



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
June 2015

English Literature (Specification A)

LTA1A

Unit 1 Texts in Context

Option A: Victorian Literature

Friday 15 May 2015 9.00 am to 11.00 am

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Time allowed

- 2 hours

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is LTA1A.
- Answer **two** questions.
- You must answer:
 - the **compulsory** question in **Section A**: Contextual Linking
 - **one** question from **Section B**: Poetry.
- 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 90.
- The poetry texts prescribed for this paper **may** be taken into the examination room. Texts taken into the examination must be clean: that is, free from annotation.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about 1 hour on each question.

Section A: Contextual Linking**Answer Question 1.**

In your response to this section of the paper you must refer to your wider reading across all **three** genres (prose, poetry and drama). You may also refer to your AS coursework texts.

Question 1

0	1
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Read the following extract carefully. It is taken from 'The End of General Gordon', the final section of Lytton Strachey's biographical work *Eminent Victorians* which was published in 1918, more than thirty years after Gordon's death. This highly dramatic account reveals changing attitudes towards Victorian society and ideals.

How does the writer present his thoughts and feelings about aspects of Victorian life?

How far is the extract similar to and different from your wider reading in Victorian literature? You should consider the writers' choices of form, structure and language.

[45 marks]

Gordon had long debated with himself what his action should be at the supreme moment. He had had gunpowder put into the cellars of the palace, so that the whole building might, at a moment's notice, be blown into the air. But then misgivings had come upon him; was it not his duty 'to maintain the faith, and, if necessary, to suffer for it'? – to remain a tortured and humiliated witness of his Lord in the Mahdi's chains? He remained undecided; and meanwhile, to be ready for every contingency, he kept one of his little armoured vessels close at hand on the river, with steam up, day and night, to transport him, if so he should decide, southward. The sudden appearance of the Arabs, the complete collapse of the defence, saved him the necessity of making up his mind. He had been on the roof, in his dressing-gown, when the attack began; and he had only time to hurry to his bedroom, to slip on a white uniform, and to seize up a sword and a revolver, before the foremost of the assailants were in the palace. The crowd was led by four of the fiercest of the Mahdi's followers – tall and swarthy Dervishes, splendid in their many-coloured *jibbehs*, their great swords drawn from their scabbards of brass and velvet, their spears flourishing above their heads. Gordon met them at the top of the staircase. For a moment, there was a deathly pause, while he stood in silence, surveying his antagonists. Then it is said

that Taha Shahin cried in a loud voice, 'Mala' oun el yom yomek!' (O cursed one, your time is come), and plunged his spear into the Englishman's body. His only reply was a gesture of contempt. Another spear transfixed him; he fell, and the swords of the three other Dervishes instantly hacked him to death. Thus, if we are to believe the official chroniclers, in the dignity of unresisting disdain, General Gordon met his end. But it is only fitting that the last moments of one whose whole life was passed in contradiction should be involved in mystery and doubt. Other witnesses told a very different story. The man whom they saw die was not a saint but a warrior. With intrepidity, with skill, with desperation, he flew at his enemies. When his pistol was exhausted, he fought on with his sword; he forced his way almost to the bottom of the staircase; and, among a heap of corpses, only succumbed at length to the sheer weight of the multitudes against him.

Turn over for Section B

Turn over ►

Section B: Poetry

Answer **one** question from this section.

In your response to this section of the paper you should consider the form, structure and language of the poems you choose to write about, as well as their subject matter.

Selected Poems – John Clare

Either

Question 2

0	2
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“The search for identity is the most important theme in Clare’s poetry.”

How far do you agree with this view?

In your answer you should **either** refer to **two** or **three** poems in detail **or** range more widely through the whole selection.

[45 marks]

or

Question 3

0	3
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Remind yourself of Clare’s poem ‘The Lament of Swordy Well’.

To what extent do you feel that this poem is of central importance to the selection of Clare’s poetry you have studied?

[45 marks]

Selected Poems – The Brontës

or

Question 4

0	4
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The editor of this selection writes of Emily Brontë: “Rebellion and defiance are her familiar moods.”

How far do you agree with this view of the Brontës’ poetry as a whole?

In your answer, you should **either** refer to **two** or **three** poems in detail **or** range more widely through the whole selection.

[45 marks]

or

Question 5

0	5
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Remind yourself of ‘Loud without the wind was roaring’.

To what extent do you agree that this poem is the key to the whole selection?

[45 marks]

Selected Poems – Alfred, Lord Tennyson

or

Question 6

0	6
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“The public poetry Tennyson wrote holds less interest for a modern reader than any of the poetry he wrote about his personal life.”

How far do you agree with this view of Tennyson’s poetry?

In your answer you should **either** refer to **two** or **three** poems in detail **or** range more widely through the whole selection.

[45 marks]

or

Question 7

0	7
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Although Tennyson’s poem ‘The Outcast’ was not published until forty years after his death, it is printed as the first poem in this selection.

To what extent do you agree that this poem is an effective introduction to the selection of Tennyson’s poetry that you have studied?

[45 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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Acknowledgement of copyright-holders and publishers

Question 1: Extract taken from *Eminent Victorians* by Lytton Strachey. Published in 1918.

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