



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2010

English - Ordinary Level - Paper 1

Total Marks: 200

Wednesday, June 9 – Morning, 9.30 – 12.20

- This paper is divided into two sections, Section I COMPREHENDING and Section II COMPOSING.
- The paper contains **three** texts on the general theme of FACING DANGER.
- Candidates should familiarise themselves with each of the texts before beginning their answers.

- Both sections of this paper (COMPREHENDING and COMPOSING) must be attempted.
- Each section carries 100 marks.

SECTION I – COMPREHENDING

- Two Questions, A and B, follow each text.
- Candidates must answer a Question A on one text and a Question B on a different text. Candidates must answer only one Question A and only one Question B.
- **N.B.** Candidates may NOT answer a Question A and a Question B on the same text.

SECTION II – COMPOSING

- Candidates must write on **one** of the compositions 1 – 7.



SECTION I

COMPREHENDING (100 marks)

TEXT I

DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

Martin Strel and Sophie Collett are world-class athletes who take part in extreme sports at the highest level. The following passages tell us a little about their adventures.



Martin Strel, from Slovenia, is the greatest long-distance swimmer the world has known. He famously completed a 3,278 mile swim of the Amazon. Strel is about six feet tall and very strong. He has a wrestler's neck and his body is coated with fat and muscle. When compared to a fit, toned Olympic swimmer he barely looks like an athlete at all. He swam the English Channel, the Paraná in Argentina and the Yangtze River in China. He also broke the record for the longest continuous swim, non-stop 313 miles, in the Danube in Germany.

The most dangerous river in the world, the Amazon, was his next challenge. He started in a tropical rain storm. The flooding was the worst in the Amazon area for 100 years.

There are sharks in the Amazon. It is home to the bull shark, widely believed to have killed more humans than any other shark species. There are also piranhas which have been described as the "most aggressive and savage of all aquatic animals". There are stingrays and anacondas lurking in the shallows. Long poisonous snakes can appear from nowhere while giant catfish have been known to swallow dogs and children. Those in the boats accompanying Strel could see him mouthing words. He was talking to the fish, telling them he was their friend.

He tried not to look down and instead of thinking of 'monster' creatures below him he would think of his family.

Tarantulas and scorpions dropped off trees and floated down on leaves. Wasp stings made his head hum for days. Large black birds flew down to peck at his face. He had to wear a pillowcase over his head with slits for eyes and mouth because he had second-degree burns from the sun. Strel, like all marathon swimmers, certainly is a breed apart.

Sophie Collett describes her Jungle Marathon experience as the "toughest event in the world". "The Jungle Marathon is 125 miles and is run over seven days through the Amazon rainforest in Brazil. The race is broken down into six stages. Once I got started it became clear that the biggest hazard facing me wasn't the animals. It was the plants and the landscape. I had to climb over many fallen trees and wade through lots of swamp.

When I went there I had a massive fear of spiders, but of course these creatures are all over the place in the jungle. On one of the stages, at night, I found myself crawling under a log that clearly harboured an awful lot of insects. But there was no question of getting freaked out. I was concentrating so hard on the race. I just got on with it.

I had to carry my own food and camping equipment. This included large quantities of energy drinks, freeze-dried food, plus a change of running clothes, all packed into a 30 litre rucksack. By the end of the race my arms, legs and stomach were completely shredded.

We faced the danger of heat exhaustion every day. The temperature regularly reached 30°C. For most of us, the second last stage was the worst: 54 miles of tortuous hills, jungle, two water crossings and hot, sandy ground to finish. To top it all off, I picked up a tummy bug from swallowing water when I was wading through a swamp.

I was just running along being sick in the dark. There was no one around. It felt like the stage was never going to end. Twenty-three hours later I reached the finish line.

But I was also a little sad that it was over. I loved the bond with the other runners. At times like that you make friends really quickly. It truly was my toughest challenge and finishing it gave me a great sense of achievement.”

N.B. Candidates may NOT answer Question A and Question B on the same text.

Questions A and B carry 50 marks each.

Question A

- (i) Based on your reading of the passage, give **three** reasons why you think the Amazon River is described as terrifying and dangerous. Explain your answer with reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) Martin Strel and Sophie Collett are both remarkable people. From what you have read about them in the above texts would you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer. (15)
- (iii) Both Strel and Collett took many risks in the course of their activities. In your opinion, what makes people want to undertake such dangerous activities? Give reasons for your answer. (20)

Question B.

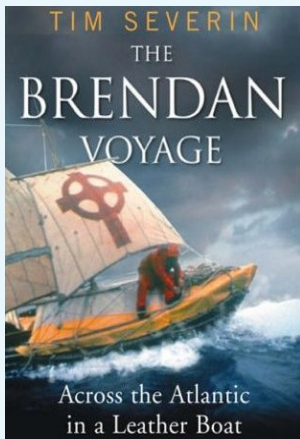
People need to be motivated in order to face a challenge.

Imagine your class is considering undertaking a 10 kilometre cross-country run for a charity of your choice. Write a short talk to inspire them to take up this challenge. (50)

TEXT 2

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC IN A LEATHER BOAT

Explorer and author Tim Severin sailed across the Atlantic in 1977. He used a leather-clad boat in order to test the legend that an Irish monk named Brendan had completed the same voyage in the sixth century. The following edited extract from Severin's book, *The Brendan Voyage*, tells of a frightening episode that occurred during the journey.



1. Our craft looked like a floating banana: long and slim, curved at the ends. No boat quite like her had been afloat for the past thousand years or so. She was made from forty-nine ox hides stitched together to form a patchwork quilt and stretched over a wooden frame. It was this thin skin, only a quarter of an inch thick, that now stood between us and the fury of the Atlantic. In such a gale even a modern yacht would have been hard pressed to hold up against the weather. For us, in a boat of ancient design, there was no choice but to do our best to stay afloat while *Brendan* tobogganed down the waves.

2. Our vessel was essentially an open boat swept by the wind and spray. There was a tent with room for three men to lie down, head to tail, like sardines. But here we also had to find space for clothes, the camera, other equipment and sleeping bags. Whenever a wave broke it had the nasty habit of sweeping forward and dropping like a thick dollop of water right into our shelter. There was another small tent, not much bigger than a good sized kennel. There the other crew members were expected to sleep but the leaks were even worse. Each time a wave broke it sent a fountain of cold water squirting up under the tent flap and drenched the men.

3. I looked at my crew and wondered if they realised how serious the situation was. George was one of the best sailors I knew. He was the sailing master, the man responsible for getting the very best performance from the boat under sail. Rolf was from Norway and spent his summers exploring his country's coastline in a massive sailing boat. Peter, our cameraman, worried me. He had damaged muscles from rowing *Brendan*. His face had a grey look as he was tossed around with the constant motion of the boat. Arthur was the youngest member of the crew and he was laid low by seasickness. I had rarely seen anyone so miserable.

4. Night came. A dirty, black night with rain and very bad visibility. Suddenly, out of the darkness less than a hundred yards away and with all her lights blazing, there was a large factory ship heading straight in our direction. Peter struggled trying to steer the boat clear. "Light a white flare!" I yelled at Peter. "Light a flare." "What about shining a torch on the sails?" asked Rolf. "No good," I shouted above the howling wind. "Our sail isn't big enough to work as a light reflector. Besides it's made of leather and won't reflect the light properly."

5. Someone had found a white flare but fingers were too cold and stiff to unwrap the tape and light it. Peter struggled trying to turn *Brendan* away but the wind had locked us on what seemed to be a collision course. Then the factory trawler's black bulk slid past us so close that we could make out the welding on the steel plates that towered over us. The lights from her portholes swept over us. We stood looking up at this giant of the sea. She was so close we could reach out and touch her.



N.B. Candidates may NOT answer Question A and Question B on the same text.

Questions A and B carry 50 marks each.

Question A

- (i) In your opinion, what were the **three** greatest difficulties faced by Tim Severin and his crew? Explain your answer with reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) In paragraphs 4 and 5 how does Tim Severin convey the atmosphere of tension and fear on *Brendan* as the huge factory ship came towards them? (15)
- (iii) From your reading of the passage do you think Tim Severin and his crew were brave or foolish or both to undertake their voyage? Give reasons for your answer. (20)

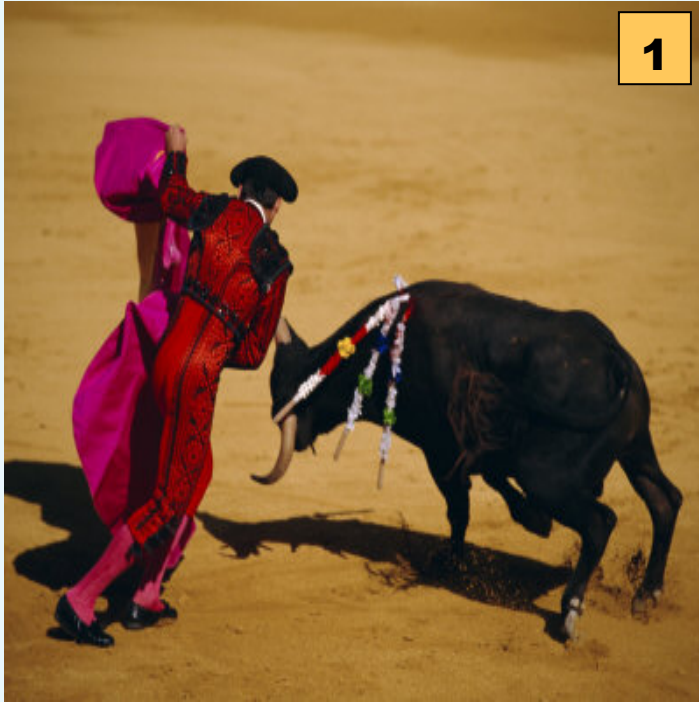
Question B

A competition has been announced to select crew members for a new *Brendan* voyage. In approximately 250 words explain to Tim Severin why you should be chosen as a crew member for this voyage. (50)



TEXT 3

FACING DANGER



N.B. Candidates may NOT answer Question A and Question B on the same text.

Questions A and B carry 50 marks each.

Question A

- (i) Write a clear and detailed description of any **one** of the four images in Text 3. (15)
- (ii) Write a caption to accompany any **three** of the four images that appear in Text 3.
You should label each caption with the number (1, 2, 3 or 4) that appears on the corresponding image. (15)
- (iii) Which of the situations pictured in Text 3 would you least like to find yourself in?
Explain your answer. (20)

Question B

Holiday of a lifetime

You work for a company that specialises in activity holidays like bungee-jumping, rock-climbing, going on safari, etc. Write a piece to appear on a webpage promoting an exciting adventure holiday anywhere in the world. (50)

SECTION II

COMPOSING (100 marks)

Write a composition on **any one** of the following.

Each composition carries 100 marks.

The composition assignments below are intended to reflect language study in the areas of information, argument, persuasion, narration, and the aesthetic use of language.

1. ‘... and finishing it gave me a great sense of achievement.’ (Text 1)

Write a talk about a person/people whose achievements you admire.

2. ‘The toughest event in the world.’ (Text 1)

Write about a time in your life when you took part in a demanding event.

3. ‘At times like that you make friends very easily.’ (Text 1)

Write a personal account of the challenges of making and keeping friends.

4. ‘Night came. A dirty, black night with rain.’ (Text 2)

Write a short story based on the above phrase.

5. ‘There was another small tent, not much bigger than a good-sized kennel.’ (Text 2)

Write a humorous article about camping.

6. ‘Ignoring the Restricted Area sign I just kept walking ...’ (Text 3)

Write a short story inspired by the above phrase.

7. Look at the images in Text 3. (Text 3)

Write an article for a teenage magazine for or against the use of animals in sport.

Blank Page

Blank Page

Blank Page

Blank Page