



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2005

English – Higher Level – Paper I

Total Marks: 200

Wednesday, 8th 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 ORDINARY LIVES.
- Candidates should familiarise themselves with each of the texts before beginning their answers.

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

SECTION I – COMPREHENDING

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

SECTION II – COMPOSING

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

SECTION I
COMPREHENDING (100 marks)
TEXT 1
AN ORDINARY LIFE

Margaret Forster writes about her grandmother, Margaret Ann Hind, a domestic servant in Carlisle, a town in the north of England, in the 1890s. Her book is called Hidden Lives – A Family Memoir.

The life of Margaret Ann, my grandmother, was narrow. The physical hardship, the sheer energy and strength needed to get through each day, was commonplace. She *expected* to be down on her knees scrubbing, up to her elbows in boiling or freezing water, washing and rinsing dishes, rocking on her feet with weariness after hours of running up and down stairs. When she reminisced in later life, it was always without any trace of resentment. Her expectations were low. She was expected to carry on as she was until she dropped. Or married.

Marriage was always an option. Marriage was possibly, but not definitely, or even probably, an escape from servitude. If she married, she knew she'd still have to cook and clean and wash and mend, and without the help of the kind of servant she was to the Stephensons unless she married a rich man. The chances of this happening were nil. Who, in Carlisle, among the servant class, married rich men? Rich, eligible men were few and far between, and girls like Annie Stephenson from good families ever on the lookout for them. But there was rich and rich after all. Plenty of tradesmen around who did quite well for themselves, who could afford to rent or even to buy decent houses and to lead comfortable enough lives. The market was full of them. Plenty of money there, especially among the butchers, with Carlisle being such a big meat-eating place. On Saturday afternoons Margaret Ann would go to the market to buy the meat for Sunday. She went through the glass doors and down the little cobbled hill where the butchers' stalls now were. Some butchers had more than one stall. They had three or four together, positive

empires. The meat hung from the ceiling on hooks, whole carcasses of pig and lamb and beef, and on the tiled counters below lay the cut-up portions; the bright red stewing steak, the dark slabs of liver, the great coils of pale, putty-coloured sausage, the crimson mounds of mince, the stiff rows of chops.



Thomas Hind was proprietor of stall number 4. This stall was clean. The carcasses didn't drip blood, the meat on the counter did not lie in puddles of it, the bin for fat wasn't nauseatingly visible. The floor always seemed freshly sawdusted, the aprons of the assistants were spotless. Even though his prices were not the cheapest, there was always a queue at Thomas Hind's. Margaret was a patient queuer. She never attempted to push herself forward but waited her turn calmly. She engaged in none of the banter that other customers seemed to

like. She stated her requirement and that was that beyond a please and thank you. These were exactly the qualities which aroused Thomas Hind's interest. He noticed her precisely because of her curious quality of stillness. In 1893, when she first began buying meat from him, he was thirty-five years old and unmarried. His father had been a butcher and so had his grandfather, and as the only son he was always expected to take over the family business. His father had died when Thomas was a child and his mother, Jane, had become a butcher herself in order to keep the business going for Thomas to inherit. His debt to her was strong and he acknowledged it by now supporting not just her but two of his three sisters (the third had married). He was prosperous enough by then to marry. He was notoriously hard to satisfy and was teased about his high standards by his sisters who despaired of him ever approving of any girl. For four years he observed Margaret

Ann quite contentedly, and then, when his mother died in 1897, decided the time had come for him to court her very seriously. Nothing impetuous about Tom.

So it was a slow affair, this courtship, three years of best boned and rolled sirloin, shoulder of lamb, leg of pork, three years of pounds of sausage, best back bacon, ham on the bone. A lot of meat, a lot of pleasantries, a lot of cap-doffing on Tom's part and head-inclining on Margaret Ann's. One Saturday, towards the end of the afternoon, when there were no assistants to hear and smirk, no customer other than Margaret Ann to hear and speculate, he asked her if she would care to go with him and his sisters out to Burgh marsh for a breath of sea air. He was very much afraid she would refuse, even be offended, but no, she smiled and said she knew his sisters from church and would be glad to accompany them if she could get time off.

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

Questions A and B carry 50 marks each.

QUESTION A

- (i) Write a paragraph in which you comment on the appropriateness of the title of this text, "An Ordinary Life". (15)
- (ii) What impressions of the characters of Thomas Hind and Margaret Ann do you get from this passage? Give reasons for your answer. (15)
- (iii) Did the description of the market bring it to life for you as a reader? Support your answer by reference to the text. (20)

QUESTION B

"On Saturday afternoons Margaret Ann would go to the market to buy the meat for Sunday."
Write **three diary entries** that Margaret Ann might have written over a series of Saturday evenings. Your writing should relate to her experience as described in the passage.

(50)

TEXT 2

ORDINARY LIVES IN WAR TIME

The following text consists of a written and visual element. The written text is adapted from an introduction by documentary photographer, Jenny Matthews, to her book of photographs entitled Women and War.



① **Mozambique 1986.** Soldier with his baby son just before he returns to the front next morning.



② **El Salvador 1986.** An afternoon dance.



③ **Bosnia 1994.** Twenty-year-old Spanish soldier serving with UN waving Red Cross convoy over narrow bridge.



④ **Eritrea 1988.** Fighter back at base after battle.

INTRODUCTION by Jenny Matthews

From the beginning I was interested in covering foreign stories – starting with Central America in the early eighties, a bit off the map for the British media but an exciting place with revolutionary groups fighting guerrilla wars in the mountains.

One visit led to another and I learned about war. Although I have often worked where pictures in the news were of the frontline confrontation, I was more interested in what was going on behind the scenes, and that usually involved looking at how women were holding everything together. Some of the wars that I've tiptoed around have been major international conflicts – the Balkans, Middle East, Rwanda, Afghanistan – but others have been practically invisible.

I have not been everywhere and this is not a complete record of world conflict; it is my take on recent history, recognising the

lives of remarkable women, ordinary people surviving as best they can. As I've travelled I've kept diaries, and the notes from these accompany the photos. All my work has been done in co-operation with a network of people, journalists, friends, fixers, drivers, translators, development workers. Without them it would be hard even to leave home. It has been a great privilege for me to be a photographer, to wander into other people's lives, often uninvited, but usually made embarrassingly welcome. I have lurked around some nasty corners of the world and come across the raw edges of life and death; an infinity of sorrow and fear, but more often than not, tempered with the hope that things will be better for the next generation.

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) Which of the four images on page 4 makes the strongest impact on you? Give a reason for your answer. (15)
- (ii) Do you think that the introduction to the collection of images is an interesting portrayal of Jenny's life as a news photographer? Give reasons for your answer. (15)
- (iii) "I learned about war ... [but] I was more interested in what was going on behind the scenes." From your reading of the introduction **and** the photographs, what impression do you have of how people's lives are touched by war? (20)

QUESTION B

Write a letter to a photographic magazine in which you propose **one** of the four images for the award "**Best War Photograph of the Year.**" (50)

TEXT 3

PUBLIC LIVES

Some people's lives seem far from ordinary. Modelled on articles from a number of celebrity magazines, the text below was written by a Leaving Certificate student. It offers a glimpse into the lifestyle of imaginary rock star, Eva Maguire.

World exclusive ! Irish Rock Diva speaks to readers from her Italian villa.

Hi, my name is Jerry Philips.

I interview sport stars, superstars, rock stars, divas, celebrities. My targets are the super wealthy, the faces of the moment, the famous; extraordinary lives that excite the curiosity and interest of ordinary people. I cover film premieres, music awards, Oscar ceremonies and star-studded parties; the significant global events of the world of entertainment.



This evening, I am in Florence, ensconced in a huge leather armchair in the waterfront palazzo home of Eva Maguire. In a rare, exclusive and candid interview, the 24 year-old rock superstar reveals where she sees her destiny and for the first time shares with "Celebrity" readers some of the secrets of her forthcoming wedding plans. Our photo shoot shows her posing with one of her pet miniature greyhounds, wearing her favourite Jacqui Getty jewellery and chic designer labels. As we discuss her plans for the future, personal and professional, candles light up her sun-baked, marble terrace with its glorious views over the Arno River,



far from the terrace house of her childhood in a small Irish town. It has been a roller-coaster 18 months for this Irish-born music queen, originally from the midlands. Discovered on Christmas Eve, busking in Covent Garden, her rise to fame has been meteoric. She has achieved head-spinning, global success, winning international music awards, packing concert venues and seeing her albums topping charts all over the world. Her first CD was the fastest-selling debut album to hit the UK charts and she is fast becoming a rock icon. Her life for the past year has been about L.A., London, New York and Monte Carlo. Some reviewers have criticised her ruthless quest for fame but she is certainly professional, hard-working and determined to succeed in a tough industry. She has been constantly under the media spotlight, (and indeed, some would suggest that today's celebrity culture has gone too far), but says that her stable Irish family background has helped her to cope with the pressures of fame and with the world's press constantly on her doorstep. "I'm a very reserved person," she says, "but this business is no place to be shrinking and insecure, it takes a certain attitude," she stops and grins. "The point is, I deal with projection all of the time. With a few smart changes, anyone can become a style goddess. Doors have opened for me and I am not afraid to take risks, " she says bluntly.

She is extraordinarily beautiful and astonishingly tough, steely and ambitious. Her golden hair frames features dominated by huge blue eyes. She wears a diamond and sapphire-studded ring on her left hand, reminding us that she is about to marry and share her future with Irish music promoter, Ross Kennedy. 300 Irish friends pack-jammed the luxurious K-Club last weekend in a pre-wedding bash.

International paparazzi are already gathering in the little Italian village where the ceremony will be held. It is expected that a galaxy of Hollywood celebrities, musicians and film producers will attend. It is even rumoured that some surprise politicians will be represented at the wedding. Limousines and helicopters have been arriving at the village for the past 48 hours. About 400 close friends of the

couple are flying in from all over the world this weekend.

This spectacular event promises to knock off in style. Expect six hundred doves to flock the Italian sky at the moment when the wedding vows are made and a church filled with tiny rosebuds, orchids and lily-of-the valley. Pink, lilac and white are the colours chosen to predominate this glittering extravaganza. The couple intend to settle on the Italian Riviera. Welcome to their high-octane world of glitz, glamour, sleek yachts and private jets. The honeymoon will begin with a train journey on the Eastern and Oriental express but the ultimate destination is a closely guarded secret. It is expected that the couple will party their way through the coming winter season in Italy.

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) How in your view is Jerry Philips's attitude to the rock star, Eva Maguire, revealed in this article? Support your answer by reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) Does the kind of superstar lifestyle described in this passage appeal to you? Give reasons for your answer, supporting the points you make by reference to the text. (15)
- (iii) Do you find the style of writing in this magazine article appealing? Support your answer by detailed reference to the text. (20)

QUESTION B

Imagine that as a reporter for a local newspaper you plan to interview a celebrity of your choice. Write a proposal/memo for the editor of your newspaper in which you explain why you want to interview this celebrity and giving an outline of the areas you hope to explore in the course of the interview. (50)

SECTION II

COMPOSING (100 marks)

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

Each composition carries 100 marks.

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

1. “... my take on recent history ...” (TEXT 2)

Write a personal essay in which you discuss your views on a recent event or series of events in the world.

2. “... celebrity culture has gone too far ...” (TEXT 3)

Write a speech in which you attempt to persuade an audience that today’s obsession with the lives of the rich and famous has gone too far.

3. “...ordinary people surviving as best they can.” (TEXT 2)

You are responding to a radio competition to find an ordinary person whose life story will inspire others. Entries should include an account of the person’s life and the reason(s) why it is inspirational. Write your competition entry.

4. “... the hope that things will be better for the next generation.” (TEXT 2)

Write an article for a newspaper or magazine, outlining your vision of a better future.

5. “She was expected to carry on as she was he was always expected to take over the family business.” (TEXT 1)

Write a personal essay on the part which other people’s expectations play in our lives.

6. “She engaged in none of the banter that other customers seemed to like.” (TEXT 1)

You have been asked to give a talk to your class on the importance of not taking life too seriously. Write the talk you would give.

- 7 (a). **Write a short story suggested by one or more of the images in TEXT 2.**

OR

- (b) **Write a short story suggested by the pair of images (the two houses) in TEXT 3.**

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