**SCOTTISH TEXT (POETRY)**

Read the poem below and then attempt the following questions.

***Assisi* byNorman McCaig**  
The dwarf with his hands on backwards  
sat, slumped like a half-filled sack  
on tiny twisted legs from which  
sawdust might run,  
outside the three tiers of churches built  
in honour of St Francis, brother  
of the poor, talker with birds, over whom  
he had the advantage  
of not being dead yet.  
  
A priest explained  
how clever it was of Giotto  
to make his frescoes tell stories  
that would reveal to the illiterate the goodness  
of God and the suffering  
of His Son. I understood  
the explanation and  
the cleverness.  
  
A rush of tourists, clucking contentedly,  
fluttered after him as he scattered  
the grain of the Word. It was they who had passed  
the ruined temple outside, whose eyes  
wept pus, whose back was higher  
than his head, whose lopsided mouth  
said Grazie in a voice as sweet  
as a child's when she speaks to her mother  
or a bird's when it spoke  
to St Francis.

**Questions MARKS**

1. In the opening stanza, MacCaig describes the beggar in some detail.

1. Show how **two** of the examples of the poet’s language in stanza one help

the reader to feel sympathy for the beggar. **4**

1. How does the description of the beggar introduce the main concerns or

ideas of the poem?  **2**

2. Show how any **two** examples of the poet’s use of language in stanza two or stanza three effectively contribute to the main ideas or concerns of the poem. **4**

3. How effective do you find any aspect of the final stanza as a conclusion to the poem? Your answer might deal with ideas and / or language. **2**

4. Poetry often observes people or places. Referring closely to this poem and to at

least one other by MacCaig, show how the poet uses observation of people or places  **8**

in his poems.