

## **IOC – Sample discussion questions**

The following examples of discussion questions are ones provided by the official subject guide for this course. How do you think you might fare if you were asked these? Talk about them as a group or you could use them as a means to prepare for your assessment.

### **Prose: the novel and short story**

- What fictional character did you find most interesting? Can you account for that effect based on some choices you see that the writer has made in constructing the character?
- Did you observe any contrivances in the novel that were in some way distracting, such as coincidences, or unresolved questions, unconvincing resolutions, chance meetings and the like?
- How powerfully - or not - would you say the setting affected the events or action of the novel?
- How emotionally or intellectually satisfying did you find the conclusion of the novel or short story?
- How enthusiastic were you about the novel or short story in the opening pages or paragraphs?

### **Drama**

- Did you find the dramatist using different kinds of tension in the play in order to engage and hold the audience?
- What, for you, was the most riveting or satisfying moment in the play? Can you account for how the playwright managed to achieve that effect?
- What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the protagonist and what effect do you think these have on the believability of the play?
- Who was your favourite or least favourite secondary character in the play? Can you see how the playwright elicited such a response?
- Do you think any profound human truths are being considered in this play, or do you see its main purpose as keeping an audience interested in human behaviour?

### **Prose other than fiction**

- What cultural aspects of the context do you think had the strongest impact on the writer's story?
- Is there any person in the work, other than the writer, whose presence you found to be forceful or memorable?
- Were there some aspects of life that you found significantly omitted in the writer's story of experience?
- What features of the work most attracted you, for example, the history or the geography, the encounters with people or the personal reactions of the writer?
- What is the role of anecdote in the work and how well do you think this writer handled that feature?
- Do you have any reservations about the writer's responses or attitudes to the places/people/ideas?
- What human issues form the subjects of the work? Did you find any of them particularly well handled?
- Did you find the essayist skilled in bringing the work to a particularly satisfying conclusion?