In the gobbet questions you are expected to ground your response in the given text. You should identify the text’s immediate context and relate the text to one or more of the following, making reference to the play as a whole:

- characterization
- imagery
- theme
- setting

JULIUS CAESAR

Either

(a) Cassius: Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
   Like a Colossus, and we petty men
   Walk under his huge legs and peep about
   To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
   Men at some time are masters of their fates:
   The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
   But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
   Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that ‘Caesar’?
   Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
   Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
   Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
   Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with ‘em,
   Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Caesar.
   Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,
That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was famed with more than with one man?
When could they say till now, that talk’d of Rome,
That her wide walls encompass’d but one man?
Now is it Rome indeed and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.
O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
There was a Brutus once that would have brook’d
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king.

Or

(b) It has been said that Brutus would have been a better title for this play than Julius Caesar. Do you agree?

Or

(c) Julius Caesar is a tragedy of good intentions. How far do you agree with this statement?

THE TEMPEST

Either

(a) Prospero: You do look, my son, in a moved sort
As if you were dismayed. Be cheerful, sir.
Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Ye all which it inherit shall dissolve
And like this insubstantial pageant faded
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. Sir I am vexed.
Bear with my weakness – my old brain is troubled.
Be not disturbed with my infirmity.
If you be pleased, retire into my cell
And there repose. A turn or two i’ll walk
To still my beating mind.

Or
(b) How fair is the comment that Prospero represents the world of the mind and Caliban that of the senses?

Or

(c) How does Shakespeare’s use of imagery and language contribute to the overall themes of The Tempest?

OTHELLO

Either

(a) Iago I am glad of it; for now I shall have reason
    To show the love and duty that I bear you
    With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,
    Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.
    Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio;
    Wear your eye thus, not jealous nor secure:
    I would not have your free and noble nature,
    Out of self-bounty, be abused; look to’t:
    I know our country disposition well;
    In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
    They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
    Is not to leave’t undone, but keep’t unknown.

   Othello Dost thou say so?

   Iago She did deceive her father, marrying you;
    And when she seem’d to shake and fear your looks,
    She loved them most.

   Othello And so she did.

   Iago Why, go to then;
    She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
    To seal her father’s eyes up close as oak-
    He thought ‘twas witchcraft--but I am much to blame;
    I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
    For too much loving you.

Or

(b) Desdemona does have some fault in the tragic events of the play. Discuss.

Or

(c) In spite of the constant references, military battle is avoided in Othello only to be replaced by battles of the mind. Discuss.
SECTION B  
POETRY – SET TEXTS  

OWEN  

Either  

(a) How relevant are Wilfred Owen’s poems today? Comment with reference to at least three poems.  

Or  

(b) Wilfred Owen manages to shock his readers by beguiling them with deceptive titles for his poems and then using stark realism coupled with effective poetic devices to get his message across. Using at least three poems, discuss Owen’s poetic technique.  

KEATS  

Either  

(a) Keats’s letters reveal a lifelong, almost obsessively intense preoccupation with the relationship between Beauty and Truth. Through clear reference to at least three of Keats’s major poems, show how this poet’s exploration of this relationship is consistently open-ended, tentative, and always subject to revision.  

Or  

(b) Keats’s exceptional gift for evoking the senses is never used for its own sake but as a means of exploring fundamental human and existential issues. Discuss with reference to at least three major poems.  

DICKINSON  

Either  

(a) Tracing the powerful intersection of tradition and experience in Dickinson’s poetry, the reader notices Dickinson using the modes and motifs of hymn culture in order to manipulate the space between concept and experience, a space in which Dickinson challenges old ways of thinking and expresses her own innovative ideas on spirituality. Discuss with reference to at least FOUR poems.  

Or  

(b) With reference to a range of poems, discuss Dickinson’s use of images of flight and community as metaphors for the divine.
Section C
LITERARY CRITICISM

In this exercise of practical criticism, you are asked to write an appreciation of the poem below. You may wish to keep in mind some of the following considerations in your answer, and may also comment on any other aspect of the poem that you consider to be worthy of discussion.

- theme and motifs;
- form and structure;
- imagery and rhetoric;
- rhyme and metre;
- style and tone;
- place, time and mood.

"I Was All Hers"
From CLEARANCES, a sonnet sequence on his mother’s death

When all the others were away at Mass
I was all hers as we peeled potatoes.
They broke the silence, let fall one by one
Like solder weeping off the soldering iron:
Cold comforts set between us, things to share
Gleaming in a bucket of clean water
And again let fall. Little pleasant splashes
From each other’s work would bring us to our senses.

So while the parish priest at her bedside
Went hammer and tongs at the prayers for the dying
And some were responding and some crying
I remembered her head bent towards my head,
Her breath in mine, our fluent dipping knives –
Never closer the whole rest of our lives.

Seamus Heaney