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# A-level

## ENGLISH LITERATURE A

### (7712/2B)

Paper 2B: Texts in Shared Contexts: Modern Times: Literature from 1945 to the Present Day

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2015

Morning    Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

**For this paper you must have:**

- an AQA 12-page answer booklet
- a copy of the Modern Times Question Paper Insert
- a copy of each of the set texts you have studied for this paper. These texts must **not** be annotated and must **not** contain additional notes or materials.

**Instructions**

- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is AQA. The **Paper Reference** is 7712/2B.
- Read all of the questions. Then choose **either** Option 1, Option 2 **or** Option 3. Answer **one** question from Section A and **both** questions from Section B from your chosen option. You must answer questions from **only one** option.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.

**Information**

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 75.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
  - use good English
  - organise information clearly
  - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.
- In your response you need to:
  - analyse carefully the writers' methods
  - explore the contexts of the texts you are writing about
  - explore connections across the texts you have studied
  - explore different interpretations of your texts.

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**Option 1****Section A: Poetry Set Text**

Answer **one** question in this section.

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***Feminine Gospels* – Carol Ann Duffy****Either**

0	1
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‘The title of the collection suggests Duffy’s agenda is to challenge traditional male ideas about the “gospel truth”.’

Examine this view.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

0	2
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Examine the view that this collection ‘excludes men as subjects and makes no attempt to engage them as readers’.

**[25 marks]**

***Skirrid Hill* – Owen Sheers****or**

0	3
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‘In *Skirrid Hill* relationships are frail, fragile, falling apart.’

Examine this view of Sheers’ presentation of relationships in the collection.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

0	4
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Sheers prefaces *Skirrid Hill* with a quotation from T.S.Eliot.

Examine the significance of Sheers’ choice of this preface for his collection.

**[25 marks]**

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**Option 1****Section B: Drama and Prose Contextual Linking**

Read the insert. Answer **both** questions in this section.

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Read the insert carefully. It is taken from *Brick Lane*, a novel by Monica Ali published in 2003. 18-year-old Nazneen has moved from Bangladesh to Britain to become the wife of Chanu, an older man. Having no prior experience of Britain and very little knowledge of the English language, Nazneen spends her time in their small flat looking out across a housing estate.

Answer **both** questions.

0	5
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Explore the significance of isolation in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Ali shapes meanings.

**[25 marks]**

0	6
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‘Modern literature shows isolated characters as being profoundly damaged.’

Compare the significance of isolation in **two** other texts you have studied. Remember to include in your answer reference to how meanings are shaped in the texts you are comparing.

You must use **one** drama text and **one** prose text in your response.

**[25 marks]**

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**Option 2****Section A: Drama Set Text**

Answer **one** question in this section.

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***A Streetcar Named Desire* – Tennessee Williams****Either**

0	7
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‘Primarily, this play presents a clash between two cultures, not two individuals.’

Examine this view of *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

**[25 marks]****or**

0	8
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Examine the view that *A Streetcar Named Desire* fails because the relationship between Stella and Stanley is ‘inconceivable’.

**[25 marks]*****Top Girls* – Caryl Churchill****or**

0	9
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‘Churchill presents a cynical, negative critique of powerful women.’

Examine this view of *Top Girls*.

**[25 marks]****or**

1	0
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Examine the view that the character of Dull Gret is insignificant within the play as a whole.

**[25 marks]**

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**Option 2****Section B: Prose and Poetry Contextual Linking**

Read the insert. Answer **both** questions in this section.

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Read the insert carefully. It is taken from *Brick Lane*, a novel by Monica Ali published in 2003. 18-year-old Nazneen has moved from Bangladesh to Britain to become the wife of Chanu, an older man. Having no prior experience of Britain and very little knowledge of the English language, Nazneen spends her time in their small flat looking out across a housing estate.

Answer **both** questions.

1	1
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Explore the significance of isolation in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Ali shapes meanings.

**[25 marks]**

1	2
---	---

‘Modern literature shows isolated characters as being profoundly damaged.’

Compare the significance of isolation in **two** other texts you have studied. Remember to include in your answer reference to how meanings are shaped in the texts you are comparing.

You must use **one** prose text and **one** poetry text in your response, at least **one** of which must be a text written post-2000.

**[25 marks]**

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**Option 3****Section A: Prose Set Text**

Answer **one** question in this section.

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***Waterland* – Graham Swift****Either**

1	3
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Examine the view that the 'Fenland landscape' is the most compelling character in this novel.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

1	4
---	---

'Graham Swift presents history as being as much about the private as the public.'

Examine this view of *Waterland*.

**[25 marks]**

***The Handmaid's Tale* – Margaret Atwood****or**

1	5
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'In Gilead, men are victims too.'

Examine this view of Atwood's presentation of male characters in *The Handmaid's Tale*.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

1	6
---	---

Examine the view that, in *The Handmaid's Tale*, Atwood's primary concern is sexual violence against women.

**[25 marks]**

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**Option 3****Section B: Drama and Poetry Contextual Linking**

Read the insert. Answer **both** questions in this section.

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Read the insert carefully. It is taken from *Brick Lane*, a novel by Monica Ali published in 2003. 18-year-old Nazneen has moved from Bangladesh to Britain to become the wife of Chanu, an older man. Having no prior experience of Britain and very little knowledge of the English language, Nazneen spends her time in their small flat looking out across a housing estate.

Answer **both** questions.

1	7
---	---

Explore the significance of isolation in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Ali shapes meanings.

**[25 marks]**

1	8
---	---

‘Modern literature shows isolated characters as being profoundly damaged.’

Compare the significance of isolation in **two** other texts you have studied. Remember to include in your answer reference to how meanings are shaped in the texts you are comparing.

You must use **one** poetry text written post-2000 and **one** drama text in your response.

**[25 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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**SPECIMEN INSERT**

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