



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED

General Certificate of Education

2023

English Literature

Assessment Unit A2 2

assessing

The Study of Poetry Pre 1900
and Unseen Poetry



AEL21

[AEL21]

TUESDAY 6 JUNE, MORNING

TIME

2 hours.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklet provided.
Answer **two** questions. Answer **one** question from Section A on your chosen poet and the question from Section B.
A Resource Booklet is provided for use with Section A.
The unseen poem for Section B is printed in the examination paper.
This unit is closed book.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The total mark for this paper is 100.
Both sections carry equal marks, i.e. 50 marks for each question.
Quality of written communication will be assessed in **all** responses.

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Section A: The Study of Poetry Pre 1900

In Section A you will be marked on your ability to:

- articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression (AO1)
- analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts (AO2)
- demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received (AO3)
- explore connections within and between literary texts (AO4)

Answer **one** question from Section A on your chosen poet.

1 Chaucer: *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) By referring closely to Extract **1(a)** printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and other appropriately selected parts of the text, and making use of relevant external contextual information on medieval attitudes to marriage, examine the **poetic methods** which Chaucer uses to write about female dominance in marriage.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

- (b) By referring closely to Extract **1(b)** printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and other appropriately selected parts of the text, and making use of relevant external contextual information on medieval traditional tales, examine the **poetic methods** which Chaucer uses to present his version of a traditional tale.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of the given extract and other relevant parts of the text. [50]

2 Donne

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) By referring closely to "A Hymn to God the Father" (Poem **2(a)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Donne uses to write about feelings of sinfulness.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

- (b) By referring closely to "The Anniversary" (Poem **2(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on the nature of Metaphysical poetry, examine the **poetic methods** which Donne uses to write about feelings of being in love.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

3 Blake

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) By referring closely to “The Lamb” (Poem **3(a)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on Blake’s view of religion, examine the **poetic methods** which Blake uses to write about the theme of innocence.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

- (b) By referring closely to “London” (Poem **3(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on social conditions in late-eighteenth-century England, examine the **poetic methods** which Blake uses to write about social injustice.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

4 Keats

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) By referring closely to “Ode on Indolence” (Poem **4(a)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on the nature of Romantic poetry, examine the **poetic methods** which Keats uses to write about withdrawal from reality.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

- (b) By referring closely to “On seeing the Elgin Marbles” (Poem **4(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Keats uses to write about mortality.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

5 Dickinson

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) By referring closely to “I heard a Fly buzz – when I died – ” (Poem **5(a)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external contextual information on nineteenth-century Puritan attitudes to death, examine the **poetic methods** which Dickinson uses to write about attitudes to death.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

- (b) By referring closely to “I’m “wife” – I’ve finished that – ” (Poem **5(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Dickinson uses to write about attitudes to marriage.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

6 Barrett Browning

Answer either (a) or (b)

- (a) By referring closely to “A False Step” (Poem **6(a)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Barrett Browning uses to write about attitudes to love.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

- (b) By referring closely to “First News from Villa-Franca” (Poem **6(b)**) printed in the accompanying Resource Booklet and one other appropriately selected poem, and making use of relevant external biographical information, examine the **poetic methods** which Barrett Browning uses to write about patriotism.

N.B. Equal marks are available for your treatment of each poem. [50]

Section B: Unseen Poetry

In Section B you will be marked on your ability to:

- articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression (AO1)
- analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts (AO2)
- explore literary texts informed by different interpretations (AO5)

Answer the question set in Section B.

In this poem the speaker considers a rainstorm outside, and its impact on the house and its occupant.

Explore the thoughts and feelings of the speaker through **analysis** of the poetic methods used by Nemerov.

Brainstorm

The house was shaken by a rising wind
That rattled window and door. He sat alone
In an upstairs room and heard these things: a blind
Ran up with a bang, a door slammed, a groan
Came from some hidden joist, and a leaky tap,
At any silence of the wind, walked like
A blind man through the house. Timber and sap
Revolt, he thought, from washer, baulk and spike.
Bent to his book, continued unafraid
Until the crows came down from their loud flight
To walk along the rooftree overhead.
Their horny feet, so near but out of sight,
Scratched on the slate; when they were blown away
He heard their wings beat till they came again,
While the wind rose, and the house seemed to sway,
And window panes began to blind with rain.
The house was talking, not to him, he thought,
But to the crows; the crows were talking back
In their black voices. The secret might be out:
Houses are only trees stretched on the rack.
And once the crows knew, all nature would know.
Fur, leaf and feather would invade the form,
Nail rust with rain and shingle warp with snow,
Vine tear the wall, till any straw-borne storm
Could rip both roof and rooftree off and show
Naked to nature what they had kept warm.

He came to feel the crows walk on his head
As if he were the house, their crooked feet
Scratched, through the hair, his scalp. He might be dead
It seemed, and all the noises underneath
Be but the cooling of the sinews, veins,
Juices, and sodden sacks suddenly let go;
While in his ruins of wiring, his burst mains,
The rainy wind had been set free to blow
Until the green uprising and mob rule
That ran the world had taken over him,
Split him like seed, and set him in the school
Where any crutch can learn to be a limb.

Inside his head he heard the stormy crows.

Howard Nemerov

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TUESDAY 6 JUNE, MORNING

**RESOURCE BOOKLET
(For Section A only)**

Extract 1(a) Chaucer: *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*

(extract for use with Question 1(a))

“... In wyfhod I wol use myn instrument
As frely as my Makere hath it sent.
If I be daungerous, God yeve me sorwe!
Myn housbonde shal it have bothe eve and morwe,
Whan that him list come forth and paye his dette.
An housbonde I wol have, I wol nat lette,
Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral,
And have his tribulacion withal
Upon his flessh, whil that I am his wyf.
I have the power duringe al my lyf
Upon his propre body, and noight he.
Right thus the Apostel tolde it unto me;
And bad oure housbondes for to love us weel.
Al this sentence me liketh every deel.”

Up stirte the Pardoner, and that anon:
“Now, dame,” quod he, “by God and by Seint John!
Ye been a noble prechour in this cas.
I was aboute to wedde a wyf; allas,
What sholde I bye it on my flessh so deere?
Yet hadde I levere wedde no wyf to-yeere!”

“Abide!” quod she, “my tale is nat bigonne.
Nay, thou shalt drinken of another tonne,
Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale.
And whan that I have toold thee forth my tale
Of tribulacion in mariage,
Of which I am expert in al myn age –
This is to seyn, myself have been the whippe –
Than maystow chese wheither thou wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche.
Be war of it, er thou to ny approche;
For I shal telle ensamples mo than ten.
‘Whoso that nil be war by othere men,
By him shul othere men corrected be.’
The same words writeth Ptholomee;
Rede in his *Almageste*, and take it there.”

“Dame, I wolde praye yow, if youre wil it were,”
Seyde this Pardoner, “as ye bigan,
Telle forth your tale, spareth for no man,
And teche us yonge men of your praktike.”
“Gladly,” quod she, “sith it may yow like;
But that I praye to al this compaignie,
If that I speke after my fantasie,
As taketh not agrief of that I seye;
For myn entente is nat but for to pleye.”

Extract 1(b) Chaucer: *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*

(extract for use with Question 1(b))

And so bifel it that this king Arthour
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler,
That on a day cam ridinge fro river;
And happed that, alone as he was born,
He saugh a maide walkinge him biforn,
Of whiche maide anon, maugree hir heed,
By verray force, he rafte hire maidenhed;
For which oppressioun was swich clamour
And swich pursute unto the king Arthour,
That dampned was this knight for to be deed,
By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his heed –
Paraventure swich was the statut tho –
But that the queene and othere ladies mo
So longe preyeden the king of grace,
Til he his lyf him graunted in the place,
And yaf him to the queene, al at hir wille,
To chese wheither she wolde him save or spille.

The queene thanketh the king with al hir might,
And after this thus spak she to the knight,
Whan that she saugh hir time, upon a day:
“Thou standest yet,” quod she, “in swich array
That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.
I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me
What thing is it that wommen moost desiren.
Be war, and keep thy nekke-boon from iren!
And if thou kanst nat tellen it anon,
Yet wol I yeve thee leve for to gon
A twelf-month and a day, to seche and leere
An answeere suffisant in this mateere;
And suretee wol I han, er that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place.”

Wo was this knight, and sorwefully he siketh;
But what, he may nat do al as him liketh.
And at the laste he chees him for to wende,
And come again, right at the yeres ende,
With swich answeere as God wolde him purveye;
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his weye.

Poem 2(a) Donne: "A Hymn to God the Father"

(poem for use with Question **2(a)**)

I

Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive those sins, through which I run,
And do run still: though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For, I have more.

II

Wilt thou forgive that sin by which I've won
Others to sin? and, made my sin their door?
Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year, or two: but wallowed in, a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

III

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by thy self, that at my death thy son
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
And, having done that, thou hast done,
I fear no more.

Poem 2(b) Donne: "The Anniversary"

(poem for use with Question **2(b)**)

All kings, and all their favourites,
All glory of honours, beauties, wits,
The sun itself, which makes times, as they pass,
Is elder by a year, now, than it was
When thou and I first one another saw:
All other things, to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay;
This, no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday,
Running it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

Two graves must hide thine and my corse,
If one might, death were no divorce.
Alas, as well as other princes, we
(Who prince enough in one another be)
Must leave at last in death, these eyes and ears,
Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears;
But souls where nothing dwells but love
(All other thoughts being inmates) then shall prove
This, or a love increased there above,
When bodies to their graves, souls from their graves remove.

And then we shall be thoroughly blest,
But we no more, than all the rest.
Here upon earth, we're kings, and none but we
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be;
Who is so safe as we? Where none can do
Treason to us, except one of us two.
True and false fears let us refrain,
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain
To write threescore, this is the second of our reign.

Poem 3(a) Blake: "The Lamb"

(poem for use with Question **3(a)**)

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life & bid thee feed
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, wooly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb.
He is meek & he is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

Poem 3(b) Blake: "London"

(poem for use with Question **3(b)**)

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear:

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry
Every black'ning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls;

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

Poem 4(a) Keats: "Ode on Indolence"

(poem for use with Question **4(a)**)

"They toil not, neither do they spin."

I

One morn before me were three figures seen,
With bowèd necks, and joinèd hands, side-faced;
And one behind the other stepp'd serene,
In placid sandals, and in white robes graced;
They pass'd, like figures on a marble urn,
When shifted round to see the other side;
They came again; as when the urn once more
Is shifted round, the first seen shades return;
And they were strange to me, as may betide
With vases, to one deep in Phidian lore.

II

How is it, Shadows! that I knew ye not?
How came ye muffled in so hush a mask?
Was it a silent deep-disguisèd plot
To steal away, and leave without a task
My idle days? Ripe was the drowsy hour;
The blissful cloud of summer-indolence
Benumb'd my eyes; my pulse grew less and less;
Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath no flower:
O, why did ye not melt, and leave my sense
Unhaunted quite of all but – nothingness?

III

A third time pass'd they by, and passing, turn'd
Each one the face a moment whiles to me;
Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd
And ached for wings, because I knew the three;
The first was a fair Maid, and Love her name;
The second was Ambition, pale of cheek,
And ever watchful with fatiguèd eye;
The last, whom I love more, the more of blame
Is heap'd upon her, maiden most unmeek, –
I knew to be my demon Poesy.

IV

They faded, and, forsooth! I wanted wings:
 O folly! What is Love? And where is it?
 And for that poor Ambition! it springs
 From a man's little heart's short fever-fit;
 For Poesy! – no, – she has not a joy, –
 At least for me, – so sweet as drowsy noons,
 And evenings steep'd in honey'd indolence;
 O, for an age so shelter'd from annoy,
 That I may never know how change the moons,
 Or hear the voice of busy common-sense!

V

And once more came they by; – alas! wherefore?
 My sleep had been embroider'd with dim dreams;
 My soul had been a lawn besprinkled o'er
 With flowers, and stirring shades, and baffled beams:
 The morn was clouded, but no shower fell,
 Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears of May;
 The open casement press'd a new leav'd vine,
 Let in the budding warmth and throstle's lay;
 O Shadows! 'twas a time to bid farewell!
 Upon your skirts had fallen no tears of mine.

VI

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot raise
 My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass;
 For I would not be dieted with praise,
 A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce!
 Fade softly from my eyes, and be once more
 In masque-like figures on the dreamy urn;
 Farewell! I yet have visions for the night,
 And for the day faint visions there is store;
 Vanish, ye Phantoms! From my idle spright,
 Into the clouds, and never more return!

Poem 4(b) Keats: "On seeing the Elgin Marbles"

(poem for use with Question **4(b)**)

My spirit is too weak: – mortality
 Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,
 And each imagin'd pinnacle and steep
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die
Like a sick eagle looking at the sky.
 Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep,
 That I have not the cloudy winds to keep
Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.
Such dim-conceivèd glories of the brain
 Bring round the heart an undescribable feud;
So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,
 That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude
Wasting of old Time – with a billowy main –
 A sun – a shadow of a magnitude.

Poem 5(a) Dickinson: "I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –"

(poem for use with Question **5(a)**)

I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –
The Stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air –
Between the Heaves of Storm –

The Eyes around – had wrung them dry –
And Breaths were gathering firm
For that last Onset – when the King
Be witnessed – in the Room –

I willed my Keepsakes – Signed away
What portion of me be
Assignable – and then it was
There interposed a Fly –

With Blue – uncertain – stumbling Buzz –
Between the light – and me –
And then the Windows failed – and then
I could not see to see –

Poem 5(b) Dickinson: "I'm "wife" – I've finished that –"

(poem for use with Question **5(b)**)

I'm "wife" – I've finished that –
That other state –
I'm Czar – I'm "Woman" now –
It's safer so –

How odd the Girl's life looks
Behind this soft Eclipse –
I think that Earth feels so
To folks in Heaven – now –

This being comfort – then
That other kind – was pain –
But why compare?
I'm "Wife"! Stop there!

Poem 6(a) Barrett Browning: "A False Step"

(poem for use with Question **6(a)**)

I

Sweet, thou hast trod on a heart.
Pass! there's a world full of men;
And women as fair as thou art
Must do such things now and then.

II

Thou only hast stepped unaware, –
Malice, not one can impute;
And why should a heart have been there
In the way of a fair woman's foot?

III

It was not a stone that could trip,
Nor was it a thorn that could rend:
Put up thy proud underlip!
'Twas merely the heart of a friend.

IV

And yet peradventure one day
Thou, sitting alone at the glass,
Remarking the bloom gone away,
Where the smile in its dimplement was,

V

And seeking around thee in vain
From hundreds who flattered before,
Such a word as, 'Oh, not in the main
Do I hold thee less precious, but more!' ...

VI

Thou'lt sigh, very like, on thy part,
'Of all I have known or can know,
I wish I had only that Heart
I trod upon ages ago!'

Poem 6(b) Barrett Browning: "First news from Villa-Franca"

(poem for use with Question **6(b)**)

I

Peace, peace, peace, do you say?
What! – with the enemy's guns in our ears?
With the country's wrong not rendered back?
What! – while Austria stands at bay
In Mantua, and our Venice bears
The cursed flag of the yellow and black?

II

Peace, peace, peace, do you say?
And this the Mincio? Where's the fleet,
And where's the sea? Are we all blind
Or mad with the blood shed yesterday,
Ignoring Italy under our feet,
And seeing things before, behind?

III

Peace, peace, peace, do you say?
What! — uncontested, undenied?
Because we triumph, we succumb?
A pair of Emperors stand in the way
(One of whom is a man, beside),
To sign and seal our cannons dumb?

IV

No, not Napoleon! – he who mused
At Paris, and at Milan spake,
And at Solferino led the fight:
Not he we trusted, honoured, used
Our hopes and hearts for ... till they break –
Even so, you tell us ... in his sight.

V

Peace, peace, is still your word?
We say you lie then! – that is plain.
There *is* no peace, and shall be none.
Our very Dead would cry 'Absurd!'
And clamour that they died in vain,
And whine to come back to the sun.

VI

Hush! More reverence for the Dead!
They've done the most for Italy
Evermore since the earth was fair.
Now would that *we* had died instead,
Still dreaming peace meant liberty,
And did not, could not mean despair.

VII

Peace, you say? – yes, peace, in truth!
But such a peace as the ear can achieve
'Twixt the rifle's click and the rush of the ball,
'Twixt the tiger's spring and the crunch of the tooth,
'Twixt the dying atheist's negative
And God's Face – waiting, after all!

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