



Cambridge IGCSE™

WORLD LITERATURE

0408/22

Paper 2 Unseen Poetry

May/June 2022

1 hour 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 30.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Question 1

Read carefully the poem which describes birds flying across the sky at the beginning of spring.

Starlings

Starlings at dusk pour across
the dull beacon¹ of the distant sun.

A high crying, cold as winter
In the day's dark metal, they spin,
eddy² and spill towards
the horizon's walking throng³ of trees.

5

This fist of birds, flashing black
against the sky's red warning,
batters through the wooden veins
and tells the buds of coming summer.

10

The slow sap⁴, thick with a season's sleep,
quickens with the clashing song

of the driven starlings, stirs
the sluggish branches to tell

the buried roots of spring ...
And yet time hangs like a dead fruit.

15

Who knows this cycled secret
of spinning birds and sensing trees?

Who hears the signals sounding there?
Only blind eyes see the breaking year!

20

The soundless voice that tells the trees,
the wheeling arm that swings

this black fist of starlings, is rooted
in the ten million years that hover here.

¹ *beacon*: guiding light

² *eddy*: fly in circles

³ *throng*: crowd

⁴ *sap*: the liquid inside a tree

(a) How does the poet vividly describe the starlings? [15]

(b) How does the poet dramatically explore the link between the starlings and the changing seasons? [15]

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