

General Certificate of Education
January 2008
Advanced Level Examination



ENGLISH LITERATURE (SPECIFICATION A)
Unit 6 Reading for Meaning

LTA6

Wednesday 30 January 2008 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- a 16-page answer book.

Time allowed: 3 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 LTA6.
- Answer **both** parts of the question.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- Materials from your wider reading **may not** be taken into the examination room.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 40.

Advice

- This unit assesses your understanding of the relationships between the different aspects of English Literature.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Please read this advice carefully before you turn to the material.

1 Reading

- Here are the materials taken from the **prescribed area for study**. You will be using this material to answer the questions in the examination which appear on the facing page.
- Alongside the four pieces (**B, C, D, E**) about The First World War (the prescribed area for study) you will find **Extract A**, a pre-twentieth century poem, *The Soldier's Death*, by Anne Finch. This also has **war** as its theme.
- Read all five pieces and their introductions carefully and closely several times in the light of the specific questions set.

2 Timing

- You should plan to spend about 1 hour and 15 minutes on Question 1(a); this will include reading and planning time.
- You should plan to spend about 1 hour and 45 minutes on Question 1(b); this will include reading and planning time.

3 Wider Reading

- Question 1(b) tests your wider reading on the subject of **War in Literature** with specific reference to literature of and about The First World War.
- In your answer, you should take every opportunity to refer to this wider reading and to your knowledge of this specific area of study.

Answer **both** parts of Question 1.

- 1 (a) You should spend about 1 hour and 15 minutes on this question.

Basing your answer on **Extract A and Extract B**, you should:

- write a comparison of the ways the poets present the death of a soldier
 - say how far you agree with the view that Anne Finch's poem is a more convincing commentary on the pointlessness of war than Ian Duhig's poem *The Stake*.
- (20 marks)

- (b) You should spend about 1 hour and 45 minutes on this question.

By comparing **Extracts C, D and E**, and by referring to your **wider reading**, examine how typical in both style and treatment of subject matter these writings are of literature from and about The First World War.

You should consider:

- language, form and structure
- the writers' thoughts and feelings about war and contemporary society
- the influence of the time of composition
- the gender of the writers.

(20 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

THE READING**Extract A**

This poem was written by Anne Finch, Countess of Winchelsea (1661–1720).

The Soldier's Death

Trail all your pikes, dispirit every drum,
March in a slow procession from afar,
Ye silent, ye dejected men of war!
Be still the hautboys*, and the flute be dumb!
Display no more, in vain, the lofty banner.
For see! Where on the bier before ye lies
The pale, the fall'n, th'untimely sacrifice
To your mistaken shrine, to your false idol Honour.

ANNE FINCH

* musical instruments

Extract B

This poem, about a Private who volunteered to fight in The First World War, was written by Ian Duhig and published in his collection of poems, *The Lammis Hireling*, in 2003.

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Turn over for Extract C

Extract C

This extract is the ending of the play *Journey's End* by R.C. Sherriff, first published in 1929. It is March 1917 and the troops are in the trenches close to St. Quentin. Raleigh has been fatally wounded. Back in England he had been a school friend of Stanhope, the company commander.

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Extract D

This extract is the opening of Ben Elton's novel *The First Casualty*, published in 2005.

Ypres, Belgium, October 1917, before dawn

The soldier was laden like a pack mule.

Besides his knapsack and his water bottle, he carried on his back an iron bar around which was wound a mass of barbed wire that must have weighed a hundred pounds. Hanging from his belt and webbing were two Mills bombs, a hatchet, a bayonet, a pouch of ammunition and various entrenching tools. In his hands he carried his rifle. In addition, the man was wet through and through, every stitch of cloth and every inch of leather as sodden as if it had been deliberately immersed in water, so that it all weighed three times what a uniform, coat and boots ought to have weighed. Of course, every man in Flanders was as wet as that, but not every man carried a reel of wire on his back and so not all of them staggered as this man did or made such slow time.

'You there,' cried a voice, trying to make itself heard above the roar of artillery that thundered up from the guns at the rear. 'Military Police! Make way. I must get past. I simply must get past.'

Perhaps the man heard, perhaps he didn't – but if he did, he did not make way, but continued to plod steadily towards his goal. The officer could do no more than travel in his wake, cursing this ponderous beast of burden and hoping to find a point where the duckboard grew wide enough to let him pass safely. It was doubly frustrating for him to be so obstructed, for he knew enough about the nature of an attack to see that this fellow would not be advancing in the first wave. His job would be to follow on, using his wire and tools to help consolidate the gains made by the boys with the bayonets. The impatient officer did not expect any gains to be made. No gains of any significance anyway. There had not been any in the battle before this one, nor had there been in the one preceding that. Still, even gains of a few yards would need consolidation, new trenches to be dug and fresh wire laid. And so the pack mule plodded on.

Then the mule slipped. His heavily nailed boot skidded on the wet duckboard and with scarcely a cry he fell sideways into the mud and was gone, sucked instantly beneath the surface.

'Man in the mud!' the officer shouted, although he knew it was already too late. 'Bring a rope! A rope, I say, for God's sake!'

But there was no rope to hand. Even if there had been one, and time to slip it around the sinking man, it is doubtful whether four of his comrades pulling together would have had the strength to draw him forth from the swamp that sucked at him. And there was no room on the duckboard for four men to stand together, or even two, and so slippery were the wire-bound planks that any rescue attempt would have resulted in the rescuers sharing the same fate as the man they hoped to save.

And so the man drowned in mud. Dead and buried in a single moment.

Extract E

This poem was written by May Wedderburn Cannan in December 1916. May Cannan served both as a nurse and in the Intelligence Service.

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END OF EXTRACTS

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