GCSE

3720UC0-1

S18-3720UC0-1

ENGLISH LITERATURE

UNIT 2b
(Contemporary drama and literary heritage prose)
HIGHER TIER

FRIDAY, 25 MAY 2018 – MORNING

2 hours

SECTION A

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ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

A WJEC pink 16-page answer booklet.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Use black ink or black ball-point pen. Do not use pencil or gel pen. Do not use correction fluid.
Answer **both** Section A and Section B. Answer on **one** text in each section.
Write your answers in the separate answer booklet provided.
Use both sides of the paper. Write only within the white areas of the booklet.
Write the question number in the two boxes in the left hand margin at the start of each answer,
e.g. **2** **1** .
Leave at least two line spaces between each answer.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Section A: 30 marks Section B: 30 marks
You are advised to spend your time as follows: Section A – about one hour
Section B – about one hour

The number of marks is given in brackets after each question or part-question.
You are reminded that the accuracy and organisation of your writing will be assessed.

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SECTION A

Answer questions on **one** *text.*

The History Boys

Answer **1 1** *and* ***either*** **1 2** ***or*** **1 3** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **1 1** *, and about 40 minutes on* **1 2** *or* **1 3** *.*

1 1 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

Look closely at how the Headmaster and Mrs Lintott speak and behave here. What does it reveal to an audience about their characters? [10]

Either,

1 2 How is the character of Dakin presented to an audience in *The History Boys?* Refer closely to the text in your answer. [20]

Or,

1 3 How effective do you find the ending of *The History Boys*? [20]

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Staff room.

HEADMASTER Mrs Lintott, Dorothy.

MRS LINTOTT Headmaster?

HEADMASTER These Oxbridge boys. Your historians. Any special plans?

MRS LINTOTT Their A Levels are very good.

HEADMASTER Their A Levels are *very* good. And that is thanks to you, Dorothy. We've never had so many. Remarkable! But what now – in teaching terms?

MRS LINTOTT More of the same?

HEADMASTER Oh. Do you think so?

MRS LINTOTT It's what we've done before.

HEADMASTER Quite. Without much success. No one last year. None the year before. When did we last have anyone in history at Oxford and Cambridge?

MRS LINTOTT I tend not to distinguish.

HEADMASTER Between Oxford and Cambridge?

MRS LINTOTT Between centres of higher learning. Last year two at Bristol, one at York. The year before …

HEADMASTER Yes, yes. I know that, Dorothy. But I am thinking league tables. Open scholarships. Reports to the Governors. I want them to do themselves justice. I want them to do you justice. Factually tip-top as your boys always are, something more is required.

MRS LINTOTT More?

HEADMASTER Different.
I would call it grooming did not that have overtones of the monkey house.
'Presentation' might be the word.

MRS LINTOTT They know their stuff. Plainly stated and properly organised facts need no presentation, surely.

HEADMASTER Oh, Dorothy. I think they do.
'The facts: serving suggestion.'

MRS LINTOTT A sprig of parsley, you mean? Or an umbrella in the cocktail? Are dons so naive?

HEADMASTER Naive, Dorothy? Or human?
I am thinking of the boys. Clever, yes, remarkably so. Well taught, indubitably. But a little…*ordinaire*?
Think charm. Think polish. Think Renaissance Man.

MRS LINTOTT Yes, Headmaster.

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Turn over.

Blood Brothers

Answer **1 4** *and* ***either*** **1 5** ***or*** **1 6** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **1 4** *, and about 40 minutes on* **1 5** *or* **1 6** *.*

1 4 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

Look closely at how the characters speak and behave here. How does it create mood and atmosphere for an audience? [10]

Either,

1 5 How is the character of Edward Lyons (Eddie) important to the play as a whole? [20]

Or,

1 6 How are different kinds of love presented in *Blood Brothers*? [20]

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The NARRATOR *exits to re-enter as a* GYNAECOLOGIST.

MRS JOHNSTONE: What are you doin' here? The milk bill's not due 'till Thursday.

GYNAECOLOGIST *(producing a listening funnel)*: Actually I've given up the milk round and gone into medicine. I'm your gynaecologist. *(He begins to examine her.)* OK, Mummy, let's have a little listen to the baby's ticker, shall we?

MRS JOHNSTONE: I was dead worried about havin' another baby, you know, Doctor. I didn't see how we were gonna manage with another mouth to feed. But now I've got me a little job we'll be OK. If I'm careful we can just scrape by, even with another mouth to feed.

The GYNAECOLOGIST *completes his examination.*

GYNAECOLOGIST: Mouths, Mummy.

MRS JOHNSTONE: What?

GYNAECOLOGIST: Plural, Mrs Johnstone. Mouths to feed. You're expecting twins. Congratulations. And the next one please, Nurse.

The GYNAECOLOGIST *exits*.

MRS JOHNSTONE, *numbed by the news, moves back to her work, dusting the table upon which the shoes had been placed.*

MRS LYONS *enters*.

MRS LYONS: Hello, Mrs. J. How are you?

There is no reply.

(Registering the silence) Mrs J? Anything wrong?

MRS JOHNSTONE: I had it all worked out.

MRS LYONS: What's the matter?

MRS JOHNSTONE: We were just getting straight.

MRS LYONS: Why don't you sit down.

MRS JOHNSTONE: With one more baby we could have managed. But not with two. The Welfare have already been on to me. They say I'm incapable of controllin' the kids I've already got. They say I should put some of them into care. But I won't. I love the bones of every one of them. I'll even love these two when they come along. But like they say at the Welfare, kids can't live on love alone.

MRS LYONS: Twins? You're expecting twins?

The NARRATOR *enters.*

NARRATOR: How quickly an idea, planted, can
Take root and grow into a plan.
The thought conceived in this very room
Grew as surely as a seed, in a mother's womb.

The NARRATOR *exits*.

MRS LYONS *(almost inaudibly)*: Give one to me.

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Turn over.

A View From The Bridge

Answer **1 7** *and* ***either*** **1 8** ***or*** **1 9** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **1 7** *, and about 40 minutes on* **1 8** *or* **1 9** *.*

1 7 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

Look closely at how the characters speak and behave here. How does it create mood and atmosphere for an audience? [10]

Either,

1 8 How is the character of Rodolfo important to the play as a whole? [20]

Or,

1 9 'Family is the most important thing to the characters in *A View From the Bridge.'* To what extent do you agree? [20]

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BEATRICE: Go in the house! Eddie, go in the house!

EDDIE – *he gradually comes to address the people*: Maybe he come to apologize to me. Heh, Marco? For what you said about me in front of the neighborhood? *He is incensing himself and little bits of laughter even escape him as his eyes are murderous and he cracks his knuckles in his hands with a strange sort of relaxation*. He knows that ain't right. To do like that? To a man? Which I put my roof over their head and my food in their mouth? Like in the Bible? Strangers I never seen in my whole life? To come out of the water and grab a girl for a passport? To go and take from your own family like from the stable–and never a word to me? And now accusations in the bargain! *Directly to* MARCO*:* Wipin' the neighborhood with my name like a dirty rag! I want my name, Marco. *He is moving now, carefully, toward* MARCO*.* Now gimme my name and we go together to the wedding.

BEATRICE *and* CATHERINE, *keening*: Eddie! Eddie, don't! Eddie!

EDDIE: No, Marco knows what's right from wrong. Tell the people, Marco, tell them what a liar you are! *He has his arms spread and* MARCO *is spreading his*. Come on, liar, you know what you done! *He lunges for* MARCO *as a great hushed shout goes up from the people.*

MARCO *strikes* EDDIE *beside the neck.*

MARCO: Animal! You go on your knees to me!

EDDIE *goes down with the blow and* MARCO *starts to raise a foot to stomp him when* EDDIE *springs a knife into his hand and* MARCO *steps back*. LOUIS *rushes in toward* EDDIE.

LOUIS: Eddie, for Christ's sake!

EDDIE *raises the knife and* LOUIS *halts and steps back*.

EDDIE: You lied about me, Marco. Now say it. Come on now, say it!

MARCO: Anima-a-a-l!

EDDIE *lunges with the knife*. MARCO *grabs his arm, turning the blade inward and pressing it home as the women and* LOUIS *and* MIKE *rush in and separate them, and* EDDIE, *the knife still in his hand, falls to his knees before* MARCO. *The two women support him for a moment, calling his name again and again.*

CATHERINE: Eddie I never meant to do nothing bad to you.

EDDIE: Then why–Oh, B.!

BEATRICE: Yes, yes!

EDDIE: My B.!

He dies in her arms, and BEATRICE *covers him with her body.* ALFIERI, *who is in the crowd, turns out to the audience. The lights have gone down, leaving him in a glow, while behind him the dull prayers of the people and the keening of the women continue.*

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Be My Baby

Answer **2 0** *and* ***either*** **2 1** ***or*** **2 2** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **2 0** *, and about 40 minutes on* **2 1** *or* **2 2** *.*

2 0 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

Look closely at how the characters speak and behave here. How does it create mood and atmosphere for an audience? [10]

Either,

2 1 How does Amanda Whittington present the relationship between Mary and her mother, Mrs Adams, in *Be My Baby*? [20]

Or,

2 2 'Each of the girls in the play finds a different way to survive what they are going through.' How far do you agree with this statement? [20]

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Dormitory. MARY *packs her suitcase, which lies open on the bed.* DOLORES *passes items to her as she packs.*

DOLORES. 'Ey, Mary? That new lass nearly passed out when she saw your sheets. We had 'er on you'd done someone in.
MARY *continues packing.*
Do you think Norma's feeling better?
MARY. I'm sure she is.
DOLORES. Will you go and see her?
MARY. I don't know where she lives.
DOLORES. You'd best write me your address. So I can ask you to the wedding.
MARY *takes a pen and paper out of her suitcase and gives it to* DOLORES.
MARY. Why don't you give me yours?
DOLORES. Will you send us a letter?
MARY. If you like.
DOLORES *(beaming).* I never get a letter.
DOLORES *sits down to write her address*. MARY *closes the suitcase. Enter* QUEENIE, *who watches* MARY *from the doorway.*
MARY. All right?
QUEENIE. You've forgot your gloves.
MARY. They're in the case.
QUEENIE. She'll want you in your gloves.
MARY. I'd like to introduce you.
QUEENIE. No, ta.
MARY. To break the ice. For when you come to stay.
QUEENIE. Doll? We're wanted in the kitchen.
DOLORES *hands* MARY *the pen and paper.*
DOLORES. I don't mind you going now you're doing me a letter.
MARY. Good.
DOLORES. Can I do you one back?
MARY. If you like.
DOLORES. I'll start it tonight.
Exit DOLORES, *followed by* QUEENIE.
MARY. Queenie?
QUEENIE. I've got work to do.
MARY *writes down her address and offers it to* QUEENIE.
MARY. My address.
QUEENIE *looks at it then hands it back.*
QUEENIE. Mapperley Park. Sounds posh.
MARY. You will come?
QUEENIE. That'd get the nets twitching.
MARY. I need you to come.
QUEENIE. Won't I give the game away?
MARY. You're the only one I can talk to.
QUEENIE. It's best forgot. All of it.
MARY. How?
QUEENIE. You'll find a way.
MARY. I don't blame you for saying what you said. Not after Billy.
QUEENIE. Who's Billy?
MARY. Your son.
MARY *offers her address again*. QUEENIE *refuses it.*

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Turn over.

My Mother Said I Never Should

Answer **2 3** *and* ***either*** **2 4** ***or*** **2 5** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **2 3** *, and about 40 minutes on* **2 4** *or* **2 5** *.*

2 3 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

Look closely at how Margaret and Jackie speak and behave here. What does it reveal to an audience about their characters? [10]

Either,

2 4 What do you think of Doris and the way she is presented to an audience in *My Mother Said I Never Should*? [20]

Or,

2 5 '*My Mother Said I Never Should* is a play about women who have to make difficult decisions.' To what extent do you agree with this statement? [20]

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MARGARET Hello Jackie.

JACKIE *(immediately casual)* Oh, hi Mummy.

MARGARET It's not locked!

JACKIE I knew it would be you.

MARGARET You've been smoking.

JACKIE Journey from London OK?

MARGARET Not how I remembered, Mosside. All those tower blocks …

JACKIE Is Daddy–he's not–

MARGARET Waiting in the car.

JACKIE He didn't mind?–I'm sorry, I couldn't face–

MARGARET He understands.

Pause

JACKIE This is Rosie, Mummy.

MARGARET I–came up the stairs. *(Pause)* Lift is out of order. *(Pause)* Lot of stairs.

JACKIE … Please.

MARGARET *(after a long pause)* Three months.

JACKIE Say hello.

MARGARET *goes to the Moses basket. Pause*

MARGARET Pretty.

JACKIE *(also going to the basket)* You think so?

MARGARET You had curly eyelashes like that.

JACKIE *(pleased)* Did I?

MARGARET Hello Rosie ... *(She kisses her)*

JACKIE Don't wake her!

MARGARET Of course not!

JACKIE I'm sorry, it's just–

MARGARET You think I don't know?

ROSIE *coos quietly*

(Very tenderly) Ssh, there now.

ROSIE *murmurs*

JACKIE *(turning away)* I've packed her things … here. *(She gives* MARGARET *the holdall)* And her bottles are in this carrier. There's a bit of powdered milk left–

MARGARET Oh you don't need–

JACKIE Well what would I do with it?

An awkward pause. MARGARET *looks through the clothes in the holdall*

MARGARET I've been to Mothercare. Got some of those new disposable nappies, like you said. Quite different from when you were a baby *(She sees another carrier bag across the room and goes to pick it up)* What about this bag–what a sweet–won't she want this dress with the rabbit on?

JACKIE Leave those!–Things she's grown out of.

MARGARET Why did you have to try! All by yourself? Didn't you believe me?

JACKIE I wanted to see if our theories worked … *(Pause)* When I came back from hospital everyone had cleared out. You'd think I had VD, not a new baby.

MARGARET He should be here with you, your–*(stuck for a word)*–Rosie's father.–You in these flats …

JACKIE *(calmly)* Mummy, I told you. He visits; and sends money. It was my decision.

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Turn over.

SECTION B

Answer questions on **one** *text.*

Silas Marner

Answer **2 6** *and* ***either*** **2 7** ***or*** **2 8** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **2 6** *, and about 40 minutes on* **2 7** *or* **2 8** *.*

2 6 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

How does George Eliot create mood and atmosphere here? Refer closely to the extract in your answer. [10]

Either,

2 7 How important is the character of Godfrey Cass to the novel as a whole? Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

Or,

2 8 'In *Silas Marner* characters change for the better.' How far do you agree with this statement? Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

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For some time Silas was mute with astonishment: then he said, ‘God will clear me: I know nothing about the knife being there, or the money being gone. Search me and my dwelling; you will find nothing but three pound five of my own savings, which William Dane knows I have had these six months.’ At this William groaned, but the minister said, ‘The proof is heavy against you, brother Marner. The money was taken in the night last past, and no man was with our departed brother but you, for William Dane declares to us that he was hindered by sudden sickness from going to take his place as usual, and you yourself said that he had not come; and, moreover, you neglected the dead body.’

‘I must have slept,’ said Silas. Then, after a pause, he added, ‘Or I must have had another visitation like that which you have all seen me under, so that the thief must have come and gone while I was not in the body, but out of the body. But, I say again, search me and my dwelling, for I have been nowhere else.’

The search was made, and it ended – in William Dane’s finding the well-known bag, empty, tucked behind the chest of drawers in Silas’s chamber! On this William exhorted his friend to confess, and not to hide his sin any longer. Silas turned a look of keen reproach on him, and said, ‘William, for nine years that we have gone in and out together, have you ever known me tell a lie? But God will clear me.’

‘Brother,’ said William, ‘how do I know what you may have done in the secret chambers of your heart, to give Satan an advantage over you?’

Silas was still looking at his friend. Suddenly a deep flush came over his face, and he was about to speak impetuously, when he seemed checked again by some inward shock, that sent the flush back and made him tremble. But at last he spoke feebly, looking at William.

‘I remember now – the knife wasn’t in my pocket.’

William said, ‘I know nothing of what you mean.’ The other persons present, however, began to inquire where Silas meant to say that the knife was, but he would give no further explanation: he only said, ‘I am sore stricken; I can say nothing. God will clear me.’

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Pride and Prejudice

Answer **2 9** *and* ***either*** **3 0** ***or*** **3 1** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **2 9** *, and about 40 minutes on* **3 0** *or* **3 1** *.*

2 9 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

How does Jane Austen create mood and atmosphere here? Refer closely to the extract in your answer. [10]

Either,

3 0 How is the character of Wickham important to the novel as a whole? Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

Or,

3 1 For which character in *Pride and Prejudice* do you have the most sympathy? Show how Austen creates sympathy for your chosen character. Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

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"How very ill Eliza Bennet looks this morning, Mr. Darcy," Miss Bingley cried; "I never in my life saw any one so much altered as she is since the winter. She is grown so brown and coarse! Louisa and I were agreeing that we should not have known her again."

However little Mr. Darcy might have liked such an address, he contented himself with coolly replying, that he perceived no other alteration than her being rather tanned,–no miraculous consequence of travelling in the summer.

"For my own part," she rejoined, "I must confess that I never could see any beauty in her. Her face is too thin; her complexion has no brilliancy; and her features are not at all handsome. Her nose wants character; there is nothing marked in its lines. Her teeth are tolerable, but not out of the common way; and as for her eyes, which have sometimes been called so fine, I never could perceive any thing extraordinary in them. They have a sharp, shrewish look, which I do not like at all; and in her air altogether, there is a self-sufficiency without fashion, which is intolerable."

Persuaded as Miss Bingley was that Darcy admired Elizabeth, this was not the best method of recommending herself; but angry people are not always wise; and in seeing him at last look somewhat nettled, she had all the success she expected. He was resolutely silent however; and, from a determination of making him speak, she continued,

"I remember, when we first knew her in Hertfordshire, how amazed we all were to find that she was a reputed beauty; and I particularly recollect your saying one night, after they had been dining at Netherfield, '*She* a beauty!–I should as soon call her mother a wit.' But afterwards she seemed to improve on you; and I believe you thought her rather pretty at one time."

"Yes," replied Darcy, who could contain himself no longer, "but *that* was only when I first knew her, for it is many months since I have considered her as one of the handsomest women of my acquaintance."

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A Christmas Carol

Answer **3 2** *and* ***either*** **3 3** ***or*** **3 4** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **3 2** *, and about 40 minutes on* **3 3** *or* **3 4** *.*

3 2 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

How does Charles Dickens create mood and atmosphere here? Refer closely to the extract in your answer. [10]

Either,

3 3 'It isn't one Spirit that changes Scrooge, it is all of them.' To what extent do you agree with this statement? Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

Or,

3 4 '*A Christmas Carol* is set in the Victorian world but its message is timeless.' How far do you agree? Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

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“Don’t be cross, uncle!” said the nephew.

“What else can I be,” returned the uncle, “when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What’s Christmas-time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books, and having every item in ’em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will,” said Scrooge indignantly, “every idiot who goes about with ‘Merry Christmas’ on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!”

“Uncle!” pleaded the nephew.

“Nephew!” returned the uncle sternly, “keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.”

“Keep it!” repeated Scrooge’s nephew. “But you don’t keep it.”

“Let me leave it alone, then,” said Scrooge. “Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!”

“There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say,” returned the nephew; “Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas-time, when it has come round–apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that–as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!”

The clerk in the tank involuntarily applauded. Becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark for ever.

“Let me hear another sound from *you*,” said Scrooge, “and you’ll keep your Christmas by losing your situation! You’re quite a powerful speaker, sir,” he added, turning to his nephew. “I wonder you don’t go into Parliament.”

“Don’t be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us to-morrow.”

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Lord of the Flies

Answer **3 5** *and* ***either*** **3 6** ***or*** **3 7** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **3 5** *, and about 40 minutes on* **3 6** *or* **3 7** *.*

3 5 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

Look closely at how the characters speak and behave here. How does it create mood and atmosphere? [10]

Either,

3 6 For which character in *Lord of the Flies* do you have the most sympathy? Show how Golding creates sympathy for your chosen character. Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

Or,

3 7 How is the character of Simon important to the novel as a whole? Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

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Piggy gripped Ralph's arm.

'If Jack was chief he'd have all hunting and no fire. We'd be here till we died.'

His voice ran up to a squeak.

'Who's that sitting there?'

'Me. Simon.'

'Fat lot of good we are,' said Ralph. 'Three blind mice. I'll give up.'

'If you give up,' said Piggy, in an appalled whisper, 'what 'ud happen to me?'

'Nothing.'

'He hates me. I dunno why. If he could do what he wanted–you're all right, he respects you. Besides–you'd hit him.'

'You were having a nice fight with him just now.'

'I had the conch,' said Piggy simply. 'I had a right to speak.'

Simon stirred in the dark.

'Go on being chief.'

'You shut up, young Simon! Why couldn't you say there wasn't a beast?'

'I'm scared of him,' said Piggy, 'and that's why I know him. If you're scared of someone you hate him but you can't stop thinking about him. You kid yourself he's all right really, an' then when you see him again; it's like asthma an' you can't breathe. I tell you what. He hates you too, Ralph–'

'Me? Why me?'

'I dunno. You got him over the fire; an' you're chief an' he isn't.'

'But he's, he's, Jack Merridew!'

'I been in bed so much I done some thinking. I know about people. I know about me. And him. He can't hurt you: but if you stand out of the way he'd hurt the next thing. And that's me.'

'Piggy's right, Ralph. There's you and Jack. Go on being chief.'

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Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve

Answer **3 8** *and* ***either*** **3 9** ***or*** **4 0** *.*

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on **3 8** *, and about 40 minutes on* **3 9** *or* **4 0** *.*

3 8 Read the extract on the opposite page. Then answer the following question:

How does Dannie Abse create mood and atmosphere here? Refer closely to the extract in your answer. [10]

Either,

3 9 How is the character of Leo presented in *Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve*? Remember to support your answer with reference to the novel and comment on its social, cultural and historical context. [20]

Or,

4 0 'The time in which the book is set helps to make the events of *Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve* interesting to us.' How far do you agree with this statement? [20]

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‘I suppose we better go,’ I said.

‘A date’s a date,’ answered Bob. ‘Anyway… the others will ask us.’

‘Yes,’ I said. ‘A date’s a date.’

We arrived punctually, right on the hour. We looked around the foyer but Lydia Pike wasn’t there. The commissionaire was shouting out the prices of the seats and we looked at each other hopefully.

‘Perhaps she won’t turn up,’ said Bob.

‘I refuse to wait for a woman,’ I said.

‘Let’s wait one minute and then go in,’ Bob suggested. We counted sixty quickly; we looked at the clock and noted that she was already two minutes late. Every girl that passed by looked a little like Lydia Pike.

‘Let’s go in,’ I insisted. ‘Don’t want to miss the second feature.’

‘Hell, she might see us inside,’ Bob pointed out. ‘Let’s go to another cinema.’

‘The Empire,’ I said. ‘Better programme than here.’ We looked round like two foxes.

‘Quick,’ Bob said, ‘let’s go before she comes.’

We walked out swiftly into Queen Street, then ran as fast as we could down the road to the Empire. Only after we had bought our tickets and were going into the dark did we feel free and want to chuckle.

When I returned home that night, mother shouted from the kitchen: ‘Is that you? I’ve got your supper ready.’ Standing in the hall, in my brand-new, unstained mackintosh, I put my finger again on the nipple of Clytemnestra, the murderess. The stone face seemed to sag a little and assume the features of honey-haired Lydia Pike, and I think I was smiling, with my finger incriminating me, when I heard Leo’s voice from the stairs saying, ‘What the hell’s the matter with you?’ He leaned over the banister, looking at me from his dark, smouldering eyes, smilingly startled.

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