**YEAR 9**

**UNSEEN POETRY ASSESSMENT**

**WORLD LITERATURE**

45 minutes

30 marks

Read the poem below then answer the question that follows.

Refugees

Bent under burdens which sometimes  
can be seen and sometimes can’t,  
they trudge through mud or desert sands,  
hunched, hungry,

silent men in heavy jackets,  
dressed for all four seasons,  
old women with crumpled faces,  
clutching something – a child, the family  
lamp, the last loaf of bread?

It could be Bosnia today,  
Poland in September ’39, France  
eight months later, Germany in ’45,  
Somalia, Afghanistan, Egypt.

There’s always a wagon or at least a wheelbarrow  
full of treasures (a quilt, a silver cup,  
the fading scent of home),  
a car out of gas marooned in a ditch,  
a horse (soon left behind), snow, a lot of snow,  
too much snow, too much sun, too much rain,

and always that special slouch  
as if leaning toward another, better planet,  
with less ambitious generals,  
less snow, less wind, fewer cannons,  
less History (alas, there’s no  
such planet, just that slouch).

Shuffling their feet,  
they move slowly, very slowly  
toward the country of nowhere,  
and the city of no one  
on the river of never. By Adam Zagajewski

**How does the poet powerfully describe the refugees?**  [30]