

**OPTION INTERNATIONALE DU BACCALAUREAT
SESSION DE JUIN 2006**

SECTION : AMERICAINE, USA

EPREUVE : LANGUE ET LITTERATURE

DUREE TOTALE : 4 HEURES

SUJETS PRINCIPAUX

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Choose either Option A or B

- a) Write on one of the following four essay topics in Part I and write a **commentary on one** of the two passages in Part II, either poetry or prose.
- b) Write on two of the following essay topics in part I. Those candidates choosing two essay questions may not refer principally to the same works in both essays.

Part I:

1. To what extent may guilt, or absence of that feeling, influence one's destiny in life? Use two works of literature to illustrate your response.
2. "To live is to suffer." To what extent does suffering lead to self-knowledge and redemption in two works you have studied?
3. "The essential dynamic of literature is the struggle to re-establish a lost stability." Discuss the extent to which this statement is true, using two works you have studied.
4. "The medium is the message." Is this true of two works you have studied?

Part II:

1. POETRY - *The Darkling Thrush* by Thomas Hardy
2. PROSE *Call it Sleep* by Henry Roth

The Darkling Thrush

I LEANT upon a coppice gate,
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted night
Had sought their household fires.
The land's sharp features seemed to me
The Century's corpse outleant,
Its crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind its death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervorless as I.
At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead,
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited.
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt and small,
With blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.
So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew,
And I was unaware.

Thomas Hardy, 1902

He went down - wonderingly and just a little disturbed. He didn't mind being called a dunce. After all, she was only joking. Hadn't she laughed and kissed him? And besides, if he hadn't shown any interest in his future uncle, she hadn't shown any in himself. Forgetting Chinese nuts that way! When they were free too, and she knew how fond of them he was. He wondered if the Chinaman would give him any if he went in now and told him that his mother had just gotten some laundry out - what kind? Shirts. Yes. His father was going to dress up too. Maybe stiff collars, though the parcel didn't feel that way. Will you give me some nuts, Mr. - Mr. what? She forgot to ask, my mother forgot! Mr. - Mr. Chinee-Chink! Funny. Walk past anyway and look in. Funny. But - what? What? He had been wondering about something, he told himself. Yes. Something. But now he couldn't remember. Not chinee-nuts. No. Company was coming? Maybe, no.

He left the stoop, turned west. The Chinese laundry was near the corner of Tenth Street and Avenue C. He walked slowly, idly, aware but no longer overcome or even troubled by the movement of vehicles and people. He knew his world now. With a kind of meditative assurance, he singled out the elements of the ever-present din - the far voices, the near, the bells of a junk wagon, the sing-song cry of the I-Cash-clothes man, waving his truncheon-newspaper, the sloshing jangle of the keys on the huge ring on the back of the tinker. There was more blue in the air of afternoons now; the air was brisker, fixing houses in a cold, sunless, brittle light. He looked up. They were both gone - the two cages on the first floor fire-escape. A parrot and a canary. Awk! awk! the first cried. Eee - tee - tee - tweet! the other. A smooth and a rusty pulley. He wondered if they understood each other. Maybe it was like Yiddish and English, or Yiddish and Polish, the way his mother and aunt sometimes spoke. Secrets. What? Was wondering. What? Too cold now. Birds go south, teacher said. But pigeons don't. Sparrows don't. So how? Funny, birds were. In the park on Avenue C. Eat brown. Shit green. On the benches is green. On the railings. So how? Don't you? Apples is red and white. Chicken is white. Bread, watermelon, gum-drops, all different colours. But - Don't say. Is bad. But everybody says. Is bad though ... And he drifted on towards the corner drug-store, glanced at the red and green mysterious fluid in the glass vases and turned right.

But was wondering. He shifted the mind's trinkets, searching for one elusive. Was wondering. Birds? Not birds. Bad words? No. Before that. When? Aunt Bertha, the new man? No. Can't find. Maybe his name? Mr - Mr What. Yes. Maybe. No - But - Approaching the laundry, he gazed up at the low sign, the dull black letters against the dull red. C-h-Chuh-Ch-ar-ley. Charley, American name. Just like Charley in school. But something else maybe, like Yussie is Joey. Gee, forgot. Yussie! L-i-n-g. Ling. Ling-a-ling. Is Jewish. Can't be. Ling. Don't like. How it hangs in the butcher shop. Mister Ling.

Henry Roth
Call it Sleep
1932