SECTION A


The Sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The skylark and thrush,
5
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around
To the bells’ cheerful sound,
While our sports shall be seen
On the Ecchoing Green.
10
Old John with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak
Among the old folk.
They laugh at our play
And soon they all say:
‘Such, such were the joys
When we all, girls and boys,
In our youth-time were seen
On the Ecchoing Green.’

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry;
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers,
Many sisters and brothers
Like birds in their nest
Are ready for rest;
And sport no more seen
On the darkening Green.

2. Provide a close reading of the following extract from William Wordsworth’s poem ‘We Are Seven’ and discuss the ways in which the poem fits into the wider project of the Lyrical Ballads of 1798:

A simple child, dear brother Jim,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb –
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl,
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.
She had a rustic woodland air  
And she was wildly clad;  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair — 
Her beauty made me glad.

‘Sisters and brothers, little maid, 
How many may you be?’ 
‘How many? Seven in all’, she said, 
And wondering looked at me.

‘And where are they? I pray you tell?’ 
She answered, ‘Seven are we; 
And two of us at Conway dwell, 
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the churchyard lie, 
(My sister and my brother), 
And in the churchyard cottage I 
Dwell near them with my mother.’

‘You say that two at Conway dwell, 
And two are gone to sea, 
Yet you are seven — I pray you tell, 
Sweet maid, how this may be?’

Then did the little maid reply, 
‘Seven boys and girls are we; 
Two of us in the churchyard lie, 
Beneath the churchyard tree.’

‘You run about, my little maid, 
Your limbs they are alive; 
If two are in the churchyard laid, 
Then ye are only five.’
1. “The ‘spots of time’ that are described in *The Prelude* are not just memories in which time stands still but images and pictures that have been imprinted on the mind as a result of an unusually intense emotional experience and which continue to shape the mind long after the experience of the event.” Discuss this statement in relation to the following passage from the two part *Prelude* of 1799:

... One Christmas-time, 330
The day before the holidays began,
Feverish and tired and restless, I went forth
Into the fields, impatient for the sight
Of those three horses which should bear us home,
My brothers and myself. There was a crag, 335
An eminence which from the meeting-point
Of two highways ascending, overlooked
At least a long half-mile of those two roads,
By each of which the expected steeds might come,
The choice uncertain. Thither I repaired
Up to the highest summit. 'Twas a day
Stormy, and rough, and wild, and on the grass
I sat, half-sheltered by a naked wall;
Upon my right hand was a single sheep,
A whistling hawthorn on my left, and there,
Those two companions at my side, I watched
With eyes intensely straining, as the mist
Gave intermitting prospects of the wood
And plain beneath. Ere I to school returned
That dreary time, ere I had been ten days 350
A dweller in my Father's house, he died,
And I and my two Brothers, orphans then,
Followed his body to the grave. The event,
With all the sorrow which it brought, appeared
A chastisement, and when I called to mind
That day so lately past, when from the crag
I looked in such anxiety of hope,
With trite reflections of morality,
Yet with the deepest passion, I bowed low
to God, who thus corrected my desires.
And afterwards the wind and sleety rain,
And all the business of the elements,
The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
And the bleak music of that old stone wall,
The noise of wood and water, and the mist
Which on the line of each of those two roads
Advanced in such indisputable shapes —
All these were spectacles and sounds to which
I often would repair, and thence would drink
As at a fountain.

2. Seamus Perry argues that the short third verse (lines 31-36) of Coleridge’s *Kubla Khan* reconciles “the diverse worlds of verses one and two” but that the last 18 lines of the poem cast doubt on the success of this reconciliation. Critically discuss this contention in the course of a close reading of the poem.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree,
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
    Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.
But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place, as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail!
And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever,
It flung up momentely the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean.
And mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome, those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, ‘Beware, beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread —
For he on honey-dew hath fed
And drunk the milk of paradise.’

SECTION C

1. Andrew Motion writes of Keats’s odes that: “They struggle to transcend time, and are fully aware of being written within time.” Discuss this statement in relation to the following stanzas from the ‘Ode to a Nightingale’:

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk;
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,
That thou, light-winged dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.
2

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
   Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of flora and the country green,
   Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
Oh for a beaker full of the warm south,
   Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
   With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
   And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim —

3

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
   What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
   Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
   Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
   Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
   And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.
2.

Provide a close reading of John Keats’ “To Autumn” in which you discuss the poem’s treatment of the theme of change.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o’er-brimm’d their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap’d furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.
Where are the songs of Spring? Aye, where are they?
    Think not of them, thou hast thy music too —
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
    And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
    Among the river sallows, borne aloft
    Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
    Hedge-cricketts sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
    And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.