

TEXT 1 – WHAT IS ART FOR?

This edited piece is based on an article by Jeanette Winterson entitled, “What is Art for?” The writer uses the term “art” to include all artistic forms, e.g. painting, writing, music, etc. The original article appears on the writer’s website, jeanettewinterson.com.

An American lady travelling to Paris in 1913 asked the poet Ezra Pound what he thought art was for. Pound replied, ‘Ask me what a rose bush is for.’ I know there is a sneaking feeling, even among art lovers, that art is a luxury. The endless rows over funding centre on an insecurity about the role of art in society. Nobody doubts that hospitals and schools must be paid for by all of us. Mention art, and the answer seems to be that it should rely on the market place; let those who want it pay for it. Art is being treated as a commodity. Dead artists – whether authors or painters or musicians – belong to the Heritage industry. Live artists belong to the PR industry.

Art is a different value system, it leaves us with footprints of beauty. We sense there is more to life than the material world can provide, and art is a clue, an intimation, at its best, a transformation. We can experience it. The experience suggests that the monolith of corporate culture is only a partial reality. This is important information, and art provides it. When you take time to read a book or listen to music or look at a picture, the first thing you are doing is turning your attention inwards. The outside world, with all of its demands, has to wait. As you withdraw your energy from the world, the artwork begins to reach you with energies of its own – very different energies to the getting and spending going on all around. When I read Heaney or Hughes, I’m not just reading a poet’s take on the world, I am entering into a different world – a world built from the beginning on other principles.

‘It’s hard to get the news from poems, but men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there’ (William Carlos Williams). He believed that art affirms and sustains life at its highest level. It is the reason why art is timeless. It is the reason why art does not date. We don’t go to Shakespeare to find out about life in Elizabethan England; we go to Shakespeare to find out about ourselves now.

Mass production is about cloned objects. Art is about individual vision. It has a way of forcing us to concentrate on the thing in itself as it really is. Capitalism doesn’t want you to concentrate – you might notice that much is amiss. A blurred, out of focus consuming is what suits the market place best. Somebody has to buy all that overproduction of useless



Art’s counter-culture, however diverse, holds in plain sight what the material world denies – love and imagination. Art is made out of both – a passionate reckless love of the work in its own right, as though nothing else exists, and an imaginative force that creates something new out of disparate material

Art’s experiments are not funded by huge state programmes, venture capital, or junk bonds, they are done when someone picks up a pen or a brush, or sits down at the piano, or takes a piece of clay and changes it forever. A money culture wants the figures, the bottom line, the sales, the response, it wants a return on its investment, it wants more money. Art can offer no obvious return. There is only the experience. Art can’t change your life. It can waken us to truths about ourselves and our lives, but the responsibility to act on what we find, is ours.

I know of a man who volunteered as an ambulance driver in World War II. While other men had pictures of their sweethearts in their breast pockets, he carried a photo of a Queen Anne chair. In his despair at where human folly had brought him, he needed to remember the glory of the human spirit.

orthodoxy of materialism Yes, art becomes a collector’s item, or a rich man’s trophy. Yes, art is traded for large sums of money, but this is not art’s purpose, nor its nature. If money ceased to exist, art would continue. Why did the Taliban bullet-down the Buddhas? Why did Hitler burn books? Why was Ulysses banned? Why did Franco refuse to show Picasso’s masterpiece, Guernica?

Art is potent, confrontational, difficult. It challenges what we are. We can muzzle the power of art in all sorts of ways – destroying it or banning it is too obvious. Don’t be fooled by the way capitalism co-opts art. It pretends to do

dead objects. In contrast, all art is live theatre. The dialogue continues between object, maker, owner, viewer, listener, reader.

Art is proof of a living spirit that defies the

it for money, but underneath money is terror. Terror that there might be a different way to live. There is a different way, it's a celebration of the human spirit. Art reminds us of all the possibilities we are persuaded to forget.

QUESTION A – 50 Marks

- (i) Based on your reading of TEXT 1, explain three points Jeanette Winterson makes about the value and importance of the arts. Support your response with reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) In TEXT 1, Jeanette Winterson claims that, “We go to Shakespeare to find out about ourselves now.” With reference to a Shakespearean play you have studied for your 2019 Leaving Certificate course, identify an image, moment or episode that revealed something to you about “ourselves now”. Explain the insight(s) you gained about “ourselves now” from engaging with this image, moment or episode. (15)
- (iii) Identify four elements of argumentative or persuasive language, evident in TEXT 1, and explain why their use might encourage readers to agree with the views expressed by the writer in the article. You may include any combination of elements of the language of argument or the language of persuasion in your response. Support your answer with reference to the text. (20)

TEXT 2 – DETECTIVE FICTION

This text is based on edited extracts adapted from *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*, a short story by Arthur Conan Doyle, originally published in 1892.

I had called upon my friend Sherlock Holmes. He was lounging upon the sofa in a purple dressing gown, a pipe within his reach, and a pile of crumpled morning papers, evidently newly studied, near at hand. Beside the couch was a wooden chair, on which sat a very seedy and disreputable hard-felt hat, much the worse for wear, and cracked in several places. A magnifying glass was lying upon the seat of the chair. I seated myself before his crackling fire, for a sharp frost had set in, and the windows were thick with the ice crystals.

‘I suppose,’ I remarked, ‘that, homely as it looks, that hat has some deadly story linked on to it – that it is the clue which will guide you in the solution of some mystery and the punishment of some crime.’

‘No, no, Watson. No crime,’ said Sherlock Holmes, laughing. ‘Only one of those whimsical little incidents which will happen when you have four million human beings all jostling each other within the space of a few square miles. You know Peterson, the commissioner*? It is to him this trophy belongs, he found it. Its owner is unknown. I beg that you look upon it as an intellectual problem.’

‘The facts are these. About four o’clock in the morning, Peterson was making his way homewards down Tottenham Court Road. In front of him he saw, in the gaslight, a tallish man, walking with a slight stagger. A row broke out between this stranger and a little knot of roughs. One of these knocked off the man’s hat. Peterson had rushed forward to protect the stranger from his assailants, but the man, seeing an official looking person in uniform rushing towards him, took to his heels, and vanished amid the labyrinth of small streets. The roughs had also fled.

‘You are certainly joking, Holmes. I have no doubt that I am very stupid, but I must confess that I am unable to follow you. How did you deduce that this man was intellectual?’

For answer Holmes clapped the hat upon his head. It came right over the forehead and settled upon the bridge of his nose. ‘It is a question of cubic capacity,’ said he: ‘a man with so large a brain must have something in it.’

‘The decline of his fortunes, then?’



Peterson was left in possession of the field of battle, and also of the spoils of victory in the shape of this battered hat. He brought the hat to me, knowing that even the smallest problems are of interest to me. Here is my magnifying glass. You know my methods. What can you gather as to the individuality of the man who has worn this article?’

I took the tattered object in my hands and turned it over rather ruefully. It was a very ordinary black hat of the usual round shape, hard, and much the worse for wear. ‘I can see nothing,’ said I, handing it back to my friend.

‘On the contrary, Watson, you can see everything. You fail however, to reason from what you see. You are too timid in drawing your inferences.’

Holmes picked the hat up and gazed at it in the peculiar introspective fashion which was characteristic of him. ‘There are a few inferences which are very distinct, and a few others which represent at least a strong balance of probability. That the man was highly intellectual is, of course, obvious. Also, he was fairly well-to-do, although he has now fallen upon harder times. He has grizzled hair, which he has had cut within the last few days. These are the more patent facts that are to be deduced from his hat.’

ago, and has had no hat since, then he has assuredly gone down in the world. The further point, that his hair is grizzled, and that it has been recently cut, are to be gathered from a close examination of the lower part of the lining. The magnifying glass discloses a large number of hair-ends, clean cut by the scissors of the barber.’

‘Well, it is very ingenious,’ said I, laughing. ‘But since, as you said just now, there has been no crime committed, all this seems to be rather a waste of energy.’

This hat is three years old. These hat brims curled at the edge were fashionable then. It is a hat of the very best quality. Look at the band of ribbed silk and the excellent lining. If this man could afford to buy so expensive a hat three years

Sherlock Holmes had opened his mouth to reply when the door flew open, and Peterson rushed into the apartment with flushed cheeks, dazed with astonishment.

*Commissionaire – a uniformed hotel door attendant.

QUESTION B – 50 Marks

You have been asked to write **the introduction** to a new collection of contemporary detective fiction. In your introduction you should: outline the reasons why you think detective stories have enduring appeal, discuss some of the personal qualities you believe are essential in a memorable fictional detective, and explain why you recommend this particular collection of stories to readers.

TEXT 1 – BETWEEN TWO WORLDS: VILLAGE AND CITY

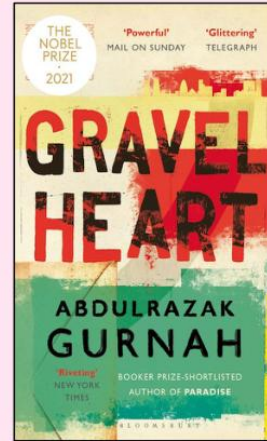
This text is based on an edited extract from *Gravel Heart*, a novel by Abdulrazak Gurnah, 2021 Nobel Prize winner for literature. In this extract Salim, from a small island village in Zanzibar, comes to stay with his uncle in London to further his education. He doesn't know how to belong in this strange city and feels cut off from the world he has left behind.

When I went to live with Uncle Amir in London, it was his wish that I should study for a career in business. "In your circumstances, it is the perfect option and it will allow you to work anywhere in the world. Make money! Think of the outcomes: accountancy, management, consultancy, and at the end of it all plenty of money in the bank."

It would have sounded cowardly to tell him that I should have preferred to study literature. By the time I left for London, I had worked my way through most of my father's books, had made good progress through the school library shelves, had borrowed and exchanged books with friends, and I thought of myself as someone with proven credentials as a future student of literature. When I came to London I realised how unimpressive my credentials were, how much there was to read, how much there was to work through. Uncle Amir had different plans for me and I did not have the courage to say anything about how I might have preferred to proceed with my life.

I was moved by the pleasure they took in my arrival. They both beamed smiles at me and Auntie Asha spoke to me as if I was a diffident younger brother who needed to be brought out of himself. I was too flustered to take in everything immediately, but I noticed the amplitude of space and the expensive furnishings. Auntie Asha took me upstairs to show me my room which was luxurious: a large bed, a dark wardrobe the depth of a coffin, a wide desk, a chest of drawers, a bookshelf, a comfortable reading chair, and still enough space in the middle for a rug. A whole family lived in a room of this size where I had come from. My suitcase, which I you have to push your way through crowds and hold on to your possessions. To be honest, I think I'm scared of that press of people. It gets so crowded on the underground that I feel as if I can't breathe. Trains that travel under the ground! We are so backward! You just cannot imagine how enormous the city is. Love, Salim.

London terrified me so much. The streets confused me. The buses and taxis and cars roared past and churned up my gut. The rush of people and vehicles muddled my sense of direction and panicked me. I felt as if the city despised me, as if I were a tiresome and timorous child who had wandered unwelcome out of the dust and rubble of his puny island shantytown into this place where boldness and greed



had bought new just before I left, looked cheap and flimsy and tiny on that rug, like a cardboard box. I sat on the bed when I was left alone, looking around the room, gazing out of the darkened window then at the clean bare desk with its angled lamp, and I smiled. That is the desk where I will sit and write to Mama about the wonders I encounter and I won't allow the thought of my ignorance to discourage me. I allowed this resolution to overcome the slight feeling of panic I sensed at the edge of my mind. What was I doing here?

Dear Mama,
I hope you are well. It is now October and I started college last week. London is full of people from everywhere in the world. I just had not expected to see that, Indians, Arabs, Africans, Chinese, and I don't know where all the European people come from but they are not all English. When a double-decker bus goes by and you see the faces through the window, it is like a glimpse of a page in an illustrated children's encyclopaedia under the title People of the World. Everywhere you go,

Dear Mama,
I stood on ice today. I woke up in the morning to a deep hush, and went to the window to look out at the back garden, and everything was changed. All the neighbouring roofs were covered with snow and everywhere looked so clean. The pavements were covered too, which was beautiful to walk on at first, crunchy and almost silent, but the snow soon became dirty and perilous from so many feet and from the wash of cars driving by. But that first moment when I stood on ice, I will never forget that. The crisp air made breathing easier. I think today was the happiest day I have had here. Love, Salim.

I learnt to live in London, to avoid being intimidated by crowds and by rudeness. to avoid

and swagger were required for survival.



Abdulrazak
Gurnah

curiosity, not to feel desolate at hostile stares and to walk purposefully wherever I went. I learnt to live with the cold and the dirt, and to evade the angry students at college with their swagger and their sense of grievance. I learnt to live with the chaotic languages of London which did not speak to each other. I tried but could not join in the city's human carnival. I feared the silent empty streets at night and always hurried home.

SECTION II

COMPOSING

(100 marks)

Write a composition on **any one** of the assignments that appear in **bold print** below.

Each composition carries 100 marks.

The composition assignments are intended to reflect language study in the areas of information, argument, persuasion, narration, and the aesthetic use of language.

2. TEXT 1 gives us the protagonist's view of the city of London as he encountered it.

Write a feature article, for a popular magazine, describing your hometown, city, village or area, in which you consider some of the following: the place, its people, values, atmosphere and general way of life.