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English A: literature – Higher level – Paper 1
Anglais A : littérature – Niveau supérieur – Épreuve 1
Inglés A: Literatura – Nivel Superior – Prueba 1

9 May 2024 / 9 mai 2024 / 9 de mayo de 2024

Zone A afternoon	Zone B afternoon	Zone C afternoon
Zone A après-midi	Zone B après-midi	Zone C après-midi
Zona A tarde	Zona B tarde	Zona C tarde

2 h 15 m

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a guided analysis of text 1.
- Write a guided analysis of text 2.
- Use the guiding question or propose an alternative technical or formal aspect of the text to focus your analysis.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[40 marks]**.

Instructions destinées aux candidats

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez une analyse dirigée du texte 1.
- Rédigez une analyse dirigée du texte 2.
- Utilisez la question d'orientation ou proposez une autre manière d'aborder le texte en choisissant un aspect technique ou formel sur lequel concentrer votre analyse.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est de **[40 points]**.

Instrucciones para los alumnos

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un análisis guiado del texto 1.
- Escriba un análisis guiado del texto 2.
- Utilice la pregunta de orientación o proponga otro aspecto técnico o formal del texto en el que centrar su análisis.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es **[40 puntos]**.

Write a guided analysis of the following text.

1. The following text is an excerpt from *Hotel Sorrento*, a play by Hannie Rayson. Meg, an Australian writer living in London, has written a novel which has been short-listed for a major award. She is talking with her husband Edwin about a letter from her sister, Hilary, who lives back in Australia.

MEG is sitting on the lounge room floor reading aloud excerpts from a letter from Hilary.

MEG: Listen to this bit...

EDWIN: This is still from Hilary?

- 5 MEG: Yeah... [*She reads aloud.*] 'I'm doing an English course with the Council of Adult Education. We are studying Chaucer¹ at the moment. It's very interesting.'

See what I mean? Chaucer is not interesting. Chaucer is very, very dull.

- 10 EDWIN: So, she finds it interesting.

MEG: She does not. She just thinks she *should* find it interesting, because that's what being 'cultured' is all about.

EDWIN: Being conversant with things that are irrelevant and dull.

MEG: Exactly. That's what the whole middle class is like back home².

- 15 They go off and memorise Shakespeare's date of birth and a few rhyming couplets so they can sprinkle it in conversation around the barbie³. 'D'you think Kylie'll bring the coleslaw.' 'Ah, To bring or not to bring. That is the question⁴. Shakespeare you know. Born in 1564, strangely enough.' 'Yes. Died in 1616. Poor thing. Such a tragedy. Terrific bean salad Val.'

- 20 EDWIN: Ooh, you're such a snob.

MEG: No, I'm not. I don't care two hoots about Shakespeare, you know that. In fact I've often thought that my idea of purgatory would be an everlasting subscription to the Royal Shakespeare Company.

- 25 EDWIN: I'll never forget the look on Peter Hall's⁵ face, the night you told him that you thought *Othello* was dreadfully overwritten.

MEG: Ah, you see, that's one thing I really regret about ageing. I resent having to mellow. I'd never say that sort of thing now.

- 30 EDWIN: Well, that's just as well I should think. I can just see *The Times Literary Supplement*. Booker prize nominee Meg Moynihan says that Shakespeare's plays are dreadfully overwritten.

MEG: But that's what it's like at home. For all that obsessive nationalism, people still equate 'culture' with Shakespeare and Chaucer.

Pause. MEG sighs.

- 35 I just wish she'd say something about my book. [*She wrinkles up her nose.*] It's silly, isn't it, 'cause on one level I don't give a damn what she thinks of it – as a piece of 'literature'. I just want a reaction. Anything. 'Dear Meg, I found your book excruciatingly turgid.'

EDWIN: Maybe she hasn't read it yet. Too busy swatting up on Chaucer.

40 *Pause.*

MEG: If you'd written a book, you'd expect your family to read it,
wouldn't you?

¹ Chaucer: a major early English poet

² home: Australia

³ barbie: barbecue

⁴ To bring or not to bring. That is the question: adapted quotation from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

⁵ Peter Hall: famous theatre director

- How does the writer convey Meg's attitude towards her sister Hilary and the culture her sister represents?

Write a guided analysis of the following text.

2. The following text is an excerpt from *Cherry blossom season*, a piece of travel writing by Catherine Marshall. The author has made a tour of Japan during springtime when cherry blossom trees bloom.

In Tokyo, they amass on the branches like butterflies, aflutter with the least breath of wind. In the countryside, they bubble out from the deadwood, heralding my timely arrival: they have heard the oncoming rumble of the shinkansen¹ as we bullet northwards, and have opened their pink arms in welcome.

- 5 By the time we reach Kanazawa, they are positively showing off, dripping from trees, clouding the skyline, doming the streets in florescence.

“Two days ago, there were none,” marvels Simon Rickard, professional gardener and one of our Botanica guides.

- 10 Such is the capriciousness of cherry blossoms: they will arrive when they are ready. This doesn’t deter couples engaged-to-be-married, who are posing for matrimonial portraits at Kenroku-en Garden, though their weddings are still months away.

Such a response to this spectacle is inevitable, for the revered yoshino² blossom – a cluster of five barely pink petals, each one notched at its apex – casts a magical spell. It represents at once the beauty of youth, the fragility of life and the impermanence of time.

- 15 But even as new life and young love flourish around us, old age is being celebrated. Rickard leads us to Kasumigaike Pond, where the ancient Karasaki pine, slumped with age, is being upheld by wooden poles.

“The Japanese prop up their old trees,” Rickard explains. “They venerate old age.”

- 20 This reconciliation between rebirth and decline is apparent all along the coastline as we cruise from Kanazawa to Matsue, where the last of the almond-scented apricot blossoms are falling to the ground, where the Japanese maples are coming into bud and the weeping cherries are in full bloom.

- 25 At Hagi, wild cherry trees flush the mountainsides pink. People come early to lay their tarpaulins beneath the vaporous blossom-mantles in Shizuki Park. Later, they’ll picnic with their families amid a flurry of whisper-soft petals.

We arrive before the crowds, too, at Tokoji Temple, and roam paths slick with camellia buds and moss. It’s a little bit sad and lonely, Rickard says, compared with the crisp, clipped, weeded gardens we’ve visited in the past few days. A little bit wabi-sabi – that ancient Japanese celebration of rusticity³ and transience and the patina⁴ of age.

- 30 Wabi-sabi has set in across the Korea Strait in South Korea, too, where the cherry blossoms – planted by the occupying Japanese in the early 20th century – are beginning to wilt. A breeze rattles the trees, launching petals into the air like a plume of pink smoke. But at Gyeongju, the crepe myrtles⁵ are being primed for imminent rebirth: women balance on crates and scrub the tough bark until it shines. Their flowers are more durable than those
35 fickle cherry blossoms, too: clinging steadfastly to the branches, they will bloom for a full three months.

We sail back across the strait to Nagasaki, where the cherry blossoms tell another story, one of revival and resilience. Just months after this city was annihilated by an atom bomb in 1945, much of its flora started sprouting again, says local guide Miyuki Ogawa. And this fledgling growth was supplemented by still more plantings: 1000 cherry saplings alone were embedded in the charred earth by the doctor who devoted his life to researching the bomb's effects on this city's residents, Ogawa says.

We wander up to Glover Garden and look back at the rebuilt skyline from this elevated, fecund place: it's a view filled with creepers and bright annuals and agave – and those cherry blossoms, framing Nagasaki in a halo of light.

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- ¹ shinkansen: Japanese high speed train, known as the Bullet
 - ² yoshino: a species of cherry tree whose blossom is spectacular but very short-lived
 - ³ rusticity: simple country charm
 - ⁴ patina: surface coating caused by the ageing process
 - ⁵ crepe myrtles: a species of tree

– How is contrast used to explore the cycle of life in this passage?

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References/Références/Referencias:

1. Rayson, H., 1990. *Hotel Sorrento*. Strawberry Hills: Currency Press Pty Ltd, pp. 17–18. Source adapted.
2. Marshall, C., 2017. Cherry blossom season: Japan's most alluring spectacle that you'll never tire of. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, [online] 6 October. Available at: <https://www.traveller.com.au/cherry-blossoms-and-the-beauty-of-youth-gyttov> [Accessed 31 July 2023]. Source adapted.