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English A: literature – Standard level – Paper 1
Anglais A : littérature – Niveau moyen – Épreuve 1
Inglés A: Literatura – Nivel Medio – Prueba 1

Monday 9 November 2020 (afternoon)

Lundi 9 novembre 2020 (après-midi)

Lunes 9 de noviembre de 2020 (tarde)

1 h 30 m

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a guided literary analysis on one passage only. In your answer you must address both of the guiding questions provided.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[20 marks]**.

Instructions destinées aux candidats

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez une analyse littéraire dirigée d'un seul des passages. Les deux questions d'orientation fournies doivent être traitées dans votre réponse.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est de **[20 points]**.

Instrucciones para los alumnos

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un análisis literario guiado sobre un solo pasaje. Debe abordar las dos preguntas de orientación en su respuesta.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es **[20 puntos]**.

Write a guided literary analysis on **one** passage only. In your answer you must address both of the guiding questions provided.

1.

Listen. The trees in this story are stirring, trembling, readjusting themselves. A breeze is coming in gusts off the sea, and it is almost as if the trees know, in their restlessness, in their head-tossing impatience, that something is about to happen.

5 The garden is empty, the patio deserted, save for some pots with geraniums and delphiniums shuddering in the wind. A bench stands on the lawn, two chairs facing politely away from it. A bicycle is propped up against the house but its pedals are stationary, the oiled chain motionless. A baby has been put out to sleep in a pram and it lies inside its stiff cocoon of blankets, eyes obligingly shut tight. A seagull hangs suspended in the sky above and even that is silent, beak closed, wings outstretched to catch the high thermal draughts.

10 The house is set apart from the rest of the village, behind dense hedge, on the crest of a cliff. This is the border between Devon and Cornwall, where the two counties crouch, eyeing each other. It is a much-disputed piece of land. It would not do to look too long at the soil here, soaked as it will be with the blood of Celts, Anglo-Saxons, Romans, filled out with the rubble of their bones.

15 However, this happens in a time of relative peace for Britain: late summer in the mid-1950s. A gravelled path curves towards the front door of the house. On the washing-line, petticoats and vests, socks and stays¹, nappies and handkerchiefs snap and writhe in the breeze. A radio can be heard from somewhere, one of the neighbouring houses perhaps, and the muffled thwack of an axe falling on wood.

20 The garden waits. The trees wait. The seagull, balancing in the sky above the washing, waits. And then, just as if this is a stage set and there is an audience, watching from a hushed dark, there are voices. Noises off². Somebody screams, another person shouts, something heavy hits the floor. The back door of the house is wrenched open. 'I can't bear it! I tell you, I can't!' the someone shrieks. The back door is slammed, resoundingly, and a person appears.

25 She is twenty-one, soon to be twenty-two. She is wearing a blue cotton dress with red buttons. A yellow scarf holds back her hair. She is marching across the patio and she is holding a book. In her bare feet, she stamps down the steps and across the lawn. She doesn't notice the seagull, which has turned in the air to look down on her, she doesn't notice the trees, which are tossing their branches to herald her arrival, she doesn't even notice the baby as she sweeps
30 past the pram, heading for a tree stump at the bottom of the garden.

She sits herself down on this tree stump and, attempting to ignore the rage fanning through her veins, she balances the book on her lap and begins to read. *Death be not proud*, the words begin, *though some have called thee Mighty and dreadful*.

35 She bends with tense concentration over the page, sighing and flexing her shoulders. Then, without warning, she lets out a sudden growl and flings the book away from her. It hits the grass with a subdued thud, its pages fluttering closed. There it lies, surrounded by grass.

Maggie O'Farrell

¹ petticoats, stays: items of underwear

² Noises off: sounds made offstage to be heard by the audience

- (a) Comment on the techniques used to create a sense of anticipation.
- (b) Discuss the presentation and significance of the main character.

2.

Portrait

(for Lorna and Peter)

You recognise her stance first: upright and calm,
behind a weathered wooden table. Her hand rests
lightly on a book. Her head is dipped; her eyes
5 draw the full midday light of the picture window.
Behind her is a large silk hanging. So much detail
in the fall of silk. You admire this depiction
of resilience, intellect, modesty, joy, delicacy.
Her dress is simply cut, fine linen, her sole
10 adornment a filigree silver cross. Nestled
at her elbow, a smooth white china bowl holds
hazelnuts for longevity. On the sill: how strange,
a bird is peeking in. A song thrush? And what
a sturdy handkerchief on the chair! An ample gift
15 for taking in the troubles of friends? Look
intently in her pupils: a figure's mirrored there.
A tradesman, lean, neatly dressed, smiling
with a husband's tender glance. But that bird.
It nags at you. Symbols here are deep and caring.
20 It must mean a love of nature or, closer,
kindness to all creatures. There's friendship here,
clear in the living lines of the artist's gift. It makes
you want to stand beside this woman. You know
she'd take your hand and press it warmly. Lean in
25 to read the lilting script along the lintel¹: *And all manner
of things shall be well*². It's time to leave her side now.
Her story has been told, and rests inside you as you go.

Heidi Williamson

¹ lintel: a horizontal support across the top of a door or window

² *And all manner of things shall be well*: line from a prayer

- (a) Comment on what is revealed about the subject of the poem as presented in the portrait.
- (b) By what means and to what effect does the poet convey important details in the portrait?
-

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References:

1. O'Farrell, M., 2010. *The Hand That First Held Mine*. © 2010 Maggie O'Farrell. Reproduced by permission of Headline Publishing Group.
2. Heidi Williamson. *The Print Museum* (Bloodaxe Books, 2016). Reproduced with permission of Bloodaxe Books. www.bloodaxebooks.com.