

Preparing for IGCSE English Literature

Paper 2

You will be asked to answer **three questions** and will have **two hours and fifteen minutes** to complete the exam. This means you will have **45 minutes per question**. It is essential that you do not over-run on question one – you must devote the full 45 minutes to each question. Spend 5-8 minutes planning your answer. You may take the text in with you, but must not have *any* notes on it.

For each text you will have a choice of three questions.

You **MUST** answer *at least one passage-based question* (marked with an asterisk). If you wish, you may answer two or three.

Richard III: answer ONE question from a choice of three.

- One question will be based on a specific passage and will ask you to look closely at the effects of the writing in it.
- One will be a question about the play as a whole and will ask you to consider a character or theme. In both cases you must refer closely to the language.
- (The third question, which I would advise you *not* to attempt is an ‘empathy’ question where you imagine that you are a particular character and write about your feelings.)

Selected poems of John Keats: answer ONE question from a choice of three.

- One question asks you to look again at a specific poem (or part of a poem) and asks you to write about how the poet makes an aspect of it effective.
- The other two questions ask you to explore a theme in a specific poem (or part of a poem).

The God Boy

- One question will be based on a specific passage and will ask you to look closely at the effects of the writing in it.
- One will be a question about the novel as a whole and will ask you to consider a character or theme. In both cases you must refer closely to the language.
- (The third question, which I would advise you *not* to attempt is an ‘empathy’ question where you imagine that you are a particular character and write about your feelings.)

Suggestions for revising *Richard III*

- Read Acts 4 & 5 and make notes on them.
- Make notes on the following characters or themes/motifs. Ensure that you include at least three quotations for each one.

RICHARD III	VILLAINY
ANNE	FAMILY
BUCKINGHAM	KINGSHIP / THE CROWN
ELIZABETH	ENGLAND / THE STATE
CLARENCE	WAR

- There are practice questions attached that you will find it useful to answer in note form or in full.
- Read any additional or critical material you have been given – e.g. handouts, critical essays, programme notes, York notes, online study guides etc.
- You may find it useful to watch a DVD version of the play, for example the film starring Ian McKellan. There are also audio versions available of CD, which can be a useful revision aid when it comes to reminding yourself of the text.
- Practise writing timed essays – this is a key way of preparing for an exam as many candidates find themselves wrong-footed simply because they are not used to writing to a tight time limit. Here are some essay titles you might tackle, allowing 45 minutes for planning and writing.

Questions relating to the play as a whole:

- 1.) Explore the ways in which Shakespeare makes Richard's manipulation of others so convincing.
- 2.) Explore the role of women in the play.
- 3.) Explore the nature of kingship in the play.
- 4.) Discuss the role played by Buckingham in the play.
- 5.) Consider the presentation of villainy in the play.
- 6.) Explore why and how Richard is so successful in his quest to become king.
- 7.) Consider the role played by Margaret in the play.
- 8.) The play's full title is *The True Tragedy of Richard III*. In your opinion, is Richard III a tragedy or a history play?

Passage-based questions:

- 1.) Re-read 1.4.182 from 'Erroneous vassals' to the end of the scene. How does Shakespeare make the feelings and the morality of this scene so vivid?
- 2.) Re-read 5.3.180-209 What insights does this speech give you in to the character of Richard?
- 3.) Re-read 3.7.116-172. What insights does this speech give you into the character of Richard and his relationship with Buckingham?
- 4.) Re-read 4.3.1-43. Explore the ways in which Shakespeare makes this scene dramatically effective.
- 5.) Re-read 4.4.80-135. Explore the ways in which Shakespeare makes this a dark and mournful scene?
- 6.) Re-read 2.1.104-135 What insights does this speech give you into the character of Edward IV?
- 7.) Re-read 1.4.9-57. Explore the ways in which Shakespeare makes this a compelling and powerful speech.
- 8.) Re-read 5.5.15-41. In what ways is this a particularly effective ending to the play?

Suggestions for revising the poetry of Keats

- Re-read the poems and all of your notes and essays on them. The set poems are: 'Ode to a Nightingale', 'Ode to Psyche', 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', 'Ode on Melancholy', 'To Autumn', 'The Eve of St Agnes', 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci', 'Endymion' (Book 1, lines 1-33), 'Bright Star Would I Were Steadfast As Thou'.
 - Make a list of the key themes that feature in each poem. *Note any similarities or contrasts.* You can use the attached table to help you.
 - Re-read your glossary of critical terms and ensure that you know the meaning of key devices. Particularly important are: ASSONANCE, ALLITERATION, ONOMATOPOEIA, CAESURA, ENJAMBEMENT, SIBILANCE, IAMBIC PENTAMETER, METAPHOR, SYNAESTHESIA, APOSTROPHE, ANAPHORA. There is a list of some critical terms in this revision pack and you also have the glossary in your books that we have built up over the course. You should also re-familiarise yourself with the concept of ROMANTICISM and the themes in which the ROMANTIC POETS were interested.
 - Practise writing timed responses to the poems. BE CAREFUL to read the question carefully and see whether you are being asked to consider two poems or choose between two. Here are some essay titles you might tackle, allowing 45 minutes for planning and writing.
- 1.) Explore the ways in which the poet portrays his feelings for Psyche in 'Ode to Psyche'.

- 2.) Explore the ways in which Keats depicts pain and pleasure in ‘Ode to a Nightingale’.
- 3.) Explore Keats’ portrayal of beauty in ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’.
- 4.) Show how, in ‘To Autumn’, Keats evokes the season so vividly.
- 5.) Explore the presentation of the lovers Porphyro and Madeleine in ‘The Eve of St Agnes’.
- 6.) Show how, in the extract from ‘Endymion’ (lines 1-33), Keats finds beauty in the world.
- 7.) Explore the presentation of love in ‘La Belle Dame sans Merci’.
- 8.) Show how, in ‘The Eve of St Agnes’, Keats evokes a world from long ago.
- 9.) Show how, Keats portrays the star and the things that he admires about it in ‘Bright Star’.
- 10.) Explore Keats’ presentation of melancholy in ‘Ode on Melancholy’.
- 11.) Explore any **one** of the following themes in a poem or poems of your choice:
DEATH BEAUTY LOVE NATURE TIME LONGING

Suggestions for revising *The God Boy*

- Re-read the novel and all handouts, notes essays etc that you have on it.
- Make notes on the following themes, symbols and characters. Don’t forget to include quotations!

LONELINESS / ISOLATION	JIMMY
ANGER	MR SULLIVAN (‘DAD’)
CHILDHOOD	MRS SULLIVAN (‘MUM’)
RELIGION	BLOODY JACK
BICYCLES	MOLLY

- Practise writing timed responses to the poems. Here are some essay titles you might tackle, allowing 45 minutes for planning and writing.
 - 1.) How is the relationship between Jimmy’s parents presented in the novel?
 - 2.) Consider the importance of Bloody Jack in the novel.
 - 3.) Explore the presentation of Mr Sullivan (Jimmy’s dad) in the novel.
 - 4.) How does the narrative style of the novel contribute to your understanding of the character of Jimmy?

- 5.) Look again at Chapter 15. How does this chapter contribute to your understanding of Jimmy's character?
- 6.) Look again at Chapter 10. How does the presentation of the Waters family contribute to the themes of the novel as a whole?
- 7.) Look again at Chapter 23. How effective is this as an ending to the novel?
- 8.) Look again at Chapter 20. How does it contribute to your understanding of Jimmy's character?
- 9.) Explore the importance of Molly in the novel.
- 10.) Consider the ways in which religion is presented in the novel.

Internet Resources

Do use the internet to supplement your revision, but exercise caution regarding a.) the reliability of individual sites and b.) plagiarism; use the ideas, not the words!

Useful sites may include:

http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/igcse/subject?asdef_id=853 (The official IGCSE website with the syllabus, past papers and mark schemes.)

www.sparknotes.com (Study guide for all texts.)

www.wikipedia.org (Useful on writers, key literary texts, literary movements, historical background etc.)

Paper 3

You will be asked to respond to an **unseen passage**, which may be poetry, prose or drama. You will answer **one** question, and will have a choice of **two**. The two passages will probably be a poem and a piece of prose. You will have **1 hour** in which to read the passages, annotate your chosen passage and write your response. Spend about **15 minutes** reading and annotating and **45 minutes** writing.

Prepare for the exam by :

- Ensuring that you are familiar with critical terms relating to the discussion of poetry, prose and drama (onomatopoeia, pathetic fallacy etc.). There is a list of some critical terms in this revision pack and you also have the glossary in your books that we have built up over the course.
- Practise writing timed responses. This is the best preparation for this exam. Attached is a past paper and a selection of other passages.