SECTION B, Part 2 – Unseen Poetry

Read the two poems and answer Question 11.

You should spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Great-grandfather

Great-grandfather would sit in the back parlour
For hours listening to the gramophone*.
I have no photograph of him doing this,
So the picture I see of him sitting alone

With his head inclined towards the trumpeting 5
Green lily is colourful and unfaded.
The handkerchief, with which he blots the tears
Schubert serenades from him, is distinctly red

And the gramophone's tin horn grows steadily 10
More greenly lily-like and rare,
Grows into antiquity – and soon will be found
Surviving only behind glass in conditioned air.

Great-grandfather knows nothing of this, but
Such an instrument will be treasured as though
It were a silver trumpet once discovered 15
Lying in the tomb of some young Egyptian Pharaoh;

And only on certain occasions will it be taken
From its case and played with careful ceremony –
when thinnest sound will summon the ready armies
Of imagination to salute the music lovers of history. 20

And great-grandfather will be one of those.

Freda Downie

Glossary: gramophone* – an early (twentieth century) machine for listening to recorded music. It had a turntable, with a needle that went into the grooves of the record placed on it. The sound came out through a ‘horn’ or ‘trumpet’, often shaped like a flower.
**Great-grandfather**

Great-grandfather would sit in the back parlour
For hours listening to the gramophone*.
I have no photograph of him doing this,
So the picture I see of him sitting alone
With his head inclined towards the trumpeting
Green lily is colourful and unfaded.
The handkerchief, with which he blots the tears
Schubert serenades from him, is distinctly red
And the gramophone's tin horn grows steadily
More greenly lily-like and rare,
Grows into antiquity – and soon will be found
Surviving only behind glass in conditioned air.
Great-grandfather knows nothing of this, but
Such an instrument will be treasured as though
It were a silver trumpet once discovered
Lying in the tomb of some young Egyptian Pharaoh;
And only on certain occasions will it be taken
From its case and played with careful ceremony –
when thinnest sound will summon the ready armies
Of imagination to salute the music lovers of history.
And great-grandfather will be one of those.

---

**On the Verge**

The skin is wrinkled and speaks of age.
I watch it change from year to following year
As hurrying life turns yet another page,
And feel it as it drops another gear.

It’s not that bits have started to fall off,
Though annual checks will monitor decline.
Occasional wheeze is now a chronic cough.
Leg muscles wither though the brain seems fine.

The three score years and ten* are long-term past.
And dreams of action close as I can get.
The body has mislaid that key word ‘fast’.
And ‘slow’ or ‘creeping’ are a better bet.

It’s no good worrying at this lack of urge
For life’s still sweet here resting on the verge.

* three score years and ten*: 70 years

---

**Compare the ways the writers present an old person in Great-grandfather and On the Verge.**

In your answer you should compare:

- the ideas in the poems
- the poets’ use of language
- the poets’ use of form and structure.

Use *evidence* from the poems to support your *comparison*.

(Total for Question 11 = 20 marks)

---

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 40 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 80 MARKS