

Friday 10 June – Saturday 11 June

12:00pm – 12:00pm

Part IB, Paper 7B

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND ITS CONTEXTS, 1870 - PRESENT

Answer **three** questions.

*You should demonstrate substantial knowledge of literature from both **before** and **after** 1945. By 'substantial knowledge' is meant the equivalent of one question or about a third of your script as a whole.*

Do not present the same material **twice, either in this paper or in the examination as a whole.**
Irrelevant answers, or answers only tenuously related to the question, will be penalised.
In the case of handwritten scripts, Illegible handwriting may place candidates at a disadvantage.
*Include your **number, not** your name, on submitted scripts.*

All papers that would usually have been sat as three-hour 'closed-book' and invigilated exams will now be sat online as 'open-book open-web' exams within a 24-hour window. There will be no restrictions on referring during the assessment to books and other materials, whether on paper, online, or in computer files. There will be a word-count range of 800-1200 per essay, which is intended to approximate to the amount that can be written by hand under normal examination conditions. For papers which include a 'Section A' made up of multiple parts, the word-count for a candidate's responses to Section A as a whole must be within the range of 800–1200 words.

Examination responses should conform to the following presentation requirements: they should be in minimum 12pt type; should use a sans serif typeface (e.g. Arial or Calibri); should be 1.5 or double-spaced; and should be submitted as a word-processed document (in .docx or .pdf format).

1. 'Self-consciousness is fatal to love. The self-conscious lover never arrives.'

(EDWARD CARPENTER, 1894)

With reference to this quotation, discuss how some works of literature post-1870 present love and its obstacles.

2. 'How I wished during those sleepless hours that I belonged to a different nation, or better still, to none at all.'

(W.G. SEBALD, 1990)

Write about any literature from the period that represents wishes to belong, or not to belong, to a nation.

3. 'How can you encourage our children to be more optimistic in the current environment? I don't know that either.'

(LOIS WEAVER, 2020)

Does any post-1870 literature in your reading experience know this? Explore optimism **and/or** pessimism about the present or future in some post-1870 literature.

4. 'A culture, we all know, is made by cities.'

(DEREK WALCOTT, 1992)

What cultural work do cities do in post-1870 writing?

5. 'Yes, we are all living by three tempos: party, catastrophe, and limerence.'

(JACKIE WANG, 2021)

How do some works of post-1870 literature represent experiences of time?

6. 'They have helped me to hold in a single thought reality and justice.'

(W.B. YEATS, 1925)

Of what works of literature post-1870 would you say this? Pay attention, in your response, to both terms, 'reality' and 'justice'.

7. 'I hardly ever saw so much as a glimpse of myself in any of their books and I didn't care to. I didn't want to exist in books.'

(CLAIRE LOUISE BENNETT, 2021)

Responding to this quotation, consider how identification (**and/or** resistance to it) might shape the reading of post-1870 literature.

8. 'Cultures with richer vocabularies are more fully human.'

(RICHARD RORTY, 2007)

'What is tedious about the language of words is the way in which it is burdened with calculations, memories, and stories: it cannot avoid them.'

(GILLES DELEUZE, 1998)

Rorty and Deleuze differ over what words do for cultures. Write about some literature that, in its ways of using words, appears to side with Rorty or with Deleuze in this difference.

9. 'When the aromatic savour of the pine goes searching into the deepest recesses of my lungs, I know it is life that is entering. I draw life in through the delicate hairs of my nostrils.'

(NAN SHEPHERD, 1977)

How do some works of post-1870 literature present the engagement of a body with its environment? You need not focus on the sense of smell but can do so.

10. 'There can be far more poetry in a compact definition than in the over-expansion of an image.'

(KENNETH BURKE, 1937)

Test out this claim through the detailed examination of some post-1870 writing.

11. 'I do not know which characters will appear next on my pages and what they will do.'

(RICHARD RIVE, 1964)

How does the post-1870 writer either exert their authorial control or appear to relinquish it?

12. 'She do the bereaved in different voices.'

(DENISE RILEY, 2012)

Do post-1870 elegies challenge a singular conception of poetic 'voice'?

13. 'I used to distract myself, some mornings before I got out of bed, by pressing the television remote control gadget from one channel to another. This may be the only way to watch TV.'

(JAMES BALDWIN, 1964)

Write about attention and distraction in any works of literature that also involve new media or technologies.

14. 'They (or you) attack, bully, intrigue, oppress, massacre; never WE.'

(VERNON LEE, 1915)

Consider Vernon Lee's comment about the language of war alongside any writing about war **and/or** violence from the period.

15. 'The exclusion of Gertrude from the film, while seemingly negligible given that she is a minor character, constitutes a major loss, for it conduces to a simplistic vision of biracial and interracial possibilities in the 1920s.'

Departing from this review comment on the 2021 film of Nella Larsen's novel, *Passing* (1929), discuss representation of race questions in literature **and/or** film post-1870, or film adaptations of literary works. You need not make reference to Larsen or this particular adaptation.

16. 'Who can relate sound? The garbage truck, the school bell, the helicopter, the siren, the brakes. Even a footstep heavy across the ceiling. And voices. Miriam says I make sounds as I settle into sleep. I go um, um, these are the day noises I am shaking away from me as sleep which must begin as silence touches the blanket then reaches for my forehead.'

(BARBARA GUEST, 1978)

Discuss the representation of sound **and/or** silence in post-1870 writing.

17. 'We are by no means opposed to the globalization of relationships as such. [...] The enemy, rather, is a specific regime of global relations that we call Empire.'

(ANTONIO NEGRI, 2000)

Discuss global relations **and/or** resistance to Empire in any writing of the period.

18. 'DEATH to SANTA CLAUS: In this empty un-understanding world
anyone can sell knowledge: everybody wants knowledge,
and there's no price people won't pay to get it.
—Become a Scientist and your fortune's made.'

(E.E. CUMMINGS, 1946)

How is scientific knowledge valued in any writing post-1870 that you have studied?

19. 'Just as her lantern light made real to her only the patch of road on which her feet were set, her consciousness showed her only a moment's world.'

(SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER, 1936)

Consider forms of **and/or** attitudes towards realism through the detail of some writing from this period.

20. 'If there is no God, nothing matters. If there is a God, nothing else matters.'

Discuss this maxim with reference to some writing in which questions of faith or doubt, God or gods, matter.

21. 'Earliest memory: walking to school [age four] falling on the ice always at the same spot where the dog barked [as soon as it barked, I fell], being coaxed by my older sister to try to walk across the ice—before falling. Her looking sympathetically at me as I fall—and before falling.'

(LESLIE SCALAPINO, 2003)

How are memories **and/or** experiences of childhood represented in any writing of this period?

22. 'Living for beauty is all very fine, but it's a hard regimen and burns up the heart very quickly.'

(ANDREW HOLLERAN, 1978)

Discuss beauty's 'hard regimen' in any works of this period.

23. 'Being stared at produces horror widely, not only in man, but in a great range of animal species.'

(MARY MIDGLEY, 1978)

Does Midgley's judgment in *Beast and Man* hold for any works of literature you have studied for this paper?

24. 'With three or more people there is something bold in the air: direct things get said which would frighten two people alone and conscious of each inch of their nearness to one another. To be three is to be in public—you feel safe.'

(ELIZABETH BOWEN, 1935)

Does Bowen's equation between fear and intimate conversation, boldness and public speech hold for any writing of the period you have studied in detail?

25. 'Now, at the same moment, the two doctors realized that the surface of his face was a skin-graft; that the whole highly-coloured, shiny, patchy surface, while an extraordinarily skilful reconstruction of a face, was nothing but a mask, and what the face had been before must be guessed at.'

(DORIS LESSING, 1957)

Starting from this quotation, discuss moments of realisation **and/or** faces in any writing of the period.

26. 'I want people to forget that they are listening to a poetic play. A present-day audience, which realises that it is listening to a play in verse, cannot be expected to have the right attitude to what I am trying to do.'

(T.S. ELIOT, 1950)

Write about consciousness or unawareness of verse in any works of the period. This can include drama but need not.

END OF PAPER