

## 2015 Ordinary Level – Text One

### QUESTION A

- (i) From your reading of the above extract, what impression do you form of George?

Support your answer with reference to the text. (15)

### Note:

This is a question about character, so you should scan the text to see what George does in various situations and then decide what sort of person you think he is as a result.

As this is a fifteen-mark question, you should be aiming to make three well-developed points in your answer.

### Plan:

- Considerate: goes to a lot of trouble to replace dead canary etc.
- Imaginative and resourceful: tells children that canary was swapped for two finches and later that the missing finch flew back to the pet shop.
- Loving family man: delighted that wife likes his idea and cares more about his children's happiness than anything else.

### Sample Answer:

From my reading of the extract, I think George is a considerate, imaginative man who cares deeply for his family.

The introduction raises the points that will be developed in the rest of the answer.

George's consideration is clear from the outset. Although he had nothing to do with the canary's death, he goes to a lot of trouble in his attempt to replace it. He visits not one but three different pet shops and when all else fails; he buys two finches for his children instead. Later on we learn that while George considers the finches 'a pain in the neck', he still turns the car around when the family is half way to Galway because they realise they have forgotten to sort out care for the birds in their absence.

As well as being kind and considerate, George has a great imagination and is most resourceful in a crisis. He comes up with an invented story about a man on his flight telling him that finches are 'much better than canaries', to explain the sudden appearance of the finches and the disappearance of the canary. When one of the finches flies away, George loses no time in telling his wife that they should go to the pet shop to see if the bird could have flown back there and tells her to ring the shop to let them in on the plan. Sandra, his wife, calls the idea 'Brilliant' and 'genius' and I think she is right!

Finally, I think that George goes to such lengths to keep his family happy because he loves them very much. He clearly adores his wife and even when she is in her dressing gown, telling him about Pete flying off, he thinks she looks 'attractively distraught', and he is thrilled that she approves of his plan and seems to be 'falling in love with him, all over again.' When the plan works, George calls it his 'proudest moment' because of the 'happiness he delivered'. In fact, George loves his children so much that he says watching

Quotes should be short, relevant and woven into the fabric of the sentence.

Dylan gazing at the birds one morning and knowing that he, George, has ensured the little boy has his pets is one of ‘those great moments’ and thinks to himself, ‘*This is why I live*’.

(ii) Which of the following word or words would you choose to describe the above extract from *Animals*?

Humorous      Descriptive      Realistic

**Note:**

There is no right or wrong answer here: all descriptions given are equally valid. Read the question carefully: you are allowed to choose more than one word to describe the text if you wish. In the answer below, I have focused on humour only.

There is one other small point worth mentioning at this stage and that is the spelling of the word ‘humorous’. Although it is written on the page, some students will still copy it down incorrectly as ‘humourous’ and it will grate on the corrector’s nerves every time they see this silly error!

**Plan:**

- Amusing trick about having swapped canary for finches – idea of discussing it with man on plane is ridiculous
- Small touches bring humour to the piece, such as mention of Pete looking intelligent on the bars
- Description of hysteria when finch flies off is entertaining

### Sample Answer:

I think that the extract from 'Animals' is a humorous piece with an entertaining mixture of ridiculous moments and gentler humour.

One of the funniest moments in the story is when George persuades the children that a 'fella on the plane' told him that finches were better than canaries. The children see nothing at all ridiculous about this white lie but I found the idea of George and a random stranger happening to strike up a conversation about the relative merits of canaries and finches hilarious.

The white lie is quite an obvious piece of humour, but there are other small moments in the text that I found equally entertaining. One of these occurs in the second paragraph when the male finch, Pete, is described as hanging on the bars of the cage and looking intelligent. Quite how a finch could look intelligent is beyond me, but I suspect George thinks he does because the bird is the father figure and therefore must be clever, even though there is no evidence for this. It is amusing to think of George relating to a bird in this way and wanting him to be somehow admirable.

I think the funniest part of this extract is the description of the hysteria in the house when the male finch flies off. The four children are 'long past tears and snot' and although this is quite a revolting description, anyone who has dealt with hysterical children will relate to it and it is likely to make them grimace and laugh at the same time. Later on in the same paragraph, the picture Roddy Doyle paints of Sandra looking 'attractively distraught' in her dressing gown and gazing at her husband 'like he was your man from ER', is sweetly funny

Although the title of the short story is italicised in the questions, you can't do this when handwriting so you must put the title in inverted commas instead.

Where possible, link your paragraphs so your answer flows well. This will help you to gain marks under Coherence of Delivery.

because I could easily imagine how the husband and wife would appear to outsiders and how different this would be to their view of each other.

The combination of the ridiculous, disgusting and gently funny moments makes this extract a most enjoyable read.

If you have time, a brief concluding sentence can neatly tie up your answer.

- (iii) (a) Imagine you are Dylan. Based on the above text, write a paragraph telling the story of how you lost and found your pet finch, Pete.

**Note:**

Before you write, you should have a rough idea of what age you think Dylan is. Although we are not told this directly, we do know that he is young enough to be fooled by his father's white lies and to be tearful when he loses his pet bird.

You should look for other clues to his personality too. What do we learn about him from reading the text? We know that he loves his pets dearly, not just because he cries when Pete is lost but also because he gets up very early in the morning to gaze at them.

**Plan:**

- Horrified when someone opened the hatch – suspect sister! Mum tried to find him but Dad was hero. Delight on getting him back – did look different, probably tired.

### Sample Answer:

Today was sort of the worst and sort of the best day of my life. Pete, my zebra finch, got lost and I thought I'd never see him again. It happened when we wheeled the bird cage outside this morning so we could give it a good clean. Someone – I bet it was Shauna because that's just the kind of stupid thing she'd do – opened the latch and Pete flew off. We searched and searched but we couldn't find him anywhere. The others started roaring crying but I didn't. Not really. Ma sent us inside because she said she had no chance of finding Pete with all that bawling and screeching. Da came home then and that's when things started to get a bit better. Da said Pete probably flew back to Wacker's because that was where he was born. He explained that finches are like homing pigeons that way. Da's brilliant. He knows everything. He put us all into the car and we drove straight to Wacker's shop. I couldn't believe it when we went in and the men said that Pete had turned up a while ago! One man said he was flaked from flying all that way. They told me to pick him out of the cage they'd put him in and I did. At first I wasn't sure which one he was because all the finches looked the same, but then I saw him and I knew it was Pete because he was really tired-looking and just sitting there with his head down. They gave me a small box to put him in and I held him on my lap the whole way home and thought about how lucky I am to have Pete and the best Da in the whole world.

When writing from the point of view of a young child, it is appropriate to use simple language.

While you should stick to the facts of the text, you can of course include extra bits as well. Try to make sure they are in keeping with the rest of the story. Here I have said that George invented a story about homing pigeons and finches being alike, and that fits in with what we know of his personality.

- (iii) (b) George deceives his children twice: once, when the canary died, and again when Pete flew away. Do you think George was right to deceive his children on these occasions? Explain your answer with reference to the text.

**Note:**

This ten-mark question is quite straightforward in that you write one paragraph per occasion on which George deceived his children. As always, you are free to agree or disagree: there is no right or wrong answer.

**Plan:**

- Right to deceive them – children might have wondered if he had fed canary – they are very young – happy ending
- Right to deceive them second time also – they are hysterical – child who unlatched child might be blamed.

**Sample Answer:**

I think that George is right to deceive his children as he only tells them white lies and does so because they are very young and he simply wants to make them happy.

In the first instance, George could possibly have told the children the truth but they may have blamed him for killing the canary because he was left in charge of feeding it. They are young enough to be fooled by his rather ridiculous story of having met a man on the plane who persuaded him that finches were better than canaries, so they are probably too young to fully understand and accept

death. At the end of the day, they are very happy with the new arrivals and think they are 'cool', so George's lie leads to a happy ending.

I also think that George acts correctly on the second occasion when he tells the children that Pete has flown back to the pet shop. When he arrives home they are hysterical and 'long past tears and snot', so they are clearly in no state to listen to reason. Another reason that I believe George is right is that the unnamed child who unlatched the cage may have felt terribly guilty for doing so and would possibly have been blamed by the other children. George's brainwave brings nothing but happiness, so I feel he made the right choice.

Stick to the text as much as possible. You must support your points with evidence from the text, so keep guesswork to a minimum. A little is fine, but even that must be linked to the text.

Neither of George's deceptions causes any harm and both delight his small children, which I think proves that what he did was for the best.



## QUESTION B

### **Note:**

You don't have the time or the space to ramble on so make sure your points are organised before you write. It can help to ask yourself the following four questions before you begin your Question B:

### **1. What form should this task take?**

This is a formal letter.

### **2. What should the content be?**

You are applying for a job so you should list relevant experience, qualifications and interests.

First paragraph: State who you are, the position for which you are applying and where you learned about the vacancy.

Second paragraph: Give reasons for your interest in this job. Mention any relevant qualifications and / or experience. State any talents you have which might be useful in the job.

Third paragraph: If you are including a CV, mention it at this stage.

Final paragraph: Make it clear when you are available for interview and thank the person for taking the time to consider your application.

### 3. Who is my audience?

Your audience is an adult you do not know: the shop owner or manager.

### 4. What register should I use?

As this is a formal letter, you should write carefully and correctly. Avoid any slang, abbreviations or contractions (shortening 'I am' to 'I'm' is an example of a contraction.)

You are providing information, but you are also trying to persuade the shop owner that you are the best person for the job.

This is a persuasive piece, so you should do your best to include features of the language of argument and/or persuasion.

No. 10 Abbey View,  
Donaghmede,  
Dublin.

Mr. Patrick Walsh,  
Manager,  
Wacker's Pet Shop,  
Donaghmede,  
Dublin.

Your address goes on the top right-hand side of the page and the recipient's name, position (if you know it) and address go on the left hand side of the page. For more details on laying out formal letters and all the other usual Question B tasks, go to my website: [www.aoifesnotes.com](http://www.aoifesnotes.com)

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

Dear Mr. Walsh,

I am writing in reply to your advertisement in yesterday's 'Donaghmede Daily'

and I would like to apply for the position of part-time shop assistant. I am a sixth year student in Balgriffin Community College and I am available to work Friday evenings and weekends.

I believe I would be a suitable candidate for the position as I have a keen interest in working with animals and have been a weekend volunteer at Grange Road Animal Rescue Centre for the last three years. During my time there I dealt with a large variety of creatures from reptiles and exotic birds to cats and dogs. The centre arranged a training programme for all volunteers which included the basics of animal handling, feeding and first aid and I achieved the highest result in the final exam at the end of the course. I also worked in the Valley View supermarket for two months last summer, both on tills and in the stockroom. Were you to employ me, I would bring a valuable combination of animal expertise and shop floor knowledge to the job.

Written references from the Animal Rescue Centre and the supermarket are included in the attached Curriculum Vitae. If you require any further details, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email address and phone number are in my Curriculum Vitae and I am available for interview any day from four o'clock onwards.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Carr

Cathy Carr

## 2015 Ordinary Level – Text Two

- (i) From your reading of the written text and IMAGE 2 above, what impression do you form of Maureen O'Carroll? Support your answer with reference to the text.

**Note:**

As this is a fifteen-mark question, you should aim to make three well-developed points.

You must refer to both the text and the second image only in your answer. You do not have to give both equal treatment.

Be very careful when reading the text. The first paragraph tells you the story of Maureen O'Carroll's mother rather than Maureen O'Carroll herself.

**Plan:**

- Smart, ambitious and driven: went to college, was elected to Dáil
- Loving and caring mother: image shows happy mother and child; good judge of how to get the best from her children etc.
- Fiesty, sharp-tongued and intolerant of injustice and inequality

### Sample Answer:

From studying both the written text and the second image, I get the impression that Maureen O'Carroll was not only a smart, ambitious and strong-willed woman who refused to tolerate injustice but also a loving and caring mother.

The introduction raises the points that will be developed in the rest of the answer.

It is clear that Maureen was very intelligent and determined to make the most of her abilities. She used her 'incredible energy' to study hard and got a place in UCG where she qualified as a language teacher: a 'rare achievement for a woman at that time'. Even when she was married and a mother to a large family, Maureen was elected to the Dáil in 1954. Her son points out that this was a 'remarkable' achievement for a working-class woman and it shows just how far Maureen's drive and ambition brought her.

In her private life, Maureen was just as successful as in her public life. She was a loving and caring mother who not only had nine children of her own, but went on to adopt another son. The author tells us that she would have been willing to lay down her life for her family but at the same time knew how to use 'the cleverest bit of psychology' to get them to do whatever she wanted. Image 2 supports this view of Maureen. It is a happy family shot of the author and his mother. Both smile at the camera, in fact the young Brendan O'Carroll looks as if he is about to burst out laughing. I was struck by the fact that Maureen is positioned behind her son: it gave me the impression that she put him first and would always be there, right behind him, if he needed her.

Where possible, link your paragraphs so your answer flows well. This will help you to gain marks under Coherence of Delivery.

Go into some detail about the image and be sure to link everything you say to the point you are making about Maureen O'Carroll's character.

It is not really surprising that a woman who achieved so much should be described as strong-willed and a fighter. Brendan O'Carroll says that his mother had a 'feisty, fighting spirit' and wouldn't tolerate injustice and was always willing to 'tell the world exactly where it was going wrong'. Maureen refused to accept the fact that female teachers couldn't be married and when she lost her job she joined the union and fought hard to get the law changed.

All in all, the smiling mother beaming out from the photograph was clearly both a force to be reckoned both at home and in the wider world.

If you have time, a brief concluding sentence can neatly tie up your answer.

- (ii) Based on Maureen O'Carroll's experiences, outlined in the extract above, which of the following word or words do you think best describe the situation experienced by many Irish women in the past?

Explain your answer, supporting the points you make by reference to the text.

**Note:**

There is no right or wrong answer here: all descriptions given are equally valid. Read the question carefully: you are allowed to choose more than one word to describe the text if you wish. In the answer below, I have focused the words 'Challenging' and 'Unequal'.

Again, take note of the fact that you are only required to talk about Maureen O'Carroll's experiences and not those of her mother. Confine your answer to evidence from paragraph three onwards.

### Plan:

- Challenging: family sizes were large and there was not a lot of money
- Unequal: women were not expected to go to third level
- Unequal: women in the civil service were supposed to give up their jobs on marriage

### Sample Answer:

Based on Maureen O'Carroll's experiences, I believe that women in Ireland in the past had to cope with challenging and unequal situations.

One of the most challenging aspects of life at that time seems to have been the large families that women had to cope with.

Brendan O'Carroll mentions that his mother gave birth to nine children. It would be most unusual for an Irish woman nowadays to have so many children and it cannot have been easy for Maureen to cope on limited resources. The author tells us that his mother always 'lived in crowded houses'. However, although this may have been a challenge for Maureen, it was one she rose to and she must have enjoyed it as she even adopted a tenth child!

There was clearly a great difference between the way men and women were treated in Ireland in the past. Maureen O'Carroll went to university to continue her education and that was 'considered a rare achievement for a woman at that time'.

The opening sentence answers the question directly and indicates the direction the rest of the answer will take.

The reason I chose 'challenging' over 'difficult' was that Maureen O'Carroll proved she was well able to deal with the situations in which she found herself.

When Maureen graduated from university she took up a teaching job that she loved but was forced to give it up when she got married as only single women were allowed to work in that sector. This was a clear example of inequality and one Maureen O'Carroll fought against. She may not have won that particular battle, but she did succeed in running for and being elected to the Dáil. We are told that this was yet another remarkable achievement for a woman at the time, particularly a working class woman.

There is no doubt that life was not particularly easy for Maureen O' Carroll but it is also clear that she rose to the challenges and refused to accept the inequality.

- (iii) (a) Based on the above text, what aspects of Agnes Brown's character appear to be inspired by Maureen O'Carroll?

**Note:**

There are quite a few examples of shared traits and you should aim to briefly mention all of them rather than going into detail about any of them. Be careful not to mention any aspects of Maureen's character that are not shared by Agnes. Brendan O'Carroll says that his mother was smarter and far more ambitious than Agnes, but this would not be a good point to make in your answer as you are required to focus on similarities between the two women.



**Plan:**

- Both fighters
- Neither tolerates injustice
- Sharp-tongued and outspoken
- Love family
- Make fun of family
- Good judges of character
- Not comfortable with modern devices

**Sample Answer:**

Brendan O'Carroll says that although he didn't originally realise or intend it, there are many ways in which his mother's character inspired that of his famous creation, Agnes Brown.

Both Agnes and Maureen are sharp-tongued, outspoken 'battlers' with a 'feisty, fighting spirit'. They are never short of a 'cutting one-liner' when putting someone in their place and would even turn a tea towel into a weapon if necessary. Neither woman has any time for small-minded people and would always be 'ready and willing to smack the face of injustice'.

Like Maureen, Agnes is fiercely fond of and protective of her family but also loves teasing them. Both women are good judges of character and know how to get what they want from people, even pretending to be 'a bit pathetic when required', although they are really very strong-willed and capable. The only weak point they share is an uneasy relationship with modern devices!

Although you would usually look for anecdotes or examples from the text to prove your point, there is no need for that level of detail in a ten-mark answer in which you have to list quite a few points.

(iii) (b) Imagine you are either Lizzie or Michael Mc Hugh. Write a paragraph giving your version of the events outlined in paragraph one of the above text.

**Note:**

You must confine your answer to the first paragraph only. Although you would normally write two paragraphs in response to a ten-mark question, you are only required to write one in this case.

Make it clear early on in the paragraph which character you are, Michael or Lizzie.

**Plan:**

- Concern about meeting Lizzie's father, relief that it worked out well
- Sold tickets, hope the buyers find happiness

**Sample Answer:**

It has been a strange few days, there's no doubt about that. It all started on Tuesday last, when Lizzie told me that her mother had discovered our plan to go to America. She's a sharp woman, Lizzie's mother, and I'm not really surprised that she worked it out. When I heard that Lizzie's father wanted to talk to me, I wasn't particularly happy! The last time we met he beat me to within an inch of my life. Still, I'd do anything for Lizzie so I agreed to go to her house. I was greatly relieved to find the man in a calm mood this time. I think that he realised I love Lizzie very much and want nothing but the best for her, and that we're going to get married whatever happens. We shook hands and he gave Lizzie and me his blessing. I put our boat tickets up for sale and they were snapped up almost immediately

Base as much of your paragraph as possible on evidence from the passage. Use your own words and do not quote from the text.

by another young couple eager to start afresh in America. They were really excited at the thought of it all and couldn't wait to sail on the Titanic. I hope their dreams come true just as Lizzie's and mine finally seem to have.

## QUESTION B

### **Note:**

You don't have the time or the space to ramble on so make sure your points are organised before you write. It can help to ask yourself the following four questions before you begin your Question B:

#### **1. What form should this task take?**

This is a short talk.

#### **2. What should the content be?**

You must identify an injustice about which you feel strongly and you must also suggest ways of overcoming or dealing with this injustice. The particular injustice you choose is up to you, but it is always best to choose a topic on which you are reasonably well informed. In the answer below, I have chosen the education system as the basis for my talk as this is an area with which all students are familiar.

#### **3. Who is my audience?**

Your audience is anyone who might be tuned into that radio programme or podcast. You might decide that the audience for your show would primarily be young people or you might decide it is aimed at a more general audience. The choice is yours.

#### **4. What register should I use?**

You are making a case here, so you should use the language of argument and/or persuasion to win the listeners over to your point of view. Make it clear that this is a radio talk rather than an article in a magazine, for example.

Address the audience but bear in mind that they cannot see you!

#### **Sample Answer:**

Hi everyone and welcome to , the slot where I air my views on an issue which I feel strongly about. The podcast this week is about education. Yes, I know I know, and before you tune out, just bear with me for one more minute because I think you might share my views and I am sure that you will want to join me in calling for reform of our system. Without our voices crying out, nothing will ever change!

The first thing that irritates me about our current system is the belief that it is somehow 'fair'. We are meant to believe that everyone in the country has equal access to education when this is quite obviously untrue. We are supposed to have free education, but tell that to parents who are struggling to buy uniforms and books and pay for all the additional extras that crop up during the school year. There are many parents caught in the middle in that they are earning too much to be entitled to benefits but who are not earning enough to be able to send their children back to school each September without great sacrifice.

And let's move past that. Let's imagine for a moment that all parents in the country have managed to buy the ridiculously over-priced uniforms and constantly-changing text books and have heaved a sigh of relief as they wave their child through the school gate. Are their problems over? I wish. Now

they have to cope with all the other demands such as after-school study, grinds, extra subjects and so on. If they can't fork out for these, their child may be at a disadvantage compared to the child of better-off parents who can shore up any deficiencies in their son or daughter's performance by buying extra tuition or arranging for them to take extra classes in a subject that suits them better.

So what can we do about it? Well, we can stand up and be counted. We can run for student council in our schools and push for basic reforms. Instead of costly uniforms, we can call for a simple dress code of a white shirt and black trousers, for example. If the school wants a crest, let that be bought separately and sewn or ironed onto a cheap jumper or blazer rather than having to pay an extra twenty euro for the 'special' school version. We could also put pressure on publishers to stick to one version of a textbook for at least five years and ask that the Department of Education seriously consider any changes to the syllabus that might require a textbook change. Then we could request that the school buys copies of the books and loans them to the student for the year. A small damage deposit would ensure that the books were returned in reasonable condition. After school study should be more heavily subsidised by the Department of Education or else removed as an option so that everyone is playing on the same field. All those 'extra' subjects should be seriously considered for inclusion in the mainstream timetable if that is what students want.

We are the future. We've heard it often enough. Well, if you've heard me tonight, you'll hopefully do your bit to change that future. Thanks for listening, and goodnight.

## 2015 Ordinary Level – Text Three

- (i) From your reading of the above extract, what impression do you form of Tatty's father? Support your answer with reference to the text.

### **Note:**

This is a question about character, so you should scan the text to see what Tatty's father does in various situations and then decide what sort of person you think he is as a result.

As this is a fifteen-mark question, you should be aiming to make three well-developed points in your answer.

### **Plan:**

- Irresponsible: tells child to keep up with him as he runs; leaves her to wait by men's toilets while he bets
- Does love his daughter – tucks her up in her coat and mittens; is very upset when she goes missing
- Emotional: shouts at barman but suddenly burst out laughing

### **Sample Answer:**

From my reading of the extract, I believe that Tatty's father loves his daughter but is an emotionally unstable, irresponsible man.

From the very start of the text, Tatty's father appears to lack any real sense of

responsibility. He takes his young daughter to the races and then expects her to keep up with him if he suddenly runs off. He tells her to 'grab a hold of his jacket' if she gets 'the nudge', which implies that he will neither have the time nor the interest to check if she is keeping up. When he decides that the rain is too heavy to carry out this plan, he dumps his daughter by the men's toilets and tells her to wait for him while he goes off to watch the races. This is hardly the action of a good father. When he finally does find her in the bar, Tatty's father tells her not to tell her mother she was lost and seems more concerned with the fact that he might get into trouble than that he behaved badly.

Make sure that all the points you mentioned in your introduction are fully-developed in your answer. This shows the corrector that you are organised and have planned your answer.

Although Tatty's father makes a poor impression in the opening paragraphs of the extract, it is clear that he does at least love his little girl beneath it all. He tucks her up in her coat, hat and mittens when he leaves her outside the men's toilets and is distraught to find her missing on his return. Unfortunately, even though he cares enough to ensure that his daughter is warm, he doesn't care enough to stay with her rather than go and watch a horse race.

When Tatty's father discovers Tatty safe and sound in the bar, he shows just how emotionally unstable he is. At first he is angry with the barman for not hearing Tatty's name called over the loudspeaker and for 'taking her' but a moment later he begins 'laughing his head off' when Tatty says that nobody took her but that she made the decision to come into the bar herself.

All in all, Tatty's father does not seem a very impressive man as his love for his daughter is not strong enough to stop him from putting his own needs before hers.

(ii) Which of the following word or words would you choose to describe the above extract from *Tatty*?      Humorous      Descriptive      Realistic

**Note:**

As always, there is no right or wrong answer here: all descriptions given are equally valid. Read the question carefully: you are allowed to choose more than one word to describe the text if you wish. In the answer below, I have focused on the word 'Descriptive'.

**Plan:**

- Detailed description of inside of her father's coat
- Sensual: cold rain smacking her in the face, heat inside etc.
- Two versions of her clothes – father's and mother's – help us to picture them clearly

I found this extract from 'Tatty' highly descriptive. As I read it, I felt like I was there with Tatty at the races.

From the very start we are given details about Tatty's world which help us to see her surroundings through her eyes. Being underneath her father's coat is like being in 'her own little tent' and everything, from the colour of the coat to the contents of his pockets is described to us. Tatty's own clothes are very cleverly depicted for us by being described both as her father and her mother would see them. The links to food: 'biscuit-coloured' and 'chocolate-brown' for example, are very clever as they give us a clear picture of the items of clothing and one to which everybody can easily relate.

The writing is sensual, which brings the racecourse

When you are answering a question about style, think about the language you use when describing lines of poetry.



to life for us. When Tatty's father leaves her she follows him outside and the cold rain 'keeps smacking her in the face'. The onomatopoeic 'smacking' is a perfect description of the water hitting the child's skin and it also brings to mind punishment and sadness, which is appropriate for this situation.

When describing features of style, you should explain what effect they have on you, the reader.

When Tatty finds comfort in the heat of the bar, the author gives us a precise account of the scene. Rather than say that Tatty's face is red from the heater, she specifies that it is one cheek, presumably the one turned towards the heat. We are told that one of her hands is on the heater and her mitten is 'flapping from the string in the sleeve of her jacket'. We even know what she is drinking – fizzy orange – and that she is sucking it through a straw in the bottle. The writing here is cinematic and conjures up an accurate and vivid picture of Tatty as she waits for her father.

(iii) (a) Outline what you learn about Tatty from each of the book covers above and explain which of the covers you think tells you the most about her. Support your answer with reference to both book covers.

**Note:**

This is quite a complex question as it contains a number of different requirements. You must talk about both covers as well as linking them to the text and saying which one you feel did a better job of giving you an insight into Tatty's life and character. Don't forget that you can talk about the text on the covers as well as the pictures.

**Plan:**

- Cover 1: child appears sad; hiding behind her hair; alone
- Cover 2: Title/Child's name drawn in chalk is effective as book is written

from child's perspective. Interesting line about imagination. Child has eyes closed, not clear why. Upside down, like her world?

### Sample Answer:

In Cover 1, we see a young girl with her head down and much of her face hidden behind her hair. This reminded me of Tatty being hidden underneath her father's coat in the second paragraph of the extract. The girl's eyes are downcast and she appears sad and she is totally alone, which again seems appropriate, as Tatty is very much alone in the extract and is not happy to be abandoned by her father. Even when her father is with her, he is thinking of himself most of the time. I liked this cover, but I did not learn anything about it that I did not already know from the extract.

You are asked to give your opinion of both covers and say which one tells you the most about her. Any points you make are valid as long as you support them with reference to the text and the covers.

The second cover has a title drawn in chalk, which I thought was effective for a book written from a child's perspective. I also liked the line about Tatty having a 'large imagination' as this was something I did not learn from the extract. The picture was interesting too in that it showed a little girl hanging upside down from a bar, eyes closed and hair loose. I wondered if the fact that she was upside down meant that her world was a bit upside down too. Certainly, her father seems irresponsible and selfish, which would seem to be a role reversal in that I would expect such behaviour from a child, not a parent. The girl has her eyes closed which fits in with the idea of her having a vivid imagination and being lost in her own world. Overall, I found this cover more informative and thought-provoking than the first one.

(iii) (b) Imagine you are Tatty's mother. Write a paragraph which captures your reaction to Tatty's day at the races.

**Note:**

The important word here is 'reaction'. Make sure you include descriptions of your thoughts and feelings as you reflect on the day's events.

Although you would normally write two paragraphs in response to a ten-mark question, you are only required to write one in this case.

**Plan:**

- Anger and shock that father could leave Tatty
- Tatty's reaction and her lie about being lost
- Horror at thought of what could have happened
- Shame at father losing child in public
- Plan to talk to him later

**Sample Answer:**

Well, he's done it again. I can't believe he could be so stupid and irresponsible. You'd think I'd be used to him by now but every time he pulls a stunt like this I'm genuinely shocked. It's not as if I haven't had words with him before about leaving the kids alone while he watches his precious races. I'm at the end of my tether with him and now he's glued to the telly while I'm left trying to calm the child down. She's very upset, as well she might be. The poor little soul thought she was doing the right thing, telling me she hadn't been lost at all, because of course he made her promise not to tell. What sort of example is that to set the child? What sort of father would tell his child to lie to her

Use plenty of descriptive words and phrases to show the emotions you felt on hearing of the day's events.

mother? When I heard that he'd left her by the men's toilets while he went off gallivanting, I nearly died. Anything could have happened to her. I suppose I should be counting my blessings that she came home to me at all. And then to think she had to be minded by the barman... It doesn't bear thinking about. I'm praying nobody we knew saw what happened or I won't be able to show my face in town again. He's made a right show of us this time. I've held my tongue up to now but when I finally calm Tatty down and get her off to bed, I'll have a thing or two to say to him. I'll bide my time.

## QUESTION B

### **Note:**

You don't have the time or the space to ramble on so make sure your points are organised before you write. It can help to ask yourself the following four questions before you begin your Question B:

### **1. What form should this task take?**

You are asked to write two diary entries.

### **2. What should the content be?**

You can choose any misunderstanding you like. Of course, it does not have to be true, but the best answers will be at least partly based on the truth.

### **3. Who is my audience?**

Diary entries are usually only intended to be read by the writer as they are a personal record of events. However, you must always bear in mind that your audience is also the person correcting your exam or assignment, so you should aim to impress them with your command of English.

#### 4. What register should I use?

As this is a diary entry, you have the option of being more informal than you might usually be in your written English, but avoid any bad language and try to avoid text-speak, too much slang and abbreviations.

#### **Sample Answer:**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May

I just cannot believe Mum and Dad. They are the most unfair and ridiculous parents anyone could ever have. I will be the only girl in the entire school who is not allowed to go to Ciara's fifteenth birthday party and the worst part of it all is that Mum and Dad always told me if I was honest and upfront about where I was going they would let me go. Well, I was honest and upfront. I told them the party was in Ciara's house and I told them that her parents would be out for the first part of it but home around twelve because they were going to a wedding. And what was the result? A long lecture about how I needed to take it easy and focus on my study and not be going to wild parties... Wild parties? What are they talking about? They've known Ciara since she was five and we started out together in Junior Infants. She's my best friend and they know full well that whatever she is, she's not wild. I tried to tell Mum that it was only going to be the old gang who had been together since primary school, but she wasn't listening. She started ranting on about drink and unsupervised youngsters and all the rest of it. I gave up.

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May

Things are looking up! Mum just came into my room and asked if she could have a word. I've been avoiding her and Dad since Tuesday because I've been too upset about the whole party business to talk to them, but I couldn't say no when she was right there, could I? So, she came in and sat on the bed and told me that she had met Ciara's mum in the shopping centre and the topic of the

party had come up. Ciara's mum said she hoped I was coming as Ciara hadn't heard back from me about it yet. She told Mum that the plan was to order pizza and just hang out and that she and Ciara's dad would be home in time to drop everyone back to their own houses at a reasonable hour. She asked if I could stay over with one or two others as that was the one thing Ciara really wanted. Mum told her that I'd certainly be there and that I could stay over. I was thrilled, but I didn't show it straight away. Mum was in the wrong, after all, and I wasn't going to let her off the hook that easily! Mum didn't exactly apologise, but she did explain in a bit more detail what she was originally worried about and I have to wonder what she got up to when she was my age if that's what she thinks! Still, I kept quiet. Don't want to jinx things, after all. Roll on the weekend!