunk, it's as if he's done it deliberately, and no one can go to him. And Vershinin's wife can go in the drawing-room.

ANFISA [*exhaustedly*]: Olyushka dear, don't send me away! Don't!

OLGA: You're talking nonsense, Nyanya. No one is sending you away.

ANFISA [*putting her head on Olga's breast*]: My darling, my golden girl, I slave, I work . . . When I get weak, they'll all say, 'Get out!' But where will I go? Where? Eighty years old. Eighty-one . . .

OLGA: You sit down, Nyanya . . . You've got tired, poor thing . . . [*Makes her sit down.*] Have a rest, my dear. You're quite pale!

[*Enter NATASHA.*]

NATASHA: They're saying out there we must form an association to help the victims of the fire as soon as possible . . . It's an excellent idea, don't you think? One should always help poor people, that's a duty of the rich. Bobik and Sofochka are fast asleep, sleeping as if nothing had happened. We've got so many people everywhere, wherever you go, the house is full. There's a lot of influenza now in town, I'm frightened the children will catch it.

OLGA [*not listening to her*]: In this room you can't see the fire, it's quiet here . . .

NATASHA: Yes . . . I must look a mess. [*Looking in a mirror.*] Someone said I'd got fatter . . . that's just not true! Not true at all! Masha's sleeping, she's worn out, poor thing . . . [*Coldly, to Anfisa*] Don't you dare sit in my presence! Get up! Get out of here!

[*anfisa goes out; a pause.*]

2: Plays

2 – 1 Anton Chekhov: *Three Sisters* – continued

3.

And why you keep on that old woman I just do not understand!

OLGA [*dumbfounded*]: I'm sorry, I don't understand either . . .

* * * *

TUZENBAKH: I think that's the only man in the town who's glad that the Army is going.

IRINA: One can understand that.

[*A pause.*]

Our town will be empty now.

TUZENBAKH: My dear, I'll be back straight away.

IRINA: Where are you going?

TUZENBAKH: I must go into the town and then . . . say goodbye to friends.

IRINA: That's not true . . . Nikolay, why are you so distracted today?

[*A pause.*]

What happened yesterday by the theatre?

TUZENBAKH [*making an impatient movement*]: I'll be back in an hour and be with you again. [*Kissing her hands.*] My beloved . . . [*Looking into her face.*] It's already five years since I came to love you and I still can't get accustomed to it, and you seem to me more and more beautiful. What wonderful, lovely hair! What eyes! Tomorrow I will take you away, we will work, we'll be rich, my dreams will come true. You will be happy. There's just one thing, only one – you don't love me!

IRINA: It's not in my power! I will be your wife, true and obedient, but love – no, what can I do! [*Weeps.*] I've never loved once in my life. Oh, how I dreamed of love, for a long time how I dreamed, day and night, but my soul was like an expensive piano, shut and its key lost.

[*A pause.*]

Your eyes are worried.

TUZENBAKH: I didn't sleep all night. In my life there's nothing so terrible that it can frighten me and only that lost key torments my spirit and stops me sleeping. Say something to me.

[*A pause.*]

Say something to me . . .

IRINA: What? Say what? Everything around us is so mysterious, the old trees are standing there, silent . . . [*Puts her head on his breast.*]

TUZENBAKH: Say something to me.

IRINA: What? Say what? What?

TUZENBAKH: Anything.

IRINA: That's enough! Enough!

[*A pause.*]

tuzenbakh: Sometimes in life trifles, silly little things, all of a sudden acquire significance, and for no good reason. You laugh at them as before and think them trifling, and you just go on because you feel you haven't the strength to stop. Oh, don't let's talk about it! I feel happy.

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 2 Euripides: *The Women of Troy*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Women of Troy*.

1.

TALTHYBIUS:

Hecabe, my frequent journeys here to Troy as herald
Of the Achaean army have made me known to you.
I am Talthybius, lady; and I come with news.

HECABE:

Dear friends, it has come. Women of Troy,
The moment we have dreaded is now here.

TALTHYBIUS:

You have all now been allotted – if this was what you
feared.

HECABE:

What is our fate? Are we for Thessaly?
Or Phthia? Or for the land of Cadmus?

TALTHYBIUS:

Each is assigned to a different man, not all to one.

HECABE:

Tell each of us her fortune.
Which of Troy's women has a golden future?

TALTHYBIUS:

I know; but you must ask one question at a time.

HECABE:

Then tell me about my daughter, poor Cassandra.
Whose share is she?

TALTHYBIUS:

King Agamemnon chose her as his special prize.

HECABE:

A slave for his Spartan wife?
O miserable fate!

TALTHYBIUS:

No, for his own bed. She is to be his concubine.

HECABE:

But she belongs to the bright-haired Apollo –
A consecrated virgin, set aside
By him to live in single purity!

TALTHYBIUS:

She is god-possessed; but she has captured the king's heart.

HECABE:

Cassandra, fling your temple-keys away,
Strip off your vestments, tear your holy wreath!

TALTHYBIUS:

Is it not good fortune that she is chosen for the king's bed?

HECABE:

What of my other daughter, whom you took
From me last night?

TALTHYBIUS:

Is it Polyxena you are speaking of?

HECABE:

It is.
Has she been drawn for? Whose yoke does she bear?

TALTHYBIUS:

She has been made attendant at Achilles' tomb.

HECABE:

Attendant at a tomb! My child! Talthybius,
Is this some Greek tradition?

TALTHYBIUS:

Be happy for your daughter; all is well with her.

HECABE:

What do you mean? At least she is alive?

TALTHYBIUS:

Her fate is settled. She is free from suffering.

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 2 Euripides: *The Women of Troy* – continued

2.

HECABE:

I see how the high gods dispose this world; I see
The mean exalted to the sky, the great brought low.

ANDROMACHE:

I and my son are carried off as spoils of war;
Royalty is enslaved, the world turned upside down.

HECABE:

It's a strange thing to meet the irresistible.
Just now I saw Cassandra dragged away by force.

ANDROMACHE:

Poor child, poor girl! – to meet a second Aias like
The first. But listen: there's more bitterness for you.

HECABE:

There is always more; my suffering has no limit, none;
And each new misery outdoes what went before.

ANDROMACHE:

Polyxena is dead. They sacrificed her at
Achilles' tomb – an offering to a lifeless corpse.

HECABE:

Oh, no! Oh, horror! That was what Talthybius meant
By his evasive answers. It was plain enough.

ANDROMACHE:

I saw her there myself. I left the chariot,
Wrapped a robe round her body, and paid my due of tears.

HECABE:

What sacrilegious murder! Oh, my child, my child
Polyxena! How terrible to die like this!

ANDROMACHE:

It is over now. Yes, it was terrible; and yet,
Being dead, she is more fortunate than I who live.

HECABE:

Not so, my daughter; death and life are not the same.
Death is extinction; but in life there is still hope.

ANDROMACHE:

Hecabe! – you are my mother, as you are hers – let me
Comfort your heart with welcome truth. I believe this:
To be dead is the same as never to have been born,
And better far than living on in wretchedness.
The dead feel nothing; evil then can cause no pain.
But one who falls from happiness to unhappiness
Wanders bewildered in a strange and hostile world.

* * * *

3.

HECABE:

O thou, this earth's upholder, throned above the earth,
Great Zeus, whoever thou art, mysterious and unknown,
Be thou human intelligence, or natural law,
I praise thee! For thou movest on a noiseless path
And guidest all the affairs of men to their just end.

MENELAUS:

That's a new kind of prayer to heaven. What does it mean?

HECABE:

I applaud you, Menelaus, if you will kill your wife;
But avoid seeing her, or she will take prisoner
Your tender heart. She captures men's eyes, destroys cities,
Burns houses to the ground, so potent are her spells.
I know her, so do you, and all who have suffered know.

HELEN enters, the soldiers following her.

HELEN:

Menelaus, is this beginning meant to frighten me?
Your men seized me and hurried me out here by force.
I think I know you hate me; but I wish to ask,
What sentence have the Greeks, and you, passed on my life?

MENELAUS:

There was no question in your case. The whole army
Of Greece gave you to me, whom you had wronged, to
kill.

HELEN:

Have I permission to reply to that sentence
And plead that it would be unjust to take my life?

MENELAUS:

I've come to kill you, not to bandy arguments.

HECABE:

Let her speak, Menelaus; she must not die without
A hearing. And let *me* undertake in turn to speak
Against her. Of the mischief that she made in Troy
You know nothing. The whole indictment, once complete,
Will ensure her death; there can be no chance of escape.

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 3 Joanna Murray-Smith: *Honour*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Honour*.

1.

HONOR: She's a clever young thing—
 GUS: She's done her homework. At least they didn't send me some nitwit who doesn't understand the meaning of the world "research"—
 HONOR: The last one—
 GUS: Asked me if this country really *needed* any more intellectuals—
 HONOR: Oh dear—
 GUS: So I said: Once we identify the smart gene, we might be able to eradicate it—
 HONOR: Whereas this one was—
 GUS: Yes, she was—
 HONOR: Even so, you could refuse—
 GUS: Honor—I need the fifteen minutes—
 HONOR: Darling, you don't—
 GUS: Things are shaky—
 HONOR: You've been saying that for—
 GUS: What happened to the great editors? The men of vision?—If Hudson drops the column, we're in a very bad situation—
 HONOR: Not so bad—
 GUS: They'll bring in some thirty year old who peppers his insights with references to deconstructionism and *The Brady Bunch*—
 HONOR: There are other possibilities—*The Mail*—*The Globe*—
 GUS: They're run by *managers*, Honor. They don't want intellectuals. They want clairvoyants and food writers. It's all about really good risotto.
 HONOR: You're so cynical at the moment—
 GUS: I *like* to be cynical. Cynical is lovely. It's jauntier than hopeful.
 HONOR: I love you.
 GUS: I love you.
 HONOR: She reminded me of—she—
 GUS: Who?
 HONOR: The girl. Woman. Claudia.
 GUS: Claudia?
 HONOR: Yes. Reminded me of—of me—
 GUS: When?
 HONOR: Well, not me exactly. But me without—without good fortune—
 GUS: You mean—
 HONOR: She's a clever thing—
 GUS: Very focussed, for that age, very—I wish Sophie had a bit of her—She's tenacious—
 HONOR: And she's beautiful—
 GUS: Is she—?
 HONOR: What I meant about me—is that she has something of my early ambition. And she's very bright. Yet she has this—toughness—as if she's afraid of being damaged—
 GUS: Maybe she has been damaged—
 HONOR: As if somehow, she wasn't quite—
 GUS: Always composing histories—the writer's compulsion—
 HONOR: *Loved*. Maybe she was loved in every identifiable way, ballet lessons, party shoes, good schools, but not—
 GUS: Honor!

HONOR: Perhaps her mother just felt some tremor of loss in mothering that made her—stand back from—
 GUS: Claudia.
 HONOR: Anyway. She'll go far. She's driven. And she'll—she'll—life will soften her up eventually—

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 3 Joanna Murray-Smith: *Honour* – continued

2.

CLAUDIA: What about Gus? Isn't he the problem? Your husband has not felt love—real, sexual love for you for years—
 HONOR: That's not—Not—
 CLAUDIA: You said yourself—
 HONOR: I did *not*!
 CLAUDIA: I have it on *tape*, Honor.
 HONOR: That's right. You taped me. You taped me because I was useful to you—
 CLAUDIA: So what if I did?
 HONOR: Will you put Gus on your resume?
 CLAUDIA: Well, he's certainly been on yours for long enough.

Pause.

honor: Listen. Listen to yourself. Do you hear that?
 CLAUDIA: What? Do I hear what?
 HONOR: The hardness there. The fear—
 CLAUDIA: What fear?
 HONOR: That makes you fight so hard to believe yourself strong—
 CLAUDIA: I think it's only fair to tell you I'm not a compassionate person—
 HONOR: [*dawning on her*] You like this, don't you?
 CLAUDIA: Like what?
 HONOR: At first I just thought that you—you were in the —like Gus—in the grip of something—but you're not, are you?
 CLAUDIA: I don't know what you're talking about—
 HONOR: You really enjoy this, don't you? You like to be at the *centre* of things—
 CLAUDIA: *You asked me* to come here—
 HONOR: And you're certainly not going to forfeit your—your *significance*, are you Claudia?
 CLAUDIA: The difference between us, Honor, is that I don't intend giving up *anything* for *anyone*—
 HONOR: And that makes you feel very proud, doesn't it?
 CLAUDIA: Why shouldn't it? [*Beat.*] Look at me. [*Beat.*] Look at all I might become. [*Beat.*] Wouldn't you wish that for yourself?

Pause.

You could have been a great writer, Honor. You could have been up there—if you'd been more like me—
 HONOR: So I should admire you, Claudia. Is that it?
 CLAUDIA: Your husband and I may have fallen in love but—but you and I—are still, on some level, greater allies than—than—he and I.
 HONOR: We are allies?
 CLAUDIA: You're a passionate woman—I *know* that. And you have—you're a writer. All around us there are systems to keep us *unrealised*. [*Beat.*] “You are the cartographer and I am your canyons and your oceans.” A beautiful line.
 HONOR: Don't *you* use *my* words—
 CLAUDIA: Did you really need a map-maker, Honor? [*Beat.*] You should never have lost that part of you that is you, alone—
 HONOR: I still write!

3.

GUS: What are the pleasures of getting old, if not to know oneself and the fixtures around you? To have the blessings of intimacy? I wake up and know how I relate to my bed, to my work, to my wife, to the night, to the universe, in fact. My body marching into it, moving towards the darkness, the space, the dust, the dust. I have a tally of my ambitions: my rates of success, my sorrows, all I once hoped for, all that has been met, and all that I now know I can never be. The cleverness that never amounted to genius. The kindness that never amounted to saintliness. The wit which touched charisma but in the end, failed to claim it. What greater comfort can there be than the certainty of knowing what you have become and what you belong to—
 CLAUDIA: Or who—
 GUS: Or who. [*Beat.*] I've given everything away to love you—
 CLAUDIA: Yes. Everything. Maybe. Maybe you have.

Silence. Stillness in her. She turns to him.

Why *am* I so certain?

GUS: About?
 CLAUDIA: Everything.
 GUS: Why are you so certain?
 CLAUDIA: Is it knowledge, Gus—or is it—or is it—fear? I wanted you—
 GUS: You have me—
 CLAUDIA: I wanted you to love me—
 GUS: I love you—
 CLAUDIA: I call for you—
 GUS: I answer you—
 CLAUDIA: And the smaller that gap between our voices, the stronger, the sweeter I feel, as if all the realness is—is smothered in us—there is only us—
 GUS: There *is* only us—
 CLAUDIA: And Honor—
 GUS: Honor's gone—
 CLAUDIA: At night I feel her fingers in the darkness, creeping over me—
 GUS: Forget Honor!
 CLAUDIA: As if—as if—she knows me—will not let me go—
 GUS: Forget Honor. Christ! It's us now—
 CLAUDIA: How wondrous it is to let yourself be—be—at a loss, alone—
 GUS: You're telling me you admire my wife?
 CLAUDIA: I look at myself and I think why is my voice so clear? Why do my words sound so satisfied with themselves?

2: Plays

2 – 4 Yasmina Reza: *Art*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Art*.

1.

Yasmina Reza, *Art*,
Faber, 1997
pp 4–5

2.

Yasmina Reza, *Art*,
Faber, 1997
pp 51–52

2: Plays

2 – 4 Yasmina Reza: *'Art'* – continued

3.

Yasmina Reza, *Art*,
Faber, 1997
pp 62–63

2: Plays

2 – 5 William Shakespeare: *King Lear*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *King Lear*.

1.

GONERILL Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence tonight.

REGAN That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

GONERILL You see how full of changes his age is. The observation we have made of it hath not been little. He always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgement he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

REGAN 'Tis the infirmity of his age. Yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

GONERILL The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash. Then must we look from his age to receive not alone the imperfections of long-ingrained condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

REGAN Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

GONERILL There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you, let us hit together. If our father carry authority with such disposition as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

REGAN We shall further think of it.

GONERILL We must do something, and i'th'heat.

Exeunt

Enter Edmund

EDMUND

Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? Wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well-compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With 'base'? with 'baseness'? 'bastardy'? 'base, base'?
Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth within a dull, stale, tired bed
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate. Fine word 'legitimate'!
Well, my 'legitimate', if this letter speed
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow. I prosper.
Now gods stand up for bastards!

* * * *

2.

EDGAR Look where he stands and glares! Want'st thou eyes at trial, madam?

(sings)

Come o'er the burn, Bessy, to me.

FOOL *(sings)* Her boat hath a leak

And she must not speak

Why she dares not come over to thee.

EDGAR The foul fiend haunts Poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hoppedance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel! I have no food for thee.

KENT

How do you, sir? Stand you not so amazed.

Will you lie down and rest upon the cushionings?

LEAR

I'll see their trial first; bring in their evidence.

(To Edgar)

Thou robed man of justice, take thy place.

(To the Fool)

And thou, his yokefellow of equity,

Bench by his side. *(To Kent)* You are o'the commission;

Sit you too.

EDGAR Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?

Thy sheep be in the corn,

And for one blast of thy minikin mouth

Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur, the cat is grey.

LEAR Arraign her first. 'Tis Gonerill! I here take my oath before this honourable assembly she kicked the poor King her father.

FOOL Come hither, mistress. Is your name Gonerill?

LEAR She cannot deny it.

FOOL Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

LEAR

And here's another whose warped looks proclaim

What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!

Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!

False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

EDGAR Bless thy five wits!

KENT

O pity! Sir, where is the patience now

That you so oft have boasted to retain?

EDGAR *(aside)*

My tears begin to take his part so much

They mar my counterfeiting.

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 5 William Shakespeare: *King Lear* – continued

3.

GLOUCESTER O, let me kiss that hand!

LEAR Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

GLOUCESTER

O ruined piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to naught. Dost thou know me?

LEAR I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at
me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love. Read thou
this challenge; mark but the penning of it.

GLOUCESTER

Were all thy letters suns, I could not see.

EDGAR (*aside*)

I would not take this from report. It is;
And my heart breaks at it.

LEAR Read.

GLOUCESTER What, with the case of eyes?

LEAR O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor
no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your
purse in a light; yet you see how this world goes.

GLOUCESTER I see it feelingly.

LEAR What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with
no eyes. Look with thine ears. See how you justice rails
upon yon simple thief. Hark in thine ear – change places
and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?
Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

GLOUCESTER Ay, sir.

LEAR And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst
behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in
office.

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand.

Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thy own back.

Thou hotly lusts to use her in that kind

For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.

Thorough tattered clothes great vices do appear;

Robes and furred gowns hide all. Plate sins with gold,

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;

Arm it in rags, a pygmy's straw does pierce it.

None does offend, none, I say none; I'll able 'em.

Take that of me, my friend, (*giving flowers*) who have
the power

To seal th'accusers' lips.

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 6 William Shakespeare: *Measure for Measure* – continued

3.

MARIANA

O my good lord! Sweet Isabel, take my part,
Lend me your knees, and, all my life to come,
I'll lend you all my life to do you service.

DUKE

Against all sense you do importune her.
Should she kneel down in mercy of this fact,
Her brother's ghost his pavèd bed would break,
And take her hence in horror.

MARIANA

Isabel,

Sweet Isabel, do yet but kneel by me.
Hold up your hands, say nothing, I'll speak all.
They say best men are moulded out of faults,
And, for the most, become much more the better
For being a little bad. So may my husband.
O Isabel, will you not lend a knee?

DUKE

He dies for Claudio's death.

ISABELLA (*kneeling*)

Most bounteous sir,

Look, if it please you, on this man condemned
As if my brother lived. I partly think
A due sincerity governèd his deeds
Till he did look on me. Since it is so,
Let him not die. My brother had but justice,
In that he did the thing for which he died.
For Angelo,
His act did not o'ertake his bad intent,
And must be buried but as an intent
That perished by the way. Thoughts are no subjects,
Intent but merely thoughts.

MARIANA

Merely, my lord.

DUKE

Your suit's unprofitable. Stand up, I say.
I have bethought me of another fault.
Provost, how came it Claudio was beheaded
At an unusual hour?

PROVOST

It was commanded so.

DUKE

Had you a special warrant for the deed?

PROVOST

No, my good lord, it was by private message.

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 7 Sam Shepard: *True West*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *True West*.

1.

Sam Shepard, *True West*,
Faber, 1997

pp 12–13

2.

Sam Shepard, *True West*,
Faber, 1997

pp 33–34

2: Plays

2 – 7 Sam Shepard: *True West* – continued

3.

Sam Shepard, *True West*,
Faber, 1997

pp 54–55

2: Plays

2 – 8 Dylan Thomas: *Under Milk Wood*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Under Milk Wood*.

1.

Time passes. Listen. Time passes.
Come closer now.

Only you can hear the houses sleeping in the streets in the slow deep salt and silent black, bandaged night. Only you can see, in the blinded bedrooms, the coms and petticoats over the chairs, the jugs and basins, the glasses of teeth, Thou Shalt Not on the wall, and the yellowing dickybird-watching pictures of the dead. Only you can hear and see, behind the eyes of the sleepers, the movements and countries and mazes and colours and dismays and rainbows and tunes and wishes and flight and fall and despairs and big seas of their dreams.

From where you are, you can hear their dreams.

Captain Cat, the retired blind seacaptain, asleep in his bunk in the seashelled, ship-in-bottled, shipshape best cabin of Schooner House dreams of

SECOND VOICE never such seas as any that swamped the decks of his S.S. Kidwelly bellying over the bedclothes and jellyfish-slippery sucking him down salt deep into the Davy dark where the fish come biting out and nibble him down to his wishbone and the long drowned nuzzle up to him . . .

FIRST DROWNED

Remember me, Captain?

CAPTAIN CAT

You're Dancing Williams!

FIRST DROWNED

I lost my step in Nantucket.

SECOND DROWNED

Do you see me, Captain? the white bone talking? I'm Tom-Fred the donkeyman . . . We shared the same girl once . . . Her name was Mrs Probert . . .

WOMAN'S VOICE

Rosie Probert, thirty three Duck Lane. Come on up, boys, I'm dead.

THIRD DROWNED

Hold me, Captain, I'm Jonah Jarvis, come to a bad end, very enjoyable . . .

FOURTH DROWNED

Alfred Pomeroy Jones, sealawyer, born in Mumbles, sung like a linnnet, crowned with you a flagon, tattooed with mermaids, thirst like a dredger, died of blisters . . .

FIRST DROWNED

This skull at your earhole is

FIFTH DROWNED

Curly Bevan. Tell my auntie it was me that pawned the ormolu clock . . .

CAPTAIN CAT

Aye, aye, Curly.

SECOND DROWNED

Tell my missus no my never

THIRD DROWNED

I never done what she said I never . . .

FOURTH DROWNED

Yes, they did.

FIFTH DROWNED

And who brings cocoanuts and shawls and parrots to my Gwen now?

FIRST DROWNED

How's it above?

SECOND DROWNED

Is there rum and lavabread?

THIRD DROWNED

Bosoms and robins?

FOURTH DROWNED

Concertinas?

FIFTH DROWNED

Ebenezer's bell?

* * * *

2: Plays

2 – 8 Dylan Thomas: *Under Milk Wood* – continued

2.

FIRST VOICE And in Willy Nilly the Postman's dark and sizzling damp tea-coated misty pygmy kitchen where the spittingcat kettles throb and hop on the range, Mrs Willy Nilly steams open Mr Mog Edwards' letter to Miss Myfanwy Price and reads it aloud to Willy Nilly by the squirt of the Spring sun through the one sealed window running with tears, while the drugged, bedraggled hens at the back door whimper and snivel for the lickerish bog-black tea.

MRS WILLY NILLY

From Manchester House, Llareggub. Sole Prop: Mr Mog Edwards (late of Twll), Linendraper, Haberdasher, Master Tailor, Costumier. For West End Negligee, Lingerie, Teagowns, Evening Dress, Trousseaux, Layettes. Also Ready to Wear for All Occasions. Economical Outfitting for Agricultural Employment Our Speciality. Wardrobes Bought. Among Our Satisfied Customers Ministers of Religion and J.P.'s. Fittings by Appointment. Advertising Weekly in the Twll Bugle. Beloved Myfanwy Price my Bride in Heaven,

MOG EDWARDS

I love you until Death do us part and then we shall be together for ever and ever. A new parcel of ribbons has come from Carmarthen today all the colours in the rainbow. I wish I could tie a ribbon in your hair a white one but it cannot be. I dreamed last night you were all dripping wet and you sat on my lap as the Reverend Jenkins went down the street. I see you got a mermaid in your lap he said and he lifted his hat. He is a proper Christian. Not like Cherry Owen who said you should have thrown her back he said. Business is very poorly. Polly Garter bought two garters with roses but she never got stockings so what is the use I say. Mr Waldo tried to sell me a woman's nightie outsize he said he found it and we know where. I sold a packet of pins to Tom the Sailors to pick his teeth. If this goes on I shall be in the Workhouse. My heart is in your bosom and yours is in mine. God be with you always Myfanwy Price and keep you lovely for me in His Heavenly Mansion. I must stop now and remain, Your Eternal, Mog Edwards.

MRS WILLY NILLY

And then a little message with a rubber stamp. Shop at Mog's!!!

* * * *

3.

FIRST VOICE Look up Bessie Bighead in the White Book of Llareggub and you will find the few haggard rags and the one poor glittering thread of her history laid out in pages there with as much love and care as the lock of hair of a first lost love. Conceived in Milk Wood, born in a barn, wrapped in paper, left on a doorstep, big-headed and bass-voiced she grew in the dark until long-dead Gomer Owen kissed her when she wasn't looking because he was dared. Now in the light she'll work, sing, milk, say the cow's sweet names and sleep until the night sucks out her soul and spits it into the sky. In her life-long love-light, holily Bessie milks the fond lake-eyed cows as dusk showers slowly down over byre, sea and town.

Utah Watkins curses through the farmyard on a carthorse.

UTAH WATKINS

Gallop, you bleeding cripple! –

SECOND VOICE and the huge horse neighs softly as though he had given it a lump of sugar.

FIRST VOICE Now the town is dusk. Each cobble, donkey, goose and gooseberry street is a thoroughfare of dusk; and dusk and ceremonial dust, and night's first darkening snow, and the sleep of birds, drift under and through the live dusk of this place of love. Llareggub is the capital of dusk.

Mrs Ogmores-Pritchard, at the first drop of the dusk-shower, seals all her Sea View doors, draws the germ-free blinds, sits, erect as a dry dream on a highbacked hygienic chair and wills herself to cold, quick sleep. At once, at twice, Mr Ogmores and Mr Pritchard, who all dead day long have been gossiping like ghosts in the woodshed, planning the loveless destruction of their glass widow, reluctantly sigh and sidle into her clean house.

MR PRITCHARD

You first, Mr Ogmores.

MR OGMORES

After you, Mr Pritchard.

MR PRITCHARD

No, no, Mr Ogmores. You widowed her first.

FIRST VOICE And in through the keyhole, with tears where their eyes once were, they ooze and grumble.

* * * *

3: Short stories

3 – 1 Thea Astley: *Hunting the Wild Pineapple*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Hunting the Wild Pineapple*.

1.

The Curate Breaker

There was living not far from him in the same country town an Anglican canon called Morrow, a fierce anti-papist who was as filled with splenetic loathing for what he called the 'incense pack' as the other was with the total indifference of infallibility. As much as was possible in a town that size, these two avoided each other, though it was inevitable they should meet at municipal junkets where the local council solved squabbles over precedence by allowing each cleric in turn to have the position of vantage.

Canon Morrow was married to a humble little woman he had saved from a diocesan typing pool many years ago. Their union was fruitless in every way and she had become absorbed, though in a very minor capacity, by parish duties through which her unobtrusive form wavered like a jumble-stall wraith. 'The Canon' she always called him, modestly but with terrified pride when she talked with her few acquaintances – they were only that; for her husband despised anything as passionate as friendship. And he puff-facedly accepted her diffident worship, hardly seeing her, certainly never listening to her, and only occasionally touching her.

'I am afraid,' Father Rassini would announce, smiling to his smiling curates, 'that Mrs Morrow in choosing marriage to the Canon has made a far greater sacrifice than we in choosing celibacy.'

The two men used to go one day a week to give religious instruction at Finecut High School. Although Father Rassini felt this to be a duty he could hand over to one of the curates, he sensed the subtle flow of by-products from a genial public appearance and retained this particular office for himself.

'The careless . . . the carefree, shall we say? . . . I mean those who take their spiritual obligations lightly . . . need perhaps a more practised hand on the reins.' He would explain this delicately to the curates, sipping his Cointreau, wielding the pause, flick flick flick, with such conviction the vintners knew exactly where they stood in relation to the grapes.

Except for the briefest of all possible nods as they passed in some chalky corridor, Canon Morrow and Father Rassini had not spoken for years. Those townsfolk whom the canon knew positively to be papists he cut dead.

* * * *

2.

A Northern Belle

As her muscles shrank the garden acre flexed its own, strengthened and grew more robust than a lover. There were rheumatic twinges that worried her. One day when she went to rise from where she had been weeding a splendid planting of dwarf poinsettia, the pain in her back was so violent she lay on the grass panting. Bixer nosed around, worried and whimpering, and she told him it was nothing at all; but she thought it was time she got a little help.

She was fifty when she took in Willy Fourcorners as gardener. He was an elderly Aborigine, very quiet, very gentle, who had been for a long time a lay preacher with one of the churches. Clarice didn't know which one, but she felt this made him respectable. Willy wore a dark suit on Sundays, even in summer, and a tie. He would trudge back from the station sometimes, lugging a battered suitcase and, passing Clarice's house and seeing her wrenching at an overgrowth of acalypha, would raise his stained grey hat and smile. The gesture convinced Clarice that though he was a lesser species he was worthy, and she would permit herself to smile back, but briefly.

'Willy,' she said one day, emerging from the croton hedge, 'Willy, I wonder could I ask your help?'

Willy set down his bag in the dust and rubbed his yellow-palmed hands together.

'Yeah, Miss Geary. What's the trouble then?'

She came straight to the point.

'I need help with the garden, Willy.' She was still used to command and the words came out as less of a request than she intended. She was devastated by the ochreous quality of his skin so close to hers and a kindness in the old eyes she refused to admit, for she could not believe in a Christian blackskin, preacher or not. 'It's all getting too much for me.'

Willy's face remained polite, concerned but doubtful. He was getting on himself and still worked as a handyman at the hardware store. On week-ends he preached.

'Only got Saturdays,' he said.

'Well, what's wrong with Saturday?'

'I like to keep it for m'self.'

Clarice struggled with outrage.

'But wouldn't you like a little extra money, Willy?'

'Not that little, Miss Geary,' Willy said.

Clarice's irritation riveted at once upon the simple smiling face, and unexpectedly, contrarily, she was delighted with his show of strength.

'I'm a fair woman,' she said. 'You'd get regular wages. What I'd give anyone.'

Willy nodded. He still smiled through the sweat that was running down his face, down his old brown neck and into the elderly serge of his only suit.

* * * *

3: Short stories

3 – 1 Thea Astley: *Hunting the Wild Pineapple* – continued

3.

A Man Who Is Tired of Swiper's Creek Is Tired of Life

At first the plane appears empty, but after a while I see the pilot helping down an old woman, very tiny, very frail. From this distance I see his arm directing her to the shed and slowly, step after tiny step, she shuffles towards me carrying her bulging grandma bag; and I wonder, as I watch her cover painfully that hundred-yard stretch, if it seems like ten miles. After she has struggled to the gate off the tarmac, I see that despite the morning heat she's wearing an old blue cardigan and clutching a straggling afterthought bunch of flowers someone has given her. It's a very tiny bunch. I help her onto the seat. There's no one around. The pilot. The bus driver. The fat old codger running the hose. Me.

She has a pressed and diffident face that's trying to be brave alone at the top of the lost end of the world.

'Is anyone meeting you?' I ask. No one out there seems to care. We really are in limbo.

She's deaf and I try again.

'It's not too hot,' she says and gives a timid bit of a smile, tugging her old cardigan round her.

I repeat my question.

'Can't stand the cold. My daughter, she's gone to Goulburn. It's too cold for me. I love the heat.'

'Do you?' I have to shout it again. 'Do you?'

'Oh, yes. Can't bear that cold.'

I gaze all round me at the empty circle in the scrub. The pilot. The bus driver helping unstack the plane. The old codger. And behind us, beyond this last hoop of reality, the untranslatable idiom of trees and emptiness.

I say more loudly, 'Isn't anyone meeting you?'

She flashes me an old tired look. 'I'm going to the hospital.'

'Hospital?'

'It's a place for old people like. Well, I'm old, aren't I?' she asks defiantly.

* * * *

3: Short stories

3 – 2 Raymond Carver: *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*.

1.

Raymond Carver, *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*
Vintage, 2003

pp 3–4

2.

Raymond Carver, *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*
Vintage, 2003

pp 111–112

3: Short stories

3 – 2 Raymond Carver: *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?* – continued

3.

Raymond Carver, *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*
Vintage, 2003

pp 138–139

3: Short stories

3 – 3 James Joyce: *Dubliners*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Dubliners*.

1.

Two Gallants

—How much is a plate of peas? he asked.

—Three halfpence, sir, said the girl.

—Bring me a plate of peas, he said, and a bottle of ginger beer.

He spoke roughly in order to belie his air of gentility for his entry had been followed by a pause of talk. His face was heated. To appear natural he pushed his cap back on his head and planted his elbows on the table. The mechanic and the two work-girls examined him point by point before resuming their conversation in a subdued voice. The girl brought him a plate of hot grocer's peas, seasoned with pepper and vinegar, a fork and his ginger beer. He ate his food greedily and found it so good that he made a note of the shop mentally. When he had eaten all the peas he sipped his ginger beer and sat for some time thinking of Corley's adventure. In his imagination he beheld the pair of lovers walking along some dark road; he heard Corley's voice in deep energetic gallantries and saw again the leer of the young woman's mouth. This vision made him feel keenly his own poverty of purse and spirit. He was tired of knocking about, of pulling the devil by the tail, of shifts and intrigues. He would be thirty-one in November. Would he never get a good job? Would he never have a home of his own? He thought how pleasant it would be to have a warm fire to sit by and a good dinner to sit down to. He had walked the streets long enough with friends and with girls. He knew what those friends were worth: he knew the girls too. Experience had embittered his heart against the world. But all hope had not left him. He felt better after having eaten than he had felt before, less weary of his life, less vanquished in spirit. He might yet be able to settle down in some snug corner and live happily if he could only come across some good simple-minded girl with a little of the ready.

* * * *

2.

Counterparts

Nosey Flynn was sitting up in his usual corner of Davy Byrne's and, when he heard the story, he stood Farrington a half-one, saying it was as smart a thing as ever he heard. Farrington stood a drink in his turn. After a while O'Halloran and Paddy Leonard came in and the story was repeated to them. O'Halloran stood tailors of malt, hot, all round and told the story of the retort he had made to the chief clerk when he was in Callan's of Fownes's Street; but, as the retort was after the manner of the liberal shepherds in the eclogues, he had to admit that it was not so clever as Farrington's retort. At this Farrington told the boys to polish off that and have another.

Just as they were naming their poisons who should come in but Higgins! Of course he had to join in with the others. The men asked him to give his version of it, and he did so with great vivacity for the sight of five small hot whiskies was very exhilarating. Everyone roared laughing when he showed the way in which Mr Alleyne shook his fist in Farrington's face. Then he imitated Farrington, saying, *And here was my nabs, as cool as you please*, while Farrington looked at the company out of his heavy dirty eyes, smiling and at times drawing forth stray drops of liquor from his moustache with the aid of his lower lip.

When that round was over there was a pause. O'Halloran had money but neither of the other two seemed to have any; so the whole party left the shop somewhat regretfully. At the corner of Duke Street Higgins and Nosey Flynn bevelled off to the left while the other three turned back towards the city. Rain was drizzling down on the cold streets and, when they reached the Ballast Office, Farrington suggested the Scotch House. The bar was full of men and loud with the noise of tongues and glasses. The three men pushed past the whining match-sellers at the door and formed a little party at the corner of the counter. They began to exchange stories.

* * * *

3: Short stories

3 – 3 James Joyce: *Dubliners* – continued

3.

A Mother

Miss Devlin had become Mrs Kearney out of spite. She had been educated in a high-class convent where she had learned French and music. As she was naturally pale and unbending in manner she made few friends at school. When she came to the age of marriage she was sent out to many houses where her playing and ivory manners were much admired. She sat amid the chilly circle of her accomplishments, waiting for some suitor to brave it and offer her a brilliant life. But the young men whom she met were ordinary and she gave them no encouragement, trying to console her romantic desires by eating a great deal of Turkish Delight in secret. However, when she drew near the limit and her friends began to loosen their tongues about her she silenced them by marrying Mr Kearney, who was a bootmaker on Ormond Quay.

He was much older than she. His conversation, which was serious, took place at intervals in his great brown beard. After the first year of married life Mrs Kearney perceived that such a man would wear better than a romantic person but she never put her own romantic ideas away. He was sober, thrifty and pious; he went to the altar every first Friday, sometimes with her, oftener by himself. But she never weakened in her religion and was a good wife to him. At some party in a strange house when she lifted her eyebrow ever so slightly he stood up to take his leave and, when his cough troubled him, she put the eider-down quilt over his feet and made a strong rum punch. For his part he was a model father. By paying a small sum every week into a society he ensured for both his daughters a dowry of one hundred pounds each when they came to the age of twenty-four. He sent the elder daughter, Kathleen, to a good convent, where she learned French and music and afterwards paid her fees at the Academy. Every year in the month of July Mrs Kearney found occasion to say to some friend:

—My good man is packing us off to Skerries for a few weeks.

If it was not Skerries it was Howth or Greystones.

* * * *

4: Other literature

4 – 1 William Dalrymple: *City of Djinnns*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *City of Djinnns*.

1.

William Dalrymple, *City of Djinnns*,
Flamingo, 1994

pp 149–150

2.

William Dalrymple, *City of Djinnns*,
Flamingo, 1994

pp 201–202

4: Other literature

4 – 1 William Dalrymple: *City of Djinnns* – continued

3.

William Dalrymple, *City of Djinnns*,
Flamingo, 1994

pp 337–338

4: Other literature

4 – 2 Robert Drewe: *The Shark Net*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *The Shark Net*.

1.

One day the news got out that Old Mr Mueller, the Mueller boys' grandfather, had done something to Rosalie France down at White Beach. The Frances had called the police. My parents were, as always, both agitated and silent about 'trouble' but Nick Howell said Old Mr Mueller had lifted her dress and looked at her underpants.

This didn't seem particularly serious to me. Rosalie France's underpants, like those of her sisters, Margaret and Natalie, were made by her mother out of sturdy maroon or purple cloth and were no surprise to anyone. The France girls spent most of the day hanging upside down, or doing headstands and handstands and cartwheels, with their dresses tucked in their pants. Try as we might, it was impossible for the neighbourhood to escape the sight of the France girls' violently coloured homemade underpants.

No one said anything more in my hearing about the underpants, or Rosalie France either, but two days later she was standing on her head in her front yard with her dress tucked in her purple bloomers as usual and the Mueller family was packing Old Mr Mueller off to Sunset to live with the head-waving Chinaman and the noseless man.

Nick Howell was my link to the scandalous adult world. His mother told him everything he wanted to know, about the Muellers or anything else, and he passed it on to me. Both of them seemed to relish these roles. Mrs Howell knew details of the neighbourhood's latest polio victims, how severely they had the disease and in what limbs. She knew which neighbourhood men were having affairs and which boys were romancing which girls. She knew what most kids' fathers earned and everyone's parents' ages.

* * * *

2.

My father asked me one Saturday evening if I wanted to go and see *On the Beach*. This was quite a surprise but I had nothing doing so I said yes. I'd just turned seventeen, I was his eldest child and I'd never been on an outing alone with him before. Not to the pictures or the football or the beach, not even to the park to throw a ball around. It was such a novelty that in the car on the way I thought I should start some comradely banter.

'What do you hear from the cops?' I asked him.

He gave me a quizzical look as if I had crossed some forbidden boundary. 'Nothing,' he said eventually. Once, long before, I recalled, I'd been reading *Dick Tracy* in the back seat of the car when a question occurred to me. I called out cheerily, 'Dad, what's Skid Row?' He didn't answer. His eyes met mine in the rear-vision mirror. 'Nothing at all,' he said finally.

We drove the rest of the way in silence. It wasn't an unfriendly silence. It wasn't even a neutral silence like when he drove me to school. I was pleased he'd asked me to do something with him. I also had a rich enough store of self-pity to wonder why it took a film about the end of the world for this to happen.

He'd asked my mother first but she hadn't wanted to go. She said she couldn't cope with such a depressing story. But *On the Beach* fascinated him. He'd already read the novel by Nevil Shute. Not only was it about Australians (as well as Americans) awaiting the nuclear fallout which had already wiped out the northern hemisphere, but it was set in Melbourne, his home town.

With most other films I'd have approached the evening more warily, but in a film about the end of mankind I didn't anticipate any embarrassment between us over love scenes. I'd also flipped through the book and couldn't recall any particularly raunchy passages. And I would have.

Usually it was uncomfortable just watching TV with him. Any love scene, in fact any scene at all, even a commercial, featuring an attractive or flirtatious woman, caused a force-field of disapproval and embarrassment to rise from my father's chair and fill the room. The story, the actors, the drama, all became lost and blurred. While I sat there stolidly in front of the television, my face set in an expressionless mask to show how unaffected I was by the woman before us, I was silently urging her to put something on, for God's sake! Do up that button! Pull that sheet higher! Stop kissing that man!

I'd see by the grim set of his mouth and his frowning profile that he was willing the same thing.

* * * *

4: Other literature

4 – 2 Robert Drewe: *The Shark Net* – continued

3.

When he was committed for trial on the charge of murdering John Sturkey, Eric had nodded politely to the magistrate. I thought he also murmured, 'Thank you,' but with his indistinct speech, and the scraping of chairs and the shuffling of the police guards in the dock as they moved towards him, I wasn't sure enough to write it.

Anyway, despite his Hollywood-gangster appearance he certainly looked resolved about the decision. He was on authority's side. *Anything I can do to help? Just ask me the questions.* Short of holding a smoking gun, he looked as much a serial killer as anyone could. Yet he didn't appear to feel any guilt at all.

Not like me. As I finally drove back across the Narrows Bridge and headed towards my evening appointment, the guilt kept rolling in, steady as surf on a sand bank. Along with those other recent feelings: grief, confusion, embarrassment. And now a special sort of childish shame and anxiety as well. The feeling of being called to the principal's office.

I was anxious about Dr Synott summoning me this evening. I'd intended to go home first, to see Ruth and fortify myself for the ordeal. But having wasted time driving dazedly around South Perth I was running late. I hadn't seen him since the funeral and, before that, standing helplessly by my mother's bed at the hospital. He was the family doctor, the family friend. The man who'd made a mistake with my meningitis. The man who could come around to Circe Circle for drinks on Sunday evening, then professionally examine my mother's body in his office on Monday afternoon. In retrospect this seemed very peculiar to me.

Some family doctors had offices of cheery disarray, with hunting prints or Rottneest Island scenes hanging beside their medical degrees. For decoration Dr Synott had the gloomy *Stag at Bay*. Otherwise his office was as bare as an operating theatre, with sharp silver instruments laid out, and coils of vaguely obscene rubber tubing and concave metal appliances like little stacked bed pans. It smelled of methylated spirits. On the wall Landseer's hounds were about to force the stag over the cliff.

The doctor told me to sit down. He was frowning. 'I thought it was time to discuss your mother's death,' he said.

I waited, more a dismal child again than a father. My head swam in methylated spirits. 'You've probably been wondering,' he said solemnly, 'whether you killed her.'

* * * *

4: Other literature

4 – 3 Drusilla Modjeska: *Timepieces*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of *Timepieces*.

1.

Apprentice Piece

What strikes me now, reading the interview with Dora Russell, is that the very things I could have learned from her and taken into my own life, I seemed barely to grasp as an issue. Here was a woman who'd lived the ideal of sexual freedom to an extent that few of us were managing (despite our ideals) and who knew exactly what was involved in a women's 'quest', as she put it, 'for liberty and love'. She also knew its cost, for herself and her children. But I asked nothing about how to balance responsibility with independence, or even how motherhood changes the quest, and how you think about your own needs and the needs of others where it really counts – in the accumulation of small details in daily living. Despite the evidence of my own life, or perhaps because of it, I clung to the heady realm of radical politics rather than admit to the fear of losing control and being plunged into the churn of feelings not far below the surface in the messy realm of personal relationships. Lucy Russell, who was twenty-six when she died, had written to her grandfather Bertie from Paris in 1967 that, despite the radicalism of the students she'd joined, 'in the last analysis human nature and human relationships have a far greater bearing on anyone's life than politics ever could.' Her grandmother had lived by a belief in the opposite; when I met her after the death of her granddaughter and she suggested that perhaps she was wrong, I didn't want to hear what she had to say.

I returned to London and typed up the interview at an attic window, watching the old lady next door snip round her tiny patch of grass with scissors.

* * * *

2.

Writing Poppy

After he retired and before he became ill, my father wrote a memoir. Full of court cases, law reform campaigns and eminent men, it was the sort of memoir I've never much liked. But as it was my father's, I found his account of life at the bar more interesting, and his evasion of domestic and emotional life more infuriating than I'd expected. At least I got born, which is more than my sisters did. But I can see that his memoir gave his life a shape that he wanted it to have, and expressed a meaning that in some deep part of himself it did have. It wasn't that he was an inattentive or distant father, or that family didn't matter to him; rather it was that the world of emotion was opaque to him, he had no language for it, no way of interpreting its breaks and rhythms. The life he could enter into without reservation and which he understood down to his bones happened in his garden where plants grew according to the season, and in the law courts and the Temple, that part of London between Fleet Street and the Embankment where the barristers hang out and legal order prevails.

During the last months of his life, I sat across the desk from him (the desk at which I now work) and helped edit the memoir, sort photos, consider titles and write captions. Every now and then I'd give a nudge in the direction of filling some of the dry emotional streams that we stumbled into, but he was adamant that was not the task of memoir and I didn't push. When I was writing *Poppy* there were questions I'd wanted answered – like how he *felt* when my mother went into the sanatorium – and I'd pushed until, for the only time in my life, I could see he was avoiding me, or avoiding my next question, dodging an emotional insistence that reminded him miserably of my mother. Walking across a field behind his garden he had finally asked me to relent.

* * * *

4: Other literature

4 – 3 Drusilla Modjeska: *Timepieces* – continued

3.

Memoir Australia

Susan Ryan's *Catching the Waves* and Anne Summers' *Ducks on the Pond* and McCarthy's *Don't Fence Me In* were published within two years of each other, and the title of each has feminist resonance.

These women are not stepping into the new Australian memoir so much as politicising a tradition of autobiography that had been out of favour for twenty years, writing accounts of their lives because they recognise their public significance. The difference is that at the heart of each is the feminist idea that the personal is political. For them the messy aspects of life – the abortions, the separations, the failed love affairs – are essential to the story. This is their challenge to the values of public life and the priorities by which it's conducted. But their memoirs are oddly impersonal, a kind of updated version of the memoirs of the suffragettes, whose impulse and intent in writing their lives was much the same. We get a good sense of what they have done, and what has happened to them, but not much of who they are. Interiority is not what these memoirs are about.

Perhaps because I'm of their generation, I find the first signs of the daughters' response more interesting, as the next generation, taking their right to a voice for granted, turn their gaze back on their parents.

* * * *

5: Poetry

5 – 1 Robert Adamson: *Mulberry Leaves*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Robert Adamson.

1.

Robert Adamson, *Mulberry Leaves*,
Paper Bark Press, 2001

p 53

2.

Robert Adamson, *Mulberry Leaves*,
Paper Bark Press, 2001

p 114

5: Poetry

5 – 1 Robert Adamson: *Mulberry Leaves* – continued

3.

Robert Adamson, *Mulberry Leaves*,
Paper Bark Press, 2001

p 275

5: Poetry

5 – 2 W H Auden: *Selected Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of W H Auden.

1.

W H Auden, *Selected Poems*,
ed. Edward Mendelson, Faber, 1979

pp 79–80

2.

W H Auden, *Selected Poems*,
ed. Edward Mendelson, Faber, 1979

pp 85–86

5: Poetry

5 – 2 W H Auden: *Selected Poems* – continued

3.

W H Auden, *Selected Poems*,
ed. Edward Mendelson, Faber, 1979

pp 195–196

5: Poetry

5 – 3 John Donne: *Selected Poetry*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of John Donne.

1.

The Sun Rising

Busy old fool, unruly sun,
 Why dost thou thus,
 Through windows, and through curtains call on us?
 Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
 Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
 Late schoolboys, and sour prentices,
 Go tell court-huntsmen, that the King will ride,
 Call country ants to harvest offices;
 Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
 Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams, so reverend, and strong
 Why shouldst thou think?
 I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
 But that I would not lose her sight so long:
 If her eyes have not blinded thine,
 Look, and tomorrow late, tell me,
 Whether both th'Indias of spice and mine
 Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me.
 Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
 And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

She'is all states, and all princes, I,
 Nothing else is.
 Princes do but play us; compared to this,
 All honour's mimic; all wealth alchemy.
 Thou sun art half as happy as we,
 In that the world's contracted thus;
 Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
 To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
 Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
 This bed thy centre is, these walls, thy sphere.

* * * *

2.

A Valediction: forbidding Mourning

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
 And whisper to their souls, to go,
 Whilst some of their sad friends do say,
 The breath goes now, and some say, no:

So let us melt, and make no noise,
 No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move,
 'Twere profanation of our joys
 To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears,
 Men reckon what it did and meant,
 But trepidation of the spheres,
 Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love
 (Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
 Absence, because it doth remove
 Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love, so much refined,
 That ourselves know not what it is,
 Inter-assured of the mind,
 Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss.

Our two souls therefore, which are one,
 Though I must go, endure not yet
 A breach, but an expansion,
 Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
 As stiff twin compasses are two,
 Thy soul the fixed foot, makes no show
 To move, but doth, if th' other do.

And though it in the centre sit,
 Yet when the other far doth roam,
 It leans, and hearkens after it,
 And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must
 Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
 Thy firmness makes my circle just,
 And makes me end, where I begun.

* * * *

5: Poetry

5 – 3 John Donne: *Selected Poetry* – continued

3.

Holy Sonnets: Death be not proud

Death be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not so,
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me;
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more, Death thou shalt die.

* * * *

5: Poetry

5 – 4 Gwen Harwood: *Selected Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Gwen Harwood.

1.

In the Park

She sits in the park. Her clothes are out of date.
Two children whine and bicker, tug her skirt.
A third draws aimless patterns in the dirt.
Someone she loved once passes by — too late

to feign indifference to that casual nod.
“How nice,” *et cetera*. “Time holds great surprises.”
From his neat head unquestionably rises
a small balloon ... “but for the grace of God”

They stand awhile in flickering light, rehearsing
the children’s names and birthdays. “It’s so sweet
to hear their chatter, watch them grow and thrive,”
she says to his departing smile. Then, nursing
the youngest child, sits staring at her feet.
To the wind she says, “They have eaten me alive.”

* * * *

2.

Father and Child

II Nightfall

Forty years, lived or dreamed:
what memories pack them home.
Now the season that seemed
incredible is come.
Father and child, we stand
in time’s long-promised land.

Since there’s no more to taste
ripeness is plainly all.
Father, we pick our last
fruits of the temporal.
Eighty years old, you take
this late walk for my sake.

Who can be what you were?
Link your dry hand in mine,
my stick-thin comforter.
Far distant suburbs shine
with great simplicities.
Birds crowd in flowering trees,

sunset exalts its known
symbols of transience.
Your passionate face is grown
to ancient innocence.
Let us walk for this hour
as if death had no power

or were no more than sleep.
Things truly named can never
vanish from earth. You keep
a child’s delight for ever
in birds, flowers, shivery-grass —
I name them as we pass.

“*Be your tears wet?*” You speak
as if air touched a string
near breaking-point. Your cheek
brushes on mine. Old king,
your marvellous journey’s done.
Your night and day are one

as you find with your white stick
the path on which you turn
home with the child once quick
to mischief, grown to learn
what sorrows, in the end,
no words, no tears can mend.

* * * *

5: Poetry

5 – 4 Gwen Harwood: *Selected Poems* – continued

3.

The Sea Anemones

Grey mountains, sea and sky. Even the misty
seawind is grey. I walk on lichened rock
in a kind of late assessment, call it peace.
Then the anemones, scarlet, gouts of blood.
There is a word I need, and earth was speaking.
I cannot hear. These seaflowers are too bright.
Kneeling on rock, I touch them through cold water.
My fingers meet some hungering gentleness.
A newborn child's lips moved so at my breast.
I woke, once, with my palm across your mouth.
The word is: *ever*. Why add salt to salt?
Blood drop by drop among the rocks they shine.
Anemos, wind. The spirit, where it will.
Not flowers, no, animals that must eat or die.

* * * *

5: Poetry

5 – 5 John Kinsella: *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of John Kinsella.

1.

John Kinsella, *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems*, Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 2003

pp 9–10

2.

John Kinsella, *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems*, Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 2003

p 39

5: Poetry

5 – 5 John Kinsella: *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems* – continued

3.

John Kinsella, *Peripheral Light: Selected and New Poems*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2003

pp 42–43

5: Poetry

5 – 6 Adrienne Rich: *The Fact of a Doorframe*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Adrienne Rich.

1.

Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe*,
W W Norton & Company, 2002

pp 19–20

2.

Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe*,
W W Norton & Company, 2002

pp 101–102

5: Poetry

5 – 6 Adrienne Rich: *The Fact of a Doorframe* – continued

3.

Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe*,
W W Norton & Company, 2002

p 154

5: Poetry

5 – 7 Judith Wright: *Collected Poems*

Use one or more of the passages selected as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Judith Wright.

1.

The Company of Lovers

We meet and part now over all the world.
 We, the lost company,
 take hands together in the night, forget
 the night in our brief happiness, silently.
 We who sought many things, throw all away
 for this one thing, one only,
 remembering that in the narrow grave
 we shall be lonely.

Death marshals up his armies round us now.
 Their footsteps crowd too near.
 Lock your warm hand above the chilling heart
 and for a time I live without my fear.
 Grope in the night to find me and embrace,
 for the dark preludes of the drums begin,
 and round us, round the company of lovers,
 Death draws his cordons in.

* * * *

2.

Woman to Man

The eyeless labourer in the night,
 the selfless, shapeless seed I hold,
 builds for its resurrection day—
 silent and swift and deep from sight
 foresees the unimagined light.

This is no child with a child's face;
 this has no name to name it by:
 yet you and I have known it well.
 This is our hunter and our chase,
 the third who lay in our embrace.

This is the strength that your arm knows,
 the arc of flesh that is my breast,
 the precise crystals of our eyes.
 This is the blood's wild tree that grows
 the intricate and folded rose.

This is the maker and the made;
 this is the question and reply;
 the blind head butting at the dark,
 the blaze of light along the blade.
 Oh hold me, for I am afraid.

* * * *

5: Poetry

5 – 7 Judith Wright: *Collected Poems* – continued

3.

Smalltown Dance

Two women find the square-root of a sheet.
 That is an ancient dance:
 arms wide: together: again: two forward steps: hands meet
 your partner's once and twice.
 That white expanse
 reduces to a neat
 compression fitting in the smallest space
 a sheet can pack in on a cupboard shelf.

High scented walls there were of flapping white
 when I was small, myself.
 I walked between them, playing Out of Sight.
 Simpler than arms, they wrapped and comforted—
 clean corridors of hiding, roofed with blue—
 saying, Your sins too are made Monday-new;
 and see, ahead
 that glimpse of unobstructed waiting green.
 Run, run before you're seen.

But women know the scale of possibility,
 the limit of opportunity,
 the fence,
 how little chance
 there is of getting out. The sheets that tug
 sometimes struggle from the peg,
 don't travel far. Might symbolise
 something. Knowing where danger lies
 you have to keep things orderly.
 The household budget will not stretch to more.

And they can demonstrate it in a dance.
 First pull those wallowing white dreamers down,
 spread arms: then close them. Fold
 those beckoning roads to some impossible world,
 put them away and close the cupboard door.

* * * *

Assessment criteria

The examination will address all of the criteria. All students will be examined against the following criteria.

1. Understanding of the text demonstrated in a relevant and plausible interpretation.
2. Ability to write expressively and coherently to present an interpretation.
3. Understanding of how views and values may be suggested in the text.
4. Analysis of how key passages and/or moments in the text contribute to an interpretation.
5. Analysis of the features of a text and how they contribute to an interpretation.
6. Analysis and close reading of textual details to support a coherent and detailed interpretation of the text.

A checklist for planning and revising

Have I included the part numbers and text numbers of my chosen texts on the front cover(s) of all script books?

Have I written on texts from two different parts?

Have I demonstrated my knowledge and understanding of the chosen texts?

Have I referred to the chosen texts in detail to illustrate or justify my responses?

Have I discussed at least one set passage for each text in detail?

Have I expressed myself effectively and appropriately?

Have I edited my final version for spelling, punctuation and sentence structure?

Are there places where my handwriting would be difficult to read and should be tidied?

Are any alterations I have made clear to the reader?

END OF TASK BOOK