



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit  
State Examinations Commission**

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**JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2010**

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**ENGLISH - HIGHER LEVEL - PAPER 2**  
(180 marks)

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**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9 - AFTERNOON, 2.00 - 4.30**

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**YOU MUST ATTEMPT ALL THREE SECTIONS ON  
THIS PAPER.**

**EACH SECTION CARRIES 60 MARKS.**

**SPEND ABOUT 45 MINUTES ON EACH SECTION.**

Answer QUESTION ONE and QUESTION TWO

## QUESTION ONE

(30)

Answer either (A) or (B).

## (A) SHAKESPEAREAN DRAMA

The following extract (in edited form) is taken from *Coriolanus* by William Shakespeare. Read the extract carefully and then answer the questions which follow.

**Background to this extract:**

In this extract Volumnia, mother of Marcius and her daughter-in-law, Virgilia are at home. Their conversation concerns Marcius, who is away fighting Rome's great enemy, the Volsces. Towards the end of the extract they are visited by their friend Valeria.

*Rome – a room in the house of Marcius. Enter Marcius' mother, Volumnia and his wife, Virgilia. They are seated on two low stools, sewing.*

**VOLUMNIA:**

I pray you daughter, sing or express yourself in a more cheerful manner. If my son were my husband, I would freely rejoice in any absence which won him honour. When he was very young and the only son of my womb; I was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him, from which he returned wearing the crown of glory.

I tell thee daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child, than now on seeing he has proved himself a man.

**VIRGILIA:**

But had he died in the business, madam, how then?

**VOLUMNIA:**

Then his good report would have been my son. Hear me profess sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather eleven die nobly for their country than one abandon himself to a life less noble.

*Enter a gentlewoman*

**GENTLEWOMAN:**

Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

**VIRGILIA:**

I beg you, give me leave to retire.

**VOLUMNIA:**

Indeed you shall not.

*(Imagining)* Methinks I hear your husband's drum.

Methinks I see him wipe his bloody brow with his armoured hand  
As he goes forth.

**VIRGILIA:**

His bloody brow? O Jupiter, no blood!

**VOLUMNIA:** Away you fool!  
Blood more honours a man than gilt his trophy.  
Tell Valeria we are fit to bid her welcome.

*Exit Gentlewoman*

**VIRGILIA:** Heaven's bless my lord from the cruel enemy!  
**VOLUMNIA:** He'll beat the enemies' heads below their knees  
And tread upon their necks.

*Enter Valeria*

**VALERIA:** My ladies, how do you both? What are you sewing here?  
A fine embroidery. Come, lay aside your stitchery: I must have you play the idle housewife with me this afternoon.

**VIRGILIA:** No, good madam; I will not out of doors.  
**VALERIA:** Not out of doors!  
**VOLUMNIA:** She shall, she shall.  
**VIRGILIA:** Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not cross over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

**VALERIA:** In truth, go with me and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.  
**VIRGILIA:** O, good madam, there can be none yet.  
**VALERIA:** In earnest, it's true: I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: –  
The Volsces have an army forth; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power: your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli. They will no doubt prevail\*, making brief the war. This is true, on mine honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

**VIRGILIA:** I pray you; give me excuse, good madam.  
**VOLUMNIA:** Let her alone, lady: as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

\*Prevail : be successful

Answer **two** of the following questions. Each question is worth 15 marks.

1. From your reading of the extract, what kind of relationship do you think exists between Virgilia and her mother-in-law, Volumnia? Support your answer with reference to the extract.
2. Your school is auditioning for a forthcoming production of *Coriolanus*. Based on your reading of the above extract, which of the three characters, Volumnia, Virgilia or Valeria would you most like to audition for? Explain your answer with reference to the extract.
3. Imagine that Marcius comes on stage to speak at the end of this extract. Based on information supplied in the extract, write out the lines that you imagine Marcius would speak and briefly explain why you think this speech would be appropriate in the circumstances.

## (B) OTHER DRAMA

The following extract (in edited form) is adapted from a play *Same Old Moon* by Geraldine Aron. Read the extract carefully and answer the questions which follow.



### Background to this extract:

In this extract we meet Brenda Barnes, just home from Australia. She is visiting her widowed mother, Bridie and her Aunt Peace, who live together.

Also on stage we see the ghost of Desmond - Bridie's late husband and Brenda's father.

Although he reacts to the women's conversation Desmond says nothing during this extract.

1980's. The stage is split in two - a small cramped living room and a bedroom section which is occupied by Desmond's ghost. The ghost reacts from time to time but is generally still and inconspicuous. Bridie has prepared a tea-trolley; she enters with the milk jug, and puts it on the trolley.

**BRENDA:** New curtains, Mum? They're lovely.

**BRIDIE:** Thanks, love.

**PEACE:** I was just thinking to myself that if you weren't going to notice them we'd wasted our time making them. I thought you'd say something the minute you came in.

**BRENDA (reasonably):** Give us a chance. I mean they don't exactly jump out at a person. They're exactly the same as the old ones ... *(uncertainly)* aren't they?

**BRIDIE:** These are mushroom. The old ones were beige. We might as well have kept them if you can't see the difference. Well, I must say Brenda, I thought you were more observant. Not a word about the new tea-trolley.

*Bridie hands out cups of tea, first to Peace, then to Brenda.*

**BRIDIE:** Here we are now. Sugar's in.

**BRENDA:** Sorry to be such a pest, Mum, but I don't take milk or sugar in mine.

**BRIDIE:** Oh? Since when?

**BRENDA:** About fifteen years.

**BRIDIE:** Well, that's strange. Because it's the first I've heard of it.

**PEACE:** Throw it down the drain if she doesn't want it.

**BRIDIE:** Black tea. Out of the blue. You remind me of your father, pretending to like his meat underdone.

*The light comes up on Desmond 'the ghost'. He becomes alert and reacts now that he is being discussed.*

**BRENDA (Smiling):** Maybe he really *did* like his meat underdone.

*Desmond reacts.*

**BRIDIE:** Indeed he did not. That was all put on, trying to impress people.

*Desmond reacts.*

- PEACE:** It's probably smart, in Australia, but can you imagine what black tea does to the lining of your stomach?
- BRIDIE:** The tannin you mean? Sure tannin is more poisonous than nicotine.
- BRENDA:** (*Showing strain*) I'll *drink* it, OK? No problem at all. (She drains her cup and slams cup and saucer down on the trolley.)
- BRIDIE:** (*Wounded*) There was no need for that, Brenda. No need at all. How were we supposed to know you suddenly stopped taking milk and sugar? We'll know for the next time.
- BRENDA:** That's OK then.
- PEACE:** Bridie and I had a great idea, to simplify our tea drinking. I used to take *two* sugars and Bridie used to take *one*. So we split the difference and now we both take one and half and it doesn't matter if the cups get mixed up. Aren't we sensible?
- BRENDA:** (*Smiling*) Very sensible.

Answer **two** of the following questions. Each question is worth 15 marks.

1. From your reading of the extract, what kind of relationship exists between Brenda and her mother, Bridie? Support your answer with reference to the extract.
2. In your opinion is this extract serious or humorous or a mixture of both? Explain your answer with reference to the extract.
3. The ghost, Desmond, reacts three times in the course of this extract. In each of these three cases explain why he reacts. What effect do you think his reactions would have on an audience?

## QUESTION TWO

(30)

Answer **EITHER 1 OR 2** which follow.

**N.B.** You must give the name of the play that you choose. You may **NOT** choose either of the scenes quoted on this examination paper as the basis for your answer.

1. Tension between characters is a common feature in drama. From a play you have studied choose two characters who have a tense relationship.
  - (a) Explain the reason(s) for the tension that exists between these two characters. (15)
  - (b) Imagine you are directing a stage production of this play. Select a scene where this tension is evident and explain what you, as director, would do to convey the tension between these two characters on stage. (15)

**OR**

2. Often the closing scenes of a play have a powerful impact on an audience. Name a play you have studied and explain what impact the closing scenes had on you. Support your answer by reference to the play. In your answer you might wish to consider some of the following; the feelings you were left with at the end of the play, the outcome of the issues raised during the play, how you were affected by what happened to the characters, if the ending was shocking or unexpected, etc. (30)

Read the following poem by Roger McGough and answer the questions which follow.

### Cinders

After the pantomime, carrying you back to the car  
On the coldest night of the year  
My coat, black leather, cracking in the wind.

Through the darkness we are guided by a star  
It is the one the Good Fairy gave you  
You clutch it tightly, your magic wand.

And I clutch you tightly for fear you blow away  
For fear you grow up too soon and - suddenly,  
I almost slip, so take it steady down the hill.

Hunched against the wind and hobbling  
I could be mistaken for your grandfather  
And sensing this, I hold you tighter still.

Knowing that I will never see you dressed for the Ball  
Be on hand to warn you against Prince Charmings  
And the happy ever afters of pantomime.

On reaching the car I put you into the baby seat  
And fumble with straps I have yet to master  
Thinking, if only there were more time. More time.

You are crying now. Where is your wand?  
Oh no. I can't face going back for it  
Let some kid find it in tomorrow's snow.

Waiting in the wings, the witching hour.  
Already the car is changing. Smells sweet  
Of ripening seed. We must go. Must go.

Roger McGough



Roger McGough

### Answer QUESTION ONE and QUESTION TWO

#### QUESTION ONE

(30)

Answer **two** of the following questions. Each question is worth 15 marks.

1. From your reading of the poem what do you learn about the relationship between the poet and his child? Base your answer on evidence from the poem.
2. Do you think the poet captures the scene well in this poem? Support your answer with reference to the poem.
3. Do you think this poem is sad or happy or a mixture of both? Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

## QUESTION TWO

(30)

Answer **EITHER 1 OR 2** which follow.

**N.B.** In answering you may **NOT** use the poem given on this paper. You must give the title of the poem you choose and the name of the poet.

1. Choose a poem you have studied in which the poet deals with an important issue.
  - (a) Explain what the poet had to say about the important issue in the poem. (15)
  - (b) What insights into the issue did you get from studying this poem? (15)  
Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

**OR**

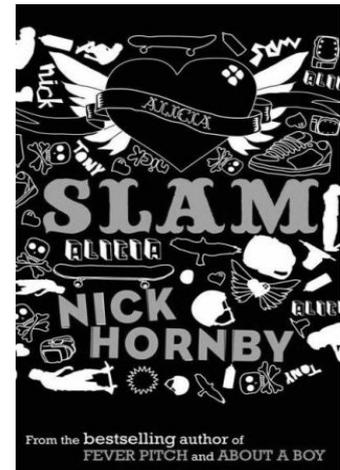
2. Imagine you have to recommend one poem that you have studied for a new publication entitled, *A Book of Favourite Poems for Young People of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Name the poem you would choose and explain why this particular poem would be suitable for inclusion in this collection.  
In your answer you may wish to consider some of the following; the poem's theme, the way the poet uses language, the use of imagery, tone and/or mood, the structure of the poem, etc. (30)

Read the following edited extract from the novel *Slam* by award-winning writer Nick Hornby and then answer the questions that follow.



**Background to the extract:**

In this edited extract, from the opening of the book, we are introduced to Sam, a skateboard-loving teenager. Sam tells us about himself in his own words. He reveals that he holds imaginary conversations with his skateboarding hero, Tony Hawk.



So things were ticking along quite nicely. In fact, I'd say that good stuff had been happening pretty solidly for about six months.

- For example: Mrs Gillett, my art and design teacher took me to one side after a lesson and asked whether I'd thought of doing art at college.

- For example: I'd learned two new skating tricks, suddenly, after weeks of making an idiot of myself in public. (I'm guessing that not all of you are skaters, so I should say something straight away, just so that there are no terrible misunderstandings. Skating = skateboarding.)

All that and I'd met Alicia too.

If you knew something about me, you might actually care about some of those things. But then, looking at what I just wrote, you know quite a lot already, or at least you could have guessed a lot of it. You could have guessed that I skate, and you could have guessed that my best subject at school was art and design, unless you thought I might be the sort of person who's always being taken to one side and told to apply for college by all the teachers in every subject. You know, and the teachers actually fight over me. 'No, Sam! Forget art! Do physics!' 'Forget physics! It would be a tragedy for the human race if you gave up French!' And then they all start punching each other.

Yeah, well. That sort of thing really, really doesn't happen to me. I can promise you, I have never ever caused a fight between teachers.

If I'm going to tell this story properly, without trying to hide anything, then there's something I should own up to, because it's important. Here's the thing. I know it sounds stupid, and I'm not this sort of person usually, honest. I mean, I don't believe in, you know, ghosts or reincarnation or any weird stuff at all. Anyway. I'll just say it and you can think what you want.

I talk to Tony Hawk, and Tony Hawk talks back.

Some of you probably won't have heard of Tony Hawk. Well, I'll tell you, but I'll have to say that you should know already. Not knowing Tony Hawk is like not knowing Robbie Williams, or maybe even Tony Blair. It's worse than that, if you think about it, because there are loads of politicians and loads of singers. But there is only one skater, really, and his name's Tony Hawk. Well, there is not only one. But he's definitely the Big One. He's the J.K. Rowling of skaters, the Big Mac, the iPod, the Xbox. The only excuse I'll accept for not knowing Tony Hawk is that you're not interested in skating.

When I got into skating, my mum bought me a Tony Hawk poster off the Internet. It's the coolest present I've ever had, and it wasn't even the most expensive. And it went straight up onto my bedroom wall, and I just got into the habit of telling it things. At first I only told Tony about skating – I would talk about the problems I was having or the tricks I'd pulled off. I pretty much ran to my room to tell him about the first rock'n'roll\*<sup>1</sup> I'd managed, because I knew it would mean much more to a picture of Tony Hawk than it would to a real-life Mum. I'm not dissing\*<sup>2</sup> my mum, but she hasn't got a clue, really. So when I told her about things like that, she'd try to look all enthusiastic,

but there was nothing really going on in her eyes. She was all, ‘Oh, that’s great’. But if I’d asked her what a rock’n’roll was, she wouldn’t have been able to tell me. So what was the point? Tony knew, though. Maybe that was why my mum bought me the poster, so that I’d have someone else to talk to.

\*<sup>1</sup> Rock’n’ roll - Skate boarding term      \*<sup>2</sup> Dissing - Disrespecting

Answer **QUESTION ONE** and **QUESTION TWO**

### **QUESTION ONE**

**(30)**

Answer **two** of the following questions. Each question is worth **15 marks**.

1. From your reading of the passage, what do you learn about the character of Sam? Support your answer with reference to the passage.
2. Nick Hornby, the author of *Slam*, has described the novel as being “about and hopefully for teenagers”. From what you have read of this extract, do you think he has achieved his aim?
3. In the passage Sam tells us that he sometimes holds imaginary conversations with his skateboarding hero, Tony Hawke. Based on information from the extract, write out the conversation that might take place between Sam and Tony.

### **QUESTION TWO**

**(30)**

Answer **EITHER 1 OR 2** which follow.

**N.B.** In answering you may **NOT** use the extract given above as the basis for your answer. You must give the title of the text you choose and the name of the author.

1. Novels and short stories often surprise the reader with an unexpected development.
  - (a) Briefly describe such a development in a novel or short story you have studied. (15)
  - (b) Did this development add to your enjoyment of the book? Explain your answer with reference to the novel or short story. (15)

**OR**

2. You have been asked to rate a novel or short story that you have studied according to the following scale:

★★★★★ Will change your life!  
★★★★★ Highly recommended  
★★★★ A good read  
★★★ Average  
★★ Disappointing  
★

Choose the rating that you feel is appropriate. Explain your choice with reference to the novel or short story. In your answer you may wish to consider some of the following; plot, character, atmosphere, relevance to your age group, insights gained, language or any other aspect you feel is relevant. (30)

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