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Pearson Edexcel Level 3 GCE

**English Language and Literature
Advanced**

Paper 2: Varieties in Language and Literature

Tuesday 20 June 2017 – Morning

SOURCE BOOKLET

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SECTION A: Unseen Prose Non-fiction Texts

Society and the Individual

Text A

In this article first published in the Daily Telegraph, Nick Page writes about men's experience of being middle-aged.

Something strange happens to men in middle age. Not all men. Many sail serenely through it with no issues at all. That's fine. I'm very pleased for them. For the rest of us, middle age is a more turbulent sea. The German term for mid-life crisis is Torschlusspanik – "shut-door panic". And lots of men in their 40s and 50s feel that the door has closed. 5 10

The ageing process doesn't help. Aches and pains used to disappear quickly, now they hang around for months. Hair no longer grows on the head, and you can't stop it growing out of your ears. You can't sit down, stand up or pick up any object without emitting a grunt. But it's not the age, it's the anxiety – those dark nights of the soul, staring at the ceiling, pondering the ultimate question of middle age: "Is that it?" 15

The ubiquity of these feelings is why David Nobbs, who died last week, was able to create such an enduring character in Reggie Perrin, the corporate man trapped in a meaningless life. "One day I'll die," 20

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says Reggie, during a seminar on instant puddings, 25
 “and on my grave it will say: ‘Here lies Reginald
 Iolanthe Perrin. He didn’t know the names of the trees
 and the flowers, but he knew the rhubarb crumble
 sales figures for Schleswig-Holstein’.”

Reggie, of course, faked his own death to break free, 30
 only to find his new life wasn’t any better. Other men
 make less drastic attempts to escape. Some take up
 the triathlon and wear unfeasibly tight Lycra. “I want
 to prove that I can still do it,” said a marathon-running
 friend. “I’m fitter than guys half my age.”

Some change their appearance. The jeans grow 35
 tighter than their Lycra. A tattoo appears. Then there’s
 the sports car because they think buying something
 will cure their sadness. But they end up just as
 unhappy, only at a higher speed.

When the shut-door panic hits, we all look for ways 40
 out. Me? At the age of 54, I built a shed. Well, I say
 “built”. I turned the rickety structure in the garden of
 the house I share with my wife and three daughters
 into a place where I could work. As a writer, this was
 my Porsche. All the great writers had sheds: Dylan 45
 Thomas, Roald Dahl, George Bernard Shaw. But more
 than that, I wanted a place where I could process all
 the stuff I was going through.

The book that emerged I called The Dark Night of the 50
 Shed – a book that turned out to be an exploration of
 men, mid-life, spirituality and sheds.

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The first recorded use of the phrase “middle age” is in William Langland’s poem, *Piers Plowman*. Written in 1400, it tells of a man who falls asleep and dreams of a quest to find the purpose of life. At one point he meets Imagination, who advises him to “make amends in middle age before your strength fails”. What could be more mid-life than this? It’s about changing and finding a purpose. And it begins with a long nap. 55 60

In Arthur Miller’s *Death Of A Salesman*, Willy Loman’s son, Biff, cries out at his funeral: “He had the wrong dreams... He never knew who he was.” (Miller wrote that play in a shed, which he had built.) Many of us have the wrong dreams. We don’t need a new Porsche, we need a new purpose. 65

As I rebuilt my shed, I came to the conclusion that the problems of middle age are spiritual. I realise we live in a time when spirituality is as unfashionable as flared jeans. But sod that. I’m middle-aged. I’m allowed to be unfashionable. 70

GLOSSARY

Reggie Perrin – the hero of a popular comic novel, later adapted for BBC television.

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Love and Loss

Text B

In this letter, dated 11 June 1852, the American poet Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) writes to an old school friend, Susan Gilbert.

I have but one thought, Susie, this afternoon of
 June, and that of you, and I have one prayer, only; 5
 dear Susie, that is for you. That you and I in hand as
 we e'en do in heart, might ramble away as children,
 among the woods and fields, and forget these many
 years, and these sorrowing cares, and each become
 a child again – I would it were so, Susie, and when I 10
 look around me and find myself alone, I sigh for you
 again; little sigh, and vain sigh, which will not bring
 you home.

I need you more and more, and the great world grows
 wider, and dear ones fewer and fewer, every day that 15
 you stay away – I miss my biggest heart; my own
 goes wandering round, and calls for Susie – Friends
 are too dear to sunder, Oh they are far too few, and
 how soon they will go away where you and I cannot
 find them, dont let us forget these things, for their 20
 remembrance now will save us many an anguish
 when it is too late to love them! Susie, forgive me
 Darling, for every word I say – my heart is full of you,

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(Turn over)

none other than you is in my thoughts, yet when
 I seek to say to you something not for the world, 25
 words fail me. If you were here – and Oh that you
 were, my Susie, we need not talk at all, our eyes
 would whisper for us, and your hand fast in mine, we
 would not ask for language – I try to bring you nearer,
 I chase the weeks away till they are quite departed, 30
 and fancy you have come, and I am on my way
 through the green lane to meet you, and my heart
 goes scampering so, that I have much ado to bring
 it back again, and learn it to be patient, till that dear
 Susie comes. Three weeks – they can't last always, 35
 for surely they must go with their little brothers and
 sisters to their long home in the west!

I shall grow more and more impatient until that dear
 day comes, for till now, I have only mourned for you;
 now I begin to hope for you. 40

Dear Susie, I have tried hard to think what you would
 love, of something I might send you – I at last saw
 my little Violets, they begged me to let them go,
 so here they are – and with them as Instructor, a
 bit of knightly grass, who also begged the favor to 45
 accompany them – they are but small, Susie, and I
 fear not fragrant now, but they will speak to you of
 warm hearts at home, and of something faithful which
 “never slumbers nor sleeps” – Keep them 'neath your
 pillow, Susie, they will make you dream of blue-skies, 50

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(Turn over)

and home, and the “blessed countrie”! You and I will have an hour with “Edward” and “Ellen Middleton”, sometime when you get home – we must find out if some things contained therein are true, and if they are, what you and me are coming to!

55

Now, farewell, Susie, and Vinnie sends her love, and mother her’s, and I add a kiss, shyly, lest there is somebody there! Dont let them see, will you Susie?

Emilie –

GLOSSARY

“Never slumbers nor sleeps” – a quotation from Psalm 121 in the Bible.

“Edward” and “Ellen Middleton” – characters in a popular melodramatic novel of the 1840s.

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Encounters

Text C

In 1889, Rudyard Kipling travelled from India to the United States. The trip was especially memorable for an encounter with his literary hero, the American novelist Mark Twain. The edited extract here is taken from Kipling's report of the interview, published in the Allahabad Pioneer, an English language newspaper published in India. 5

Morning revealed Elmira, whose streets were desolated by railway tracks, and whose suburbs were given up to the manufacture of door-sashes and window-frames. It was surrounded by pleasant, fat, little hills, rimmed with timber and topped with cultivation. 10

A friendly policeman volunteered the news that he had seen Twain or "some one very like him" driving a buggy the day before. This gave me a delightful sense of nearness. Fancy living in a town where you could see the author of Tom Sawyer, or "some one very like him," jolting over the pavements in a buggy! 15

"He lives out yonder at East Hill," said the policeman; "three miles from here." 20

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Then the chase began – in a hired hack, up an awful hill, where sunflowers blossomed by the roadside, and crops waved, and Harper’s Magazine cows stood in eligible and commanding attitudes knee-deep in clover, all ready to be transferred to photogravure. The great man must have been persecuted by outsiders aforetime, and fled up the hill for refuge. 25

Decidedly this remote place was an ideal one for work, if a man could work among these soft airs and the murmur of the long-eared crops. 30

Appeared suddenly a lady used to dealing with rampageous outsiders. “Mr. Clemens has just walked downtown. He is at his brother-in-law’s house.”

Then he was within shouting distance, after all, and the chase had not been in vain. With speed I fled, and the driver, skidding the wheel and swearing audibly, arrived at the bottom of that hill without accidents. It was in the pause that followed between ringing the brother-in-law’s bell and getting an answer that it occurred to me for the first time Mark Twain might possibly have other engagements than the entertainment of escaped lunatics from India, be they never so full of admiration. And in another man’s house – anyhow, what had I come to do or say? Suppose the drawing-room should be full of people, – suppose a baby were sick, how was I to explain that I only wanted to shake hands with him? 35 40 45

Then things happened somewhat in this order. A big, darkened drawing-room; a huge chair; a man with eyes, a mane of grizzled hair, a brown mustache covering a mouth as delicate as a woman's, a strong, square hand shaking mine, and the slowest, calmest, levellest voice in all the world saying:— 50

“Well, you think you owe me something, and you’ve come to tell me so. That’s what I call squaring a debt handsomely.” 55

“Piff!” from a cob-pipe (I always said that a Missouri meerschaum was the best smoking in the world), and, behold! Mark Twain had curled himself up in the big armchair, and I was smoking reverently, as befits one in the presence of his superior. 60

The thing that struck me first was that he was an elderly man; yet, after a minute's thought, I perceived that it was otherwise, and in five minutes, the eyes looking at me, I saw that the grey hair was an accident of the most trivial. He was quite young. I was shaking his hand. I was smoking his cigar, and I was hearing him talk – this man I had learned to love and admire fourteen thousand miles away. 65 70

Reading his books, I had striven to get an idea of his personality, and all my preconceived notions were wrong and beneath the reality. Blessed is the man

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who finds no disillusion when he is brought face to face with a revered writer. That was a moment to be remembered; the landing of a twelve-pound salmon was nothing to it. I had hooked Mark Twain, and he was treating me as though under certain circumstances I might be an equal.

75

GLOSSARY

Elmira – a town in New York State.

photogravure – a form of photographic reproduction.

Mr Clemens – Samuel Clemens, the real name of the author whose books were published under the pen-name Mark Twain.

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Crossing Boundaries

Text D

In this extract from her memoir *Object Lessons: The Life of the Woman and the Poet in Our Time*, published in 1996, Eavan Boland recalls her experience of moving from Dublin to London in 1950, when she was six years old.

5

Almost everything about this house was different from the one we had left behind. That had been family sized, with a flight of stone steps and a garden edging out into fields. There had been glasshouses and a raggy brown-and-white terrier called Jimmy.

10

There had been lilac and roses along a stone wall. Nothing about it had the closed-in feel of this street. But that had been the house of a life in Ireland, of an Irishman and his wife and five children. And now my father had gone, all at once, it seemed, from being an Irish civil servant to being an ambassador in London. The life had changed. The house had changed.

15

I knew I was somewhere else. I knew there was something momentous – and for me alone – in the meaning of the big staircase, with its gilded iron fretwork and its polished balustrade; in the formal carpets, with the emblems of the four provinces of Ireland on them: the harp for Leinster, the red hand

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(Turn over)

for Ulster, the dog and shield for the other two. I knew
 that the meaning was not good. But what was bad 25
 and what was good? Bad, it seemed, was dropping
 soft toys and metal cars down the stairwell. Bad
 was making noise and tricking with the fire hoses
 on every floor. Good was being invisible: spending
 hours in the sparse playroom on the top floor, with a 30
 blank television and the balcony which overlooked
 a dark, closed-in courtyard.

We turned the armchairs on their side there, day after
 day, and called them horses, and rode them away
 from this strange house with fog outside the window 35
 and a fiction of home in the carpets on the floor.

Exile is not simple. There are Irish emigrant songs
 which make it sound so; they speak of green shores
 and farewells. ... In most cases those songs were
 composed in settled and hard-pressed communities 40
 of Irishmen and women – most of them in the
 New World – to reassure them that they still had
 noble roots as they branched out in a daylight which
 was often sordid and dispossessed.

I wanted simplicity. I craved it. At school I would learn 45
 Thomas Hood's poem: "I remember, I remember /
 The house where I was born." But as time went on,
 I didn't. Such memory as I had was constantly being
 confused and disrupted by gossip and homily, by the

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brisk and contingent talk of adults. “Stop that. Settle down. Go to sleep now.” 50

The city I came to offered no simplicity either. The rooms to the east of the house looked out on gardens and railings. But the vista was almost always, that first winter anyway, of a yellow fog. If the windows were open, it drifted smokily at the sill. If the doors were open and you went into the street, you entered a muddled and frightening mime. Passersby were gagged in white handkerchiefs. The lights of buses loomed up suddenly. All I knew of the country was this city; all I knew of this city was its fog. 55 60

The first winter passed. In the conventional interpretation of exile I should, child as I was, have missed my home and my country. I should have entered the lift and regret of an emigrant ballad and remembered the Dublin hills, say, and the way they look before rain: heathery and too near. Instead I stared out the window at the convent school I attended in North London. It was March, my first one in England. A swell of grass, a sort of hummock, ran the length of the window and beyond. It had been planted with crocuses, purple, white, yellow. I may not have seen them before; I had certainly never seen so many. There and then I appropriated the English spring. 65 70 75

SOURCE INFORMATION

Text A: taken from *The Irish Independent*, 16 August 2015; the article was first published in *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 August 2015.

Text B: taken from *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson (Harvard University Press, 1986), pages 111–12.

Text C: taken from *The Mark Twain Anthology: Great Writers on His Life and Works*, (The Library of America, 2010), pages 66–77, reproduced online at https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/static/pdf/Kipling_Interview_Twain.pdf

Text D: taken from Eavan Boland, *Object Lessons: The Life of the Woman and the Poet in Our Time* (Vintage, 1996), pages 36–38.

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