

Answer **one** question, **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Either 1 Read carefully Poem A and Poem B.

Compare how both poets vividly convey experiences of human isolation.

In your answer you should comment closely on the effects of language, style and form and how contexts are suggested by the writing.

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the poets portray the different settings
- how both convey experiences of loneliness
- the impact of the ways in which the poems end.

POEM A

Out There

If space begins at an indefinite zone
where the chance of two gas molecules colliding
is rarer than a green dog or a blue moon
then that's as near as we can get to nothing.

Nostalgia for the earth and its atmosphere
weakens the flesh and bones of cosmonauts¹.
One woke to find his crewmate in a space suit
and asked where he was going. For a walk.

5

He had to sleep between him and the air-lock.
Another heard a dog bark and a child cry
halfway to the moon. What once had been

10

where heaven was, is barren beyond imagining,
and never so keenly as from out there can
the lost feel earth's the only paradise.

¹ *cosmonauts*: a Russian word for astronauts

POEM B

Desert Places

Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast

Content removed due to copyright restrictions.

To scare myself with my own desert places.

Or 2 Read carefully the following Prose Extract A and Prose Extract B.

Compare how the writers vividly portray the women in these two extracts.

In your answer you should comment closely on the effects of language, style and form and how contexts are suggested by the writing.

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how both writers introduce the characters of the women
- the language both narrators use to convey their attitudes to the women
- the effect of both writers' choices of narrative voice.

PROSE EXTRACT A

The following extract is from a novel. The narrator, Marigold, lives in a boys' boarding school where her father works. Paula is the matron of the school and is from Dorset.

She's lovely, Paula. She has a grand straight back joining on to a long, duchess-like neck and a whoosh of hair scooped into a silky high bundle with a pin. She's tall, with a fine-drawn narrow figure with sloping shoulders and whatever she wears looks expensive. At father's school functions she sails in dressed in anything and sits down anywhere and all eyes turn. She nods and smiles, this way and that, and all the pork butchers' wives in polyester and earrings on the platform look like rows of dropping Christmas trees. 5

Paula has a voice like *Far from the Madding Crowd*¹ – beautiful. "There's my duck," "That's my lover." To show you the full marvellousness of Paula when she says, "That's my lover" to any of the boys who's in her sick room I've never heard of one who sniggered. 10

Paula's deep funny voice goes with her rosy cheeks and bright eyes and hurtling feet. She is always running and usually towards you. "Oh for a beaker full of the warm South,"² always makes me think of Paula, and I told her so the first time she read it to me when I was about eleven. I was a very late reader and it was an effort even at eleven to sit down and read for long so Paula used to read to me. I wish she did so still. 15

"Warm south," says Paula, "Wish I wurr an' not in this God-forzaken hoale."

"Why d'you stay here then?" asks the boy of the day, calling through from the sick room. There is a sick room for solitary sufferers and a San³ for epidemics. The sick room nearly always has someone or other in it, usually one of the youngest ones. They troop up in droves. "Matron, I'm sick," "Matron, I've got a burst appendix," "Matron, I've punctured a lung," and she bundles them off whizz, bang, thermometer, pulse – "Rubbish, my lover. Stop it now, do. Sit through on the bed and drink some cocoa and hush whilst I read to our Marigould." She sorts them out every time, the ones who are sick and the ones just home-sick. 25

¹ *Far from the Madding Crowd*: a novel by Thomas Hardy, set in Dorset

² "Oh for a beaker full of the warm South": quotation from Keats' poem *Ode to a Nightingale*

³ *San*: abbreviation of sanatorium – a sick-bay

PROSE EXTRACT B

The following extract is from a short story. Miss Venetia Reid is the only passenger on a German cargo ship. She dines each night with the captain and crew.

It was really an experience to find herself alone with all those men. How they would laugh when she told them all about it when she got home! They would say that things like that only happened to Venetia. She smiled when she heard the captain on deck singing with that great booming voice of his. Germans were so musical. He had a funny way of strutting up and down on his short legs singing Wagner tunes to words of his own invention. It was *Tannhäuser* he was singing now (that lovely thing about the evening star) but knowing no German Miss Reid could only wonder what absurd words he was putting to it. It was as well. 5

‘Oh, what a bore that woman is, I shall certainly kill her if she goes on much longer.’ Then he broke into Siegfried’s martial strain. ‘She’s a bore, she’s a bore, she’s a bore. I shall throw her into the sea.’ 10

And that of course is what Miss Reid was. She was a crashing, she was a stupendous, she was an excruciating bore. She talked in a steady monotone, and it was no use to interrupt her because then she started again from the beginning. She had an insatiable thirst for information and no casual remark could be thrown across the table without her asking innumerable questions about it. She was a great dreamer and she narrated her dreams at intolerable length. There was no subject upon which she had not something *prosy*¹ to say. She had a truism for every occasion. She hit on the commonplace like a hammer driving a nail into the wall. She plunged into the obvious like a clown in a circus jumping through a hoop. Silence did not abash her. Those poor men far away from their homes and the patter of little feet, and with Christmas coming on, no wonder they felt low; she redoubled her efforts to interest and amuse them. She was determined to bring a little gaiety into their dull lives. For that was the awful part of it: Miss Reid meant well. She was not only having a good time herself, but she was trying to give all of them a good time. She was convinced that they liked her as much as she liked them. She felt that she was doing her bit to make the party a success and she was naïvely happy to think that she was succeeding. She told them all about her friend Miss Price and how often she had said to her: Venetia, no one ever has a dull moment in your company. It was the captain’s duty to be polite to a passenger and however much he would have liked to tell her to hold her silly tongue he could not, but even if he had been free to say what he liked, he knew that he could not have brought himself to hurt her feelings. Nothing stemmed the torrent of her loquacity². It was as irresistible as a force of nature. Once, in desperation, they began talking German, but Miss Reid stopped this at once. 20 25 30 35

‘Now I won’t have you saying things I don’t understand. You ought all to make the most of your good luck in having me all to yourselves and practise your English.’

¹ *prosy*: prosaic, dull

² *loquacity*: talkativeness

BLANK PAGE

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced online in the Cambridge Assessment International Education Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download at www.cambridgeinternational.org after the live examination series.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which itself is a department of the University of Cambridge.