



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2012

English - Ordinary Level - Paper 1

Total Marks: 200

Wednesday, 6 June – 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 BEING A LEADER.
- 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.

TEXT 1

BRIAN O'DRISCOLL – SPORTING LEADER

The following text is adapted from an article by Steve Beacom which appeared in *The Belfast Telegraph*. This text has been adapted from the original, for the purpose of assessment, without the author's prior consent.

1. Watching Brian O'Driscoll on television you see a great athlete and marvel at his ability to drive the Irish rugby team on. He is an impressive man to meet. The bulging biceps and tree-trunk thighs have helped make him a world superstar and given him the physical presence to tackle giants and race past opponents in equal measure. But it's O'Driscoll's mind that sets him apart. Clever player. Clever man. He's razor-sharp. When O'Driscoll's career ends, he'll go down as one of the best sportsmen Ireland ever had.

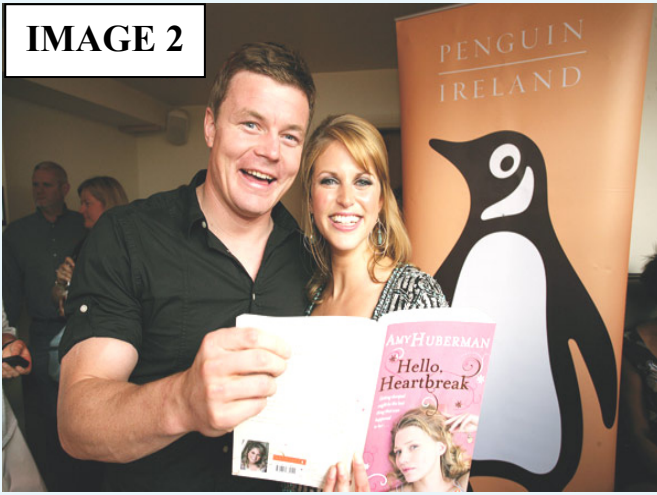
2. Some sporting heroes, despite all the success and wealth they have achieved, are more insecure than your granny on a skateboard. Not O'Driscoll. This is one bloke who is comfortable in his own skin. Self-belief oozes out of him. He wasn't arrogant during our meeting, just supremely confident. In a world where everything he does comes under scrutiny, this is a useful quality to possess.

3. Often pictured on the front pages with his wife, actress and writer Amy Huberman, O'Driscoll sees himself as a serious sportsman rather than a celebrity. There is a fun and mischievous side to him also that goes with an appreciation of his position as one of Ireland's most famous figures. Hundreds recently queued up to meet and greet the 32-year-old from Clontarf. Both kids and parents were excited at the prospect of getting up close and personal to their hero. O'Driscoll has won 109 caps for Ireland since making his international debut in 1999.

4. You may be surprised to learn that O'Driscoll's hero as a youth had nothing to do with rugby. "I was a football fan before I became a rugby fan. Growing up I supported Manchester United," said Ireland's rugby captain. His own father, Frank, was a decent rugby player and Brian says he would be happy for his kids to continue the O'Driscoll sporting tradition, though they won't necessarily be pushed into rugby.



5. "Sport is good for a number of reasons," he says. "Team sports are very important for shaping personalities. It's important that kids understand the mentality behind playing team sports and playing for one another and playing with friends. Also, from a fitness point of view sport is hugely beneficial. There is a big obesity problem in this country. The more kids that are exercising the less of an issue that's going to be. So, I would promote exercise and sport to my own kids or someone else's."

IMAGE 2*O'Driscoll helps launch Amy Huberman's book.*

6. O' Driscoll's love of sport is in contrast to how he feels about the celebrity status that comes with twenty-first century fame. When I say he has been labelled the Irish David Beckham, there's a sigh. "It's not something I pay too much attention to. I want to be remembered for my sporting ability more than anything else."

7. Brian O'Driscoll is one of the few men

on this planet worshipped north and south of the border. "That's something to be proud of, but I don't really dwell much on what other people think," he says. "If you can be a good role model for people, well, great. You try and live your sporting life and the rest of your life as well as you can and if it's something that people admire, well, fantastic. I don't sit at home and think about it too much though — there are plenty of other things going on in my life."

IMAGE 3*O'Driscoll visits a children's hospital.*

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) Choose three of the skills or qualities, mentioned in the above passage, that you think contribute to Brian O'Driscoll's success. Explain your choice. (15)
- (ii) In the above passage, Brian O'Driscoll expresses his views on being a role model. Based on your reading of the passage, explain why you do or do not think that he is a good role model for young people. (15)
- (iii) (a) What does **Image 1** show us about Brian O'Driscoll as a sportsman? Explain your answer with reference to the image. (10)
- (b) What do you learn about Brian O'Driscoll from both **Image 2** and **Image 3** that accompany this text? Refer to both images in your answer. (10)

Question B

Imagine you have been successful at **one** of the following: (i) achieving a sporting ambition (ii) overcoming a fear or phobia (iii) participating in a school play, musical or debate. Write **three diary entries** related to this achievement. (50)

TEXT 2

MARY McALEESE – NATIONAL LEADER

Mary McAleese was President of Ireland from 1997 to 2011. At the end of her presidency she wrote an open letter to the people of Ireland, which was published in *The Irish Times*. An edited version of this letter appears below. This text has been adapted from the original, for the purpose of assessment, without the author's prior consent.

IMAGE 1



1. On my last day as President of Ireland, I want to thank the Irish people for the trust they placed in me when I was elected 14 years ago. I also want to offer my warmest good wishes to Michael D. Higgins as he prepares to become our ninth president.

2. Back in 1997 both peace and prosperity seemed far away. Today the once difficult relationships on this island and between Ireland and Great Britain have been transformed. Now we have a stable peace for the first time in centuries. Regrettably, the combination of peace and prosperity remains some distance away; for we have been hit with a global recession and serious challenges within the euro zone.

3. In the success of the efforts made by peacemakers we can see the enormous human capacity for change. In the quiet but relentless voluntary community work undertaken daily in every corner of this island, we can be reassured by the Irish gift for making life more caring, interesting, exciting, inclusive and rewarding. These things are signs of the strengths we have as a people. They also demonstrate the collective

power that is already sowing the seeds of improved times beyond these days of high unemployment, falling incomes, worrying debt levels and the return of emigration.

4. I will be forever grateful to all those schools, colleges, organisations and individuals who invited Martin and me into their lives and introduced us to their remarkable and extensive work. Those invitations brought us to every part of this island, North and South. They also brought us to many parts of the world where our global Irish family nurtures such a deep loyalty to Irish identity and culture.

5. My husband, Martin, and I shook thousands of hands while at Áras an Uachtaráin*. We enjoyed the pleasure that a visit to that house brought to so many people. The happy and healing visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II demonstrated the extent of the desire for a new and healthier relationship between our countries and showed how far we have travelled in creating it.

*Áras an Uachtaráin: the President's official residence.

6. Representing Ireland abroad was always a particular thrill. Ireland has many friends and a lot of respect across many nations. Much of this has been earned for us by our very distinguished and talented emigrant family. I thank all of those who hosted us so hospitably. I especially offer thanks to those who invested so much in ensuring the smooth running and success of those visits.



IMAGE 2

7. I have come to know Ireland as well as any human being ever could. Ours is an exquisitely beautiful, welcoming country and you would be hard put to find finer people anywhere on this planet. They deserve to live in peace and prosperity. I will continue to pray that such a time will come and soon. It has been the most fulfilling experience to serve my country as president. Thank you for giving me that opportunity. I hope I have honoured your trust.



IMAGE 3

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) Choose three of Mary McAleese's experiences, mentioned in the above passage, which in your opinion, helped to make her work as President of Ireland enjoyable. Explain your choice. (15)
- (ii) In the above passage the President mentions changes she has noticed in Ireland since 1997. Explain which one of these changes you think is the most important. (15)
- (iii) (a) Look carefully at **Image 1** in which President McAleese and her husband, Martin, meet Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip. What details in this image suggest to you that this is an important formal occasion? Explain your answer with reference to the image. (10)
- (b) From what you see in the images that illustrate this text, identify a skill or quality that you think a president would need to carry out his or her official duties. Explain your answer. (10)

Question B

Write a **letter** to former President McAleese in which you express your own hopes for Ireland in the future. (50)

TEXT 3



– CREATIVE MARKET LEADERS

The following edited extract is taken from Rhymer Rigby's book, *28 Business Thinkers Who Changed The World*. This text has been adapted from the original, for the purpose of assessment, without the author's prior consent.

1. Who founded Google?

Sergey Brin and Larry Page are co-founders of the world's biggest search engine, Google. It is one of the world's hottest 'tech' companies and, some argue, the world's most valuable brand. Page was born in Michigan; Brin in Russia. The pair met and became friends while studying for advanced degrees in computer science in Stanford University. In 1996 they began working together on a search engine that they called BackRub. In 1997 they changed the name to Google. The name was based on the mathematical term 'googol'. This means the number '1' followed by 100 zeros. The name was chosen to suggest the vast amount of information available online.

2. Getting started.

In 1998 the pair persuaded another successful technology innovator to invest \$100,000 and they set up shop in a rented garage. The same year they hired their first employee, Craig Silverstein, who still works with the company. Brin and Page had spotted a gap in the market for what they had to offer. Page said in an interview with *Businessweek*, "We realised there was a huge business opportunity and nobody else was going to work on it." By the end of its first year, an influential computer magazine had crowned Google the world's top search engine. From one employee in 1998, Google now employs well over 20,000 world-wide. The Google founders, both still young men, are among the richest people in the world.

3. Being Different.

So what did Brin and Page do that was so different? They didn't invent the world's first search engine: others such as Excite and Ask Jeeves already existed. What Google offered users was different in certain ways. It looked different from its competitors. Google looked plain and simple. It was essentially a search box, the word 'Google' and a white background. Also, the way it organised its pages allowed users access the information they needed quickly and more easily.

IMAGE 1

Original
Unconventional
Successful
Creative
Intelligent

4. A new type of work-place.

The company's final difference is cultural. It has long been famed as a great place to work. Everything is legendary – from the quality of its cafeteria food, to child care, to having fun facilities like climbing walls for staff. It famously offers its engineers twenty percent of their time to spend looking at projects they're interested in. You get the impression that this culture comes from the very top. When I interviewed Brin in 2001, he seemed a regular guy, albeit one who was uncommonly clever. His office was messy: the corner was full of skiing equipment; we spent 15 minutes talking about skiing.

5. What makes Google 'cool'?

Google pursues an unusual game plan. It comes up with brilliant, innovative and usually well-designed products and gives them away free. One of the best known of these is Gmail, its e-mail service. Gmail is widely seen as cooler and more cutting-edge than its rivals. In 2008, Google launched a mobile phone operating system called Android. More recently, the company launched its Chrome browser which gives users a free operating system. Many of these developments stem from having founders who have such a strong belief in the creative application of new technologies.

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 above passage, choose three words from **Image 1**, each of which you think describes a different aspect of the company, Google, or of its founders. Explain each of your choices with evidence from the passage. (15)
- (ii) Based on what you have read in the passage, explain why you would or would not like to work for a company like Google. Refer to the text in your answer. (15)
- (iii) (a) From your reading of the passage, choose another word to add to the collection of words in **Image 1**, which would also describe either Google or its founders. Explain your choice with reference to the passage. (10)
- (b) Look at the Google logo at the top of this text. Do you think it is an effective or appealing logo? Support your answer with reference to the logo. (10)

Question B

Imagine you are running for election as leader of the Student Council in your school. Write the **talk** you would deliver to your school assembly outlining the qualities you feel you possess that would make you an excellent leader of the Student Council. (50)

Write a composition on any one of the following.

Each composition carries 100 marks.

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

1. '...he'll go down as one of the best sportsmen Ireland ever had.' (Text 1)

Write an article for a popular magazine in which you identify the people you admire and explain why you admire them.

2. '...to tackle giants...' (Text 1)

Write a short story inspired by the phrase, '...to tackle giants'.

3. '...the celebrity status that comes with twenty-first century fame.' (Text 1)

Write a personal essay about your views on celebrities and being famous in the twenty-first century.

4. '... our global Irish family nurtures such a deep loyalty to Irish identity and culture.' (Text 2)

Write a speech, to be delivered to your year group, in which you express your views on the importance of Irish cultural pursuits such as music, sport, drama etc.

5. '...an exquisitely beautiful, welcoming country.' (Text 2)

Write an article for a travel website about the places you would like to visit in Ireland, or further afield. Explain why you would like to visit these places.

6. '...I want to thank the Irish people...' (Text 2)

Write a personal essay about some of the people who have made a positive contribution to your life so far. Explain why you feel grateful to these people.

7. '...e-mail...mobile phone...browser...' (Text 3)

Write a short story in which modern technology plays an important part.

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