
INTERNATIONAL GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 1 Literary Non-fiction and Composition

Time allowed: 2 hours

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an Oxford International AQA Examinations 8-page Answer Book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your Answer Book.
- Answer **all** questions from **Section A**. Answer **one** question from **Section B**.
- Write your answers in the Answer Book provided.
- Do all rough work in your Answer Book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- You must **not** use a dictionary.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- There are 40 marks for **Section A** and 40 marks for **Section B**.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.
- You will be assessed on your **reading** in **Section A**.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your **writing** in **Section B**:
 - 30 marks are awarded for communication and organisation;
 - 10 marks are awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Advice

- You should spend about 1 hour on **Section A** and about 1 hour on **Section B**.
- You should make sure you leave sufficient time to check your answers.

Section A

Answer **all** questions in this section.
You should spend about 1 hour on this section.

In 1944 the writer's grandmother fled Latvia in Eastern Europe because the Russian troops were advancing. Here the writer tells of how she meets, many years later, her grandmother's sister and family who stayed behind in Latvia.

Read **lines 01 to 10** and answer **Question 01**.

The woman who could be my grandmother, but is not, motions for me to follow her into the weary house. 1

I can hear the chirruping of a bad hip as she hitches slowly down the narrow hallway, which is lined with baskets of flower bulbs, knobbly with dirt and age. As she leads me into what appears to be a sitting room, I see her draw a balled-up handkerchief from the cuff of her cardigan and dab it at her eyes – eyes that I must keep convincing myself are not, in fact, my grandmother's eyes. My grandmother Livija's eyes were brown, edged in blue, I remind myself. This woman's are blue, edged in brown. 5

She scrapes a chair back from the table, indicates I should sit.

It's easier for her to let photographs speak. 10

Question 1

0 1 What do you learn about the woman who leads the writer into the house?

[5 marks]

Now read **lines 11 to 31** and answer **Question 02**.

Here, she says, pulling a thick album from a cabinet in the corner of the room. She sets it on the table between us, lifts away the yellowing layers of parchment that cover each face. 11

Livija, she says. And my grandmother appears to us, a young woman, the hem of her skirt hovering above the stiffened grass.

Next to her, a boy buttoned into a suit as rigid and unyielding as the fence posts in front of which they pose, itching neck and rakish grin stifled--*Janis!*--said just like that, an exclamation, my grandmother's brother. 15

So this must be you? I ask, pointing to a little girl who sits on a chair between the other two in the photograph. Her hair is pulled into braids, her feet end in stiff boots. She looks like she has been swinging them back and forth. She nods. 20

Ausma. My grandmother's sister, born when my grandmother, Livija, was fourteen, and whom I have specifically travelled here to meet, my *history in flesh and blood*.

Was this portrait taken at the farm? I ask Ausma.

Yes, she says.

My grandmother told me all about the farm, I say. 25

Ausma doesn't immediately respond.

It sounds like an incredible place, I say.

She flips a page. I can hear a clock somewhere in the house, its second hand conducting the tiny eternity that has opened between us.

You should know that your grandmother's stories aren't my stories, Ausma says at last. 30
Her memories aren't my memories. 31

Question 2

0 2

What do you learn about the writer's grandmother, Livija, and Livija's brother and sister?
[6 marks]

Now read **lines 32 to 51** and answer **Question 03**.

Later. I'm sitting. I'm sitting at a table. I'm sitting at a table with Ausma and her husband, a man named Harijs, who, although he is in his mid-eighties, has just been scrambling around on the roof, checking for a possible leak. We are joined by two of Ausma and Harijs's three children, and their children's children. Also at the table that day is the family's first great-grandchild, a girl, just turned two, and when I hear her name for the first time, I have to ask the family to repeat it because it sounds so much like my grandmother's name: Liva. We are seated like this, so many generations, so close to one another, that every voice seems to begin inside my own chest. Eat, someone says. Drink, someone else says. Hours pass. There is no room to walk around the table where we toast and cry and eat and laugh. Liva crawls across my lap to reach her grandmother -- Ausma's youngest daughter, my second cousin, a woman named Ligita, who upon seeing me for the first time, ran forward and embraced me so fiercely that I felt my own ribs under the pressure of her forearms, work-strong, sunned to the color of cloves. We've waited for you, she said, as she held me. We waited, and now you're really here. 32 35 40 45

To be part of a family is to know instinctively the subtleties behind what remains unsaid, and why.

And yet, with my new, long-lost family, it was clear that I still had so much more to learn.

About Ausma, and what happened to her after my grandmother left Latvia. 50

But also, the farm. 51

Question 3

0 3

What does the writer discover about her long-lost family?

[6 marks]

Turn over for the next question

Now read **lines 52 to 68** and answer **Question 04**.

I had assumed someone from our family must still be living at the farm, because I had not heard otherwise. And yet, since my arrival, no one had brought it up, or suggested that we go there, and I could sense the silence surrounding it is something soft, vulnerable, like the things that are revealed when an old log is lifted. 52 55

And so, I decided, at last, to ask if someone could take me to the farm.

In the quiet that follows, I can hear the shrilling of sparrows outside, the exaggerated yipping of a puppy. Through the window, I glimpse the dog's silhouette: pawing and biting at the shadows the birds cast as they swoop over the lawn.

Gone, I think I hear someone say over the cries of the dog and the birds. 60

I wait for more. But the silence continues to extend between us, drifting like a fine mist, until it occurs to me that no one feels comfortable giving me the words for what this means, that they need me to discover it on my own.

I'm just curious about the place where my grandmother grew up, I say. I have no other expectations, if you could just show me the way. And at that, the room seems to contract with relief. 65

Off to the car we trundle, including the baby, tiny Liva, shod in rubber boots, trying with unbending knees to outtrot the puppy. 68

Question 4

0	4
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How does the writer create a sense of mystery around the farm?

[6 marks]

Now read **lines 69 to 94** and answer **Question 05**.

When the car finally stops, we step out into a landscape that holds only still air, the hush of a place that has begun to forget what it is to hold a conversation with anyone other than itself. 69 70

And then, the house emerges from behind a screen of weeds.

I recognize it, in the way that one can sometimes briefly recognize, in the faces of the very elderly, all the versions of every age they have ever been.

From the outside, it is exactly as my grandmother described--there is the window in front of which she and her brother and sister posed for their portraits. 75

And now the stories are returning to me: there is the stoop from which my grandmother's mother would have shouted for her to stop playing in the hemp fields, where my grandmother sometimes liked to sneak on hot days, the smell of the sun on the leaves like something sweet and something dead, all at once.

And there is the half of the house where Livija's father's elderly cousin would have lived with his wife, a woman said to have lacked the will to contain her chickens, who let them run everywhere, pecking and scratching like a mad herd, laying, without qualm, in their cousin-chickens' nests, until no one could say whose eggs were whose or whose chicks were whose. 80

And I'm thinking how remarkable it is that the house still appears to hold the shape of its memories, when I begin to register that something is not quite right. I skirt the edge of the house, and as I approach its flank, that's when I see what has previously remained hidden: something has gored the roof. Slivers of wood, greasy strands of insulation dangle at the edges of the hole like flaps of cartilage. 85

All the while, the family leaves me alone to my discovery.

They stand at a respectful distance, at the edge of the property, where the last of the unmelted snow has drifted into swells, rock-studded and stubborn, resistant to the thin sun. 90

I'm grateful that they didn't try to define the scope of the loss for me.

What had Ausma said?

Your grandmother's stories aren't my stories. 94

Question 5

0	5
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What methods does the writer use to recreate the scene for the reader?

[9 marks]Now think about the **whole** passage (lines **1** to **94**) and answer **Question 6**.**Question 6**

0	6
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What do you learn about the importance of this visit for the writer?

[8 marks]**Turn over for the next section**

Section B

Answer **one** question in this section.
You should spend about 1 hour on this section.

Remember to:

- spend time thinking about the question and planning your ideas
- organise your ideas into paragraphs
- communicate clearly
- spend 5 minutes checking and editing your writing.

Either**Question 7**

0	7
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'Family is always more important than friends.' Discuss.

[40 marks]**Or****Question 8**

0	8
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Describe a place you know from childhood that seems different to you now.

[40 marks]**Or****Question 9**

0	9
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Write a story with the title: 'Memories'.

[40 marks]**END OF QUESTIONS**

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