

考試科目	文學作品分析	系所別	英國語文學系/文學組	考試時間	2月5日(四)第四節
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1. Read the following four short works and write an essay in English answering the questions that follow them below. (70%)

Song (1)

Summer is over upon the sea.
The pleasure yacht, the social being,
that danced on the endless polished floor,
stepped and side-stepped like Fred Astaire,
is gone, is gone, docked somewhere ashore.

The friends have left, the sea is bare
that was strewn with floating, fresh green weeds.
Only the rusty-sided freighter
go past the moon's marketless craters
and the stars are the only ships of pleasure.

—Elizabeth Bishop

vocabulary:

Fred Astaire: an actor famous for his dancing

The Widow (2)

Q: Nice place you have here.

A: I try to keep it up. But it's hard. It's hard.

Q: How many years has it been now?

A: Seven. Seven come September. He was sitting in that chair, right where you are now, and the next minute he was gone. Just a kind of long sigh, and he was gone.

Q: Sounds like a pretty good way to go. Since we all have to go sometime.

A: That's what everybody said. The minister, the undertaker. I suppose I should have been grateful, but if it had been less sudden, it might have been less of a shock. It was as if he *wanted* to go, the way he went so easy.

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Q: Well. I doubt that. But it's you I'm interested in, you in the years since. You look wonderfully well.

A: Ever since I stopped taking the pills. These doctors nowadays, they prescribe the pills, I honestly believe, to kill you. I was having dizzy spells, one leg seemed to be larger than the other, my hands felt like they were full of prickles...it all stopped, once I stopped taking the pills.

Q: And your...mental state?

A: If you mean do I still have all my buttons, you'll have to judge that for yourself. Oh, I'm forgetful, but then I always was. I know if I stand in the middle of the room long enough it'll come to me. It's like the sleeping. At first I used to panic, but now if I wake up at three in the morning I just accept it as what my body wants. Trust your body, is the moral of it all I suppose.

Q: By mental state I meant more grief, loneliness, sense of self, since...you became a widow.

A: Well, first, there's the space. No, first, there's the ghosts. Then there's the space.

Q: Ghosts?

A: Oh yes, right there. All the time. Talking to me, telling me to put one foot in front of the other, not to panic. Rattling the latches at night. As certain as you're sitting there. Many a time I've seen it rock by itself.

Q: Perhaps I should change chairs.

A: Oh no, sit right there. People do all the time.

Q: After the ghosts, space?

A: An amazing amount of it. Amazing. I never noticed the sky before. Seventy years on earth and I never looked at the sky. Just yesterday, there were clouds in it with little downward points, like a mountain range upside down, or a kind of wet handwriting, it looked ever so weird, I can't describe it properly. Ad the trees. The way the trees are so patient, so *themselves*, gathering their substance out of air—it sounds silly, in words.

Q: So you would say then that since your husband's passing your life has taken a turn toward the mystical?

A: Not mystical, *practical*. The income tax, for instance. I do it all myself, federal and state. I never knew I had it in me to enjoy numbers. And people. I have friends, of all ages. Too many at times, I take the phone off the hook. I think what I meant about the space before, it's space you can arrange yourself, there's nobody pushing at you with *his* space, nobody to tell you you're crazy when you're weeding the peas at four in the morning and start singing.

Q: You often sing to yourself?

A: I'm not sure.

Q: I don't mean to pry—

A: Then don't pry.

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One must be prepared, in interviewing the elderly, for these sudden changes of mood, for abrupt closure of access. Human material rubbed so thin by longevity resembles a book whose pages in their tissue fineness admit phrases from the next page or, in their proximity *en face*, have become scrambled inky mirrors one of the other. Paranoia is the natural state of a skidding organism. Volatility is the inevitable condition of angels. The widow's face, so uncannily tranquil and spacious before, has grown hard and narrow as a gem that is cutting the transparent interface of the interview. One must return to scratch:

Q: But, er, ma'am, prying wasn't—I mean, what we want to do here, your testimony is so positive, so unexpectedly so, that we want to bring to the widest possible audience...uh, its great value in this era of widows, to all those others who find themselves alone.

A: You are not alone. You are not. Not.

—John Updike

vocabulary:

- undertaker:** a person who prepares the dead and arranges funerals
latch: a fastener to keep something (such as a door or window) closed
pry: ask a nosy or presumptuous question
en face: facing one another, opposite one another
skid: slide rather than grip the ground; fall rapidly

His Wife's Parents (3)

A man lives with his wife's parents, because if left alone they cried all day because life had passed them by, and it hurt them to see young people so happy, while they were old and unhappy.

If the man wanted to go upstairs his father-in-law would say, I want to go upstairs too, let me ride on your back. But his mother-in-law would want to go too. So he would have to ride the father-in-law on his back, and carry his mother-in-law in his arms.

If they saw him breathing, they would want to breathe. Give us artificial respiration, they would say; and he would have to pump air into them until they tired of breathing.

If he slept, they woke him. We want to sleep too, but we're afraid to sleep while you sleep, because someone might wake us; so stay awake while we sleep, so we'll be safe. But after they were finished

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sleeping they still did not want him to sleep; because it is lonely when somebody sleeps and leaved you alone.

The man said to his wife, I cannot get to like your parents too well. I can't put my finger on the reason, but, nevertheless, there it is...

—Russell Edson

Waiting (4)

When I am alone I am happy.
 The air is cool. The sky is
 flecked and splashed and wound
 with color. The crimson phalloi
 of the sassafras leaves
 hang crowded before me
 in shoals on the heavy branches.
 When I reach my doorstep
 I am greeted by
 the happy shrieks of my children
 and my heart sinks.
 I am crushed.

Are not my children as dear to me
 as falling leaves or
 must one become stupid
 to grow older?
 It seems much as if Sorrow
 had tripped up my heels.
 Let us see, let us see!
 What did I plan to say to her
 when it should happen to me
 as it has happened now?

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—William Carlos Williams

vocabulary:

phalloi: penises, or symbols or representations of a penis

shoal: a sandbank or sandbar that makes the water shallow

Question: *What do these four works say or imply about interpersonal relationships (including family relationships)? What kinds of barriers or obstacles to such relationships are shown, and how do people struggle to overcome them? Use evidence from the works to support your interpretation.*

2. Read the following poem and write a brief essay answering the question that follows below. (30%)

Capitalist Poem #7

I stole the UNICEF box.
 I didn't mean to.
 It was an accident.
 I didn't turn it in at school.
 I wanted it.
 I kept it.
 I hid it in my closet.

The box grew on my mind every day.
 I thought of what it would buy for the Africans.
 Four schoolbooks.
 A dozen meals.
 Eighty-five polio vaccinations.

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Nine hundred million vitamin tablets.

Eventually I think I blew all the money at 7-11.
Some friends came with me and we splurged.

We bought: Chunkies, Big Buddies, baseball cards,
M&M's Charleston Chews, fire balls, rootbeer barrels,
Clark Bars, Snickers, Milky Ways, bubble gum,
Sweet'n'Sours, Red Hots, Marathon Bars, and Pixie Stix.

To be perfectly honest, I might have gotten that money one year at Christmas when my best friend Bobby Wixam broke both his legs sledding. I was OK, even though I was on the sled too when we ran into the light pole. But it was Bobby's birthday, either that day or the next, and the party favors were sets of little blue dinosaurs which I really wanted. They actually looked more like a pack of prehistoric dogs, or wolves. And on Sunday his dad was going to take us to the Redskins game. But when Bobby broke his legs we couldn't go. Everything was cancelled. I was so disappointed that my mother gave me five dollars.

I don't really remember what happened to the UNICEF box.
I might have lost it.

—Campbell McGrath

vocabulary:

UNICEF: the United Nation's Children's Fund

splurge: spend extravagantly

Redskins: a professional football team

Question: *What does this poem express about capitalism? Use evidence from the poem to support your interpretation.*

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- 一、作答於試題上者，不予計分。
- 二、試題請隨卷繳交。