INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Answer TWO questions altogether: one from each section.

Answer each question in a SEPARATE BOOK.

Candidates are requested to write legibly

This paper consists of 13 pages. Please ensure that you have them all
SECTION 1: CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN POETRY.

Answer ONE question from this section.

QUESTION 1. (A)
Read the poem below carefully, and then answer the questions that follow.

THE TOILET CLEANER AT O.R. TAMBO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
by Vonani Bila

Young and energetic
with a clean-shaven head
and well-trimmed beard
and red work wear
smiles broadly:
“Good afternoon sir,
welcome to my office.”
Then he goes to the cubicle, cleans it,
kills the odour of any diarrhoea
with detergents

The man in the urinal
wearing an expensive black suit
executive tie and pointed shoes –
the man who pushes a black suitcase
full of modern gadgets, cash, credit cards,
important documents and perhaps a bottle of whisky
this familiar black diamond says:
“You have a nice office man!”

He bursts into uncontrollable laughter
Hahaha! Hahaha! Hahaha!
Hehehe! Hehehe! Hehehe!
Kekeke! Kekeke! Kekeke!
Wakakaka! Wakakakaaa!
Wakakakakakakaaaaa!
Wakakakakakakakakaaaaa!
1. Comment on the representation of the two male characters in the poem. How are they presented? How does the speaker use appearance, detail and dialogue to build up the difference between the two characters? How would you describe the speaker’s attitude to the two men? Support your answer with specific phrases or images from the poem. (30)

2. What is the social and political commentary that underlies the speaker’s depiction of the two men in the poem? (10)

3. Comment on the effect of the exaggerated laughter that concludes the poem, and discuss the speaker’s intention behind this hyperbolic device. (10)

[50 marks]

QUESTION 1. (B)
Read the poem below carefully, and then answer the question that follows.

I FORGET TO LOOK
by Gabeba Baderoon

The photograph of my mother at her desk in the fifties has been in my purse for twenty years, its paper faded, browning, the scalloped edge bent then straightened.

The collar of her dress folds discreetly. The angle of her necks looks as though someone has called her from far away.

She was the first in her family to take the bus from Claremont up the hill to the University.
At one point during the lectures at medical school, black students had to pack their notes, get up and walk past the ascending rows of desks out of the theatre.

Behind the closed doors, in an autopsy, black students were not meant to see the uncovering and cutting of white skin.

Under the knife, the skin, the mystery of sameness.

In a world that defined how black and white could look at each other, touch each other, my mother looks back, her poise unmarred.

Every time I open my purse, she is there, so familiar I forget to look at her.

In his essay “The Rediscovery of the Ordinary” (1991) the critic Njabulo Ndebele differentiates between what he calls the ‘spectacular’ and ‘the ordinary’. He explains: ‘The spectacular documents; it indicts implicitly; it is demonstrative, preferring exteriority to interiority; it keeps the larger issues of society in our minds, obliterating the details’. By contrast, he defines the ordinary as ‘forcing attention on necessary detail’ and claims that ‘paying attention to the ordinary and its methods will result in a significant growth of consciousness’.

Write an essay of approximately 3 pages, in which you critically discuss how Baderoon uses ‘the ordinary’ in her poem, and what the social or political consequences of her focus on ‘interiority’ might be.

[50 marks]
QUESTION 1. (C)
Read the poem below carefully, and then answer the question that follows.

DON’T THINK OF ME AS A CHAOTIC WRITER
by Mlungisi Mkhize

Don’t think of me as a poet
Blind of beauty
A poet who always
Sings songs of grief
A chaotic writer
I love to sing of beauty
And sing of joy
But I wake up
In the morning
Trudge the ghetto paths
Searching for beauty
That I can sing of joy.
But to my dismay
I meet unemployed
Young ones
I see
Crumbling mud-houses
And daily
I meet widows
I meet urchins
I meet orphans
I meet the unwillingly drunk
People
So tell me honestly
O dear friend
How can I write
About big apples, sheets of
Green grass
Green valleys, beautiful
Flowers
Big bungalows, and shady
Sycamores
For in my part of the world
It’s only a barren piece of
Earth
Rich with the fragrance of poverty.

Write an essay in which you critically discuss the view of poetry and the role of the poet as it is put forward by Mkhize in this poem. In your essay consider the relationship between Art and Society, and between the Sociological and the Literary. Your essay should be approximately 3 pages.

[50 marks]
SECTION 2: POETRY IN THE WORLD.

Answer ONE question from this section.

Question 2 (A)

“In literary satire, unlike in the comic, the laughter is not an end in itself. Satire is largely employed as a literary device to ridicule human behaviour in numerous ways.”

In view of the above statement, discuss ways in which satire is used in the two poems, “Dead Boy” and “Humanity I Love You”, reproduced below. Using the following points as your guide, write a short essay of between THREE and FOUR pages, in which you address the following points:

- Briefly explain the differences between the comic and satire with examples from the two poems reprinted below.
- The poetic/literary devices that are used to make these two poems fit the category of “satirical” poetry.
- The similarities and the differences in the use of satire evident in the two poems.
- Some of the human foibles that are rebutted in both poems. (You also need to explain in ways in which these foibles are different and, yet, symbolically similar)
- The view that in both poems the “tone hovers perilously between irony and sorrow”.

[50 marks]

DEAD BOY

by John Crowe Ransom

The little cousin is dead, by foul subtraction,
A green bough from Virginia's aged tree,
And neither the county kin love the transaction
Nor some of the world of outer dark, like me.

5 He was not a beautiful boy, nor good, nor clever,
A black cloud full of storms too hot for keeping,
A sword beneath his mother's heart,—yet never
Woman bewept her babe as this is weeping.

A pig with a pasty face, I had always said.
10 Squealing for cookies, kinned by pure pretence
With a noble house. But the little man quite dead,
I can see the forebears' antique lineaments.

The elder men have strode by the box of death
To the wide flag porch, and muttering low send round
15 The bruit of the day. O friendly waste of breath!
Their hearts are hurt with a deep dynastic wound.

He was pale and little, the foolish neighbours say;
The first-fruits, saith the preacher, the Lord hath taken;
But this was the old tree's late branch wrenched away,
20 Aggrieving the sapless limbs, the shorn and shaken.

**HUMANITY I LOVE YOU**

*by e.e. cummings*

Humanity i love you
because you would rather black the boots of
success than enquire whose soul dangles from his
watch-chain which would be embarrassing for both

5 parties and because you
unflinchingly applaud all
songs containing the words country home and mother when sung at the old howard

Humanity i love you because
10 when you're hard up you pawn your intelligence to buy a drink and when you're flush pride keeps you from the pawn shops and because you are continually committing nuisances but more especially in your own house

Humanity i love you because you are perpetually putting the secret of life in your pants and forgetting it's there and sitting down
20 on it and because you are forever making poems in the lap of death Humanity

25 i hate you

Question 2 (B)
Read the poems reproduced below and answer the contextual questions based on either or both of them. Use mark allocation as guide to the length of your responses.

WE REAL COOL
by Gwendolyn Brooks

The Pool Players.
Seven at the Golden Shovel.

We real cool. We Left school. We
5 Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We
Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We
Jazz June. We
10 Die soon.

1. Whose voice and opinions come through in the poem? How does Brooks create a persona for the pool players that both sounds like them and sounds like someone criticizing them? (10)

2. Why does Brooks put the word “We” at the end of almost every line? What effect does this have on the way you read the poem? Discuss citing specific word/phrases from the poem to support your views (10)

3. Refer to the following statement by Gwendolyn Brooks on what stimulated her to write the poem and answer the question that follows:

“I was passing by a pool-hall in my community one afternoon, during school time, and I saw, therein, a little bunch of boys… and they were shooting pool. But instead of asking myself, ‘why aren’t they in school?’; I asked myself ‘I wonder what they feel about themselves?’ And, perhaps, they might have considered themselves contemptuous of the establishment – or at least they wanted to feel that they were contemptuous of the establishment – and they may want to thumb their noses at the establishment”.

What does Brooks mean by “the establishment” and in what way does this imply about the youth’s race, their socio-economic status as well as their reaction to “the establishment”? (10)

HIV NIGHTS
by Phaswane Mpe

we called them gumbas
our friday night parties
we ate & drank with our mouths
& bottoms too
the beers the brandies the food
then in the early hours of the morning
we carried gumbas to our student rooms
where we gulped
steaming semen & vaginal juices
thus we killed friday nights
& our dreams
we drowned our dreams
in oceans of alcohol
& baked them away
in the heat of the mornings
there could be no cooler breaks
from the burden of books
the disappointing grades
the markers’ corrosive comments
until the doctors looked us gravely in the eye
& said
but children it’s too late now
we still do not have a cure

4. Comment on the language used throughout Mpe’s ‘HIV Nights’ and explore the manner in which it is used deliberately to shock and jar the readers about the consequences of engaging in reckless behaviour. (10)

5. To what extent do you think your reading of the poem is influenced by stereotypes? Does Mpe acknowledge or undermine these stereotypes in any way? (10)

[50 marks]
Question 2 (C)
Critically review Charles Mungoshi’s poem below and answer the questions that follow.

IF YOU DON’T STAY BITTER FOR TOO LONG

by Charles Mungoshi

If you don’t stay bitter and angry for too long
you might finally salvage something useful
from the old country

a lazy half sleep summer afternoon
for instance, with the whoof-whoof of grazing cattle in your ears
tails swishing, flicking flies away

or the smell of newly tamed soil
with birds hopping about in the wake of the plough
in search of worms

or the pained look of your father
a look that took you all these years and lots of places to understand
the bantering tone you used with your grandmother and their old laugh
that said nothing matters but death

If you don’t stay bitter and angry for too long
and have the courage to go back
you will discover that the autumn smoke
writes different more helpful messages in the high skies of the old country.

1. Explain, in your own words, the central point the poet is making in this poem. Cite specific words/phrases from the poem to support your views. (10)
2. Given the socio-political and historical contexts of the poem, who is the implicit addressee (the “you”) referred to throughout the poem? Your answer should include extracts from the poem. 

(5)

3. We often associate smoke with destruction as it conjures up images of arson, gunfire, industrial smoke and the destruction of buildings and farmland. Why do you think the poet (i) personifies smoke and (ii) imbues it with positive and constructive connotations in lines 23-25? Discuss and refer to the poem as a whole. 

(10)

4. Comment on the use of a simple conversational style throughout the poem and explain how it contributes to the overall thematic concern of the poem. 

(5)

5. Refer to the first and the last stanzas of the poem and critically comment on why the persona moves from a tentative suggestion in the first stanza to a more confident advice in the last stanza. 

(10)

6. Critically comment on the use of the pastoral device. Does it augment or detract from the polemic aspect of the poem? Discuss. 

(10)

[50 marks]