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# A-level

## ENGLISH LITERATURE B

### (7717/2B)

Paper 2B: Texts and Genres: Elements of Political and Social Protest  
Writing

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2015

Morning

Time allowed: 3 hours

#### Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer booklet
- a copy of the set text(s) you have studied for Section B and Section C. These texts must **not** be annotated and must **not** contain additional notes or materials.

#### Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is AQA. The **Paper Reference** is 7717/2B.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.
- You must answer the question in Section A, **one** question from Section B and **one** question from Section C. Over Section B and Section C you must write about **three** texts: **one** poetry text, **one** post-2000 prose text and **one** further text. **One** of your texts must be written pre-1900.

#### Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 75.
  - The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
  - 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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**Section A**

Answer the question in this section.

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| 0 | 1 |
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Explore the significance of the elements of political protest in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways Bolt has shaped meanings.

[25 marks]

The play *A Man for All Seasons* was written by Robert Bolt in 1960 about historical events in 1535 during the reign of Henry VIII. Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England and a Catholic, has refused to endorse the king's wish to divorce his wife and to set himself up as head of the Church in England. Henry desperately wants More to support him because he likes him personally and he knows that the country greatly respects More, a man of conscience and integrity. At this point in the play, More is on trial for high treason because he will not swear the Oath of Supremacy which puts Henry at the head of the church, in defiance of the Pope's authority. Presiding over the trial is the Duke of Norfolk. More's chief accuser is Thomas Cromwell.

**Norfolk** Be seated. Master Secretary Cromwell, have you the charge?

**Cromwell** I have, my lord.

**Norfolk** Then read the charge.

**Cromwell** (*approaching MORE, behind him, with papers; informally*) It is the same charge, Sir Thomas, that was brought against Bishop Fisher.... (*As one who catches himself up punctiliously.*) The late Bishop Fisher I should have said.

**More** (*tonelessly*) 'Late'?

**Cromwell** Bishop Fisher was executed this morning.

*More's face expresses violent shock, then grief; he turns his head away from Cromwell who is observing him clinically.*

**Norfolk** Master Secretary, read the charge!

**Cromwell** (*formal*) That you did conspire traitorously and maliciously to deny and deprive our liege lord Henry of his undoubted certain title, Supreme Head of the Church in England.

**More** (*surprise, shock and indignation*) But I have never denied this title!

**Cromwell** You refused the oath tendered to you at the Tower and elsewhere –

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**More** (*the same*) Silence is not denial. And for my silence I am punished, with imprisonment. Why have I been called again? (*At this point he is sensing that the trial has been in some way rigged.*)

**Norfolk** On a charge of High Treason, Sir Thomas.

**Cromwell** For which the punishment is *not* imprisonment.

**More** Death... comes for us all, my lords. Yes, even for Kings he comes, to whom amidst all their Royalty and brute strength he will neither kneel nor make them any reverence nor pleasantly desire them to come forth, but roughly grasp them by the very breast and rattle them until they be stark dead! So causing their bodies to be buried in a pit and sending *them* to a judgement... whereof at their death their success is uncertain.

**Cromwell** Treason enough here!

**Norfolk** The death of Kings is not in question, Sir Thomas.

**More** Nor mine, I trust, until I'm proven guilty.

**Norfolk** (*leaning forward urgently*) Your life lies in your own hand, Thomas, as it always has.

**More** (*absorbs this*) For our own deaths, my lord, yours and mine, dare we for shame desire to enter the Kingdom with ease, when Our Lord Himself entered with so much pain?

*And now he faces CROMWELL his eyes sparkling with suspicion.*

**Cromwell** Now, Sir Thomas, you stand upon your silence.

**More** I do.

**Cromwell** But, Gentlemen of the Jury, there are many kinds of silence. Consider first the silence of a man when he is dead. Let us say we go into the room where he is lying; and let us say it is in the dead of night – there's nothing like darkness for sharpening the ear; and we listen. What do we hear? Silence. What does it betoken, this silence? Nothing. This is silence, pure and simple. But consider another case. Suppose I were to draw a dagger from my sleeve and make to kill the prisoner with it, and suppose their lordships there, instead of crying out for me to stop or crying out for help to stop me, maintained their silence. That *would* betoken! It would betoken a willingness that I should do it, and under the law they would be guilty with me. So silence can, according to circumstances, speak. Consider, now, the circumstances of the prisoner's silence. The oath was put to good and faithful subjects up and down the country and they had declared His Grace's Title to be just and good. And when it came to the prisoner he refused. He calls this silence. Yet is there a man in this court, is there a man in this country, who does not *know* Sir Thomas More's opinion of this title? Of course not! But how can that be? Because this silence betokened – nay this silence *was* – not silence at all, but most eloquent denial.

**More** (*with some of the academic's impatience for a shoddy line of reasoning*) Not so, Mr Secretary, the maxim is 'qui tacet consentire'. (*Turns to COMMON MAN.*) The

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maxim of the law is: (*very carefully*) 'Silence Gives Consent'. If therefore, you wish to construe what my silence 'betokened', you must construe that I consented, not that I denied.

**Cromwell** Is that what the world in fact construes from it? Do you pretend that is what you *wish* the world to construe from it?

**More** The world must construe according to its wits. This Court must construe according to the law.

Robert Bolt (1960)

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Over **Section B** and **Section C**, you must write about **three** texts from the following list:

*Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (pre-1900)

*Tony Harrison: Selected Poems*

*Harvest* (post-2000 prose)

*The Kite Runner* (post-2000 prose)

*A Doll's House* (pre-1900)

*Hard Times* (pre-1900)

*Henry IV Part 1* (pre-1900)

*The Handmaid's Tale*.

Choose **one** of the following combinations:

*Songs of Innocence and of Experience* plus 1 post-2000 prose text plus 1 other text

*Tony Harrison: Selected Poems* plus 1 post-2000 prose text plus 1 pre-1900 text

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### Section B

Answer **one** question in this section.

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**Either**

**0 2**

#### ***Songs of Innocence and of Experience* – William Blake**

‘Opposition to anything that oppresses the human spirit is the element that dominates *The Songs of Innocence* and *The Songs of Experience*.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Blake’s authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

**0 3**

#### ***Selected Poems* – Tony Harrison**

‘In his poetry Harrison is always critical of the ways in which social divisions are both constructed and maintained.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Harrison’s authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

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or

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| 0 | 4 |
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***The Kite Runner* – Khaled Hosseini**

‘In *The Kite Runner*, the personal and the political are always linked.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Hosseini’s authorial methods.

[25 marks]

or

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| 0 | 5 |
|---|---|

***Harvest* – Jim Crace**

‘In *Harvest*, the world is unmade in seven days and it is those with political power who are solely to blame.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Crace’s authorial methods.

[25 marks]

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 6 |
|---|---|

***Hard Times* – Charles Dickens**

‘Stephen Blackpool’s “Tis aw a muddle” is an apt assessment of the power structures in *Hard Times*.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Dickens’ authorial methods.

[25 marks]

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 7 |
|---|---|

***Henry IV Part I* – William Shakespeare**

‘Shakespeare shows that rebellion, whatever its origin or purpose, is sure to result in vengeance.’

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Shakespeare’s dramatic methods.

[25 marks]

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 8 |
|---|---|

***A Doll's House* – Henrik Ibsen (Translated by Michael Meyer)**

'By the end of the play Nora is presented as having fulfilled her desire to be absolutely free.'

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Ibsen's dramatic methods.

**[25 marks]**

or

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 9 |
|---|---|

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

'*The Handmaid's Tale* is not primarily about the suppression of women but about their defiance.'

To what extent do you agree with this view? Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed exploration of Atwood's authorial methods.

**[25 marks]**

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**Section C**

Answer **one** question in this section.

In your answer you must write about **two** texts that you have **not** used in **Section B**.

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**Either**

**1 0**

‘Political and social protest writing often focuses on rebellion against those in power.’

Explore the significance of rebellion as it is presented in **two** political and social protest texts you have studied.

**[25 marks]**

**or**

**1 1**

‘Political and social protest writing shows that, if people are to effect change, they need to group together.’

Explore the significance of people joining together as it is presented in **two** political and social protest texts you have studied.

**[25 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS**

**There are no questions printed on this page**

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Question 1: Extract from *A Man for All Seasons* by Robert Bolt, 1960. A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS © 1960 by ROBERT BOLT

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