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# OXFORD AQA INTERNATIONAL A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE

## UNIT 4: LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS

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Specimen

Morning

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

### Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an Oxford AQA exams 12-page answer booklet

### Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is Oxford AQA Exams.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.
- You must answer **all** questions. There is **one** question in Section A and **one** question in Section B.

### Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.

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**Section A: Prose**

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Read carefully the following passage. It is taken from the novel *Family Life* by Akhil Sharma, first published in 2014. The novel is set in the late 1970s

At the point of this extract, narrated by Ajay, he is 8 years old and his mother has just received the plane tickets which will fly the family from India to USA to join their father who has already emigrated there. Birju is Ajay's older brother.

Write an analysis of this extract, in which you focus on the representation of children.

[25 marks]

At first having the tickets thrilled me.

The next morning, I went to the milk shop at the end of our street. The shop was a cement booth about as wide as a ticket counter. It was a hot, bright morning and I was sweating by the time I arrived. The air near the shop smelled of milk and spoilage and the incense that the milkman burned every morning as part of his prayers. There was a crush of boys on the sidewalk, spilling off into the road, holding up their milk pails, calling out 'Brother, Brother' to get the milkman's attention.

Some of the boys looked at me and glanced away, their heads turned like oscillating table fans. Others glared as if I had taken something from them. To me, both reactions showed jealousy, and they thrilled me.

I came up to a boy and pressed my hands together before me. 'Namaste'\* I said. The boy looked at me strangely. I knew it was odd to speak so formally to someone my own age, but I felt that being excessively proper would make me even more special; not only was I going to America, but I was polite and humble. 'How is your family? Everybody happy? Healthy?' Speaking increased my excitement. I tried not to smile. I took out a luggage tag from the pocket of my short pants. The tag had an elastic loop coming out of a small hole. 'Our tickets arrived. We get these also. Do you want to see?' I held out the tag.

The boy was boxed in. If he refused to look, he would be revealing his jealousy and so appear weak. He took the tag. After handling it for a moment, he gave it back in silence.

I spoke again. 'I learned that everybody in America has their own speedboat'. Nobody had told me any such thing. As I said this, though, it felt true. 'Brother, I can't swim. I hope I don't drown'. To be modest and to also be leaving for America made me feel like I was wonderful.

The crowd shuffled. The boy I was talking to moved away. I turned to another boy and pressed my hands together once more.

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The Sunday after the tickets arrived, my mother took me and Birju to see my grandparents. She shook us awake while it was still dark. We went out onto the roof and bathed using a bucket and a mug. It was strange to bathe with the moon above us. And when the horizon began to brighten that first light felt rare and precious. And then, a little later, as the sky brightened, we walked down the street towards the bus stand. Birju walked beside my mother and I walked in the shadow of the boundary walls. In the shade the dust was heavier and things smelled different, as if a fragment of the night lingered.

Everything about where my grandparents lived was pleasantly miniature. The lane was so narrow I could reach out and touch the houses on both sides. In the morning, when we arrived, the gutters ran with soapy water and the lane smelled of soap and also of hot oil and dough from the parathas being fried.

My grandfather, seeing us, straightened up from sweeping his small whitewashed courtyard. 'Who are these two princes? Are they saints who have come to bless my house?' He wore white pajamas and a homemade sleeveless undershirt with long shoulder straps. I hurried forward and to show that I was good and knew to display respect, touched his feet.

'We have gotten our airplane tickets, nanaji,' Birju said. Hearing this I wished I had said it so that then I would be the one bringing the news.

'I'm not letting both of you go. One of you I will keep'.

'We'll miss you,' Birju said, reaching down to touch our grandfather's feet. He had long, bony arms.

'I will miss you too,' I murmured, again feeling jealous that Birju had said something that made him look good.

\*Namaste is a traditional Indian greeting and gesture of respect.

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## Section B: Poetry

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Read carefully the following poem by W. H. Auden, first published in 1940, and complete the task below.

Write an analysis of this poem in which you explore the significance of Auden's representation of social class and culture.

**[25 marks]**

The Unknown Citizen

(TO JS/07/M378 This Marble Monument is Erected by the State)

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be  
 One against whom there was no official complaint,  
 And all the reports on his conduct agree  
 That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,  
 For in everything he did he served the Greater Community.  
 Except for the War till the day he retired  
 He worked in a factory and never got fired,  
 But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.  
 Yet he wasn't a scab\* or odd in his views,  
 For his Union reports that he paid his dues,  
 (Our report on his Union shows it was sound)  
 And our Social Psychology workers found  
 That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.  
 The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day  
 And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.  
 Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,  
 And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.  
 Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare  
 He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Instalment Plan  
 And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,  
 A phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.  
 Our researchers into Public Opinion are content  
 That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;  
 When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.  
 He was married and added five children to the population,  
 Which our Eugenist\* says was the right number for a parent of his generation,  
 And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.  
 Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:  
 Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

\*scab: a person who refuses to strike or who takes the place of a striking worker

\*Eugenist: a scientist who works to control the inherited characteristics of the population.

**END OF QUESTIONS**