

## AS ENGLISH LITERATURE A

Paper 2 Love through the ages: Prose

---

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

### Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book
- a copy of each of the set texts you have studied for **Section B**. These texts must **not** be annotated and must **not** contain additional notes or materials.

### Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7711/2.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- Answer the question in Section A and **one** question from Section B.

### Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
  - use good English
  - organise information clearly
  - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.
- In your response you need to:
  - analyse carefully the writers' methods
  - explore the contexts of the texts you are writing about
  - explore connections across the texts you have studied
  - explore different interpretations of your texts.

---

**Section A: Unseen prose**

Answer the question in this section.

---

0	1
---	---

*The Stone Diaries* by Carol Shields was published in 1993. In this extract, set in Canada in 1936, Daisy Goodwill, a young, widowed woman, is about to meet Barker Flett, a family friend she has not seen for many years.

Examine the view that Shields presents both Daisy and Barker as more troubled than excited about their meeting.

Make close reference to the writer's methods in your response.

**[25 marks]**

"In one hour I will be there," Daisy writes in her travel journal, underlining "there" three times.

It is unbearably hot on the train, but she has managed, with the conductor's assistance, to open a window. As a result her hair is blowing about wildly, and the fading sunlight shines through it, so that she appears to be wearing a kind of halo or else a hat made of burnt fur.

To still the loud beating of her heart she stows her journal away safely, or so she thinks, and replaces her gloves. She holds herself upright, rigid. A stillness that purifies. Barbara Stanwyck with a head of foxy hair.

She is overwhelmed at times – and this is one of those times – with the wish to ask forgiveness.

Now darkness is coming on gradually, and the Ontario sky fills up with diamond dust. These particles, she senses, have nothing to do with her. The villages that rush by are foreign and unyielding. They seem to turn their backs on her. At the end of the railway car, on the other side of the aisle, four men are playing a noisy game of cards – rummy, most likely – and so engaged are they in this cheerful amusement and in the rough pleasure of each other's company, that she might be snatched suddenly from their midst and they would never so much as glance in her direction. She knows that when the train arrives in Ottawa, all of these men will hurry off into the continued nexus of their real lives, while she is about to hurl herself into whatever accident of fortune awaits her. She will accept "it" without protest, without question, for what choice has she?

She is powerless, anchorless, soft-tissued – a woman. Perhaps that is the whole of it, that she is a woman. Yes, of course.

It occurs to her that she should record this flash of insight in her journal – otherwise she is sure to forget, for she is someone who is always learning and forgetting and obliged to learn again – but the act of recording requires that she remove her gloves, rummage through her bag for her pen and for the notebook itself. This is more than she is capable of doing. And so she forces herself to sit quietly, her pulse racing, as the train rolls into the gentle, shadowy outskirts of Ottawa, capital of the Dominion (Do-min-i-on) of Canada.

He is at the station a full ten minutes before her arrival. He has allowed for this, knowing he'll need a cushion of calm in which to arrange his thoughts, his body too. "Well, well," he plans to say to her, draining the drama off the moment with heartiness, "so you've made it all in one piece, have you?"

Or something about the heat. Or perhaps? – he doesn't know what. Everything seems suddenly at risk. Even his long legs have gone unsteady.

He wouldn't dream, though, of sitting down on one of those long, varnished benches. No, he pulls himself straight, his shoulders, his back, his hands clasped behind him, and paces the marble floor of the concourse. He pauses, staring up into the dome. A handsome building, yes indeed. He examines it carefully, its decorated frieze and fluted granite pillars with their classical pediments. He memorizes these stone surfaces, staring hard as though he may never again have an opportunity to see this clearly.

His life is on the cusp of change. Love, that sudden dissolving of art and nature, of language itself, is about to overcome his senses. He breathes deeply, and glances up at the station clock. Yes, the train is on time. On the minute. Precisely. This fact he finds deeply satisfying. Also worrying.

And there she is. Coming toward him.

**Turn over for Section B**

**Turn over ►**

---

**Section B: Comparing prose texts**

Answer **one** question in this section.

---

**Either**

0	2
---	---

'In literature, lovers always have different expectations of relationships.'

By comparing **two** prose texts, explore the extent to which you agree with this statement.  
**[25 marks]**

**or**

0	3
---	---

'In literature, marriage is often seen to be problematic.'

By comparing **two** prose texts, explore the extent to which you agree with this statement.  
**[25 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS****Copyright information**

For confidentiality purposes, all acknowledgements of third-party copyright material are published in a separate booklet. This booklet is published after each live examination series and is available for free download from [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk).

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases, efforts to contact copyright-holders may have been unsuccessful and AQA will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements. If you have any queries please contact the Copyright Team.

Copyright © 2022 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

