

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

Peperiksaan Semester Kedua
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HXE 109 – English Literature and Language

Masa : 3 jam

THIS EXAMINATION PAPER CONTAINS SIX [6] QUESTIONS IN SIX [6] PAGES.

Answer **FOUR [4]** questions. Choose any **TWO [2]** questions from **Section A** and **TWO [2]** from **Section B**.

SECTION A:

1. The following poem by e. e. cummings exemplifies several different kinds of cohesion. Identify them as specifically as you can. What purposes do they serve?

love is more thicker than forget

love is more thicker than forget
more thinner than recall
more seldom than a wave is wet
more frequent than to fail

it is most mad and moonly
and less it shall unbecome
than all the sea which only
is deeper than the sea

5

love is less always than to win
less never than alive
less bigger than the least begin
less littler than to forgive

10

...2/-

it is most sane and sunly
and more it cannot die
than all the sky which only
is higher than the sky

15

[100 marks]

2. What do you think Wilfred Owen was trying to do in the following poem? How successful do you think he was?

DULCE ET DECORUM EST

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

5

Gas! GAS! Quick boys!--An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone was still yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea. I saw him drowning.

10

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

15

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues, --
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.*

20

25

[100 marks]

3. Read carefully the following poem by Shirley Lim and then address the following questions:

[i] Identify the metaphors and similes and their ground, tenor and vehicle.

[ii] What purposes do they serve (the metaphors and similes)?

MONSOON HISTORY

The air is wet, soaks
into mattresses, and curls
In apparitions of smoke,
Like fat white slugs furred
Among the timber, 5
Or silver fish tunnelling
The damp linen covers
Of schoolbooks, or walking
Quietly like centipedes,
The air walking everywhere 10
On its hundred feet
Is filled with the glare
Of tropical water.

Again we are taken over
By clouds and rolling darkness. 15
Small snails appear
Clashing their timid horns
Among the morning glory
Vines.

Drinking milo, 20
Nyonya and baba sit at home.
This was forty years ago.
Sarong-wrapped they counted
Silver paper for the dead. Portraits of grandfathers
Hung always in the parlour. 25

Reading Tennyson at six
p.m. in pajamas,
Listening to down-pouring
Rain: the air ticks
With gnats, black spiders fly, 30
Moths sweep out of our rooms
Where termites built

...4/-

Their hills of eggs and queens zoom In heat. We wash our feet For bed, watch mother uncoil Her snake hair, unbuckle The silver mesh around the waist, Waiting for father pacing The sand as fishers pull From the Straits after monsoon.	35 40
The air is still, silent, Like sleepers rocked in the pantun, Sheltered by Malacca. This was forty years ago, When nyonya married baba.	 45

[100 marks]

SECTION B:

4. Analyse in detail the language in the following extract and discuss the writer's attitude to the main character. Describe also the voice the writer is using.

“Now, what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up my own children, and this is the principle on which I bring up these children. Stick to Facts, sir.”

The scene was a plain, bare, monotonous vault of a schoolroom, and the speaker's square forefinger emphasized his observations by underscoring every sentence with a line on the schoolmaster's sleeve. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's square wall of a forehead, which had its eyebrows for its base, while his eyes found commodious cellarage in two dark caves, overshadowed by the wall. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's mouth, which was wide, thin, and hard set. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's voice, which was inflexible, dry and dictatorial. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from its shining surface, all covered with knobs, like the crust of a plum pie, as if the head had scarecely warehouse room for the hard facts stored inside.

...5/-

The speaker's obstinate carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders – nay, his very neckcloth, trained to take him by the throat with an unaccommodating grasp, like a stubborn fact, as it was – all helped the emphasis.

“In this life, we want nothing but Facts, sir; nothing but Facts!” The speaker, and the schoolmaster, and the third grown person present, all backed a little, and swept with their eyes the inclined plane of little vessels then and there arranged in order, ready to have imperial gallons of facts poured into them until they were full to the brim.

Charles Dickens (1854) – *Hard Times*
[100 marks]

5. Identify the premodifiers in the noun phrases in the following extract and discuss the reasons why the narrator makes use of them.

I was not disappointed. The house – a substantial but essentially modest suburban villa – was furnished with voluptuous grandeur in approximations of various styles, predominantly those of several Louis, with late nineteenth and early twentieth century additions. Heavy coloured glass ashtrays of monstrous size and weight rested on inlaid marquetry tables of vaguely Pompadour associations. At dinner we drank champagne from ruby Bohemian glasses: the meat was carved at a Boulle-type sideboard. “Regency” wallpaper of dark green and lighter green stripes was partially covered by gilt-framed landscapes of no style whatever. The dining-room seemed dark, as dining rooms often do. In fact all the rooms seemed to repel both light and weather; they were designed to keep one's thoughts indoors, resigned and melancholy. I thought of listless Saturday afternoons, when I pictured Oscar relaxing in one of the turquoise silk-covered bergeres, with footstools to match. I thought of Dorrie taking a nap in her shell-pink bedroom with the extravagant expanses of white shag-pile carpet. All the windows would be closed, of course, the smell of a substantial lunch still heavy on the air, slightly obscured by one of the two or three weekend cigars. Upstairs, the nap finished, and the light already beginning to fade, I imagined Dorrie switching on the vaguely baronial gas fire and pulling the satin curtains. Throwing a handful of flowery cologne over her throat and shoulders, she would change into a patterned silk dress, taking a clean handkerchief and tucking it up her sleeve. It would not be quite time for tea, but as relatives were expected she would start her preparations in the kitchen, transferring

home-made cakes and biscuits on to dishes with gold rims, and laying cups and plates, interleaved with tiny napkins of ecru linen, on the trolley, knives and spoons tinkling, to be wheeled in effortlessly at the right moment. For she was daintily houseproud.

Anita Brookner (1987), *A Friend from England*
[100 marks]

6. Examine the language in the following extract, in particular its transitivity structures and decide what kind of a man the speaker is.

I do not care for posturing women. But she struck me. I had to stop and look at her. The legs were well apart, the right foot boldly advanced, the left trailing with studied casualness. She held her right hand before her, almost touching the window, the fingers thrusting up like a beautiful flower. The left hand she held a little behind her and seemed to push down playful lapdogs. Head well back, a faint smile, eyes half-closed with boredom or pleasure. I could not tell. Very artificial the whole thing, but then I am not a simple man. She was a beautiful woman. I saw her most days, sometimes two or three times. And of course she struck other postures as the mood took her. Sometimes as I hurried by (I am a man in a hurry) I allowed myself a quick glance and she seemed to beckon me, to welcome me out of the cold. Other days I remember seeing her in that tired, dejected passivity which fools mistake for femininity.

I began to take notice of the clothes she wore. She was a fashionable woman, naturally. In a sense it was her job. But she had none of the sexless, mincing stiffness of those barely animated clothes-hangers who display *houte couture* in stuffy salons to the sound of execrable music. No, she was another class of being. She did not exist merely to present a style, a current mode. She was above that, she was beyond that. Her clothes were peripheral to her beauty. She would have looked great in old paper bags. ...

Bit I digress. I bore you with lyricism. The days came and passed. I saw her this day and not that, and perhaps twice on another day. Imperceptibly, seeing her and not seeing her became a factor in my life, and then before I knew it, it passed from factor to structure. Would I see her today? Would she look at me? Did she remember me from one time to another? ...I wished to possess her. And to possess her it seemed I would have to buy her.

Ian McEwan (1979), *Dead As They Come*
[100 marks]

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