

QUESTION 1: PRESCRIBED POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION

somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond
– ee cummings

1 somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond
2 any experience, your eyes have their silence:
3 in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,
4 or which i cannot touch because they are too near

5 your slightest look easily will unclose me
6 though i have closed myself as fingers,
7 you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens
8 (touching skillfully, mysteriously) her first rose

9 or if you wish to be close to me, i and
10 my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly,
11 as when the heart of this flower imagines
12 the snow carefully everywhere descending;

13 nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals
14 the power of your intense fragility: whose texture
15 compels me with the colour of its countries,
16 rendering death and forever with each breathing

17 (i do not know what it is about you that closes
18 and opens; only something in me understands
19 the voice of your eyes is deeper than all the roses)
20 nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

Cummings once commented that 'love is the mystery-of-mysteries'.

Critically discuss to what extent this view of love is evident in the poem by referring to the **paradoxes**, **imagery** and **tone**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (1–1½ pages).

[10]

QUESTION 2: PRESCRIBED POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

VULTURES – Chinua Achebe

1 In the greyness
2 and drizzle of one despondent
3 dawn unstirred by harbingers
4 of sunbreak a vulture
5 perching high on broken
6 bones of a dead tree
7 nestled close to his
8 mate his smooth
9 bashed-in head, a pebble
10 on a stem rooted in
11 a dump of gross
12 feathers, inclined affectionately
13 to hers. Yesterday they picked
14 the eyes of a swollen
15 corpse in a water-logged
16 trench and ate the
17 things in its bowel. Full
18 gorged they chose their roost
19 keeping the hollowed remnant
20 in easy range of cold
21 telescopic eyes...
22 Strange
23 indeed how love in other
24 ways so particular
25 will pick a corner
26 in that charnel-house
27 tidy it and coil up there, perhaps
28 even fall asleep – her face
29 turned to the wall!

30 ...Thus the Commandant at Belsen
31 Camp going home for
32 the day with fumes of
33 human roast clinging
34 rebelliously to his hairy
35 nostrils will stop
36 at the wayside sweet-shop
37 and pick up a chocolate
38 for his tender offspring
39 waiting at home for Daddy's
40 return...

41 Praise bounteous
42 providence if you will
43 that grants even an ogre
44 a tiny glow-worm
45 tenderness encapsulated
46 in icy caverns of a cruel
47 heart or else despair

48 for in the very germ
49 of that kindred love is
50 lodged the perpetuity
51 of evil.

- 2.1 How does the alliteration in line 2 contribute to the atmosphere? (2)
- 2.2 What does the speaker find 'Strange' in line 22? (2)
- 2.3 Comment on the contrast between the physical description of the Commandant and his interaction with his child. (3)
- 2.4 Refer to lines 48–51: 'for in the very germ of that kindred love is lodged the perpetuity of evil'.
Critically comment on the parallel drawn between the vultures and the Commandant at Belsen. (3)