



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2012

English - Ordinary Level - Paper 2

Total Marks: 200

Thursday, 7th June – Afternoon, 2.00 – 5.20

Candidates must attempt the following:-

- **ONE** question from SECTION I – The Single Text
- **ONE** question from SECTION II – The Comparative Study
- **THE QUESTIONS** on the Unseen Poem from SECTION III – Poetry
- The questions on **ONE** of the Prescribed Poems from SECTION III – Poetry

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SECTION I

THE SINGLE TEXT (60 MARKS)

Candidates must answer on **ONE** text (A – I).

A EMMA – Jane Austen

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the occasion in the novel when Mr Elton makes a proposal of marriage to Emma. (10)
- (b) In your opinion, is Mr Knightley a suitable husband for Emma? Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Frank Churchill. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
- (i) ‘Emma is a very kind-hearted character.’

Do you agree with this statement? Base your answer on your knowledge of the novel.

OR

- (ii) Based on your knowledge of the novel, write a piece beginning with one of the following prompts:
 - I would like to live in Emma’s world because ...
 - I would not like to live in Emma’s world because ...

OR

- (iii) Write two diary entries which Harriet Smith might have written: one following her refusal of Robert Martin’s first proposal of marriage and another following her acceptance of his second proposal. The diary entries should be based on your knowledge of the novel.

B EMPIRE OF THE SUN – J. G. Ballard

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe Jim’s life in Shanghai before the war. (10)
- (b) Why, in your opinion, does Jim admire the Japanese?
Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Basie, the American man Jim meets several times during the course of the novel. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]

- (i) ‘Jim will do almost anything to survive.’

Do you agree with this statement? Base your answer on your knowledge of the novel.

OR

- (ii) Which one of the following statements about J.G. Ballard’s novel, *Empire of the Sun*, do you most agree with?

- It is a story about the horrors of war.
- It is a story about survival.
- It is a story about heroism.

Explain your answer with reference to the text.

OR

- (iii) Imagine you are Jim, imprisoned in Lunghua camp during World War Two. Write two diary entries in which you record some of your experiences. Your response should be based on your knowledge of the novel.

C CIRCLE OF FRIENDS – Maeve Binchy

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe Benny’s relationship with her parents. (10)
- (b) What makes Sean Walsh such an unappealing character?
Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Eve Malone. (10)



3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]

- (i) The young Benny enjoys a quiet country upbringing with her parents in Knockglen. As she grows up she learns many things about the real world. Based on your knowledge of the text, write about some of the realities of life that Benny has to face during the course of the novel.

OR

- (ii) Which one of following statements do you think best describes Maeve Binchy's novel, *Circle of Friends*?
- It is a story about growing up.
 - It is a story about social class.
 - It is a story about romance.

Explain your answer with reference to the text.

OR

- (iii) You have been asked to give a talk to your class on the following topic: 'The Ireland we read about in Maeve Binchy's *Circle of Friends* is not at all like the Ireland of today.' Write the text of the talk you would give. You are free to agree or disagree with the statement. Your answer should be based on your knowledge of the novel.

D DANCING AT LUGHNASA – Brian Friel

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the first occasion in the play when Gerry Evans visits the Mundy sisters. (10)
- (b) In your opinion, did Michael have a happy childhood? Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Fr Jack. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]

- (i) 'Chris, for the most part, has a sad and difficult life.'
Do you agree with this statement? Base your answer on your knowledge of the play.

OR

- (ii) Imagine your school is staging this play. Which character would you most or least like to play on stage? Explain your choice with detailed reference to the text.

OR

- (iii) Imagine you are Kate. Write a letter to a friend in which you send news of yourself and of the household, of Gerry's visits, etc.
Your letter should be based on your knowledge of the play.

E A DOLL'S HOUSE – Henrik Ibsen

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe Helmer's treatment of Nora in the early part of the play. (10)
- (b) In your opinion, why did Nora not tell Helmer that she was being blackmailed by Krogstad? Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Krogstad. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
- (i) 'Helmer is a difficult character to like.'

Do you agree with this statement? Base your answer on your knowledge of the play.

OR

- (ii) Based on your knowledge of the play, write a piece beginning with one of the following prompts:
- I would like to live in Nora's world because ...
 - I would not like to live in Nora's world because ...

OR

- (iii) Imagine your school is staging this play. Which character would you most or least like to play on stage? Explain your choice with detailed reference to the text.

F HOW MANY MILES TO BABYLON? – Jennifer Johnston

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Alec's mother tells him that Fredrick Moore might not be his father. Describe the effect this news has on Alec. (10)
- (b) In your opinion, why does Jerry decide to join the British Army? Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Major Glendinning. (10)



3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]

(i) ‘Alicia Moore is a difficult character to like.’

Do you agree with this statement? Base your answer on your knowledge of the novel.

OR

(ii) You have been asked to give a talk to your class on the following topic: ‘The Ireland we read about in Jennifer Johnston’s novel, *How Many Miles to Babylon*, is not at all like the Ireland of today.’ Write the text of the talk you would give. You are free to agree or disagree with the statement. Your answer should be based on your knowledge of the novel.

OR

(iii) Which one of following statements do you think best describes Jennifer Johnston’s novel, *How Many Miles to Babylon*?

- It is a story about war.
- It is a story about social class.
- It is a story about relationships.

Explain your answer with reference to the text.

G THE LONESOME WEST – Martin McDonagh

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe two things that Coleman does that annoy Valene. (10)

(b) What is your opinion of Girleen Kelleher?
Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)

2. Explain what you find most interesting about Fr Welsh. (10)

3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]

(i) Do you find the conflict between the brothers, Coleman and Valene, entertaining? Explain your answer with reference to the text.

OR

(ii) Write a piece beginning with one of the following statements:

- I think this play would make a good film because...
- I do not think this play would make a good film because...

In your response, you should refer to the characters, events and setting of the play.

OR

- (iii) Imagine your school is staging this play. Which character would you most or least like to play on stage? Explain your choice with detailed reference to the text.

H HAMLET – William Shakespeare

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) What does the ghost of Hamlet's father tell Hamlet when he appears to him on the battlements of Elsinore Castle? (10)
- (b) What is your opinion of Gertrude? Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Claudius. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]

- (i) 'Ophelia is treated cruelly by those around her.'

Do you agree with this statement regarding the treatment of Ophelia by either Hamlet **or** Polonius? Base your answer on your knowledge of the play.

OR

- (ii) Imagine your school is staging a version of this play. Which character would you most or least like to play on stage? Explain your choice with detailed reference to the text.

OR

- (iii) Write a piece beginning with one of the following statements:

- I would find it exciting to live in Elsinore in Hamlet's time because...
- I would find it frightening to live in Elsinore in Hamlet's time because...

Your response should be based on your knowledge of the play.

I THE STORY OF LUCY GAULT – William Trevor

Answer **all** the questions.

1. (a) Describe what happened when a group of men visited the Gault family home at the beginning of the novel. (10)
- (b) In your opinion, should Lucy have married Ralph? Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Explain what you find most interesting about Horahan. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]

- (i) ‘Lucy Gault is a very loyal character.’

Do you agree with this statement? Base your answer on your knowledge of the novel.

OR

- (ii) Write a piece beginning with one of the following statements:

- I think this novel would make a good film because...
- I do not think this novel would make a good film because...

In your response, you should refer to the characters, events and setting of the novel.

OR

- (iii) Which one of the following statements about William Trevor’s novel, *The Story of Lucy Gault*, do you most agree with?

- It is a story about social class.
- It is a story about love.
- It is a story about loneliness and loss.

Explain your answer with reference to the text.

SECTION II

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 MARKS)

Candidates must answer **ONE** question from **either A – Hero, Heroine, Villain or B – Theme**

In your answer you may not use the text you have answered on in **SECTION I – The Single Text**.

N.B. The questions use the word **text** to refer to all the different kinds of texts available for study on this course, i.e. novel, play, short story, autobiography, biography, travel writing, and film. The questions use the word **author** to refer to novelists, playwrights, writers in all genres, and film-directors.

A HERO, HEROINE, VILLAIN

1. (a) Choose a hero or heroine or villain from **one** of the three texts you have studied on your comparative course. Based on the character's personality and behaviour, give reasons why you would or would not like to meet him or her. Support your answer with reference to the text. (30)
- (b) Choose a hero or heroine or villain from another text you have studied as part of your comparative course. Compare the personality and behaviour of this character with the personality and behaviour of the character you referred to in 1.(a) above.

Remember to refer to both characters in the course of your answer. (40)

OR

2. (a) (i) Identify a hero or heroine or villain from **one** text you have studied as part of your comparative course. Give one reason why you like or dislike this character. In your answer use one or more key moments to explain why you feel this way about the character. (15)
- (ii) Choose a different hero or heroine or villain from another text you have studied as part of your comparative course. Give one reason why you like or dislike this character. In your answer use one or more key moments to explain why you feel this way about this character. (15)
- (b) Compare the characters you discussed above, in order to decide which of these two characters you most enjoyed studying.

Remember to refer to both characters in your answer. (40)



B THEME

1. (a) Identify a theme found in **two** of the three texts you have studied on your comparative course . In relation to **one** text you have studied, explain how you found studying this text helpful in understanding your chosen theme. (30)

- (b) Identify a second text in which you have studied the same theme. Compare relevant aspects of this text, with the one you referred to in 1.(a) above, in order to establish which text was the most helpful in developing your understanding of the theme.

Remember to refer to both texts in your answer. (40)

OR

2. (a) (i) Identify a theme from **one** text that you have studied on your comparative course and describe a key moment in which this theme is clearly evident. (15)

- (ii) Describe a key moment in another text, which you studied on your comparative course, which clearly reveals the same theme which you discussed in 2.(a)(i) above. (15)

- (b) Compare what you learned about your chosen theme from each of the key moments you have identified.

Remember to refer to both key moments in your answer. (40)

SECTION III

POETRY (70 MARKS)

Candidates must answer the questions on the Unseen Poem **and** the questions on **one** of the Prescribed Poems – A, B, C, D.

UNSEEN POEM (20 marks).

Read the following poem and the questions that follow at least twice before writing your answers.

SHOULDERS

A man crosses the street in rain,
stepping gently, looking two times north and south:
because his son is asleep on his shoulder.

No car must splash him.
No car drive too near to his shadow.

This man carries the world's most sensitive cargo
but he's not marked.
Nowhere does his jacket say FRAGILE,
HANDLE WITH CARE.

His ear fills up with breathing.
He hears the hum of a boy's dream
deep inside him.

We're not going to be able
to live in this world
if we're not willing to do what he's doing
with one another.

The road will only be wide.
The rain will never stop falling.

Naomi Shihab Nye

1. From your reading of this poem, how do you know the father loves his son?
Explain your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
2. In your opinion, what is the poet's message in the last six lines of this poem? (10)

PRESCRIBED POETRY (50 marks)

You must answer on **ONE** of the following poems: (A - D)

A A CONSTABLE CALLS

His bicycle stood at the window-sill,
The rubber cowl of a mud-splasher
Skirting the front mudguard,
Its fat black handlegrips

Heating in sunlight, the 'spud'
Of the dynamo gleaming and cocked back,
The pedal treads hanging relieved
Of the boot of the law.

His cap was upside down
On the floor, next his chair.
The line of its pressure ran like a bevel
In his slightly sweating hair.

He had unstrapped
The heavy ledger, and my father
Was making tillage returns
In acres, roods, and perches.

Arithmetic and fear.
I sat staring at the polished holster
With its buttoned flap, the braid cord
Looped into the revolver butt.

'Any other root crops?
Mangolds? Marrowstems? Anything like that?'
'No.' But was there not a line
Of turnips where the seed ran out

In the potato field? I assumed
Small guilts and sat
Imagining the black hole in the barracks.
He stood up, shifted the baton-case

Further round on his belt,
Closed the domesday book,
Fitted his cap back with two hands,
And looked at me as he said goodbye.

A shadow bobbed in the window.
He was snapping the carrier spring
Over the ledger. His boot pushed off
And the bicycle ticked, ticked, ticked.

Seamus Heaney

1. (a) From your reading of this poem, explain why the constable called to the Heaney home. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
- (b) The poet as a young boy observes many details about the constable in the poem. Identify the detail that you find most striking and explain why you find it to be so. (10)
- (c) *...I assumed
Small guilts and sat
Imagining the black hole in the barracks.*
- Explain what you think the poet means by these lines. (10)

2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]

- (i) What do you learn about the world of Seamus Heaney's childhood by studying this poem? Support your answer with reference to the poem.

OR

- (ii) In which one of the following collections of poetry do you feel this poem best belongs?

- A collection of poems about rural life.
- A collection of poems about the past.
- A collection of poems about childhood.

Give reasons for your choice with reference to the poem.

OR

- (iii) Imagine you are the young Seamus Heaney. Write a diary entry about the day the constable called. Your diary entry should be based on your reading of the poem.



B THE SUN

Have you ever seen
anything
in your life
more wonderful

than the way the sun,
every evening,
relaxed and easy,
floats toward the horizon

and into the clouds or the hills,
or the ruffled sea,
and is gone –
and how it slides again

out of the blackness,
every morning,
on the other side of the world,
like a red flower

streaming upwards on its heavenly oils,
say, on a morning in early summer,
at its perfect imperial distance –
and have you ever felt for anything

such wild love –
do you think there is anywhere, in
any language,
a word billowing enough
for the pleasure

that fills you,
as the sun
reaches out,
as it warms you

as you stand there,
empty-handed –
or have you too
turned from this world –

or have you too
gone crazy
for power,
for things?

Mary Oliver

1. (a) Which image of the sun, as described in this poem, do you find most appealing? Explain your choice with reference to the poem. (10)
- (b) What does the poet do to involve the reader in this poem? Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)

- (c) *or have you too
gone crazy
for power,
for things?*

What, in your opinion, does the poet mean by these last four lines of the poem? Explain your answer with reference to the poem. (10)

2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
- (i) From your reading of the poem, what do you think is important to the poet? Support your answer with reference to the poem.

OR

- (ii) Do you find the language used by the poet in this poem appealing?
Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

OR

- (iii) In which one of the following collections of poetry do you feel this poem best belongs?
- A collection of poems about nature.
 - A collection of poems about beauty.
 - A collection of poems about life.

Give reasons for your choice with reference to the poem.



C A SUMMER MORNING

Her young employers, having got in late
From seeing friends in town
And scraped the right front fender on the gate,
Will not, the cook expects, be coming down.

She makes a quiet breakfast for herself.
The coffee-pot is bright,
The jelly where it should be on the shelf.
She breaks an egg into the morning light,

Then, with the bread-knife, stands and hears
The sweet efficient sounds
Of thrush and catbird, and the snip of shears
Where, in the terraced backward of the grounds,

A gardener works before the heat of day.
He straightens for a view
Of the big house ascending stony-gray
Out of his beds mosaic with the dew.

His young employers having got in late,
He and the cook alone
Receive the morning on their old estate,
Possessing what the owners can but own.

Richard Wilbur

1. (a) Describe the lifestyle of the owners of the estate based on your reading of the first stanza (lines 1 – 4). (10)
 - (b) What details in the poem suggest the cook enjoys this particular early morning on the estate? Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
 - (c) *He and the cook alone
Receive the morning on their old estate,
Possessing what the owners can but own.*
Explain what you think the poet means in the last three lines of this poem. (10)
2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
 - (i) ‘The poet makes effective use of comparisons in this poem.’
Discuss this statement based on your reading of this poem.

OR

(ii) In which of the following collections of poetry do you think this poem best belongs?

- A collection of poems about work.
- A collection of poems about social class.
- A collection of poems about happiness.

Explain your choice with reference to the poem.

OR

(iii) You have been asked to make a short video to accompany a reading of this poem. Describe the images, colours, music, sound effects, etc. that you would use as a background to the reading and explain your choices based on your knowledge of the poem.



D MIRROR IN FEBRUARY

The day dawns with scent of must and rain,
Of opened soil, dark trees, dry bedroom air.
Under the fading lamp, half dressed – my brain
Idling on some compulsive fantasy –
I towel my shaven jaw and stop, and stare,
Riveted by a dark exhausted eye,
A dry downturning mouth.

It seems again that it is time to learn,
In this untiring, crumbling place of growth
To which, for the time being, I return.
Now plainly in the mirror of my soul
I read that I have looked my last on youth
And little more; for they are not made whole
That reach the age of Christ.

Below my window the awakening trees,
Hacked clean for better bearing, stand defaced
Suffering their brute necessities,
And how should the flesh not quail that span for span
Is mutilated more? In slow distaste
I fold my towel with what grace I can,
Not young and not renewable, but man.

Thomas Kinsella

1. (a) Why do you think the poet called this poem, *Mirror in February*?
Explain your answer. (10)
- (b) *In slow distaste*
I fold my towel with what grace I can,
Not young and not renewable, but man.
- What do you think the poet means by these lines? Explain your
answer with reference to the poem. (10)
- (c) From your study of this poem, which one of the following phrases, in your
opinion, best describes the attitude of the man in the poem to life?
Explain your answer.
- He is a gloomy and sad individual.
- He accepts whatever life brings. (10)

2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]

- (i) What picture of nature does the poet create in this poem?
Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

OR

- (ii) In which of the following collections of poetry do you think this poem best belongs?

- A collection of poems about life.
- A collection of poems about death.
- A collection of poems about being human.

Explain your choice with detailed reference to the poem.

OR

- (iii) Do you find the atmosphere in this poem frightening? Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

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