

RAFFLES INSTITUTION

2025 YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

HIGHER 2

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9539/01

Paper 1 Reading Literature

Monday 15 September 2025

**3 hours
1330-1630**

No Additional Materials are required.

Set texts may be taken into the examination room. Pages may be flagged with paper clips or by folding the page corners. Page numbers can be highlighted, underlined, or marked out with vertical lines. Any other kind of folding or flagging of pages in texts (for example, use of sticky notes or tape flags) is not permitted.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Writing paper will be provided. If you need additional paper, ask the invigilator.
Write your name and CT group on all the work you hand in.

Answer **three** questions: one question from Section A, one question from Section B, and one question from Section C.

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

At the end of the examination tie your answer sheets to each section securely.
Hand in your answers **separately**.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **7** printed pages and 1 blank page.

[Turn over

Section A

1

Either (a) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which language, style and form contribute to each poet's portrayal of the end of a relationship.

A

Love, We Must Part Now

Love, we must part now: do not let it be
 Calamitous and bitter. In the past
 There has been too much moonlight and self-pity:
 Let us have done with it: for now at last
 Never has sun more boldly paced the sky,
 Never were hearts more eager to be free,
 To kick down worlds, lash forests; you and I
 No longer hold them; we are husks, that see
 The grain going forward to a different use.

5

There is regret. Always, there is regret.
 But it is better that our lives unloose,
 As two tall ships, wind-mastered, wet with light,
 Break from an estuary with their courses set,
 And waving part, and waving drop from sight.

10

Philip Larkin (1922–1985)

B

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part,
 Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
 And I am glad, yea glad with all my heart,
 That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
 Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
 And when we meet at any time again,
 Be it not seen in either of our brows
 That we one jot of former love retain.
 Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
 When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies;
 When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
 And Innocence is closing up his eyes –
 Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
 From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

5

10

Michael Drayton (1563–1631)

Or (b) Write a critical comparison of the following poems, considering in detail ways in which language, style and form contribute to each poet's presentation of language.

A *my mother thinks i dream in bengali*

that my dreamscapes, like hers, are flooded by
 incontinent rivers that carry language and fish
 downstream to a subconscious shore, to be
 hung to dry by an ancient fisherman. she thinks
 i am the swimmer i am not. that if i plunge 5
 feetfirst into an open sea my ankles will not
 break. instead i will break the surface with a beard,
 rich and salted, tagore's¹ or my grandfather's.
 my mother dreams i have her accent. some nights
 she is right, with a prescience i put down to 10
 maternal instinct. these are the nights when
 language rises like air, the fish swim downstream.
 the land i stand on does not subduct under
 my feet. these are the nights i do not instead
 dream of falling from a skyscraper into an 15
 olympic pool. i do not fall in a language that is
 bleached to bone, neither english nor bengali.

Wahid Al Mamun (published 2017)

B *Mother Tongue*

Which language do you dream in,
 swear in, cry in, asked the questionnaire.
 How many languages do you swim in,
 drown in, breathe in, mime in?

Do you know how many tongues have adopted 5
 your voice? And when at night you stare
 at dark walls and one pair of lips
 comes closer, whispering in perfect German

*Ich bin deine Mutter*² –

Or the night shadows enlarge into a Fritz Lang³ 10
 open scream and *Muttersprache*⁴ appears
 on the silent movie screen, then:
 what do you reply? In which language,

and how clearly, do you say: my mother tongue
 is somewhere in the recesses of my mind. 15
 I am not an orphan. I have a mother.
 She put me to bed one night

and went away. The film we made
 together has long been silent. But I still
 hear her voice in the keyhole of my heart. 20

Nora Nadjarian (published 2003)

[Turn over

¹ Tagore: Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali polymath who was recognised as a poet, writer, composer and philosopher.

² *Ich bin deine Mutter*: German phrase that translates to 'I am your mother'.

³ Fritz Lang: Austrian filmmaker.

⁴ *Muttersprache*: German word that translates to 'mother tongue' or 'native language'.

Section B

Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre*

2

Either (a) “In *Jane Eyre*, the wealthy and well-born are not the characters we most respect.”

How far, and in what ways, do you agree?

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to the presentation of Jane’s state of mind here and elsewhere in the novel.

I would have got past Mr Rochester’s chamber without a pause; but my heart momentarily stopping its beat at that threshold, my foot was forced to stop also. No sleep was there: the inmate was walking restlessly from wall to wall; and again and again he sighed while I listened. There was a heaven – a temporary heaven – in this room for me, if I chose: I had but to go in and to say – 5

“Mr Rochester, I will love you and live with you through life till death,” and a fount of rapture would spring to my lips. I thought of this.

That kind master, who could not sleep now, was waiting with impatience for day. He would send for me in the morning; I should be gone. He would have me sought for: vainly. He would feel himself forsaken; his love rejected: he would suffer; perhaps grow desperate. I thought of this too. My hand moved towards the lock: I caught it back, and glided on. 10

Dreadfully I wound my way downstairs: I knew what I had to do, and I did it mechanically. I sought the key of the side-door in the kitchen; I sought, too, a phial of oil and a feather; I oiled the key and the lock. I got some water, I got some bread: for perhaps I should have to walk far; and my strength, sorely shaken of late, must not break down. All this I did without one sound. I opened the door, passed out, shut it softly. Dim dawn glimmered in the yard. The great gates were closed and locked; but a wicket in one of them was only latched. Through that I departed: it, too, I shut; and now I was out of Thornfield. 15 20

A mile off, beyond the fields, lay a road which stretched in the contrary direction to Millcote; a road I had never travelled, but often noticed, and wondered where it led: thither I bent my steps. No reflection was to be allowed now: not one glance was to be cast back; not even one forward. Not one thought was to be given either to the past or the future. The first was a page so heavenly sweet – so deadly sad – that to read one line of it would dissolve my courage and break down my energy. The last was an awful blank: something like the world when the deluge was gone by. 25

I skirted fields, and hedges, and lanes till after sunrise. I believe it was a lovely summer morning: I know my shoes, which I had put on when I left the house, were soon wet with dew. But I looked neither to rising sun, nor smiling sky, nor wakening nature. He who is taken out to pass through a fair scene to the scaffold, thinks not of the flowers that smile on his road, but of the block and axe-edge; of the disseverment of bone and vein; of the grave gaping at the end: and I thought of drear flight and homeless wandering – and oh! with agony I thought of what I left. I could not help it. I thought of him now – in his room – watching the sunrise; hoping I should soon come to say I would stay with him and be his. I longed to be his; I panted to return: it was not too late; I could yet spare him the bitter pang of bereavement. As yet my flight, I was sure, was undiscovered. I could go back and be his comforter – his pride; his redeemer from misery, perhaps from ruin. Oh, that fear of his self-abandonment – far worse than my abandonment – how it goaded me! It was a barbed arrow-head in my breast; it tore me when I tried to extract it; it sickened me when remembrance thrust it farther in. Birds began singing in brake and copse: birds were faithful to their mates; birds were emblems of love. What was I? In the midst of my pain of heart and frantic effort of principle, I abhorred 30 35 40 45

myself. I had no solace from self-approbation: none even from self-respect. I had injured – wounded – left my master. I was hateful in my own eyes. Still I could not turn, nor retrace one step. God must have led me on. As to my own will or conscience, impassioned grief had trampled one and stifled the other. I was weeping wildly as I walked along my solitary way: fast, fast I went like one delirious. A weakness, beginning inwardly, extending to the limbs, seized me, and I fell: I lay on the ground some minutes, pressing my face to the wet turf. I had some fear – or hope – that here I should die; but I was soon up; crawling forwards on my hands and knees, and then again raised to my feet – as eager and as determined as ever to reach the road.

When I got there, I was forced to sit to rest me under the hedge; and while I sat I heard wheels, and saw a coach come on. I stood up and lifted my hand; it stopped. I asked where it was going: the driver named a place a long way off, and where I was sure Mr Rochester had no connections. I asked for what sum he would take me there; he said thirty shillings; I answered I had but twenty; well, he would try to make it do. He further gave me leave to get into the inside, as the vehicle was empty: I entered, was shut in, and it rolled on its way.

Gentle reader, may you never feel what I then felt! May your eyes never shed such stormy, scalding, heart-wrung tears as poured from mine. May you never appeal to Heaven in prayers so hopeless and so agonised as in that hour left my lips; for never may you, like me, dread to be the instrument of evil to what you wholly love.

(from Chapter 27)

[Turn over

Section C

Thomas Middleton and William Rowley: *The Changeling*

3

Either (a) “I’m forced to love thee now,
’Cause thou provid’st so carefully for my honour.”

Discuss perceptions of honour and virtue in *The Changeling*.

Or (b) Write a critical commentary on the following passage, relating it to attitudes towards love and marriage here and elsewhere in the play.

<i>Madman</i>	(<i>Within</i>) Catch there, catch the last couple in hell!	
<i>Lollo</i>	Again! Must I come amongst you? Would my master were come home! I am not able to govern both these wards together.	<i>Exit</i>
<i>Antonio</i>	Why should a minute of love’s hour be lost?	
<i>Isabella</i>	Fie, out again! I had rather you kept Your other posture; you become not your tongue, When you speak from your clothes.	5
<i>Antonio</i>	How can he freeze Lives near so sweet a warmth? Shall I alone Walk through the orchard of the Hesperides And cowardly not dare to pull an apple? This with the red cheeks I must venture for.	10
	<i>[Kisses her]</i> <i>Enter Lollo above.</i>	
<i>Isabella</i>	Take heed, there’s giants keep ’em.	
<i>Lollo</i>	<i>[Aside]</i> How now fool, are you good at that? Have you read Lipsius? He’s past <i>Ars Amandi</i> ; I believe I must put harder questions to him, I perceive that –	15
<i>Isabella</i>	You are bold – without fear, too.	
<i>Antonio</i>	What should I fear, Having all joys about me? Do you but smile, And Love shall play the wanton on your lip, Meet and retire, retire and meet again; Look you but cheerfully, and in your eyes I shall behold mine own deformity, And dress my self up fairer; I know this shape Becomes me not, but in those bright mirrors I shall array me handsomely.	20
<i>Lollo</i>	Cuckoo, cuckoo – <i>[Enter] Madmen above, some as birds, others as beasts [uttering fearful cries].</i>	<i>Exit</i>
<i>Antonio</i>	What are these?	
<i>Isabella</i>	Of fear enough to part us, Yet are they but our schools of lunatics, That act their fantasies in any shapes Suiting their present thoughts: if sad, they cry; If mirth be their conceit, they laugh again, Sometimes they imitate the beasts and birds, Singing, or howling, braying, barking – all As their wild fancies prompt ’em. <i>Enter Lollo.</i>	30
<i>Antonio</i>	These are no fears.	
<i>Isabella</i>	But here’s a large one, my man.	
<i>Antonio</i>	Ha he! that’s fine sport indeed, cousin.	40
<i>Lollo</i>	<i>[Aside]</i> I would my master were come home! ’Tis too much for one	

	shepherd to govern two of these flocks; nor can I believe that one churchman can instruct two benefices at once: there will be some incurable mad of the one side, and very fools on the other. – [Aloud] Come, Tony.	
Antonio	Prithee, cousin, let me stay here still.	45
Lollo	No, you must to your book, now you have played sufficiently.	
Isabella	Your fool is grown wondrous witty.	
Lollo	Well, I'll say nothing; but I do not think but he will put you down one of these days.	
	<i>Exeunt Lollo and Antonio</i>	
Isabella	Here the restrained current might make breach, Spite of the watchful bankers. Would a woman stray, She need not gad abroad to seek her sin – It would be brought home one ways or other: The needle's point will to the fixed north, Such drawing Arctics women's beauties are.	50 55
	<i>Enter Lollo.</i>	
Lollo	How dost thou, sweet rogue?	
Isabella	How now?	
Lollo	Come, there are degrees – one fool may be better than another.	
Isabella	What's the matter?	
Lollo	Nay, if thou giv'st thy mind to fools'-flesh, have at thee! [Tries to kiss her]	60
Isabella	You bold slave, you!	
Lollo	I could follow now as t'other fool did: "What should I fear, Having all joys about me? Do you but smile, And Love shall play the wanton on your lip, Meet and retire, retire and meet again; Look you but cheerfully, and in your eyes I shall behold my own deformity, And dress my self up fairer; I know this shape Becomes me not –"	65 70
	And so as it follows; but is not this the more foolish way? Come, sweet rogue: kiss me, my little Lacedemonian. Let me feel how thy pulses beat. Thou hast a thing about thee would do a man pleasure, I'll lay my hand on't. [Grabs indecently at her]	

Act 3.2

BLANK PAGE