



ENGLISH LITERATURE ADMISSIONS TEST

4501/11

November 2020

1 hour 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Please read this page carefully, but do not open the question paper until you are told that you may do so.

A separate answer booklet with 8 lined pages is provided. Please check you have one.

You should allow at least 30 minutes for reading this question paper, making notes and preparing your answer.

**Your answer should only be written on the lined pages inside the answer booklet. No extra paper is allowed for this purpose.** The blank inside front and back covers should be used to plan your answer and for any rough working or notes.

At the end of the examination, you must hand in both your answer booklet and this question paper.

No texts, dictionaries or sources of reference may be brought into the examination.

*This paper consists of 8 printed pages and 4 blank pages.*



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Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

You should spend at least 30 minutes reading and annotating the passages and preparing your answer.

The following passages are all linked by the theme of dance. They are arranged chronologically by date of publication. Read all the material carefully, and then complete the task below.

- (a) From *Orchestra, or a Poem of Dancing* (1596), a poem by John Davies page 4
- (b) From *Evelina* (1778), a novel by Frances Burney page 5
- (c) From *The Voyage Out* (1915), a novel by Virginia Woolf page 6
- (d) 'First Dances' (1962), a poem by Frank O'Hara page 7
- (e) From "*Master Harold*"...and the Boys (1982), a play by Athol Fugard page 8
- (f) 'Learning to Dance' (2010), Alice Walker's preface to her volume of poetry, *Hard Times Require Furious Dancing* page 9

**Task:**

Select two of the passages (a) to (f) and compare and contrast them in any ways that seem interesting to you, paying particular attention to distinctive features of structure, language and style.

*This task is designed to assess your responsiveness to unfamiliar literary material and your skills in close reading. Marks are not awarded for references to other texts or authors you have studied.*

(a) **From *Orchestra, or a Poem of Dancing* (1596), a poem by John Davies**

“Sole heir of virtue, and of beauty both,  
Whence cometh it,” Antinous<sup>1</sup> replies,  
“That your imperious virtue is so loath  
To grant your beauty her chief exercise?  
Or from what spring doth your opinion rise  
That dancing is a frenzy and a rage,  
First known and used in this new-fangled age?”

“Dancing, bright lady, then began to be  
When the first seeds whereof the world did spring,  
The fire, air, earth and water did agree,  
By Love’s persuasion, nature’s mighty king,  
To leave their first disordered combating  
And in a dance such measure to observe  
As all the world their motion should preserve.

“Since when they still are carried in a round,  
And changing come one in another’s place,  
Yet do they neither mingle nor confound,  
But every one doth keep his bounded space  
Wherein the dance doth bid it turn or trace.  
This wondrous miracle doth Love devise,  
For dancing is Love’s proper exercise.

“Like this he framed the gods’ eternal bower  
And of a shapeless and confused mass,  
By his through-piercing and digesting power  
The turning vault of heaven formed was,  
Whose starry wheels he hath so made to pass  
As that their movings do a music frame  
And they themselves still dance unto the same.

“Or if this all which round about we see,  
As idle Morpheus<sup>2</sup> some sick brains have taught,  
Of undivided motes compacted be,  
How was this goodly architecture wrought?  
Or by what means were they together brought?  
They err that say they did concur by chance;  
Love made them meet in a well-ordered dance.”

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<sup>1</sup> Antinous: a suitor to Penelope; here he is trying to overcome her reluctance to dance

<sup>2</sup> Morpheus: a Greek god associated with sleep and dreams

**(b) From *Evelina* (1778), a novel by Frances Burney**

Another gentleman, who seemed about six-and-twenty years old, gaily but not foppishly dressed, and indeed extremely handsome, with an air of mixed politeness and gallantry, desired to know if I was engaged, or would honour him with my hand. So he was pleased to say, though I am sure I know not what honour he could receive from me; but these sort of expressions, I find, are used as words of course, without any distinction of persons, or study of propriety.

Well, I bowed, and I am sure I coloured; for indeed I was frightened at the thoughts of dancing before so many people, all strangers, and, which was worse, *with* a stranger: however, that was unavoidable; for, though I looked round the room several times, I could not see one person that I knew. And so he took my hand, and led me to join in the dance.

The minuets were over before we arrived, for we were kept late by the milliners making us wait for our things.

He seemed very desirous of entering into conversation with me; but I was seized with such a panic, that I could hardly speak a word, and nothing but the shame of so soon changing my mind prevented my returning to my seat, and declining to dance at all.

He appeared to be surprised at my terror, which I believe was but too apparent: however, he asked no questions, though I fear he must think it very strange, for I did not choose to tell him it was owing to my never before dancing but with a school-girl.

His conversation was sensible and spirited; his air, and address were open and noble; his manners gentle, attentive, and infinitely engaging; his person is all elegance, and his countenance the most animated and expressive I have ever seen.

In a short time we were joined by Miss Mirvan, who stood next couple to us. But how I was startled when she whispered me that my partner was a nobleman! This gave me a new alarm: how will he be provoked, thought I, when he finds what a simple rustic he has honoured with his choice! One whose ignorance of the world makes her perpetually fear doing something wrong!

That he should be so much my superior in every way, quite disconcerted me; and you will suppose my spirits were not much raised, when I heard a lady, in passing us, say, "This is the most difficult dance I ever saw."

"O dear, then" cried Maria to her partner, "with your leave, I'll sit down till the next."

"So will I too, then," cried I, "for I am sure I can hardly stand."

"But you must speak to your partner first," answered she; for he had turned aside to talk with some gentlemen. However, I had not sufficient courage to address him; and so away we all three tript, and seated ourselves at another end of the room.

**(c) From *The Voyage Out* (1915), a novel by Virginia Woolf**

After a few minutes' pause, the father, the daughter, and the son-in-law who played the horn flourished with one accord. Like the rats who followed the piper, heads instantly appeared in the doorway. There was another flourish; and then the trio dashed spontaneously into the triumphant swing of the waltz. It was as though the room were instantly flooded with water. After a moment's hesitation first one couple, then another, leapt into mid-stream, and went round and round in the eddies. The rhythmic swish of the dancers sounded like a swirling pool. By degrees the room grew perceptibly hotter. The smell of kid gloves mingled with the strong scent of flowers. The eddies seemed to circle faster and faster, until the music wrought itself into a crash, ceased, and the circles were smashed into little separate bits. The couples struck off in different directions, leaving a thin row of elderly people stuck fast to the walls, and here and there a piece of trimming or a handkerchief or a flower lay upon the floor. There was a pause, and then the music started again, the eddies whirled, the couples circled round in them, until there was a crash, and the circles were broken up into separate pieces.

When this had happened about five times, Hirst, who leant against a window-frame, like some singular gargoyle, perceived that Helen Ambrose and Rachel stood in the doorway. The crowd was such that they could not move, but he recognised them by a piece of Helen's shoulder and a glimpse of Rachel's head turning round. He made his way to them; they greeted him with relief.

"We are suffering the tortures of the damned," said Helen.

"This is my idea of hell," said Rachel.

Her eyes were bright and she looked bewildered.

Hewet and Miss Allan, who had been waltzing somewhat laboriously, paused and greeted the newcomers.

"This is nice," said Hewet.

(d) **'First Dances' (1962), a poem by Frank O'Hara**

**Starting**

**"1**

**From behind he takes her waist"**

**Ending**

**"3**

**A white hall inside a church. Nerves."**

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(e) From *“Master Harold”...and the Boys* (1982), a play by Athol Fugard

Starting **“HALLY: Say you stumble or bump into somebody...do they take off points?”**

Ending **“SAM: Not just me... For as long as the music lasts, we are going to see six couples get it right, the way we want life to be.”**

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- (f) **'Learning to Dance' (2010), Alice Walker's preface to her volume of poetry, *Hard Times Require Furious Dancing***

**Starting "I am the youngest of eight siblings. Five of us have died."**

**Ending "Hard times require furious dancing. Each of us is the proof."**

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