

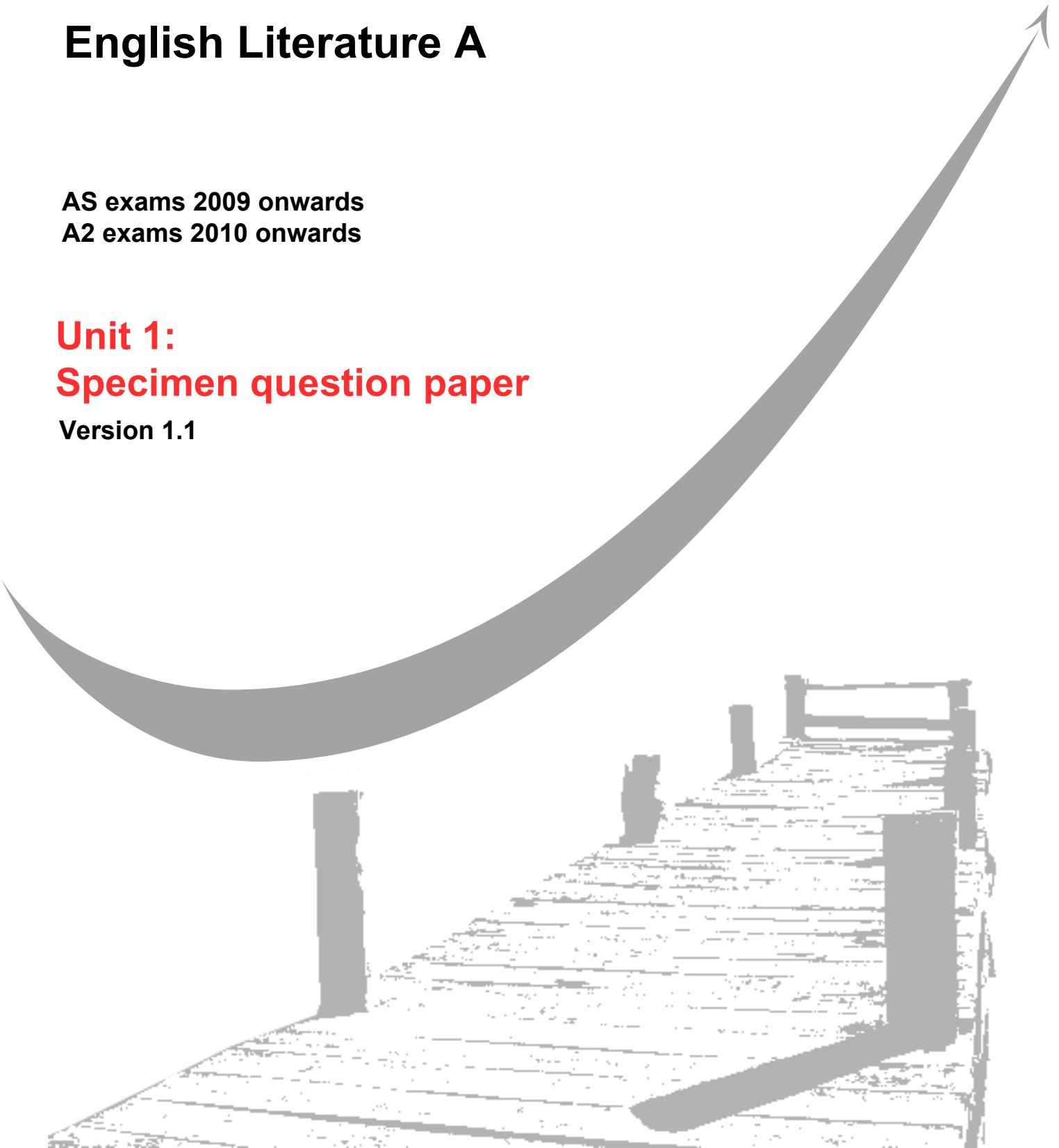
GCE
AS and A Level

English Literature A

AS exams 2009 onwards
A2 exams 2010 onwards

Unit 1: **Specimen question paper**

Version 1.1



ENGLISH LITERATURE (SPECIFICATION A)
Unit 1 Texts in Context

LTA1

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 2 hours

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or 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 LTA1.
- You will need to turn to the Option that you have studied. You will find:
 - **Option A: Victorian Literature** on page 2
 - **Option B: World War One Literature** on page 5
 - **Option C: The Struggle for Identity in Modern Literature** on page 8
- For your chosen option you must answer:
 - the **compulsory** question in **Section A: Contextual Linking**
 - **one** question from **Section B: Poetry**.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- There are 45 marks for each question.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 90.
- The poetry texts prescribed for this paper **may** be taken into the examination room.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

OPTION A: VICTORIAN LITERATURE**SECTION A: CONTEXTUAL LINKING****Answer Question 1.**

- 1** Read the following extract carefully. It has been taken from *Fors Clavigera*, a series of open letters to the public written by John Ruskin. In this letter Ruskin expresses his views on the Midland Railway's construction of a line through Monsal Dale, Derbyshire in 1863.

In your answer you should:

- consider the writer's thoughts and feelings about aspects of Victorian life and the ways in which he expresses them
- compare this extract to your wider reading, saying how typical you think it is of Victorian Literature. You should consider both subject matter and style.

(45 marks)

There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening - Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the Light - walking in fair procession on the lawns of it, and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls 'Railroad Enterprise'. You Enterprised a Railroad through the Valley - you blasted its rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the Gods with it; and now, every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half-an-hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange - you Fools Everywhere.

OPTION A: VICTORIAN LITERATURE**SECTION B: POETRY**

Answer **one** question from this section.

EITHER***Selected Poems: John Clare***

- 2** A critic has written that “Clare is primarily a protest poet, angry at the destruction of his familiar landscapes”.

To what extent 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 collection.

You may wish to use ‘The Moors’ (pages 87 – 89) as the starting point for your answer.

(45 marks)

OR

- 3** Many anthologies of John Clare’s poetry end with the poem ‘I Am’ (page 90).

To what extent do you feel that, in terms of subject matter and style, this poem would form an appropriate conclusion to a selection of Clare’s writing?

(45 marks)

OR***Selected Poems: The Brontës***

- 4** A biographer has written:

“Being the Brontë brother was Branwell’s only claim to fame: in comparison with the work of his sisters, his poems have no literary merit”.

How far do you agree with this claim?

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

(45 marks)

OR

- 5 Remind yourself of Emily Brontë's poem 'No coward soul is mine' (pages 72 – 73).

To what extent do you agree with the view that, in terms of subject matter and style, this poem is the key to the whole selection?

(45 marks)

OR

Selected Poems: Thomas Hardy

- 6 A recent study of Hardy's life claims that "the ghost of his first wife haunts all the poetry Hardy wrote after 1912".

How far do you agree with this claim?

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

(45 marks)

OR

- 7 Remind yourself of the first poem in this selection, 'Hap' (page 3).

To what extent do you feel that, in terms of subject matter and style, this poem is an effective introduction to Hardy's poetry?

(45 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS FOR OPTION A

OPTION B: WORLD WAR ONE LITERATURE**SECTION A: CONTEXTUAL LINKING****Answer Question 8.**

- 8 Read the following extract carefully. It is taken from *Letters from a Lost Generation* (First World War Letters of Vera Brittain and four friends). In this letter, Vera is writing to her mother from France.

In your answer you should:

- consider the writer's thoughts and feelings about the war and the ways in which she expresses them
- compare this extract to your wider reading, saying how typical you think it is of the literature of World War One. You should consider both subject matter and style.

(45 marks)

Vera to Edith Brittain

24th General, France, 5 December 1917

The hospital is very heavy now – as heavy as when I came; the fighting is continuing very long this year, & the convoys keep coming down, two or three a night... Sometimes in the middle of the night we have to turn people out of beds & make them sleep on the floor to make room for the more seriously ill ones that have come down from the line. We have heaps of gassed cases at present who came in a day or two ago; there are 10 in this ward alone. I wish those people who write so glibly about this being a holy war & the orators who talk so much about going on no matter how long the War lasts & what it may mean, could see a case – to say nothing of 10 cases – of mustard gas in its early stages – could see the poor things burnt and blistered all over with great mustard coloured suppurating blisters, with blinded eyes – sometimes temporarily, sometimes permanently – all sticky and stuck together, & always fighting for breath, with voices a mere whisper, saying that their throats are closing & they know they will choke. The only thing one can say is that such severe cases don't last long; either they die or else improve – usually the former; they certainly don't reach England in the state we have them here, & yet people persist in saying that God made War, when there are such inventions of the Devil about."

OPTION B: WORLD WAR ONE LITERATURE**SECTION B: POETRY**

Answer **one** question from this section.

Up the Line to Death: ed. Brian Gardner

EITHER

- 9 “An anthology which has one mood and a single focus.”

How far do you agree with this assessment? In your answer, you should **either** refer to **two** or **three** poems in detail **or** range more widely through the whole anthology.

(45 marks)

OR

- 10 Brian Gardner, the editor of this anthology, has placed the poem ‘High Wood’ by Philip Johnstone in the Epilogue.

How far do you agree that, in terms of subject matter and style, this poem forms an appropriate conclusion to the poems in the anthology?

(45 marks)

Scars Upon My Heart: ed. Catherine Reilly

OR

- 11 “The poems in this collection do not deal with the realities of the war.”

How far do you agree with this assessment?

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

(45 marks)

OR

- 12 Remind yourself of Vera Brittain’s poem ‘Perhaps’.

To what extent do you agree with the view that, in terms of subject matter and style, this poem is the key to the whole collection?

(45 marks)

War Poetry: ed. Jon Stallworthy

OR

- 13** How far do you agree with the view that there is little variety in subject matter and style in the poems in this selection?

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

- 14** Remind yourself of the poem 'MCMXIV' by Philip Larkin.

To what extent do you agree that, in terms of subject matter and style, this poem is the key to the whole selection?

(45 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS FOR OPTION B

OPTION C: THE STRUGGLE FOR IDENTITY IN MODERN LITERATURE**SECTION A: CONTEXTUAL LINKING****Answer Question 15.**

- 15** Read the following extract carefully. It is taken from *The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Speeches, sermons and articles written by Martin Luther King, Jr., a Black American civil rights leader). In this speech, Dr King is publicly addressing 250,000 people after a march on the capital Washington about equal rights for Black people in America.

In your answer you should:

- consider the writer's thoughts and feelings about the struggle for identity and the ways in which he expresses them
 - compare this extract to your wider reading, saying how typical you think it is of literature about the struggle for identity. You should consider both subject matter and style.
- (45 marks)

"I have a dream"

August 28th, 1963, Washington D.C.

...I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self evident; that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day, on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

...And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of that old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

OPTION C: THE STRUGGLE FOR IDENTITY IN MODERN LITERATURE**SECTION B: POETRY**

Answer **one** question from this section.

EITHER***And Still I Rise: Maya Angelou***

- 16** How far do you agree that ‘Still I Rise’ is the key to the whole collection?

You should consider both subject matter and style.

(45 marks)

OR

- 17** The Black American writer James Baldwin assessed Angelou’s style and subject matter as “Black, bitter and beautiful, she speaks of our survival”.

How far do you agree that this view applies to *And Still I Rise*?

(45 marks)

OR***The World’s Wife: Carol Ann Duffy***

- 18** Duffy published ‘Mrs Midas’ (page 11) several years before its inclusion in *The World’s Wife*.

To what extent do you agree with the view that, in terms of subject matter and style, this poem is the key to the whole collection?

(45 marks)

OR

- 19** How far do you agree with the view that *The World’s Wife* is “nothing but feminist propaganda”?

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

(45 marks)

Turn over for the next question

OR

Skirrid Hill: Owen Sheers

20 How far do you agree with the view that ‘Mametz Wood’ (page 1) is the key to this collection?

You should consider both subject matter and style.

(45 marks)

OR

21 To what extent do you agree that in these poems Sheers explores lost identity?

You may use ‘The Singing Men’ (page 50) as a starting point if you wish.

(45 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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