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General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/71

Paper 7 Comment and Appreciation

May/June 2013

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **6** printed pages and **2** blank pages.



1 Write a critical commentary on the following passage from *Trifles* by Susan Glaspell. The play was first produced in the USA in 1916.

Scene: The kitchen in the now abandoned farmhouse of John Wright, a gloomy kitchen, and left without having been put in order—unwashed pans under the sink, a loaf of bread outside the bread-box, a dish-towel on the table—other signs of incompleting work. At the rear the outer door opens and the SHERIFF comes in followed by the COUNTY ATTORNEY and HALE. The SHERIFF and HALE are in middle life, the COUNTY ATTORNEY is a young man; all are much bundled up and go at once to the stove. They are followed by the two women—the SHERIFF’s wife first; she is a slight wiry woman, a thin nervous face. MRS. HALE is larger and would ordinarily be called more comfortable looking, but she is disturbed now and looks fearfully about as she enters. The women have come in slowly, and stand close together near the door. 5 10

County Attorney [rubbing his hands]: This feels good. Come up to the fire, ladies.

Mrs. Peters [after taking a step forward]: I’m not—cold.

Sheriff [unbuttoning his overcoat and stepping away from the stove as if to mark the beginning of official business]: Now, Mr. Hale, before we move things about, you explain to Mr. Henderson just what you saw when you came here yesterday morning. 15

County Attorney: By the way, has anything been moved? Are things just as you left them yesterday?

Sheriff [looking about]: It’s just the same. When it dropped below zero last night I thought I’d better send Frank out this morning to make a fire for us—no use getting pneumonia with a big case on, but I told him not to touch anything except the stove—and you know Frank. 20

County Attorney: Somebody should have been left here yesterday.

Sheriff: Oh—yesterday. When I had to send Frank to Morris Center for that man who went crazy—I want you to know I had my hands full yesterday. I knew you could get back from Omaha by today and as long as I went over everything here myself— 25

County Attorney: Well, Mr. Hale, tell just what happened when you came here yesterday morning. 30

Hale: I didn’t hear or see anything; I knocked at the door, and still it was all quiet inside. I knew they must be up, it was past eight o’clock. So I knocked again, and I thought I heard somebody say, “Come in.” I wasn’t sure, I’m not sure yet, but I opened the door—this door [indicating the door by which the two women are still standing] and there in that rocker¹—[pointing to it] sat Mrs. Wright. 35

[They all look at the rocker.]

County Attorney: What—was she doing?

Hale: She was rockin’ back and forth. She had her apron in her hand and was kind of—pleating it.² 40

County Attorney: And how did she—look?

Hale: Well, she looked queer.

County Attorney: How do you mean—queer?

Hale: Well, as if she didn’t know what she was going to do next. And kind of done up. 45

County Attorney: How did she seem to feel about your coming?

- Hale:* Why, I don't think she minded—one way or other. She didn't pay much attention. I said, "How do, Mrs. Wright, it's cold, ain't it?" And she said, "Is it?"—and went on kind of pleating at her apron. Well, I was surprised; she didn't ask me to come up to the stove, or to set down, but just sat there, not even looking at me, so I said, "I want to see John." And then she—laughed. I guess you would call it a laugh. I thought of Harry and the team outside, so I said a little sharp: "Can't I see John?" "No," she says, kind o' dull like. "Ain't he home?" says I. "Yes," says she, "he's home." "Then why can't I see him?" I asked her, out of patience. "'Cause he's dead," says she. "*Dead?*" says I. She just nodded her head, not getting a bit excited, but rockin' back and forth. "Why—where is he?" says I, not knowing what to say. She just pointed upstairs—like that [*himself pointing to the room above*]. I got up, with the idea of going up there. I walked from there to here—then I says, "Why, what did he die of?" "He died of a rope round his neck," says she, and just went on pleatin' at her apron. Well, I went out and called Harry. I thought I might—need help. We went upstairs and there he was lyin'— 50
- County Attorney:* I think I'd rather have you go into that upstairs, where you can point it all out. Just go on now with the rest of the story. 55
- Hale:* Well, my first thought was to get that rope off. It looked ... [*stops, his face twitches*] ... but Harry, he went up to him, and he said, "No, he's dead all right, and we'd better not touch anything." So we went back down stairs. She was still sitting that same way. "Has anybody been notified?" I asked. "No," says she, unconcerned. "Who did this, Mrs. Wright?" said Harry. He said it business-like—and she stopped pleatin' of her apron. "I don't know," she says. "You don't *know?*" says Harry. "No," says she. "Weren't you sleepin' in the bed with him?" says Harry. "Yes," says she, "but I was on the inside." "Somebody slipped a rope round his neck and strangled him and you didn't wake up?" says Harry. "I didn't wake up," she said after him. We must 'a looked as if we didn't see how that could be, for after a minute she said, "I sleep sound." Harry was going to ask her more questions but I said maybe we ought to let her tell her story first to the coroner, or the sheriff, so Harry went fast as he could to Rivers' place, where there's a telephone. 60
- County Attorney:* And what did Mrs. Wright do when she knew that you had gone for the coroner? 65
- Hale:* She moved from that chair to this one over here [*pointing to a small chair in the corner*] and just sat there with her hands held together and looking down. I got a feeling that I ought to make some conversation, so I said I had come in to see if John wanted to put in a telephone, and at that she started to laugh, and then she stopped and looked at me—scared. 70

¹ rocker: a rocking chair

² pleating: folding with her fingers

2 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from *The Shadow Line*, a story by Joseph Conrad (1857–1924).

The narrator is in charge of a sailing ship which has been unable to move for three weeks because there has been no wind. As the passage opens, however, he becomes aware that the weather is about to change, and that a terrible storm is imminent.

At once an uneasiness possessed me, as if some support had been withdrawn. I moved forward, too, outside the circle of light, into the darkness that stood in front of me like a wall. In one stride I penetrated it. Such must have been the darkness before creation. It had closed behind me. I knew I was invisible to the man at the helm. Neither could I see anything. He was alone, I was alone, every man was alone where he stood. And every form was gone, too, spar, sail, fittings, rails; everything was blotted out in the dreadful smoothness of that absolute night. 5

A flash of lightning would have been a relief—I mean physically. I would have prayed for it if it hadn't been for my shrinking apprehension of the thunder. In the tension of silence I was suffering from it seemed to me that the first crash must turn me into dust. 10

And thunder was, most likely, what would happen next. Stiff all over and hardly breathing, I waited with a horribly strained expectation. Nothing happened. It was maddening, but a dull, growing ache in the lower part of my face made me aware that I had been grinding my teeth madly enough, for God knows how long. 15

It's extraordinary I should not have heard myself doing it; but I hadn't. By an effort which absorbed all my faculties I managed to keep my jaw still. It required much attention, and while thus engaged I became bothered by curious, irregular sounds of faint tapping on the deck. They could be heard single, in pairs, in groups. While I wondered at this mysterious devilry, I received a slight blow under the left eye and felt an enormous tear run down my cheek. Raindrops. Enormous. Forerunners of something. Tap. Tap. Tap 20

I turned about, and, addressing Gambriel earnestly, entreated him to "hang on to the wheel." But I could hardly speak from emotion. The fatal moment had come. I held my breath. The tap-ping had stopped as unexpectedly as it had begun, and there was a renewed moment of intolerable suspense; something like an additional turn of the racking screw.¹ I don't suppose I would have ever screamed, but I remember my conviction that there was nothing else for it but to scream. 25

Suddenly—how am I to convey it? Well, suddenly the darkness turned into water. This is the only suitable figure. A heavy shower, a downpour, comes along, making a noise. You hear its approach on the sea, in the air, too, I verily believe. But this was different. With no preliminary whisper or rustle, without a splash, and even without the ghost of impact, I became instantaneously soaked to the skin. Not a very difficult matter, since I was wearing only my sleeping suit. My hair got full of water in an instant, water streamed on my skin, it filled my nose, my ears, my eyes. In a fraction of a second I swallowed quite a lot of it. 30

As to Gambriel, he was fairly choked. He coughed pitifully, the broken cough of a sick man; and I beheld him as one sees a fish in an aquarium by the light of an electric bulb, an elusive, phosphorescent shape. Only he did not glide away. But something else happened. Both binnacle-lamps went out.² I suppose the water forced itself into them, though I wouldn't have thought that possible, for they fitted into the cowl perfectly.³ 40

The last gleam of light in the universe had gone, pursued by a low exclamation of dismay from Gambriel. I groped for him and seized his arm. How startlingly wasted it was. 45

“Never mind,” I said. “You don’t want the light. All you need to do is to keep the wind, when it comes, at the back of your head. You understand?”

“Aye, aye, sir ... But I should like to have a light,” he added nervously.

¹ the racking screw: an ancient instrument of torture

² binnacle-lamps: lights on the ship’s deck

³ cowl: the cover over each lamp

3 Write a critical comparison of the two following poems.

To The Moon

Lonely thou wander'st through wide heaven, like one
 That hath some fearful deed of darkness done,
 With grief upon thy cheek; while sad despair
 Coldly refuseth thee a shelter where
 Repose might give thee welcome. Or hast thou 5
 Washed with pale light thy melancholy brow,
 Because the dreams Hope brought thee once have fled,
 And left the thoughts of sadness in their stead?
 Ah no! it is that thou art too near earth
 Ever to witness rosy pleasure's birth; 10
 And ceaseless gazing on the thousand showers
 Of ill that inundate this world of ours
 Has touched thy heart, and bid thine aspect be
 For our misfortunes, pale with sympathy.

Henry Derozio (1809–1831)

Moonrise

I saw the round moon rising from the sea,
 One summer evening from a lonely isle
 Hard by the northern coast. A ruined pile,¹
 Seat of some ancient lord of Brittany,
 Revealed its lines in ghostly tracery, 5
 As o'er the placid waves for many a mile
 The mellow moonlight, 'like a silver Nile',
 Came floating, flowing, pulsing down to me.
 I stood in mute bewilderment, entranced;
 That throbbing mystery, the ocean, seemed 10
 With all its might and mystery enhanced,
 In the white radiance over all that streamed;
 And the enchantment, as the night advanced,
 Was deeper, sweeter than my soul had dreamed.

Andrew Downing (1838–1917)

¹ pile: a large building or castle

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