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X824/76/12

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National Qualifications

2024

English

Critical Reading

Thursday, 9 May

Instructions to Candidates

Candidates should enter their surname, forename(s), date of birth, Scottish candidate number and the name and level of the subject at the top of their first answer sheet.

Total marks — 40

SECTION 1 — Scottish text — 20 marks

Read an extract from a Scottish text you have previously studied.

Note: for Section 1 – Scottish Text, only Part C Poetry, Text 2 is provided in this paper.

Attempt ALL the questions for your text.

SECTION 2 – Critical essay – 20 marks

Attempt ONE question from the following genre – Prose.

You must clearly identify the question number you are attempting on your answer sheet.

Marks are shown in square brackets at **[Braille page 2]** the end of each question or part question.

An ow in the margin indicates a new question.

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SECTION 1

SCOTTISH TEXT

20 marks

Read the text extract carefully and then attempt ALL the questions for your chosen text.

PART C

SCOTTISH TEXT

POETRY

Text 2

Read the poem below and then attempt the following questions.

In Mrs Tilscher's Class by Carol Ann Duffy

You could travel up the Blue Nile
with your finger, tracing the route
while Mrs Tilscher chanted the scenery.
Tana. Ethiopia. Khartoum. Aswan.

- 5 That for an hour, then a skittle of milk
and the chalky Pyramids rubbed into dust.
A window opened with a long pole.
The laugh of a bell swung by a running child.
This was better than home. **[Braille page 4]** Enthralling books.
- 10 The classroom glowed like a sweet shop.
Sugar paper. Coloured shapes. Brady and Hindley
faded, like the faint, uneasy smudge of a mistake.
Mrs Tilscher loved you. Some mornings, you found
she'd left a good gold star by your name.
- 15 The scent of a pencil slowly, carefully, shaved.
A xylophone's nonsense heard from another form.
Over the Easter term, the inky tadpoles changed

from commas into exclamation marks. Three frogs
hopped in the playground, freed by a dunce,
20 followed by a line of kids, jumping and croaking
away from the lunch queue. A rough boy
told you how you were born. You kicked him, but stared
at your parents, appalled, when you got back home.
That feverish July, the air tasted of **[Braille page 5]** electricity.
25 A tangible alarm made you always untidy, hot,
fractious under the heavy, sexy sky. You asked her
how you were born and Mrs Tilscher smiled,
then turned away. Reports were handed out.
You ran through the gates, impatient to be grown,
30 as the sky split open into a thunderstorm.

Questions

- ow 37. Refer to lines 1 to 8. Analyse how the poet's use of language conveys the speaker's excitement about school. [2 marks]
- ow 38. Refer to lines 9 to 16. By referring to at least two examples, analyse how the poet's use of language conveys the joyful atmosphere of the classroom. [4 marks]
- ow 39. Refer to lines 17 to 30. By referring to at least two examples, analyse how the poet's use of language conveys a sense of unease. [4 marks]

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- ow 40. By referring to this poem and to at least one other poem by Duffy, discuss how the poet uses specific experiences to explore central concerns. [10 marks]

[END OF SECTION 1]

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SECTION 2

CRITICAL ESSAY

20 marks

Attempt ONE question from the following genre — Prose (Part B Fiction or Part C Non-fiction).

PART B

PROSE FICTION

Answers to questions on prose fiction should refer to the text and to such relevant features as characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, theme, ideas, description ...

- ow 4. Choose a novel or short story which features disagreement or deception or revelation. By referring to appropriate techniques, explain the nature of the disagreement or deception or revelation and discuss how this contributes to your understanding of the text as a whole.
- ow 5. Choose a novel or short story in which a character could be viewed as flawed and/or vulnerable. By referring to appropriate techniques, explain the nature of the flaws and/or vulnerability and discuss how this contributes to your appreciation of the text as a whole.

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- ow 6. Choose a novel or short story in which there is an incident which is unsettling or shocking. By referring to appropriate techniques, briefly explain what happens during this incident and discuss how the unsettling or shocking nature of the incident is important to your understanding of the text as a whole.

PART C

PROSE NON-FICTION

Answers to questions on prose non-fiction should refer to the text and to such relevant features as ideas, use of evidence, stance, style, selection of material, narrative voice ...

- ow 7. Choose a non-fiction text in which the writer engages the reader's interest in a culture or society. By referring to appropriate techniques, discuss how the writer successfully engages the reader's interest in this culture or society.
- ow 8. Choose a non-fiction text in which a specific experience leads the writer to

reflect on a wider issue. By referring to appropriate techniques, explain what the specific experience is and discuss how it leads the writer to reflect on a wider issue.

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ow 9. Choose a non-fiction text in which the writer expresses disgust or anger or sadness about an issue. By referring to appropriate techniques, discuss how this expression of disgust or anger or sadness enhances your understanding of the issue.

[END OF SECTION 2]

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]