



ENGLISH LITERATURE ADMISSIONS TEST

4501/11

Wednesday 31 October 2018

1 hour 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Please read this page carefully, but do not open the question paper until you are told that you may do so.

A separate answer booklet with 8 lined pages is provided. Please check you have one.

You should allow at least 30 minutes for reading this question paper, making notes and preparing your answer.

Your answer should only be written on the lined pages inside the answer booklet. No extra paper is allowed for this purpose. The blank inside front and back covers should be used to plan your answer and for any rough working or notes.

At the end of the examination, you must hand in both your answer booklet and this question paper.

No texts, dictionaries or sources of reference may be brought into the examination.

This paper consists of 8 printed pages and 4 blank pages.



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Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes.
You should spend at least 30 minutes reading and annotating the passages and preparing your answer.

The following passages are all linked by the theme of clothing. They are arranged chronologically by date of publication. Read all the material carefully, and then complete the task below.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| (a) 'Upon a Black Twist, Rounding the Arm of the Countess of Carlisle' (1648), a poem by Robert Herrick | page 4 |
| (b) From <i>Sketches by Boz</i> (1836), a collection of short pieces by Charles Dickens | page 5 |
| (c) From <i>Orlando: A Biography</i> (1928), a novel by Virginia Woolf | page 6 |
| (d) From 'The Vine' (1954), a short story by Tennessee Williams | page 7 |
| (e) 'The Large Cool Store' (1961), a poem by Philip Larkin | page 8 |
| (f) From 'Wannabe Hoochie Mama Gallery of Realities' Red Dress Code' (2016), a poem by Thylas Moss | page 9 |

Task:

Select two of the passages (a) to (f) and compare and contrast them in any ways that seem interesting to you, paying particular attention to distinctive features of structure, language and style.

This task is designed to assess your responsiveness to unfamiliar literary material and your skills in close reading. Marks are not awarded for references to other texts or authors you have studied.

(a) **'Upon a Black Twist, Rounding the Arm of the Countess of Carlisle' (1648), a poem by Robert Herrick**

I saw about her spotless wrist,
Of blackest silk a curious twist;
Which, circumvolving gently, there
Enthralled her arm, as prisoner.
Dark was the jail; but as if light
Had met to engender with the night:
Or so, as darkness made a stay
To show at once, both night and day.
One fancy more! but if there be
Such freedom in captivity;
I beg of love, that ever I
May in like chains of darkness lie.



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(b) From *Sketches by Boz* (1836), a collection of short pieces by Charles Dickens

We love to walk among these extensive groves of the illustrious dead, and to indulge in the speculations to which they give rise; now fitting a deceased coat, then a dead pair of trousers, and anon the mortal remains of a gaudy waistcoat, upon some being of our own conjuring up, and endeavouring, from the shape and fashion of the garment itself, to bring its former owner before our mind's eye. We have gone on speculating in this way, until whole rows of coats have started from their pegs, and buttoned up, of their own accord, round the waists of imaginary wearers; lines of trousers have jumped down to meet them; waistcoats have almost burst with anxiety to put themselves on; and half an acre of shoes have suddenly found feet to fit them, and gone stumping down the street with a noise which has fairly awakened us from our pleasant reverie, and driven us slowly away, with a bewildered stare, an object of astonishment to the good people of Monmouth-street, and of no slight suspicion to the policemen at the opposite street corner.

We were occupied in this manner the other day, endeavouring to fit a pair of lace-up half-boots on an ideal personage, for whom, to say the truth, they were full a couple of sizes too small, when our eyes happened to alight on a few suits of clothes ranged outside a shop-window, which it immediately struck us, must at different periods have all belonged to, and been worn by, the same individual, and had now, by one of those strange conjunctions of circumstances which will occur sometimes, come to be exposed together for sale in the same shop. The idea seemed a fantastic one, and we looked at the clothes again with a firm determination not to be easily led away. No, we were right; the more we looked, the more we were convinced of the accuracy of our previous impression. There was the man's whole life written as legibly on those clothes, as if we had his autobiography engrossed on parchment before us.

(c) From *Orlando: A Biography* (1928), a novel by Virginia Woolf

She remembered how, as a young man, she had insisted that women must be obedient, chaste, scented, and exquisitely apparelled. 'Now I shall have to pay in my own person for those desires,' she reflected; 'for women are not (judging by my own short experience of the sex) obedient, chaste, scented, and exquisitely apparelled by nature. They can only attain these graces, without which they may enjoy none of the delights of life, by the most tedious discipline. There's the hairdressing,' she thought, 'that alone will take an hour of my morning, there's looking in the looking-glass, another hour; there's staying and lacing; there's washing and powdering; there's changing from silk to lace and from lace to paduasoy¹; there's being chaste year in year out...' Here she tossed her foot impatiently, and showed an inch or two of calf. A sailor on the mast, who happened to look down at the moment, started so violently that he missed his footing and only saved himself by the skin of his teeth. 'If the sight of my ankles means death to an honest fellow who, no doubt, has a wife and family to support, I must, in all humanity, keep them covered,' Orlando thought. Yet her legs were among her chiefest beauties. And she fell to thinking what an odd pass we have come to when all a woman's beauty has to be kept covered lest a sailor may fall from a mast-head. 'A pox on them!' she said, realizing for the first time what, in other circumstances, she would have been taught as a child, that is to say, the sacred responsibilities of womanhood.



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¹ paduasoy: a luxurious silk fabric

(d) From 'The Vine' (1954), a short story by Tennessee Williams

Starting "Donald had once read somewhere that the way to combat a feeling of depression was to take unusual pains with your appearance."

Ending "She was walking alone..."

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- (e) 'The Large Cool Store' (1961), a poem by Philip Larkin

**Starting "The large cool store selling cheap clothes
Set out in simple sizes plainly"**

**Ending "Seem to be: synthetic, new,
And natureless in ecstasies."**

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- (f) From 'Wannabe Hoochie Mama Gallery of Realities' Red Dress Code' (2016), a poem by Thylas Moss

Starting "one day red might arrive
some planes and geometries might meet"

Ending "Oh it's so amazing
that everything that passes through
fits."

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