

Literature

Section A – Task Book

VCE Examination – Thursday 30 October 2025

- Reading time is **15 minutes**: 3.00 pm to 3.15 pm
- Writing time is **2 hours**: 3.15 pm to 5.15 pm

Approved materials

- An English and/or bilingual printed dictionary

Materials supplied

- **Section A** – Task Book of 36 pages
- **Section B** – Task Book of 64 pages
- Answer Book

Instructions

- You are required to respond to **two** questions based on **one** passage from **one** text selected from the list on pages 2 and 3 of this Task Book.
- The text you select for **Section A** must be from a different category (novels, plays, short stories, other literature, poetry) than the text you select for **Section B**. You must **not** write on two texts from the same category. Students who write on two texts from the same category will receive a score of zero for one section.
- Complete your responses for each section in the correct part of the Answer Book.
- Write your responses in English.

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

Contents	pages
Text list _____	2–3
Section A (2 questions, 20 marks) _____	4–33
Assessment criteria for Section A _____	34

Section A – Developing interpretations

Instructions

- There are two questions for each text in **Section A**. You **must** answer **both** questions for your chosen text.
 - One passage has been set for each text. The set passage has been reproduced as it appears in the nominated version of the text.
 - You must use the set passage as the basis of your responses to both questions. In your responses, refer in detail to the set passage and your selected text.
 - Your selected text for **Section A** must be from a different category than your selected text for **Section B**.
 - Indicate in the Answer Book which text you have selected.
 - Your responses will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 34 of this book.
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Text list

Novels

Text no.		page
1	Thea Astley, Drylands _____	4
2	Margaret Atwood, Alias Grace _____	5
3	Robert Drewe, Our Sunshine _____	6
4	William Faulkner, As I Lay Dying _____	7
5	Kazuo Ishiguro, The Remains of the Day _____	8
6	Gerald Murnane, The Plains _____	9
7	Bram Stoker, Dracula _____	10
8	Edith Wharton, The Age of Innocence _____	11
9	Tara June Winch, The Yield _____	12

Plays

Text no.		
10	Aeschylus, The Persians _____	13
11	Anton Chekhov, Uncle Vanya _____	14
12	Joshua Harmon, Admissions _____	15
13	Lucy Kirkwood, Chimerica _____	16
14	Joanna Murray-Smith, Berlin _____	17
15	Suzan-Lori Parks, Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3) _____	18
16	Edmond Rostand, Cyrano de Bergerac _____	19
17	William Shakespeare, As You Like It _____	20
18	William Shakespeare, The Winter's Tale _____	21

Short stories

Text no.		page
19	Ted Chiang, Stories of Your Life and Others _____	22
20	Elizabeth Strout, Olive Kitteridge _____	23
21	Elizabeth Tan, Smart Ovens for Lonely People _____	24

Other literature

Text no.		
22	James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time _____	25
23	Kate Holden, The Winter Road _____	26
24	Mary Seacole, Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands _____	27

Poetry

Text no.		
25	Elizabeth Bishop, Poems _____	28
26	Carol Ann Duffy, The World's Wife _____	29
27	Gavin Yuan Gao, At the Altar of Touch _____	30
28	Sarah Holland-Batt, The Hazards _____	31
29	Ellen van Neerven, Throat _____	32
30	William Butler Yeats, W. B. Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney _____	33

Novels

Text no. 1 Thea Astley, *Drylands*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of dislocation is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Benny sat next to Paddy [...] The words wouldn't stop vomiting from his mouth.

Thea Astley, *Drylands*,
Text Classics, 2018

pp. 160–161

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 2** Margaret Atwood, **Alias Grace**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of perception is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

[...] At the front is an engraved portrait of Grace [...] it was tucked up under a white cap.

Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace*,
Virago Press, 2019
pp. 67–68

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Novels

Text no. 3 Robert Drewe, *Our Sunshine*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of lawlessness is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

I have something to say! [...] from Edward Kelly, a
Forced Outlaw.

Robert Drewe, *Our Sunshine*,
Penguin, 2010
pp. 157–159

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 4** William Faulkner, **As I Lay Dying**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of gender is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

'If you've got any womenfolks, why in the world [...] love
or Anse: it didn't matter.

William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*,
Vintage, 1999
pp. 157–159

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels

Text no. 5 Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of disappointment is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

‘The fact is, of course,’ I said after a while [...] The evening’s the best part of the day.’

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*,
Faber & Faber, 2010

pp. 255–256

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Novels**Text no. 6** Gerald Murnane, **The Plains**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of gender is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Some years ago I was tempted to visit [...] murals of green
glaze and figurines posed ambiguously. [...]

Gerald Murnane, *The Plains*,
Text Classics, 2012
pp. 121–123

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Novels

Text no. 7 Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of transformation is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Early this morning we listened, with breathless anxiety, for her response in her trance. The hypnotic stage was even longer in coming than before; and when it came the time remaining until full sunrise was so short that we began to despair. Van Helsing seemed to throw his whole soul into the effort; at last, in obedience to his will she made reply: –

‘All is dark. I hear lapping water, level with me, and some creaking as of wood on wood.’ She paused, and the red sun shot up. We must wait till tonight.

And so it is that we are travelling towards Galatz in an agony of expectation. We are due to arrive between two and three in the morning; but already, at Bucharest, we are three hours late, so we cannot possibly get in till well after sun-up. Thus we shall have two more hypnotic messages from Mrs Harker; either or both may possibly throw more light on what is happening.

Later: – Sunset has come and gone. Fortunately it came at a time when there was no distraction; for had it occurred whilst we were at a station, we might not have secured the necessary calm and isolation. Mrs Harker yielded to the hypnotic influence even less readily than this morning. I am in fear that her power of reading the Count’s sensations may die away, just when we want it most. It seems to me that her imagination is beginning to work. Whilst she has been in the trance hitherto she has confined herself to the simplest of facts. If this goes on it may ultimately mislead us. If I thought that the Count’s power over her would die away equally with her

power of knowledge it would be a happy thought; but I am afraid that it may not be so. When she did speak, her words were enigmatical: –

‘Something is going out; I can feel it pass me like a cold wind. I can hear, far off, confused sounds – as of men talking in strange tongues, fierce-falling water, and the howling of wolves.’ She stopped and a shudder ran through her, increasing in intensity for a few seconds, till, at the end, she shook as though in a palsy. She said no more, even in answer to the Professor’s imperative questioning. When she woke from the trance, she was cold, and exhausted, and languid; but her mind was all alert. She could not remember anything, but asked what she had said; when she was told, she pondered over it deeply, for a long time and in silence.

Novels

Text no. 8 Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of conformity is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

'[...] What can you expect of a girl who was allowed to wear black satin at her coming-out ball?'

'Ah – don't I remember her in it!' said Mr Jackson; adding: 'Poor girl!' in the tone of one who, while enjoying the memory, had fully understood at the time what the sight portended.

'It's odd,' Janey remarked, 'that she should have kept such an ugly name as Ellen. I should have changed it to Elaine.' She glanced about the table to see the effect of this.

Her brother laughed. 'Why Elaine?'

'I don't know; it sounds more – more Polish,' said Janey, blushing.

'It sounds more conspicuous; and that can hardly be what she wishes,' said Mrs Archer distantly.

'Why not?' broke in her son, growing suddenly argumentative. 'Why shouldn't she be conspicuous if she chooses? Why should she slink about as if it were she who had disgraced herself? She's "poor Ellen" certainly, because she had the bad luck to make a wretched marriage; but I don't see that that's a reason for hiding her head as if she were the culprit.'

'That, I suppose,' said Mr Jackson, speculatively, 'is the line the Mingotts mean to take.'

The young man reddened. 'I don't have to wait for their cue, if that's what you mean, sir. Madame Olenska has had an unhappy life: that doesn't make her an outcast.'

'There are rumours,' began Mr Jackson, glancing at Janey.

'Oh, I know: the secretary,' the young man took him up.

'Nonsense, mother; Janey's grown-up. They say, don't they,' he went on, 'that the secretary helped her to get away from her brute of a husband, who kept her practically a prisoner? Well, what if he did? I hope there isn't a man among us who wouldn't have done the same in such a case.'

Mr Jackson glanced over his shoulder to say to the sad butler: 'Perhaps ... that sauce ... just a little, after all –'; then, having helped himself, he remarked: 'I'm told she's looking for a house. She means to live here.'

'I hear she means to get a divorce,' said Janey boldly.

'I hope she will!' Archer exclaimed.

The word had fallen like a bombshell in the pure and tranquil atmosphere of the Archer dining-room. Mrs Archer raised her delicate eyebrows in the particular curve that signified: 'The butler –' and the young man, himself mindful of the bad taste of discussing such intimate matters in public, hastily branched off into an account of his visit to old Mrs Mingott.

Novels**Text no. 9** Tara June Winch, **The Yield**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of control is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

There was order and grace to our lives at Prosperous Mission [...] their prejudice against the Native.

Tara June Winch, *The Yield*,
Penguin, 2019
pp. 164–165

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Plays

Text no. 10 Aeschylus, **The Persians**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of power is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

CHORUS: [...] Thus the Great King [...] Marched to war
on hempen cords.

Aeschylus, 'The Persians' in *Prometheus Bound and
Other Plays* (Philip Vellacott, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2001
pp. 124–126

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays

Text no. 11 Anton Chekhov, **Uncle Vanya**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of decay is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

ASTROV: [...] Now let's look lower down [...] what we talked about. Yes?

Anton Chekhov, 'Uncle Vanya' in *Plays*
(Peter Carson, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2002
pp. 178–179

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Plays**Text no. 12** Joshua Harmon, **Admissions**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of opportunity is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

CHARLIE. Anyone could be where I am [...] But it doesn't make them right either.

Joshua Harmon, *Admissions*,
Samuel French, 2019

pp. 58–59

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Plays

Text no. 13 Lucy Kirkwood, *Chimerica*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of defiance is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

JOE. So okay I'm standing there [...] Maybe they did not come back on again for me.

Lucy Kirkwood, *Chimerica*,
Nick Hern Books, 2013

pp. 23–25

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Plays**Text no. 14** Joanna Murray-Smith, **Berlin**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of authenticity is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

It's pitch black. Suddenly, the front door [...] into our jet engines, alas.

Joanna Murray-Smith, *Berlin*,
Currency Press, 2022

pp. 1–2

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Plays

Text no. 15 Suzan-Lori Parks, **Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of change is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Part 3: The Union of My Confederate Parts

PENNY. But should I wait? [...] Happy to be home.

Suzan-Lori Parks, *Father Comes Home from the Wars*

(Parts 1, 2 and 3),

Nick Hern Books, 2016

pp. 102–103

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays**Text no. 16** Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of honour is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

DE GUICHE. [...]

I charged three times. [...] With my compliments.

Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*,

(Anthony Burgess, trans.)

Nick Hern Books, 1991

pp. 126–128

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays

Text no. 17 William Shakespeare, **As You Like It**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of love is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

ROSALIND [...] There is a man haunts the forest that abuses our young plants with carving 'Rosalind' on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns and elegies on brambles; all, forsooth, defying the name of Rosalind. If I could meet that fancy-monger, I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quotidian of love upon him.

ORLANDO I am he that is so love-shaked. I pray you tell me your remedy.

ROSALIND There is none of my uncle's marks upon you. He taught me how to know a man in love, in which cage of rushes I am sure you are not prisoner.

ORLANDO What were his marks?

ROSALIND A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and sunken, which you have not; an unquestionable spirit, which you have not; a beard neglected, which you have not – but I pardon you for that, for, simply, your having in beard is a younger brother's revenue. Then your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation. But you are no such man; you are rather point-device in your accoutrements, as loving yourself than seeming the lover of any other.

ORLANDO Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.

ROSALIND Me believe it? You may as soon make her that you love believe it, which I warrant she is apter to do than to confess she does. That is one of the points in the which women still give the lie to their consciences. But, in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees wherein Rosalind is so admired?

ORLANDO I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, that unfortunate he.

ROSALIND But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?

ORLANDO Neither rhyme nor reason can express how much.

ROSALIND Love is merely a madness and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark-house and a whip as madmen do; and the reason why they are not so punished and cured is that the lunacy is so ordinary that the whippers are in love too. Yet I profess curing it by counsel.

ORLANDO Did you ever cure any so?

ROSALIND Yes, one, and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress, and I set him every day to woo me. At which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles; for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything, as boys and women are, for the most part, cattle of this colour; would now like him, now loathe him; then entertain him, then forswear him; now weep for him, then spit at him; that I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of madness, which was to forswear the full stream of the world and to live in a nook, merely monastic. And thus I cured him, and this way will I take upon me to wash your liver as clean as a sound sheep's heart, that there shall not be one spot of love in't.

ORLANDO I would not be cured, youth.

Short stories**Text no. 19** Ted Chiang, **Stories of Your Life and Others**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of connections is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

LIKING WHAT YOU SEE: A DOCUMENTARY

The same thing'll happen as happened with beauty [...] when we're by ourselves, just the two of us.

Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others*,
Picador, 2020
pp. 325–327

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Short stories**Text no. 20** Elizabeth Strout, **Olive Kitteridge**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of impermanence is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

River

[...] The silence of this sunshine [...] She did not want to leave it yet.

Elizabeth Strout, *Olive Kitteridge*,
Scribner, 2016
pp. 178–179

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Short stories**Text no. 21** Elizabeth Tan, **Smart Ovens for Lonely People**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of reality is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

THIS IS NOT A TREEHOUSE

Sometimes when I see something [...] just as the guy's head turned, the sculpture stopped.

Elizabeth Tan, *Smart Ovens for Lonely People*,
Brio Books, 2020

pp. 1–2

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Other literature**Text no. 22** James Baldwin, **The Fire Next Time**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of salvation is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

DOWN AT THE CROSS**Letter from a Region in My Mind**

[...] The universe, which is not merely the stars and the moon
[...] most effective means I had found of breaking his hold
over me. [...]

James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*,
Penguin Modern Classics, 1990

pp. 34–35

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Other literature**Text no. 23** Kate Holden, *The Winter Road*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of legacy is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

THE OLDEST KNOWN EXAMPLE of primogeniture [...] were specifically exempted from the decree.

Kate Holden, *The Winter Road*,
Black Inc, 2023
pp. 243–244

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Other literature

Text no. 24 Mary Seacole, *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands*

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of compassion is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

I wonder if I can ever forget the scenes I witnessed there? Oh! they were heartrending. I declare that I saw rough bearded men stand by and cry like the softest-hearted women at the sights of suffering they saw; while some who scorned comfort for themselves, would fidget about for hours before the long trains of mules and ambulances came in, nervous lest the most trifling thing that could minister to the sufferers' comfort should be neglected. I have often heard men talk and preach very learnedly and conclusively about the great wickedness and selfishness of the human heart; I used to wonder whether they would have modified those opinions if they had been my companions for one day of the six weeks I spent upon that wharf, and seen but one day's experience of the Christian sympathy and brotherly love shown by the strong to the weak. The task was a trying one, and familiarity, you might think, would have worn down their keener feelings of pity and sympathy; but it was not so.

I was in the midst of my sad work one day when the Admiral came up, and stood looking on. He vouchsafed no word nor look of recognition in answer to my salute, but stood silently by, his hands behind his back, watching the sick being lifted into the boats. You might have thought that he had little feeling, so stern and expressionless was his face; but once, when they raised a sufferer somewhat awkwardly, and he groaned deeply, that rough man broke out all at once with an oath, that was strangely like a prayer, and bade the men, for God's sake, take more care. And, coming up to me, he clapped me on the shoulder, saying, 'I am glad to see you here, old lady, among these poor fellows;' while, I am most strangely deceived if I did not see a tear-drop gathering in

his eye. It was on this same day, I think, that bending down over a poor fellow whose senses had quite gone, and, I fear me, would never return to him in this world, he took me for his wife, and calling me 'Mary, Mary,' many times, asked me how it was he had got home so quickly, and why he did not see the children; and said he felt sure he should soon get better now. Poor fellow! I could not undeceive him. I think the fancy happily caused by the touch of a woman's hand soothed his dying hour; for I do not fancy he could have lived to reach Scutari. I never knew it for certain, but I always felt sure that he would never wake from that dream of home in this world.

Poetry

Text no. 25 Elizabeth Bishop, **Poems**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of journeys is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Questions of Travel

There are too many waterfalls here [...] *Should we have stayed at home, wherever that may be?*"

Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems*,
Chatto & Windus, 2011

pp. 91–92

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Poetry**Text no. 26** Carol Ann Duffy, **The World's Wife**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of liberation is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Little Red-Cap

At childhood's end, the houses petered out [...] Out of the forest I come with my flowers, singing, all alone.

Carol Ann Duffy, *The World's Wife*,
Picador, 2017

pp. 3–4

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Poetry

Text no. 27 Gavin Yuan Gao, **At the Altar of Touch**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of acceptance is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Requiem Ending with the Night Sky

Lilac sings in the bridal shower of the wind: bells [...] are mine & immortal.

Gavin Yuan Gao, *At the Altar of Touch*,
University of Queensland Press, 2022

pp. 108–109

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Poetry**Text no. 28** Sarah Holland-Batt, **The Hazards**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of dominance is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Essay on the Toucan*Osa, Costa Rica*

The old colonel keeps his uniform clean: [...] the dark tribunal
of the trees.

Sarah Holland-Batt, *The Hazards*,
University of Queensland Press, 2015

p. 25

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Poetry

Text no. 29 Ellen van Neerven, **Throat**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of connection is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

I grieve in sleep

I sleep topless [...] Not while I still have crushed
eucalypt in my hand.

Ellen van Neerven, *Throat*,
University of Queensland Press, 2020

p. 125

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Poetry**Text no. 30** William Butler Yeats, **W. B. Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney**

Question 1 (6 marks)

Explore the significance of the passage below in the text.

Question 2 (14 marks)

Using the passage as a focus, discuss the ways in which the concept of regeneration is endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised by the text.

Meditations in Time of Civil War*VI The Stare's Nest by My Window*

The bees build in the crevices
Of loosening masonry, and there
The mother birds bring grubs and flies.
My wall is loosening; honey-bees,
Come build in the empty house of the stare.

We are closed in, and the key is turned
On our uncertainty; somewhere
A man is killed, or a house burned,
Yet no clear fact to be discerned:
Come build in the empty house of the stare.

A barricade of stone or of wood;
Some fourteen days of civil war;
Last night they trundled down the road
That dead young soldier in his blood:
Come build in the empty house of the stare.

We had fed the heart on fantasies,
The heart's grown brutal from the fare;
More substance in our enmities
Than in our love; O honey-bees,
Come build in the empty house of the stare.

Assessment criteria for Section A

Question 1 of Section A will be assessed against the following criteria:

- exploration of the significance of the set passage in the context of the whole text
- analysis of the significance of the set passage, demonstrated through the use of textual evidence
- ability to write coherently, expressively and fluently as appropriate to the task

Question 2 of Section A will be assessed against the following criteria:

- understanding of the ideas, views and values that arise from the concept identified in the question
 - analysis of the ways in which the concept identified in the question is represented in the set passage and the whole text, demonstrated through the use of textual evidence
 - exploration of how the relevant ideas, views and values of the text can be endorsed, challenged and/or marginalised
 - ability to write coherently, expressively and fluently as appropriate to the task
-

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Literature

Section B – Task Book

VCE Examination – Thursday 30 October 2025

- Reading time is **15 minutes**: 3.00 pm to 3.15 pm
- Writing time is **2 hours**: 3.15 pm to 5.15 pm

Approved materials

- An English and/or bilingual printed dictionary

Materials supplied

- **Section A** – Task Book of 36 pages
- **Section B** – Task Book of 64 pages
- Answer Book

Instructions

- You are required to complete **one** task based on **one** text selected from the list on pages 2 and 3 of this Task Book.
- The text you select for **Section B** must be from a different category (novels, plays, short stories, other literature, poetry) than the text you select for **Section A**. You must **not** write on two texts from the same category. Students who write on two texts from the same category will receive a score of zero for one section.
- Complete your responses for each section in the correct part of the Answer Book.
- Write your responses in English.

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

Contents	pages
Text list _____	2–3
Section B (1 question, 20 marks) _____	4–63
Assessment criteria for Section B _____	64

Section B – Close analysis

Instructions

- You are required to complete **one** task based on **one** text.
 - Three passages have been set for each text. The set passages are presented in the order in which they appear in the nominated version of the text. The set passages are also reproduced as they appear in the nominated version of the text.
 - You must use **two or more** of the set passages as the basis for a discussion about the selected text.
 - In your response, refer in detail to the set passages and the selected text. You may include minor references to other texts.
 - Your selected text for **Section B** must be from a different category than your selected text for **Section A**.
 - Indicate in the Answer Book which text you have selected.
 - Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 64 of this book.
-

Text list

Novels

Text no.		pages
1	Thea Astley, Drylands _____	4–5
2	Margaret Atwood, Alias Grace _____	6–7
3	Robert Drewe, Our Sunshine _____	8–9
4	William Faulkner, As I Lay Dying _____	10–11
5	Kazuo Ishiguro, The Remains of the Day _____	12–13
6	Gerald Murnane, The Plains _____	14–15
7	Bram Stoker, Dracula _____	16–17
8	Edith Wharton, The Age of Innocence _____	18–19
9	Tara June Winch, The Yield _____	20–21

Plays

Text no.		
10	Aeschylus, The Persians _____	22–23
11	Anton Chekhov, Uncle Vanya _____	24–25
12	Joshua Harmon, Admissions _____	26–27
13	Lucy Kirkwood, Chimerica _____	28–29
14	Joanna Murray-Smith, Berlin _____	30–31
15	Suzan-Lori Parks, Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3) _____	32–33
16	Edmond Rostand, Cyrano de Bergerac _____	34–35
17	William Shakespeare, As You Like It _____	36–37
18	William Shakespeare, The Winter's Tale _____	38–39

Short stories

Text no.		pages
19	Ted Chiang, Stories of Your Life and Others _____	40–41
20	Elizabeth Strout, Olive Kitteridge _____	42–43
21	Elizabeth Tan, Smart Ovens for Lonely People _____	44–45

Other literature

Text no.		
22	James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time _____	46–47
23	Kate Holden, The Winter Road _____	48–49
24	Mary Seacole, Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands ____	50–51

Poetry

Text no.		
25	Elizabeth Bishop, Poems _____	52–53
26	Carol Ann Duffy, The World's Wife _____	54–55
27	Gavin Yuan Gao, At the Altar of Touch _____	56–57
28	Sarah Holland-Batt, The Hazards _____	58–59
29	Ellen van Neerven, Throat _____	60–61
30	William Butler Yeats, W. B. Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney ____	62–63

Novels**Text no. 1** Thea Astley, *Drylands*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Drylands*.

1.

This will be a book for the world's last reader [...] her personal library. Glutted!

Thea Astley, *Drylands*,
Text Classics, 2018

pp. 6–7

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

In the school of arts [...] Are you with me?’

Thea Astley, *Drylands*,
Text Classics, 2018

pp. 67–69

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 1** Thea Astley, **Drylands**

3.

Janet went back to her bedroom [...] amplified the ‘what ifs’ of everything. [...]

Thea Astley, *Drylands*,
Text Classics, 2018

pp. 197–198

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Novels**Text no. 2** Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Alias Grace*.

1.

On a fine day in mid-September [...] and often where we die.

Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace*,
Virago Press, 2019

pp. 185–186

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2.

One young fellow pointed to another [...] I might end up in the same plight.

Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace*,
Virago Press, 2019

pp. 395–396

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Novels**Text no. 2** Margaret Atwood, **Alias Grace**

3.

[...] As soon as she's out of sight [...] He could have drowned.

Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace*,
Virago Press, 2019

pp. 478–479

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Novels**Text no. 3** Robert Drewe, **Our Sunshine**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Our Sunshine*.

1.

Why did they always draw him as a maniac? [...] Hadn't Dad called him sunshine?

Robert Drewe, *Our Sunshine*,
Penguin, 2010
pp. 7–9

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

Against his will he does it [...] He stays sick.

Robert Drewe, *Our Sunshine*,
Penguin, 2010
pp. 56–58

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 3** Robert Drewe, **Our Sunshine**

3.

Come and see the lion I captured [...] Regina versus Us.

Robert Drewe, *Our Sunshine*,
Penguin, 2010

pp. 174–175

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 4** William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *As I Lay Dying*.

1.

‘Are you sick?’ ma said. [...] she had to act the deceit.

William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*,
Vintage, 1999
pp. 112–113

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2.

[...] And she said, ‘I know my own sin. [...] But she wouldn’t. [...]

William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*,
Vintage, 1999
pp. 150–152

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Novels**Text no. 4** William Faulkner, **As I Lay Dying**

3.

‘JEWEL,’ I SAY, ‘whose son are you?’ [...] *Goddamn you.*
Goddamn you.

William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*,
Vintage, 1999
pp. 193–194

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided

Novels**Text no. 5** Kazuo Ishiguro, **The Remains of the Day**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Remains of the Day*.

1.

Just then a footman emerged behind me. [...] had grown even more convivial.

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*,
Faber & Faber, 2010

pp. 113–114

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

‘[...] Whenever I thought of leaving [...] I excused myself and proceeded to make my exit.

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*,
Faber & Faber, 2010

pp. 161–163

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 5** Kazuo Ishiguro, **The Remains of the Day**

3.

‘Look here, Stevens, it was dreadful. [...] ‘Indeed, sir.’

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*,
Faber & Faber, 2010

pp. 206–208

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 6** Gerald Murnane, **The Plains**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Plains*.

1.

Twenty years ago, when I first arrived [...] AND INSPIRATIONAL MATERIAL.

Gerald Murnane, *The Plains*,
Text Classics, 2012

pp. 3–5

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

[...] From somewhere beyond the half open door [...] the record of a journey of exploration.

Gerald Murnane, *The Plains*,
Text Classics, 2012

pp. 76–78

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels**Text no. 6** Gerald Murnane, **The Plains**

3.

My patron invites to his dusks [...] only what is too brightly lit.

Gerald Murnane, *The Plains*,
Text Classics, 2012

pp. 140–142

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Novels

Text no. 7 Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Dracula*.

1.

[...] He went rapidly to where the blue flame arose – it must have been very faint, for it did not seem to illumine the place around it at all – and gathering a few stones, formed them into some device. Once there appeared a strange optical effect: when he stood between me and the flame he did not obstruct it, for I could see its ghostly figure all the same. This startled me, but as the effect was only momentary, I took it that my eyes deceived me straining through the darkness. Then for a time there were no blue flames, and we sped onwards through the gloom, with the howling of the wolves around us, as though they were following in a moving circle.

At last there came a time when the driver went further afield than he had yet gone, and during his absence the horses began to tremble worse than ever and to snort and scream with fright. I could not see any cause for it, for the howling of the wolves had ceased altogether; but just then the moon, sailing through the black clouds, appeared behind the jagged crest of a beetling, pine-clad rock, and by its light I saw around us a ring of wolves, with white teeth and lolling red tongues, with long, sinewy limbs and shaggy hair. They were a hundred times more terrible in the grim silence which held them than ever when they howled. For myself, I felt a sort of paralysis of fear. It is only when a man feels himself face to face with such horrors that he can understand their true import.

All at once the wolves began to howl as though the moonlight had had some peculiar effect on them. The horses jumped about and reared, and looked helplessly round with eyes that rolled in a way painful to see; but the living ring of terror encompassed them on every side, and they had perforce to remain within it. I called to the coachman to come, for it seemed to me that our only chance was to try to break out through the ring and to aid his approach. I shouted and beat the side of the calèche, hoping by the noise to scare the wolves from that side, so as to give him a chance of reaching the trap. How he came there, I know not, but I heard his voice raised in a tone of imperious command, and looking towards the sound, saw him stand in the roadway. As he swept his long arms, as though brushing aside some impalpable obstacle, the wolves fell back and back further still. Just then a heavy cloud passed across the face of the moon, so that we were again in darkness.

2.

[...] There was a bright full moon, with heavy black, driving clouds, which threw the whole scene into a fleeting diorama of light and shade as they sailed across. For a moment or two I could see nothing, as the shadow of a cloud obscured St Mary's Church and all around it. Then as the cloud passed I could see the ruins of the Abbey coming into view; and as the edge of a narrow band of light as sharp as a sword-cut moved along, the church and the churchyard became gradually visible. Whatever my expectation was, it was not disappointed, for there, on our favourite seat, the silver light of the moon struck a half-reclining figure, snowy white. The coming of the cloud was too quick for me to see much, for shadow shut down on light almost immediately; but it seemed to me as though something dark stood behind the seat where the white figure shone, and bent over it. What it was, whether man or beast, I could not tell; I did not wait to catch another glance, but flew down the steep steps to the pier and along by the fish-market to the bridge, which was the only way to reach the East Cliff. The town seemed as dead, for not a soul did I see; I rejoiced that it was so, for I wanted no witness of poor Lucy's condition. The time and distance seemed endless, and my knees trembled and my breath came laboured as I toiled up the endless steps to the Abbey. I must have gone fast, and yet it seemed to me as if my feet were weighted with lead, and as though every joint in my body were rusty. When I got almost to the top I could see the seat and the white figure, for I was now close enough to distinguish it even through the spells of shadow. There was undoubtedly something, long and black, bending over the half-reclining white figure. I called in fright, 'Lucy! Lucy!' and something raised a head, and from where I was I could see a white face and red, gleaming eyes. Lucy did not answer, and I ran on to the entrance of the churchyard. As I entered, the church was between me and the seat, and for a minute or so I lost sight of her. When I came in view again the cloud had passed, and the moonlight struck so brilliantly that I could see Lucy half-reclining with her head lying over the back of the seat. She was quite alone, and there was not a sign of any living thing about.

Novels

Text no. 7 Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

3.

The moonlight was so bright that through the thick yellow blind the room was light enough to see. On the bed beside the window lay Jonathan Harker, his face flushed and breathing heavily as though in a stupor. Kneeling on the near edge of the bed facing outwards was the white-clad figure of his wife. By her side stood a tall, thin man, clad in black. His face was turned from us, but the instant we saw we all recognized the Count – in every way, even to the scar on his forehead. With his left hand he held both Mrs Harker’s hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension; his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared with blood, and a thin stream trickled down the man’s bare breast which was shown by his torn-open dress. The attitude of the two had a terrible resemblance to a child forcing a kitten’s nose into a saucer of milk to compel it to drink. As we burst into the room, the Count turned his face, and the hellish look that I had heard described seemed to leap into it. His eyes flamed red with devilish passion; the great nostrils of the white aquiline nose opened wide and quivered at the edge; and the white sharp teeth, behind the full lips of the blood-dripping mouth, champed together like those of a wild beast. With a wrench, which threw his victim back upon the bed as though hurled from a height, he turned and sprang at us. But by this time the Professor had gained his feet, and was holding towards him the envelope which contained the Sacred Wafer. The Count suddenly stopped, just as poor Lucy had done outside the tomb, and cowered back. Further and further back he cowered, as we, lifting our crucifixes, advanced. The moonlight suddenly failed, as a great black cloud sailed across the sky; and when the gaslight sprang up under Quincey’s match, we saw nothing but a faint vapour. This, as we looked, trailed under the door, which with the recoil from its bursting open, had swung back to its old position. Van Helsing, Art, and I moved forward to Mrs Harker, who by this time had drawn her breath and with it had given a scream so wild, so ear-piercing, so despairing that it seems to me now that it will ring in my ears till my dying day. For a few seconds she lay in her helpless attitude and disarray. Her face was ghastly, with a pallor which was accentuated by the blood which smeared her lips and cheeks and chin; from her throat trickled a thin stream of blood. Her

eyes were mad with terror. Then she put before her face her poor crushed hands, which bore on their whiteness the red mark of the Count’s terrible grip, and from behind them came a low desolate wail which made the terrible scream seem only the quick expression of an endless grief. Van Helsing stepped forward and drew the coverlet gently over her body, whilst Art, after looking at her face for an instant despairingly, ran out of the room. [...]

Novels

Text no. 8 Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Age of Innocence*.

1.

It was not the custom in New York drawing-rooms for a lady to get up and walk away from one gentleman in order to seek the company of another. Etiquette required that she should wait, immovable as an idol, while the men who wished to converse with her succeeded each other at her side. But the Countess was apparently unaware of having broken any rule; she sat at perfect ease in a corner of the sofa beside Archer, and looked at him with the kindest eyes.

‘I want you to talk to me about May,’ she said.

Instead of answering her he asked: ‘You knew the Duke before?’

‘Oh, yes – we used to see him every winter at Nice. He’s very fond of gambling – he used to come to the house a great deal.’ She said it in the simplest manner, as if she had said: ‘He’s fond of wildflowers’; and after a moment she added candidly: ‘I think he’s the dullest man I ever met.’

This pleased her companion so much that he forgot the slight shock her previous remark had caused him. It was undeniably exciting to meet a lady who found the van der Luydens’ Duke dull, and dared to utter the opinion. He longed to question her, to hear more about the life of which her careless words had given him so illuminating a glimpse; but he feared to touch on distressing memories, and before he could think of anything to say she had strayed back to her original subject.

‘May is a darling; I’ve seen no young girl in New York so handsome and so intelligent. Are you very much in love with her?’

Newland Archer reddened and laughed. ‘As much as a man can be.’

She continued to consider him thoughtfully, as if not to miss any shade of meaning in what he said. ‘Do you think then, there is a limit?’

‘To being in love? If there is, I haven’t found it!’

She glowed with sympathy. ‘Ah – it’s really and truly a romance?’

‘The most romantic of romances!’

‘How delightful! And you found it all out for yourselves – it was not in the least arranged for you?’

Archer looked at her incredulously. ‘Have you forgotten,’ he asked with a smile, ‘that in our country we don’t allow our marriages to be arranged for us?’

A dusky blush rose to her cheek, and he instantly regretted his words.

‘Yes,’ she answered, ‘I’d forgotten. [...]’

2.

‘I want,’ she went on, ‘to be perfectly honest with you – and with myself. For a long time I’ve hoped this chance would come: that I might tell you how you’ve helped me, what you’ve made of me –’

Archer sat staring beneath frowning brows. He interrupted her with a laugh. ‘And what do you make out that you’ve made of me?’

She paled a little. ‘Of you?’

‘Yes: for I’m of your making much more than you ever were of mine. I’m the man who married one woman because another one told him to.’

Her paleness turned to a fugitive flush. ‘I thought – you promised – you were not to say such things today.’

‘Ah – how like a woman! None of you will ever see a bad business through!’

She lowered her voice. ‘Is it a bad business – for May?’

He stood in the window, drumming against the raised sash, and feeling in every fibre the wistful tenderness with which she had spoken her cousin’s name.

‘For that’s the thing we’ve always got to think of – haven’t we – by your own showing?’ she insisted.

‘My own showing?’ he echoed, his blank eyes still on the sea.

‘Or if not,’ she continued, pursuing her own thought with a painful application, ‘if it’s not worth while to have given up, to have missed things, so that others may be saved from disillusionment and misery – then everything I came home for, everything that made my other life seem by contrast so bare and so poor because no one there took account of them – all these things are a sham or a dream –’

He turned around without moving from his place. ‘And in that case there’s no reason on earth why you shouldn’t go back?’ he concluded for her.

Her eyes were clinging to him desperately. ‘Oh, is there no reason?’

‘Not if you staked your all on the success of my marriage. My marriage,’ he said savagely, ‘isn’t going to be a sight to keep you here.’ She made no answer, and he went on: ‘What’s the use? You gave me my first glimpse of a real life, and at the same moment you asked me to go on with a sham one. It’s beyond human enduring – that’s all.’

‘Oh, don’t say that; when I’m enduring it!’ she burst out, her eyes filling.

Novels

Text no. 8 Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*

3.

‘Perhaps it’s that. Anyhow, I want to make a break –’

‘A break? To give up the law?’

‘To go away, at any rate – at once. On a long trip, ever so far off – away from everything –’

He paused, conscious that he had failed in his attempt to speak with the indifference of a man who longs for a change, and is yet too weary to welcome it. Do what he would, the chord of eagerness vibrated. ‘Away from everything –’ he repeated.

‘Ever so far? Where, for instance?’ she asked.

‘Oh, I don’t know, India – or Japan.’

She stood up, and as he sat with bent head, his chin propped on his hands, he felt her warmly and fragrantly hovering over him.

‘As far as that? But I’m afraid you can’t, dear ...’ she said in an unsteady voice. ‘Not unless you’ll take me with you.’ And then, as he was silent, she went on, in tones so clear and evenly pitched that each separate syllable tapped like a little hammer on his brain: ‘That is, if the doctors will let me go ... but I’m afraid they won’t. For you see, Newland, I’ve been sure since this morning of something I’ve been so longing and hoping for –’

He looked up at her with a sick stare, and she sank down, all dew and roses, and hid her face against his knee.

‘Oh, my dear,’ he said, holding her to him while his cold hand stroked her hair.

There was a long pause, which the inner devils filled with strident laughter; then May freed herself from his arms and stood up.

‘You didn’t guess –?’

‘Yes – I; no. That is, of course I hoped –’

They looked at each other for an instant and again fell silent; then, turning his eyes from hers, he asked abruptly: ‘Have you told anyone else?’

‘Only Mamma and your mother.’ She paused, and then added hurriedly, the blood flushing up to her forehead: ‘That is – and Ellen. You know I told you we’d had a long talk one afternoon – and how dear she was to me.’

‘Ah –’ said Archer, his heart stopping.

He felt that his wife was watching him intently. ‘Did you *mind* my telling her first, Newland?’

‘Mind? Why should I?’ He made a last effort to collect himself. ‘But that was a fortnight ago, wasn’t it? I thought you said you weren’t sure till today.’

Her colour burned deeper, but she held his gaze. ‘No; I wasn’t sure then – but I told her I was. And you see I was right!’ she exclaimed, her blue eyes wet with victory.

Novels**Text no. 9** Tara June Winch, **The Yield**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Yield*.

1.

[...] August wanted to fall from the bunk bed [...] and stuck branches from trees. [...]

Tara June Winch, *The Yield*,
Penguin, 2019
pp. 164–165

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

eternity, things to come – *girr* Did you remember [...] I knew everything had fallen apart.

Tara June Winch, *The Yield*,
Penguin, 2019
pp. 221–222

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Novels**Text no. 9** Tara June Winch, **The Yield**

3.

I'm certain I will die here. [...] *What has man done to man?*

Tara June Winch, *The Yield*,
Penguin, 2019
pp. 269–271

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Plays

Text no. 10 Aeschylus, *The Persians*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Persians*.

1.

ATOSSA: Since first my son marshalled his army [...] all will be well.

Aeschylus, 'The Persians' in
Prometheus Bound and Other Plays
(Philip Vellacott, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2001
pp. 128–129

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2.

ATOSSA: [...] So, friends, assist now this libation to the dead; [...] He led his people well.

Aeschylus, 'The Persians' in
Prometheus Bound and Other Plays
(Philip Vellacott, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2001
pp. 140–141

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Plays**Text no. 10** Aeschylus, **The Persians**

3.

DARIUS: Few out of many shall return, [...]
To cease affronting God with proud and rash attempts.

Aeschylus, 'The Persians' in
Prometheus Bound and Other Plays
(Philip Vellacott, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2001
p. 145

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Plays**Text no. 11** Anton Chekhov, **Uncle Vanya**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Uncle Vanya*.

1.

ASTROV: You can burn peat in your stoves [...] forests or the birds or each other.

Anton Chekhov, 'Uncle Vanya' in *Plays*
(Peter Carson, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2002
pp. 154–155

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2.

SONYA: So you don't like life? [...] I beg you, don't drink anymore.

Anton Chekhov, 'Uncle Vanya' in *Plays*
(Peter Carson, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2002
pp. 166–167

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays**Text no. 11** Anton Chekhov, **Uncle Vanya**

3.

VOYNITSKY: What do you want from me, Serebryakov?
[...] And where would you like me and my old mother
and Sonya here to go?

Anton Chekhov, 'Uncle Vanya' in *Plays*
(Peter Carson, trans.),
Penguin Classics, 2002
pp. 182–184

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Plays**Text no. 12** Joshua Harmon, **Admissions**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Admissions*.

1.

SHERRI. Yeah but, he's not Editor-in-Chief. [...] SO well deserved.

Joshua Harmon, *Admissions*,
Samuel French, 2019
pp. 19–20

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2.

BILL. A lot of good kids didn't get into Yale tonight. [...] You're Sherri Rosen Mason, award-winning rejecter of white boys.

Joshua Harmon, *Admissions*,
Samuel French, 2019
pp. 34–35

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Plays**Text no. 12** Joshua Harmon, **Admissions**

3.

GINNIE. You don't get it. [...] you want them to *be* different. [...]

Joshua Harmon, *Admissions*,
Samuel French, 2019

pp. 63–64

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Plays

Text no. 13 Lucy Kirkwood, *Chimerica*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Chimerica*.

1.

5th June, 1989. A hotel room overlooking Tiananmen Square. [...] Starts taking pictures.

Lucy Kirkwood, *Chimerica*,
Nick Hern Books, 2013

pp. 12–14

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2.

TESS opens a folder. JOE realises his mistake. [...] by the end of the day, he's part of history.

Lucy Kirkwood, *Chimerica*,
Nick Hern Books, 2013

pp. 55–57

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Plays**Text no. 13** Lucy Kirkwood, **Chimerica**

3.

TESS *is mid-speech, before her PowerPoint presentation, [...] to being tantalisingly possible. [...]*

Lucy Kirkwood, *Chimerica*,
Nick Hern Books, 2013

pp. 107–108

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays**Text no. 14** Joanna Murray-Smith, **Berlin**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Berlin*.

1.

TOM: Favourite poem? [...] CHARLOTTE: I didn't say when.

Joanna Murray-Smith, *Berlin*,
Currency Press, 2022
pp. 13–15

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

CHARLOTTE: And what happened to the boy in the blue rain jacket? [...] *Lights down*.

Joanna Murray-Smith, *Berlin*,
Currency Press, 2022
pp. 23–24

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Plays**Text no. 14** Joanna Murray-Smith, **Berlin**

3.

TOM: This population of hipsters [...] I think they should be allowed to fade.

Joanna Murray-Smith, *Berlin*,
Currency Press, 2022

pp. 34–35

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Plays

Text no. 15 Suzan-Lori Parks, *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (Parts 1, 2 & 3)

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (Parts 1, 2 & 3).

1.

Part 1: A Measure of a Man

OLD MAN. You woke this morning deciding not to go? [...] To something. Bad.

Suzan-Lori Parks, *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (Parts 1, 2 and 3),
Nick Hern Books, 2016

pp. 31–32

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2.

Part 2: A Battle in the Wilderness

COLONEL. [...]

Cannons fire in the distance. [...] I can tell you that.

Suzan-Lori Parks, *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (Parts 1, 2 and 3),
Nick Hern Books, 2016

pp. 70–71

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays**Text no. 15** Suzan-Lori Parks, **Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)**

3.

Part 3: The Union of My Confederate Parts

ULYSSES *withdraws his knife. [...] End of Play.*

Suzan-Lori Parks, *Father Comes Home from the Wars*
(Parts 1, 2 and 3),
Nick Hern Books, 2016
pp. 124–126

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays

Text no. 16 Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

1.

CYRANO (*with restrained joy*).

A hundred men? [...] You're going to see now what you're going to see. [...]

Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*,
(Anthony Burgess, trans.)
Nick Hern Books, 1991

pp. 42–44

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2.

CYRANO. I did it on principle. [...] Fighting or writing: this is the true life. [...]

Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*,
(Anthony Burgess, trans.)
Nick Hern Books, 1991

pp. 69–71

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays**Text no. 16** Edmond Rostand, **Cyrano de Bergerac**

3.

ROXANE. Everyone goes
[...] The sentiment does you honour.

Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*,
(Anthony Burgess, trans.)
Nick Hern Books, 1991

pp. 156–157

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Plays

Text no. 17 William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *As You Like It*.

1.

DUKE SENIOR True is it that we have seen better days,
And have with holy bell been knolled to church,
And sat at goodmen's feasts, and wiped our eyes
Of drops that sacred pity hath engendered:
And therefore sit you down in gentleness
And take upon command what help we have
That to your wanting may be ministered.

ORLANDO Then but forbear your food a little while
Whiles, like a doe, I go to find my fawn
And give it food: there is an old poor man
Who after me hath many a weary step
Limped in pure love. Till he be first sufficed,
Oppressed with two weak evils, age and hunger,
I will not touch a bit.

DUKE SENIOR Go find him out,
And we will nothing waste till you return.

ORLANDO I thank ye, and be blest for your good comfort.
[Exit]

DUKE SENIOR Thou see'st we are not all alone unhappy:
This wide and universal theatre
Presents more woeful pageants than the scene
Wherein we play in.

JAKUES All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;
Then the whining schoolboy with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school; and then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow; then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden, and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble 'reputation'
Even in the cannon's mouth; and then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances –
And so he plays his part; the sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloons,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose well saved – a world too wide
For his shrunk shank – and his big manly voice,

Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound; last scene of all
That ends this strange eventful history
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

2.

CELIA He hath bought a pair of cast lips of Diana. A nun of
winter's sisterhood kisses not more religiously: the very
ice of chastity is in them.

ROSALIND But why did he swear he would come this
morning and comes not?

CELIA Nay, certainly, there is no truth in him.

ROSALIND Do you think so?

CELIA Yes, I think he is not a pickpurse nor a horse-stealer
but, for his verity in love, I do think him as concave as a
covered goblet or a worm-eaten nut.

ROSALIND Not true in love?

CELIA Yes, when he is in; but I think he is not in.

ROSALIND You have heard him swear downright he was.

CELIA 'Was' is not 'is'; besides, the oath of a lover is no stronger
than the word of a tapster: they are both the confirmers
of false reckonings. He attends here in the forest on the
Duke your father.

ROSALIND I met the Duke yesterday and had much question
with him; he asked me of what parentage I was. I told him
of as good as he: so he laughed and let me go. But what
talk we of fathers when there is such a man as Orlando?

CELIA O that's a brave man: he writes brave verses, speaks
brave words, swears brave oaths, and breaks them bravely,
quite traverse, athwart the heart of his lover as a puny tilter
that spurs his horse but on one side, breaks his staff like a
noble goose. But all's brave that youth mounts and folly
guides. – Who comes here?

Enter CORIN

CORIN Mistress and master, you have oft enquired
After the shepherd that complained of love
Who you saw sitting by me on the turf,
Praising the proud disdainful shepherdess
That was his mistress.

CELIA Well, and what of him?

Plays

Text no. 17 William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

CORIN If you will see a pageant truly played
 Between the pale complexion of true love
 And the red glow of scorn and proud disdain,
 Go hence a little, and I shall conduct you
 If you will mark it.

ROSALIND O come, let us remove,
 The sight of lovers feedeth those in love. –
 Bring us to this sight and you shall say
 I'll prove a busy actor in their play. *Exeunt*

3.

DUKE SENIOR [...] Play, music – and, you brides and bridegrooms all,
 With measure heaped in joy to th' measures fall.

JAQUES Sir, by your patience. [*To Jacques de Boys*] If I heard
 you rightly,
 The Duke hath put on a religious life
 And thrown into neglect the pompous court.

JACQUES DE BOYS He hath.

JAQUES To him will I: out of these convertites
 There is much matter to be heard and learned.
 [*To the Duke*] You to your former honour I bequeath:
 Your patience and your virtue well deserves it.
 [*To Orlando*] You to a love that your true faith doth merit.
 [*To Oliver*] You to your land and love and great allies.
 [*To Silvius*] You to a long and well-deservèd bed.
 [*To Touchstone*] And you to wrangling, for thy loving voyage
 Is but for two months victualled. – So to your pleasures;
 I am for other than for dancing measures.

DUKE SENIOR Stay, Jaques, stay.

JAQUES To see no pastime, I. What you would have
 I'll stay to know at your abandoned cave. *Exit*

DUKE SENIOR Proceed, proceed. – We will begin these rites
 As we do trust they'll end, in true delights.

[*They dance.*] *Exeunt all but Rosalind*

[Epilogue]

ROSALIND It is not the fashion to see the lady the Epilogue,
 but it is no more unhandsome than to see the lord the
 Prologue. If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis
 true that a good play needs no Epilogue. Yet to good wine

they do use good bushes, and good plays prove the better
 by the help of good Epilogues. What a case am I in, then,
 that am neither a good Epilogue nor cannot insinuate with
 you in the behalf of a good play? I am not furnished like a
 beggar, therefore to beg will not become me. My way is to
 conjure you, and I'll begin with the women. I charge you,
 O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of
 this play as please you. – And I charge you, O men, for the
 love you bear to women – as I perceive by your simpering
 none of you hates them – that between you and the women
 the play may please. If I were a woman, I would kiss as
 many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions
 that liked me, and breaths that I defied not. And I am sure
 as many as have good beards, or good faces, or sweet
 breaths will, for my kind offer, when I make curtesy, bid
 me farewell. *Exit*

Plays

Text no. 18 William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Winter's Tale*.

1.

POLIXENES If at home, sir.
He's all my exercise, my mirth, my matter;
Now my sworn friend and then mine enemy;
My parasite, my soldier, statesman, all.
He makes a July's day short as December,
And with his varying childness cures in me
Thoughts that would thicken my blood.

LEONTES So stands this squire
Officed with me. We two will walk, my lord,
And leave you to your graver steps. Hermione,
How thou lov'st us show in our brother's welcome;
Let what is dear in Sicily be cheap.
Next to thyself and my young rover, he's
Apparent to my heart.

HERMIONE If you would seek us,
We are yours i'th' garden – shall's attend you there?

LEONTES To your own bents dispose you; you'll be found
Be you beneath the sky. [*Aside*] I am angling now,
Though you perceive me not how I give line.
Go to, go to!
How she holds up the neb, the bill to him!
And arms her with the boldness of a wife
To her allowing husband.

[*Exeunt Polixenes and Hermione*]
Gone already!

Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and ears a forked one!
[*To Mamillius*] Go play, boy, play: thy mother plays, and I
Play too, but so disgraced a part, whose issue
Will hiss me to my grave. Contempt and clamour
Will be my knell. Go play, boy, play. – There have been,
Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now,
And many a man there is, even at this present,
Now, while I speak this, holds his wife by th' arm,
That little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence
And his pond fished by his next neighbor, by
Sir Smile, his neighbor – nay, there's comfort in't,
Whiles other men have gates, and those gates opened,
As mine, against their will. Should all despair
That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind
Would hang themselves. Physic for't there's none:
It is a bawdy planet, that will strike
Where 'tis predominant; and 'tis powerful, think it,
From east, west, north, and south; be it concluded,
No barricado for a belly. Know't,

It will let in and out the enemy
With bag and baggage: many thousand on's
Have the disease and feel't not. – How now, boy?
MAMILLIUS I am like you, they say.

2.

SHEPHERD Fie, daughter, when my old wife lived, upon
This day she was both pantler, butler, cook,
Both dame and servant; welcomed all, served all;
Would sing her song and dance her turn; now here
At upper end o'th' table, now i'th' middle;
On his shoulder, and his; her face o' fire
With labour, and the thing she took to quench it
She would to each one sip. You are retired,
As if you were a feasted one, and not
The hostess of the meeting. Pray you bid
These unknown friends to's welcome, for it is
A way to make us better friends, more known.
Come, quench your blushes and present yourself
That which you are, mistress o'th' feast. Come on,
And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,
As your good flock shall prosper.

PERDITA Sir, welcome.
It is my father's will I should take on me
The hostess-ship o'th' day. You're welcome, sir.
Give me those flowers there, Dorcas. Reverend sirs,
For you there's rosemary and rue; these keep
Seeming and savour all the winter long.
[*Giving flowers*] Grace and remembrance be to you both,
And welcome to our shearing.

POLIXENES Shepherdess
(A fair one are you!), well you fit our ages
With flowers of winter.

PERDITA Sir, the year growing ancient,
Not yet on summer's death nor on the birth
Of trembling winter, the fairest flowers o'th' season
Are our carnations and streaked gillyvors,
Which some call nature's bastards; of that kind
Our rustic garden's barren, and I care not
To get slips of them.

POLIXENES Wherefore, gentle maiden,
Do you neglect them?

Plays

Text no. 18 William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*

PERDITA For I have heard it said
There is an art which in their piedness shares
With great creating nature.

POLIXENES Say there be;
Yet nature is made better by no mean
But nature makes that mean: so over that art
Which you say adds to nature is an art
That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race. This is an art
Which does mend nature – change it rather – but
The art itself is nature.

PERDITA So it is.

POLIXENES Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,
And do not call them bastards.

3.

AUTOLYCUS Now, had I not the dash of my former life in me, would preferment drop on my head. I brought the old man and his son aboard the prince; told him I heard them talk of a fardel and I know not what; but he at that time overfond of the shepherd's daughter – so he then took her to be – who began to be much seasick, and himself little better, extremity of weather continuing, this mystery remained undiscovered. But 'tis all one to me, for had I been the finder-out of this secret it would not have relished among my other discredits.

Enter SHEPHERD and CLOWN

Here come those I have done good to against my will, and already appearing in the blossoms of their fortune.

SHEPHERD Come, boy, I am past more children, but thy sons and daughters will be all gentlemen born.

CLOWN [*To Autolycus*] You are well met, sir. You denied to fight with me this other day because I was no gentleman born. See you these clothes? Say you see them not and think me still no gentleman born, you were best say these robes are not gentlemen born. Give me the lie, do, and try whether I am not now a gentleman born.

AUTOLYCUS I know you are now, sir, a gentleman born.

CLOWN Ay, and have been so any time these four hours.

SHEPHERD And so have I, boy.

CLOWN So you have. But I was a gentleman born before my father: for the King's son took me by the hand and called me brother; and then the two kings called my father brother; and then the Prince my brother and the Princess my sister called my father father, and so we wept; and there was the first gentlemanlike tears that ever we shed.

SHEPHERD We may live, son, to shed many more.

CLOWN Ay, or else 'twere hard luck, being in so preposterous estate as we are.

AUTOLYCUS I humbly beseech you, sir, to pardon me all the faults I have committed to your worship, and to give me your good report to the Prince my master.

SHEPHERD Prithee, son, do; for we must be gentle now we are gentlemen.

Short stories

Text no. 19 Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Stories of Your Life and Others*.

1.

UNDERSTAND

As always, the roles one plays become recognizable [...] so they've turned to more drastic measures. [...]

Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others*,
Picador, 2020
pp. 57–59

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2.

STORY OF YOUR LIFE

It'll be when you first learn to walk [...] systems for describing the same physical universe.

Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others*,
Picador, 2020
pp. 143–144

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Short stories**Text no. 19** Ted Chiang, **Stories of Your Life and Others**

3.

SEVENTY-TWO LETTERS

When he was a child, Robert's favourite toy [...] reflections of the divine name.'

Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others*,
Picador, 2020
pp. 175–176

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Short stories**Text no. 20** Elizabeth Strout, **Olive Kitteridge**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Olive Kitteridge*.

1.

A Little Burst

“So, Suzie, how do you like your new in-laws?” [...] this dress that she took comfort in all day.

Elizabeth Strout, *Olive Kitteridge*,
Scribner, 2016
pp. 69–71

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2.

Basket of Trips

“Olive, could I ask you to do me a favour?” [...] Boy, you do not.

Elizabeth Strout, *Olive Kitteridge*,
Scribner, 2016
pp. 178–179

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Short stories**Text no. 20** Elizabeth Strout, **Olive Kitteridge**

3.

Ship in a Bottle

In the afternoon it started to rain. [...] her parents' wedding day.

Elizabeth Strout, *Olive Kitteridge*,
Scribner, 2016
pp. 198–199

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Short stories**Text no. 21** Elizabeth Tan, **Smart Ovens for Lonely People**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Smart Ovens for Lonely People*.

1.

NIGHT OF THE FISH

[...] At the top of the slide [...] as if life really were a picnic.

Elizabeth Tan, *Smart Ovens for Lonely People*,
Brio Books, 2020
pp. 1–2

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2.

.PPTX

Everyone has to sit through Brodie's PowerPoint presentation [...] Brodie star-wipes to slide four of 320.

Elizabeth Tan, *Smart Ovens for Lonely People*,
Brio Books, 2020
pp. 77–78

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Short stories**Text no. 21** Elizabeth Tan, **Smart Ovens for Lonely People**

3.

WOULD YOU RATHER

[...] Jennifer would ask Freya, ‘Would you rather [...] twin portals, humming with loss. [...]

Elizabeth Tan, *Smart Ovens for Lonely People*,
Brio Books, 2020

pp. 132–133

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Other literature**Text no. 22** James Baldwin, **The Fire Next Time**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Fire Next Time*.

1.

DOWN AT THE CROSS**Letter from a Region in My Mind**

[...] In any case, white people, who had robbed black people [...] to be my gimmick.

Baldwin, James, *The Fire Next Time*, Penguin
Modern Classics, 1990

pp. 28–29

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

DOWN AT THE CROSS**Letter from a Region in My Mind**

[...] ‘Return to your true religion,’ [...] at the gates of Hell.’

Baldwin, James, *The Fire Next Time*, Penguin
Modern Classics, 1990

pp. 68–69

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Other literature**Text no. 22** James Baldwin, **The Fire Next Time**

3.

DOWN AT THE CROSS**Letter from a Region in My Mind**

[...] And therefore when the country speaks [...] by setting someone free. [...]

Baldwin, James, *The Fire Next Time*, Penguin
Modern Classics, 1990

pp. 74–75

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Other literature**Text no. 23** Kate Holden, **The Winter Road**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *The Winter Road*.

1.

The crunch of the ute's tyres [...] he closed his eyes.

Kate Holden, *The Winter Road*,
Black Inc, 2023
pp. 1–2

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

2.

[...] The moral qualities and machismo of agricultural labour
[...] Wheat production duly and patriotically soared.

Kate Holden, *The Winter Road*,
Black Inc, 2023
pp. 98–99

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full passage when this examination is published on the VCAA website. Instead, the opening and closing words of the passage have been provided.

Other literature**Text no. 23** Kate Holden, **The Winter Road**

3.

Most conservationists have in mind [...] There are ghosts and guilt.

Kate Holden, *The Winter Road*,

Black Inc, 2023

pp. 278–279

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Other literature

Text no. 24 Mary Seacole, *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands*.

1.

Occasionally some distinguished passengers passed on the upward and downward tides of rascality and ruffianism, that swept periodically through Cruces. Came one day, Lola Montes, in the full zenith of her evil fame, bound for California, with a strange suite. A good-looking, bold woman, with fine, bad eyes, and a determined bearing; dressed ostentatiously in perfect male attire, with shirt-collar turned down over a velvet lapelled coat, richly worked shirt-front, black hat, French unmentionables, and natty, polished boots with spurs. She carried in her hand a handsome riding-whip, which she could use as well in the streets of Cruces as in the towns of Europe; for an impertinent American, presuming – perhaps not unnaturally – upon her reputation, laid hold jestingly of the tails of her long coat, and as a lesson received a cut across his face that must have marked him for some days. I did not wait to see the row that followed, and was glad when the wretched woman rode off on the following morning. A very different notoriety followed her at some interval of time – Miss Catherine Hayes, on her successful singing tour, who disappointed us all by refusing to sing at Cruces; and after her came an English bishop from Australia, who need have been a member of the church militant to secure his pretty wife from the host of admirers she had gained during her day's journey from Panama.

Very quarrelsome were the majority of the crowds, holding life cheap, as all bad men strangely do – equally prepared to take or lose it upon the slightest provocation. Few tales of horror in Panama could be questioned on the ground of improbability. Not less partial were many of the natives of Cruces to the use of the knife; preferring, by the way, to administer sly stabs in the back, when no one was by to see the dastard blow dealt. Terribly bullied by the Americans were the boatmen and muleteers, who were reviled, shot, and stabbed by these free and independent filibusters, who would fain whop all creation abroad as they do their slaves at home. Whenever any Englishmen were present, and in a position to interfere with success, this bullying was checked; and they found, instead of the poor Spanish Indians, foemen worthy of their steel or lead. I must do them credit to say, that they were never loath to fight any one that desired that passing excitement, and thought little of ending their journey of life abruptly at the wretched wayside town of Cruces. It very often happened so, and over many a hasty head and ready hand have I seen the sod roughly pressed down, their hot hearts stilled suddenly in some senseless quarrel. And so in time I grew to have some considerable experience in the treatment of knife and gun-shot wounds.

2.

It was growing late before I felt tired, or thought of leaving Scutari, and Dr S—, another Jamaica friend, who had kindly borne me company for the last half-hour, agreed with me that the caicque was not the safest conveyance by night on the Bosphorus, and recommended me to present my letter to Miss Nightingale, and perhaps a lodging for the night could be found for me. So, still under the Sergeant's patient guidance, we thread our way through passages and corridors, all used as sick-wards, until we reach the corner tower of the building, in which are the nurses' quarters.

I think Mrs B—, who saw me, felt more surprise than she could politely show (I never found women so quick to understand me as the men) when I handed her Dr F—'s kind letter respecting me, and apologized for troubling Miss Nightingale. There is that in the Doctor's letter (he had been much at Scutari) which prevents my request being refused, and I am asked to wait until Miss Nightingale, whose every moment is valuable, can see me. Meanwhile Mrs B. questions me very kindly, but with the same look of curiosity and surprise.

What object has Mrs Seacole in coming out? This is the purport of her questions. And I say, frankly, to be of use somewhere; for other considerations I had not, until necessity forced them upon me. Willingly, had they accepted me, I would have worked for the wounded, in return for bread and water. I fancy Mrs B— thought that I sought for employment at Scutari, for she said, very kindly –

'Miss Nightingale has the entire management of our hospital staff, but I do not think that any vacancy –'

'Excuse me, ma'am,' I interrupt her with, 'but I am bound for the front in a few days;' and my questioner leaves me, more surprised than ever. The room I waited in was used as a kitchen. Upon the stoves were cans of soup, broth, and arrow-root, while nurses passed in and out with noiseless tread and subdued manner. I thought many of them had that strange expression of the eyes which those who have gazed long on scenes of woe or horror seldom lose.

In half an hour's time I am admitted to Miss Nightingale's presence. A slight figure, in the nurses' dress; with a pale, gentle, and withal firm face, resting lightly in the palm of one white hand, while the other supports the elbow – a position which gives to her countenance a keen inquiring expression, which is rather marked. Standing thus in repose, and yet keenly observant – the greatest sign of impatience at any time a slight, perhaps unwitting motion of the firmly planted right foot – was Florence Nightingale – that Englishwoman whose name shall never die, but sound like music on the lips of British men until the hour of doom.

Other literature

Text no. 24 Mary Seacole, **Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands**

She has read Dr F—’s letter, which lies on the table by her side, and asks, in her gentle but eminently practical and business-like way, ‘What do you want, Mrs Seacole – anything that we can do for you? If it lies in my power, I shall be very happy.’

3.

It was very hazardous to pass along some of the streets exposed to the fire of the Russians on the north side of the harbour. We had to wait and watch our opportunity, and then gallop for it. Some of us had close shaves of being hit. More than this, fires still kept breaking out around; while mines and fougasses not unfrequently exploded from unknown causes. We saw two officers emerge from a heap of ruins, covered and almost blinded with smoke and dust, from some such unlooked-for explosion. With considerable difficulty we succeeded in getting into the quarter of the town held by the French, where I was nearly getting into serious trouble.

I had loitered somewhat behind my party, watching, with pardonable curiosity, the adroitness with which a party of French were plundering a house; and by the time my curiosity had been satisfied, I found myself quite alone, my retinue having preceded me by some few hundred yards. This would have been of little consequence, had not an American sailor lad, actuated either by mischief or folly, whispered to the Frenchmen that I was a Russian spy; and had they not, instead of laughing at him, credited his assertion, and proceeded to arrest me. Now, such a charge was enough to make a lion of a lamb; so I refused positively to dismount, and made matters worse by knocking in the cap of the first soldier who laid hands upon me, with the bell that hung at my saddle. Upon this, six or seven tried to force me to the guard-house in rather a rough manner, while I resisted with all my force, screaming out for Mr Day, and using the bell for a weapon. How I longed for a better one I need not tell the reader. In the midst of this scene came up a French officer, whom I recognized as the patient I had taken to Spring Hill after the battle of the Tchernaya, and who took my part at once, and ordered them to release me. Although I rather weakened my cause, it was most natural that, directly I was released, I should fly at the varlet who had caused me this trouble; and I did so, using my bell most effectually, and aided, when my party returned, by their riding whips.

This little adventure took up altogether so much time that, when the French soldiers had made their apologies to me, and I had returned the compliment to the one whose head had been dented by my bell, it was growing late, and we made our way back to Cathcart’s Hill. On the way, a little French soldier begged hard of me to buy a picture, which had been cut from above the altar of some church in Sebastopol. It was too dark to see much of his prize, but I ultimately became its possessor, and brought it home with me. [...]

Poetry

Text no. 25 Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems*

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Elizabeth Bishop.

1.

The Imaginary Iceberg

We'd rather have the iceberg [...] fleshed, fair, erected
indivisible.

Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems*,
Chatto & Windus, 2011

p. 6

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2.

Anaphora

in memory of Marjorie Carr Stevens

Each day with so much ceremony [...] endless assent.

Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems*,
Chatto & Windus, 2011

p. 52

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Poetry**Text no. 25** Elizabeth Bishop, **Poems**

3.

12 O’Clock News

gooseneck lamp As you all know, [...]
ashtray the sad corruption of their leaders.

Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems*,
Chatto & Windus, 2011

pp. 194–195

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Poetry**Text no. 26** Carol Ann Duffy, **The World's Wife**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Carol Ann Duffy.

1.

Mrs Sisyphus

That's him pushing the stone up the hill, [...] giving one hundred per cent and more to his work.

Carol Ann Duffy, *The World's Wife*,
Picador, 2017
pp. 21–22

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2.

Medusa

A suspicion, a doubt, a jealousy [...] Look at me now.

Carol Ann Duffy, *The World's Wife*,
Picador, 2017
pp. 40–41

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Poetry**Text no. 26** Carol Ann Duffy, **The World's Wife**

3.

Penelope

At first, I looked along the road [...] once more.

Carol Ann Duffy, *The World's Wife*,

Picador, 2017

pp. 70–71

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Poetry**Text no. 27** Gavin Yuan Gao, **At the Altar of Touch**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Gavin Yuan Gao.

1.

The Afterlife

after her funeral, my mother lives forever [...] you've always wanted.

Gavin Yuan Gao, *At the Altar of Touch*,
University of Queensland Press, 2022

p. 9

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2.

Self-Portrait as the Winter Sea

I thought I was the mirror [...] rehearses its kindness.

Gavin Yuan Gao, *At the Altar of Touch*,
University of Queensland Press, 2022

pp. 45–46

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Poetry**Text no. 27** Gavin Yuan Gao, **At the Altar of Touch**

3.

At the Altar of Touch

IV.

Walk with me, says Xu Beihong [...] in the language of smoke.

Gavin Yuan Gao, *At the Altar of Touch*,
University of Queensland Press, 2022

pp. 69–71

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Poetry**Text no. 28** Sarah Holland-Batt, **The Hazards**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Sarah Holland-Batt.

1.

The Orchid House

Pegged under banana trees [...] teatree, tangle root, tongue.

Sarah Holland-Batt, *The Hazards*,
University of Queensland Press, 2015
pp. 6–7

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2.

A Scrap of Lace

My grandmother used to make Kenmare lace, [...] And the price of lace.

Sarah Holland-Batt, *The Hazards*,
University of Queensland Press, 2015
pp. 10–11

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Poetry**Text no. 28** Sarah Holland-Batt, **The Hazards**

3.

The Flowers on His Bedside Speak of Eternity

And are swiftly cleared by an axe-faced nurse: [...]
Take them away.

Sarah Holland-Batt, *The Hazards*,
University of Queensland Press, 2015

pp. 67–68

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Poetry

Text no. 29 Ellen van Neerven, **Throat**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of Ellen van Neerven.

1.

Bold & Beautiful

I feel burdened by what I forget. [...] That's my family.

Ellen van Neerven, *Throat*,
University of Queensland Press, 2020
pp. 18–19

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2.

TREATY

**OF
SHARED POWER
BETWEEN**

Throat's

Reader

and

Author

X

2020

I don't want this to go into the pile [...] incomplete and subject to change?

Ellen van Neerven, *Throat*,
University of Queensland Press, 2020
pp. 60–62

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Poetry**Text no. 29** Ellen van Neerven, **Throat**

3.

this deadly love*for Tid*

Nothing flash ehhe just the story [...] home.

Ellen van Neerven, *Throat*,
University of Queensland Press, 2020

p. 109

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Poetry

Text no. 30 William Butler Yeats, **W. B. Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney**

Use two or more of the set passages as the basis for a discussion of the poetry of William Butler Yeats.

1.

The Wild Swans at Coole

The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans.

The nineteenth autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count;
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
And now my heart is sore.
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,
The first time on this shore,
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
Trode with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
They paddle in the cold
Companionable streams or climb the air;
Their hearts have not grown old;
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water,
Mysterious, beautiful;
Among what rushes will they build,
By what lake's edge or pool
Delight men's eyes when I awake some day
To find they have flown away?

2.

Byzantium

The unpurged images of day recede;
The Emperor's drunken soldiery are abed;
Night resonance recedes, night-walkers' song
After great cathedral gong;
A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains
All that man is,
All mere complexities,
The fury and the mire of human veins.

Before me floats an image, man or shade,
Shade more than man, more image than a shade;
For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy-cloth
May unwind the winding path;
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath
Breathless mouths may summon;
I hail the superhuman;
I call it death-in-life and life-in-death.

Miracle, bird or golden handiwork,
More miracle than bird or handiwork,
Planted on the star-lit golden bough,
Can like the cocks of Hades crow,
Or, by the moon embittered, scorn aloud
In glory of changeless metal
Common bird or petal
And all complexities of mire or blood.

At midnight on the Emperor's pavement flit
Flames that no faggot feeds, nor steel has lit,
Nor storm disturbs, flames begotten of flame,
Where blood-begotten spirits come
And all complexities of fury leave,
Dying into a dance,
An agony of trance,
An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.

Astraddle on the dolphin's mire and blood,
Spirit after spirit! The smithies break the flood,
The golden smithies of the Emperor!
Marbles of the dancing floor
Break bitter furies of complexity,
Those images that yet
Fresh images beget,
That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.

1930

Poetry**Text no. 30** William Butler Yeats, **W. B. Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney**

3.

The Man and the Echo*Man*

In a cleft that's christened Alt
 Under broken stone I halt
 At the bottom of a pit
 That broad noon has never lit,
 And shout a secret to the stone.
 All that I have said and done,
 Now that I am old and ill,
 Turns into a question till
 I lie awake night after night
 And never get the answers right.
 Did that play of mine send out
 Certain men the English shot?
 Did words of mine put too great strain
 On that woman's reeling brain?
 Could my spoken words have checked
 That whereby a house lay wrecked?
 And all seems evil until I
 Sleepless would lie down and die.

Echo

Lie down and die.

Man

That were to shirk
 The spiritual intellect's great work,
 And shirk it in vain. There is no release
 In a bodkin or disease,
 Nor can there be work so great
 As that which cleans man's dirty slate.
 While man can still his body keep
 Wine or love drug him to sleep,
 Waking he thanks the Lord that he
 Has body and its stupidity,
 But body gone he sleeps no more,
 And till his intellect grows sure
 That all's arranged in one clear view,
 Pursues the thoughts that I pursue,
 Then stands in judgment on his soul,
 And, all work done, dismisses all

Out of intellect and sight
 And sinks at last into the night.

Echo

Into the night.

Man

O Rocky Voice,
 Shall we in that great night rejoice?
 What do we know but that we face
 One another in this place?
 But hush, for I have lost the theme,
 Its joy or night seem but a dream;
 Up there some hawk or owl has struck,
 Dropping out of sky or rock,
 A stricken rabbit is crying out,
 And its cry distracts my thought.

Assessment criteria for Section B

Section B will be assessed against the following criteria:

- understanding of the text, demonstrated in a relevant and plausible interpretation of the text
 - analysis of the set passages and/or key moments and how they contribute to an interpretation of the text
 - close analysis of the language and literary features of the text and how they contribute to an interpretation of the text
 - ability to write coherently, expressively and fluently as appropriate to the task
-