

**A****THE ARRIVAL OF THE BEE BOX**

I ordered this, this clean wood box  
 Square as a chair and almost too heavy to lift.  
 I would say it was the coffin of a midget  
 Or a square baby  
 Were there not such a din in it.

The box is locked, it is dangerous.  
 I have to live with it overnight  
 And I can't keep away from it.  
 There are no windows, so I can't see what is in there.  
 There is only a little grid, no exit.

I put my eye to the grid.  
 It is dark, dark,  
 With the swarmy feeling of African hands  
 Minute and shrunk for export,  
 Black on black, angrily clambering.

How can I let them out?  
 It is the noise that appalls me most of all,  
 The unintelligible syllables.  
 It is like a Roman mob,  
 Small, taken one by one, but my god, together!

I lay my ear to furious Latin.  
 I am not a Caesar.  
 I have simply ordered a box of maniacs.  
 They can be sent back.  
 They can die, I need feed them nothing, I am  
 the owner.

I wonder how hungry they are.  
 I wonder if they would forget me  
 If I just undid the locks and stood back and  
 turned into a tree.  
 There is the laburnum, its blond colonnades,  
 And the petticoats of the cherry.

They might ignore me immediately  
 In my moon suit and funeral veil.  
 I am no source of honey  
 So why would they turn on me?  
 Tomorrow I will be sweet God, I will set them  
 free.

The box is only temporary.

*Sylvia Plath*

1. (a) Identify an image that you like in the above poem and explain why you like it. (10)
  - (b) Describe a feeling or emotion expressed by the poet in this poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
  - (c) Explain what you think the poet means when she says, "I am not a Caesar". (10)
2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
- (i) Explain what you think the bees symbolise for Sylvia Plath in the above poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem.
- OR**
- (ii) Does the language and imagery used by the poet add to your enjoyment of the above poem? Support your answer with reference to the language and imagery used in the poem.
- OR**
- (iii) Imagine that you are Sylvia Plath. Write a letter to a friend in which you describe the arrival of the bee box and explain the impact it had on you. Your letter should demonstrate your knowledge of the poem.

**C CHILD**

Your clear eye is the one absolutely beautiful thing.  
I want to fill it with color and ducks,  
The zoo of the new

Whose names you meditate –  
April snowdrop, Indian pipe,  
Little

Stalk without wrinkle,  
Pool in which images  
Should be grand and classical

Not this troublous  
Wringing of hands, this dark  
Ceiling without a star.

*28 January 1963*

*Sylvia Plath*

1. (a) What feelings are expressed by the poet in the first three stanzas of this poem? Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
  - (b) What feelings are expressed by the poet in the last stanza of this poem? Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
  - (c) Choose two lines or phrases from the poem that appeal to you and explain your choice. (10)
2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
- (i) You have been asked to make a short video to accompany a reading of this poem on YouTube. Describe some of the images, colours, music, sound effects, etc. that you would use as a background to the reading and explain your choices based on your knowledge of the poem.

**OR**

- (ii) Which of the following word or words would you choose to describe the language used by the poet in this poem?  
Unusual                      Descriptive                      Appealing  
Support your answer with reference to the poem.

**OR**

(iii)

There are three poems by Sylvia Plath on your Leaving Certificate English course: “Poppies in July”, “The Arrival of the Bee Box” and “Child”. Which of these poems by Sylvia Plath do you most enjoy? Explain your answer by reference to at least one of these poems.

**C CHILD**

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Support your answer with reference to the poem.

**OR**

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- (iii) There are three poems by Sylvia Plath on your Leaving Certificate English course: “Poppies in July”, “The Arrival of the Bee Box” and “Child”. Which of these poems by Sylvia Plath do you most enjoy? Explain your answer by reference to at least one of these poems.

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The box is only temporary.

1. (a) What impression of the poet, Sylvia Plath, do you get from reading this poem? (10)
- (b) What words or phrases from the poem especially help to create that impression for you? (10)

2. The following list of phrases suggests some of the poet's attitudes to the bee box:

- *She is fascinated by it*
- *She is annoyed by it*
- *She feels she has great power over it*

Choose the phrase from the above list that is closest to your own reading of the poem. Explain your choice, supporting your view by reference to the words of the poem.

(10)

3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]

- (i) Imagine you were asked to select music to accompany a public reading of this poem. Describe the kind of music you would choose and explain your choice clearly.

**OR**

- (ii) "The box is only temporary."  
What do you understand the last line of the poem to mean?

**OR**

- (iii) Write a paragraph in which you outline the similarities **and/or** differences between *The Arrival of the Bee Box* and the other poem on your course by Sylvia Plath, *Child*.

