OCR | A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE | H472/02

Comparative and contextual study

June 2024 exam series

QUESTION PAPER

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Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Wednesday 5 June 2024 – Morning

A Level English Literature

H472/02 Comparative and contextual study

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

You must have:
- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS
- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer **two** questions from the topic you have chosen.

INFORMATION
- The total mark for this paper is **60**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets **[ ]**.
- This document has **16** pages.

ADVICE
- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

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Answer **two** questions from the topic you have chosen.

Topics	Questions	Pages
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Dystopia	5 & 6	8–9
Women in Literature	7 & 8	10–11
The Immigrant Experience	9 & 10	12–13

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American Literature 1880–1940

Answer Question 1.
Then answer Question 2(a) **or** 2(b) **or** 2(c).
You should spend about **1 hour and 15 minutes** on **each** question.

1 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading of American Literature 1880–1940. **[30]**

This story concerns two married couples, the Hallorans and the McCorkerys. Mrs Halloran (born Lacey Mahaffy) disapproves of Mr McCorkery and his wife, Rosie. Mr McCorkery is involved in the world of city politics in New York.

The McCorkerys for years had invited [Mr. Halloran] and Lacey to come over to the house and be sociable with the crowd, but Lacey would not.

'You can't run with that fast set and drink and stay out nights and hold your job,' said Lacey, 'and you should know better than to ask your wife to associate with that woman.' Mr. Halloran had got into the habit of dropping around by himself, now and again, for McCorkery still liked him, was still willing to give him a foothold in the right places, still asked him for favors at election time. There was always a good lively crowd at the McCorkerys, wherever they were; for they moved ever so often to a better place, with more furniture. Rosie helped hand around the drinks, taking a few herself with a good word for everybody. The player piano or the victrola[1] would be going full blast, with everybody dancing, all looking like ready money and a bright future. He would get home late these evenings, back to the same little cold-water walk-up flat, because Lacey would not spend a dollar for show. It must all go into savings against old age, she said. He would be full of good food and drink, and find Lacey, in a bungalow apron[2], warming up the fried potatoes once more, cross and bitterly silent, hanging her head and frowning at the smell of liquor on his breath. 'You might at least eat the potatoes when I've fried them and waited all this time,' she would say. 'Ah, eat them yourself, they're none of mine,' he would snarl in his disappointment with her, and with the life she was leading him.

He had believed with all his heart for years that he would one day be manager of one of the G. and I. chain grocery stores he worked for, and when that hope gave out there was still his pension when they retired him. But two years before it was due they fired him, on account of the depression, they said. Overnight he was on the sidewalk, with no place to go with the news but home. 'Jesus,' said Mr. Halloran, still remembering that day after nearly seven years of idleness.

The depression hadn't touched McCorkery. He went on and on up the ladder, giving beefsteaks and beanfests and beer parties for the boys in Billy's Place, standing in with the right men and never missing a trick. At last the Gerald J. McCorkery Club chartered a whole boat for a big excursion up the river. It was a great day, with Lacey sitting at home sulking. After the election Rosie had her picture in the papers, smiling at McCorkery; not fat exactly, just a fine figure of a woman with flowers pinned on her spotted fur coat, her teeth as good as ever. Oh, God, there was a girl for any man's money. Mr. Halloran saw out of his eye-corner the bony stooped back of Lacey Mahaffy, standing on one foot to rest the other like a tired old horse, leaning on her hands waiting for the iron to heat.

Katherine Anne Porter, 'A Day's Work' (1940)

[1]*The player piano or the victrola*: both means of playing music
[2]*bungalow apron*: a kind of overall

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In your answer to Question 2, you must compare at least **two** texts from the list.
At least **one** text **must** be from the two texts at the top of the list in bold.

F Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* **John Steinbeck: *The Grapes of Wrath***
Henry James: *The Portrait of a Lady* Mark Twain: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Theodore Dreiser: *Sister Carrie* Willa Cather: *My Ántonia* Edith Wharton: *The Age of Innocence* William Faulkner: *The Sound and the Fury* Ernest Hemingway: *A Farewell to Arms* Nella Larsen: *Passing* Richard Wright: *Native Son*

Either

2

(a) F Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby*

'American literature shows us that the most attractive characters are also the most dangerous.'

By comparing *The Great Gatsby* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(b) John Steinbeck: *The Grapes of Wrath*

'American literature suggests that equality will always be a distant dream.'

By comparing *The Grapes of Wrath* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(c) 'American literature shows us characters who need something to believe in.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *The Great Gatsby* and/or *The Grapes of Wrath*. **[30]**

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The Gothic

Answer Question 3.
Then answer Question 4(a) **or** 4(b) **or** 4(c).
You should spend about **1 hour and 15 minutes** on **each** question.

3 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading of the Gothic. **[30]**

The narrator of this story is Rev. Dr Gottlieb Michael Gosschen, a Catholic priest. Gosschen has gone into a prison to hear the confession of a young man who is to be executed for murder.

The man under sentence of death was, in all the beauty of youth, distinguished above his fellows for graceful accomplishments, and the last of a noble family. He had lain a month in his dungeon, heavily laden with irons. Only the first week he had been visited by several religionists, but he then fiercely ordered the jailor to admit no more 'men of God,' – and till the eve of his execution, he had lain in dark solitude, abandoned to his own soul.

It was near midnight when a message was sent to me by a magistrate, that the murderer was desirous of seeing me. I had been with many men in his unhappy situation, and in no case had I failed to calm the agonies of grief, and the fears of the world to come. But I had known this youth – had sat with him at his father's table – I knew also that there was in him a strange and fearful mixture of good and evil – I was aware that there were circumstances in the history of his progenitors[1] not generally known – nay, in his own life – that made him an object of awful commiseration[2] – and I went to his cell with an agitating sense of the enormity of his guilt, but a still more agitating one of the depth of his misery, and the wildness of his misfortunes.

I entered his cell, and the phantom struck me with terror. He stood erect in his irons, like a corpse that had risen from the grave. His face, once so beautiful, was pale as a shroud, and drawn into ghastly wrinkles. His black-matted hair hung over it with a terrible expression of wrathful and savage misery. And his large eyes, which once were black, glared with a light in which all colour was lost, and seemed to fill the whole dungeon with their flashings. I saw his guilt – I saw what was more terrible than his guilt – his insanity – not in emaciation[3] only – not in that more than death-like whiteness of his face – but in all that stood before me – the figure, round which was gathered the agonies of so many long days and nights of remorse and phrenzy[4] – and of a despair that had no fears of this world or its terrors, but that was plunged in the abyss of eternity.

For a while the figure said nothing. He then waved his arm, that made his irons clank, motioning me to sit down on the iron frame-work of his bed; and when I did so, the murderer took his place by my side.

A lamp burned on a table before us – and on that table there had been drawn by the maniac – for I must indeed so call him – a decapitated human body – the neck as if streaming with gore – and the face writhed – into horrible convulsions, but bearing a resemblance not to be mistaken to that of him who had traced the horrid picture. He saw that my eyes rested on this fearful mockery – and, with a recklessness fighting with despair, he burst out into a broken peal of laughter, and said, 'to-morrow will you see that picture drawn in blood!'

Anonymous, 'Extracts from Gosschen's Diary' (1818)

[1]*progenitors*: ancestors, family
[2]*awful commiseration*: deep sympathy
[3]*emaciation*: the state of being abnormally thin or weak
[4]*phrenzy*: an old spelling of 'frenzy'

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In your answer to Question 4, you must compare at least **two** texts from the list.
At least **one** text **must** be from the two texts at the top of the list in bold.

Bram Stoker: *Dracula* **Angela Carter: *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories******
William Beckford: *Vathek* Ann Radcliffe: *The Italian* Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein* Oscar Wilde: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* William Faulkner: *Light in August* Daphne du Maurier: *Rebecca* Cormac McCarthy: *Outer Dark* Iain Banks: *The Wasp Factory* Toni Morrison: *Beloved*

*Candidates writing about *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* should select material from the whole text.

Either

4

(a) Bram Stoker: *Dracula*

'Gothic writing explores both the attraction and the fear of taking risks.'

Consider how far you agree with this statement by comparing *Dracula* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic. **[30]**

Or

(b) Angela Carter: *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories**

'Gothic writing often depends on the idea of being trapped in a situation from which there seems to be no escape.'

By comparing *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories** with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(c) 'Violence, either implied or explicit, is a key ingredient of Gothic fiction.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Dracula* and/or *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories**. **[30]**

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Dystopia

Answer Question 5.
Then answer Question 6(a) **or** 6(b) **or** 6(c).
You should spend about **1 hour and 15 minutes** on **each** question.

5 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading of dystopian literature. **[30]**

This novel takes place after 'the End', when normal life in America is halted by the spread of an incurable disease to which Candace, the narrator, and her companions are apparently immune. The group's leader, Bob, wishes them to move in to a deserted shopping mall which he calls 'the Facility'.

Welcome to the Facility, Bob said.

We walked past an empty fountain. At the bottom was a dried copper crust of pennies for all the wishes made. The sound of our footsteps on the tile echoed through the place. We looked around at all the familiar stores. There was Aldo, Bath and Body Works, Journeys, all boasting desperate sale signs typical of the End. Everything was 50 PERCENT OFF, BUY ONE GET ONE FREE, CLEARANCE. The mall must have remained functional up until the End. Though there were vacant storefronts, the other shops were still full of merchandise, covered in dust.

Everything we want is here, in these stores, Bob said, gesturing to the stores as if he owned them. We have endless supplies.

Bob, how much does a mall like this go for? I asked.

A trillion dollars, he answered facetiously. I'm part owner.

So how much did that come to for you?

Bob shrugged. My friend was one of the developers. He got me a good deal. It was a business opportunity.

As we walked on, it occurred to me that maybe the only reason we had come all the way out here was because Bob part-owned this place. Did he think owning this place still mattered?

The first floor led to the food court, its signs once ablaze with TACO BELL, CHICK-FIL-A, WENDY'S, FALAFEL GRILL, TOKYO PALACE. Brown liquid seeped out of defunct freezers. They would have to be cleaned later. The Formica tables remained, but no chairs could be found. We came across a two-tier platform of gum-ball machines, still filled with an assortment of candies and mini party-favor toys.

No one had any quarters, or any money for that matter, but Todd ran back to the wishing fountain we'd passed earlier and returned with a handful of calcified silver coins. The first machine he tried yielded a blue gum ball. He popped it into his mouth and chewed.

Gross. Genevieve made a face. How old are those? They probably haven't been changed in over six months.

Still good. Todd grinned, chewing. They're shelf stable.

That was all it took. The tension broke. We swarmed around the machines. There were so many candy options: marbled jawbreakers, Bananaramas, Skittles, M&M's, Wicked Watermelons, Hot Chews, Hot Tamales, Reese's Pieces, Good & Plentys. Then there were the toys: little alien figurines, temporary tattoos, sticky hands, neon bouncy balls. The best part was in choosing, in deciding what to get. We sent Todd back to get more quarters. Buoyed by the sugar rush, the mood brightened. We could all feel it, even me. I hadn't had candy like this in forever.

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Todd hurtled fistfuls of bouncy balls at the columns and walls around us, and we ducked, laughing, trying not to get hit as they bounced back, hitting us from all sides.

Okay, let's keep going, Bob said. It's getting late. We should think about how to allocate this space. *45*

We quieted down, murmured consent as we followed Bob up the stilled escalator.

Ling Ma, *Severance* (2018)

In your answer to Question 6, you must compare at least **two** texts from the list.
At least **one** text **must** be from the two texts at the top of the list in bold.

George Orwell: *Nineteen Eighty-Four* **Margaret Atwood: *The Handmaid's Tale***
H G Wells: *The Time Machine* Aldous Huxley: *Brave New World* Ray Bradbury: *Fahrenheit 451* Anthony Burgess: *A Clockwork Orange* J G Ballard: *The Drowned World* Doris Lessing: *Memoirs of a Survivor* P D James: *The Children of Men* Octavia E Butler: *Parable of the Sower* Cormac McCarthy: *The Road*

Either

6

(a) George Orwell: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

'Dystopian writing often points the way to a better world.'

By comparing *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(b) Margaret Atwood: *The Handmaid's Tale*

'Dystopian writing expresses the worst fears of the age in which it was written.'

By comparing *The Handmaid's Tale* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(c) 'Dystopian fiction demonstrates the experiences of ordinary people under extraordinary pressure.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and/or *The Handmaid's Tale*. **[30]**

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Women in Literature

Answer Question 7.
Then answer Question 8(a) **or** 8(b) **or** 8(c).
You should spend about **1 hour and 15 minutes** on **each** question.

7 Write a critical appreciation of the passage, relating your discussion to your reading concerning Women in Literature. **[30]**

Janey has been married to Mr Rosendale for just one week; in this extract they are travelling through France by train on their wedding-tour. During this time she has been finding the experience of marriage deeply disappointing.

She was in the full bitterness of these discoveries when the strange incident occurred which was of so much importance in her life. They were travelling through France in one of those long night journeys to which we are all accustomed nowadays; and Janey, pale and tired, had been contemplating for some time the figure of her husband thrown back in the corner opposite, snoring complacently with his mouth open, and looking the worst that a middle-aged man can look in the utter abandonment of self-indulgence and rude comfort, when the train began to slacken its speed, and to prepare to enter one of those large stations which look so ghastly in the desertion of the night.

Rosendale jumped up instinctively, only half awake, as the train stopped. The other people in the carriage were leaving it, having attained the end of their journey, but he pushed through them and their baggage to get out, with the impatience which some men show at any pause of the kind, and determination to stretch their legs, or get something to drink, which mark the breaks in the journey. He did not even say anything to Janey as he forced his way out, but she was so familiar with his ways by this time that she took no notice. She did take notice, however when, her fellow-passengers and their packages having all been cleared away, she suddenly became sensible that the train was getting slowly into motion again without any sign of her husband.

She thought she caught a glimpse of him strolling about on the opposite platform before she was quite sure of what was happening. And then there was a scurry of hurrying feet, a slamming of doors, and as she rose and ran to the window bewildered, she saw him, along with some other men, running at full speed, but quite hopelessly, to catch the train. The last she saw was his face, fully revealed by the light of the lamp, convulsed with rage and astonishment, evidently with a yell of denunciation on the lips. Janey trembled at the sight. There was that in him, too, though as yet in her submissiveness she had never called it forth, a temper as unrestrained as his love-making, and as little touched by any thought save that of his own gratification. Her first sensation was fright, a terror that she was in fault and was about to be crushed to pieces in his rage: and then Janey sank back in her corner, and a flood of feeling of quite another kind took possession of her breast.

Was it possible that she was alone? Was it possible that for the first time since that terrible moment of her marriage she was more safely by herself than any locked door or even watchful guardian could keep her, quite unapproachable in the isolation of the train? Alone!

"Safe!" Janey ventured to say to herself, clasping her hands together with a mingled sensation of excitement and terror and tremulous delight which words could not tell.

Margaret Oliphant, 'A Story of a Wedding-Tour' (1894)

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In your answer to Question 8, you must compare at least **two** texts from the list.
At least **one** text **must** be from the two texts at the top of the list in bold.

Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility* **Virginia Woolf: *Mrs Dalloway***
Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre* George Eliot: *The Mill on the Floss* Thomas Hardy: *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* D H Lawrence: *Women in Love* Zora Neale Hurston: *Their Eyes Were Watching God* Sylvia Plath: *The Bell Jar* Toni Morrison: *The Bluest Eye* Jeanette Winterson: *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* Bernardine Evaristo: *Girl, Woman, Other*

Either

8

(a) Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility*

'Female characters cannot escape the pressures of family relationships.'

By comparing *Sense and Sensibility* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(b) Virginia Woolf: *Mrs Dalloway*

'Even privileged women have limited choices.'

By comparing *Mrs Dalloway* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(c) 'All female characters struggle to have their voices heard.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Sense and Sensibility* and/or *Mrs Dalloway*. **[30]**

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The Immigrant Experience

Answer Question 9.
Then answer Question 10(a) **or** 10(b) **or** 10(c).
You should spend about **1 hour and 15 minutes** on **each** question.

9 Write a critical appreciation of the passage, relating your discussion to your reading concerning the Immigrant Experience. **[30]**

The narrator of this novel is from British Guiana in the West Indies. He has served in the Royal Air Force and is now arriving in the East End of London to take up a teaching post. As the extract begins, a seat next to him on the bus becomes vacant.

The bus eased to a stop. Rose shifted her shopping bag off her lap and with a grunt levered her ponderous body upright; she smiled broadly at me, and with a cheery 'Ta Gert, ta girls', she waddled towards the exit while I eased my shoulders in relief from the confining pressure of her body. God, what a huge woman. As the bus moved slowly on, a bright-eyed little boy in school cap and blazer paused momentarily beside the vacant seat and then quickly moved a little way on in courteous deference to a slim, smartly dressed woman who followed behind. As I looked up she smiled her thanks to him and was preparing to sit when her eyes met mine. Surprise flickered briefly on her face as she straightened up and moved forward to stand in the narrow aisle beside the boy, who looked up at her with a puzzled expression.

The conductor approached with his cheery 'Any more fares, please, free ride only after midnight.' He had been keeping the charwomen[1] entertained by such witticisms throughout the journey. The woman reached into her bag, and the conductor casually remarked as he took her fare: 'Empty seat beside you, lady.' She received her ticket with a murmured 'Thank you,' but gave no sign that she had heard him. 'Seat here for you, lady.' The conductor indicated the vacant place with a turn of his head and moved on to examine the boy's school pass and exchange a word with the youngster. On his way back he paused to look at the woman, who returned his gaze with the cool effrontery of a patrician[2]. 'No standing on the bus, lady.' The conductor's voice was deliberately louder, with an angry rasp to it; the charladies twisted and craned their necks in their efforts to discover the reason for his sudden brusqueness. The slim woman remained standing, cool, remote, undismayed by the conductor's threatening attitude or the pointedly hostile glances directed at her by the women in their immediate sympathy and solidarity with the conductor against someone who was obviously not of their class.

My quick anger at the woman's undisguised prejudice was surprisingly tinctured by a certain admiration for her fearless, superior attitude; she was more than a match for them. What a superior bitch! She looked the conductor straight in the eye and around her mouth I could discern the muscular twitchings of a suppressed smile. I guessed she was secretly enjoying herself. What a smooth, elegant, superior bitch! Just ahead I saw a nameplate on a building, New Road. I quickly rose and said to the conductor, 'Next stop, please.' He gave me an odd disapproving stare, as if I had in some way betrayed him by leaving before he could have a real set-to with the woman; I sensed that he would have liked to try humiliating her, even to putting her off

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the bus. He pulled the bell-cord and the bus jerked to a stop, and as I stepped off the platform I saw the woman take the seat I had just vacated, stiff backed and unruffled. By leaving I had done that conductor a favour, I thought. He'd never get the better of that female. *40*

E R Braithwaite, *To Sir, With Love* (1959)

[1]*charwomen*: women employed as cleaners
[2]*effrontery of a patrician*: rudeness of a member of the ruling class

In your answer to Question 10, you must compare at least **two** texts from the list.
At least **one** text **must** be from the two texts at the top of the list in bold.

Henry Roth: *Call it Sleep* **Mohsin Hamid: *The Reluctant Fundamentalist***
Upton Sinclair: *The Jungle* Sam Selvon: *The Lonely Londoners* Philip Roth: *Goodbye, Columbus* Timothy Mo: *Sour Sweet* Jhumpa Lahiri: *The Namesake* Monica Ali: *Brick Lane* Andrea Levy: *Small Island* Kate Grenville: *The Secret River* John Updike: *Terrorist*

Either

10

(a) Henry Roth: *Call it Sleep*

'Immigrants in literature often have to find new ways of communicating.'

By comparing *Call it Sleep* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(b) Mohsin Hamid: *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

'Homesickness is a necessary part of the immigrant experience.'

By comparing *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

Or

(c) 'By moving to a new country, immigrants discover what they truly believe.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Call It Sleep* and/or *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. **[30]**

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