S4 Literature in English Practice Paper

S4 - Literature in English | Time: 75 minutes | Total: 100 marks | 24 parts

Part A: Unseen Poetry (18 marks)

Read the unseen poem below and answer items 1 to 4. The poem is an original text written for this paper. Title: Tram Window, 6 a.m. the tram rings once and the street wakes slowly / rain beads the overhead wire like strung glass / a man folds his newspaper twice / and reads the same word again / above the shops the neon is still asleep / a cleaner rings his bucket along the kerb / the city holds its breath and counts / three stops, four stops, home / morning is a door left open / and we walk through it not knowing / what the light will ask of us.

1. (1) Identify two images that create stillness in the poem and explain how each one makes the early morning feel quiet. (4 marks)

2. (2) The verb "rings" appears twice, once for the tram bell and once for the cleaner's bucket. Explain the effect of this repetition in the poem's sound patterning. (4 marks)

3. (3) The line "three stops, four stops, home" is very short and repetitive. Explain its effect on rhythm and tone. (4 marks)

4. (4) Analyse the metaphor "morning is a door left open" and judge whether it works as the poem's ending. (6 marks)

Part B: Prose Passage, Character and Narrative Voice (18 marks)

Read the prose passage below and answer items 5 to 8. The passage is an original text written for this paper. Every summer my grandmother sold rice from a shop no wider than a tram door. She weighed it on a brass balance, sliding the small weights with one finger, and she never let me touch them. Customers came for two catties and stayed for an hour. When the new supermarket opened across the road, she bought a plastic calculator and put it in the drawer, still wrapped. I asked her why. She said the brass was enough. Last month I walked past the shop. The rice sacks are gone and the counter is a phone repair bench, but the brass balance still hangs on the wall, polished, with a price tag on it.

5. (5) The passage is narrated in the first person by a child. Explain what this point of view limits in our understanding of the grandmother, and what that limitation achieves. (4 marks)

6. (6) Using two specific details, describe the grandmother's character. (4 marks)

7. (7) Which concrete things carry the passage's contrasts, and how do those contrasts develop its theme? (6 marks)

8. (8) The closing detail of the balance, "polished, with a price tag on it", allows two readings. Explain both and say which is more convincing. (4 marks)

Part C: Drama, Dialogue and Subtext (16 marks)

Read the drama extract below and answer items 9 to 12. The extract is an original text written for this paper. Characters: MAY, seventeen, and her father, in a kitchen at night. Stage direction: the father washes up with his back to the audience; water runs throughout. MAY stands at the table holding an opened letter

and does not sit. MAY: I said I will go. FATHER: (without turning) Pass me the plate. MAY: The letter says the first term starts in September. FATHER: This one is still wet. MAY: I said I will go. FATHER: (turns off the tap, pauses for three seconds) Is there rice left?

9. (9) The stage direction keeps the father's back to the audience with water running. Explain what this staging tells the audience about their relationship. (4 marks)

10. (10) MAY repeats "I said I will go". Explain the state of mind this reveals and how the second repetition differs from the first. (4 marks)

11. (11) Three seconds of silence precede the father's final line "Is there rice left?" Explain how the pause and the line create tension. (4 marks)

12. (12) As director, which two staging choices (blocking, lighting, props or sound) would you use to strengthen the tension of the ending? Justify each. (4 marks)

Part D: Film Technique and Adaptation (16 marks)

The following shot description comes from an original film sequence. Answer items 13 to 16. Shot one: extreme long shot, a footbridge crosses the frame, a small figure pauses on it for about ten seconds while traffic flows beneath. Shot two: medium shot, the figure takes an old envelope from a pocket and checks the address again. Shot three: extreme close-up on a finger pressing a torn stamp. Shot four: the same framing as shot two, but the figure has gone, leaving an empty bridge and moving traffic. Sound: distant traffic throughout, one clear paper rustle in shot three, silence otherwise.

13. (13) The sequence moves from an extreme long shot to an extreme close-up. Explain how this shift directs the audience's attention and what it implies. (4 marks)

14. (14) The sequence is almost wordless apart from one paper rustle. Explain the effect of this sound design. (4 marks)

15. (15) Shot four repeats the framing of shot two with the figure gone. Explain the purpose of this repeated composition and how it changes the audience's sense of the bridge. (4 marks)

16. (16) If a passage of novelistic interior monologue were adapted into this wordless sequence, state one gain and one risk of the change. (4 marks)

Part E: Comparative Essay Planning (16 marks)

The poem in Part A and the prose passage in Part B both centre on waiting. Answer items 17 to 20 in the form of an essay plan.

17. (17) Write a debatable thesis for the position that both texts present waiting as daily labour but judge it in opposite ways. (4 marks)

18. (18) Choose two pieces of evidence for each text and explain how each supports your judgement. (4 marks)

19. (19) How do the two texts handle waiting differently? Give one point on narrative perspective and one on imagery. (4 marks)

20. (20) Explain how you would sequence the paragraphs without relying on enumeration such as "first, second, finally". (4 marks)

Part F: Exam Timing and Marking Arithmetic (16 marks)

The following items use the HKEAA 2026 Literature in English framework: Paper 1 Essay Writing is worth 50% and lasts 3 hours; Paper 2 Appreciation is worth 30% and lasts 2 hours; school-based assessment (SBA) is worth 20%. Answer items 21 to 24.

21. (21) A candidate scores 70 on Paper 1, 60 on Paper 2 and 80 on SBA (each out of 100). Calculate the subject mark. (4 marks)

22. (22) Paper 1 lasts 3 hours and requires three essays. Calculate the average time per essay, and the average minutes per mark if each essay is worth 25 marks. (4 marks)

23. (23) Paper 2 lasts 2 hours, with three sections worth 10%, 12% and 8% of the subject mark. Allocate 120 minutes by weighting and check the total. (4 marks)

24. (24) A candidate aims at 450 words in a 60-minute essay but writes 400. Calculate both writing rates in words per minute and the gap. (4 marks)

TutorZone S4 Literature in English practice paper. Original questions and data; all figures are teaching examples.