



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2016

ENGLISH - HIGHER LEVEL - PAPER 1

180 marks

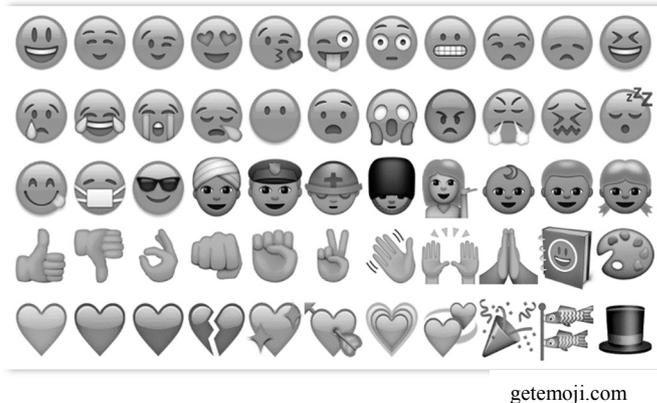
WEDNESDAY, 8 JUNE - MORNING, 9.30 - 12.00

**YOU MUST ATTEMPT ALL 4 SECTIONS
ON THIS PAPER**

**IT IS SUGGESTED THAT YOU SPEND ABOUT
HALF AN HOUR ON EACH OF SECTIONS
1, 3, 4, AND ABOUT ONE HOUR ON
SECTION 2**

Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions that follow.

The following edited text is adapted from Adam Sternbergh's article, *Smile, You're Speaking Emoji: The Rapid Evolution of a Wordless Tongue*, which was first published in *New York Magazine*. In his article Sternbergh examines the popularity of emoji in modern communication.



1. It's easy to dismiss emoji. They are, at first glance, ridiculous. They are a small invasive cartoon army of faces and vehicles and flags and food and symbols trying to topple the millennia-long reign of words. Emoji are intended to illustrate, or in some cases replace altogether, the words we send each other digitally, whether in a text message, email, or tweet.
2. Taken together, emoji look like the electronic equivalent of those puffy stickers kids use to decorate their school folders. And yet, if you have a smartphone, emoji are now available to you as an optional written language, just like any global language, such as Arabic, Catalan and English. You'll find an emoji keyboard on your phone, nestled right between Dutch and Estonian.
3. "When it comes to text-based communication, we're babies," according to Tyler Schnoebelen, a linguistics expert from Stanford University. He says, we've learned to talk, and we've learned to write, but we're only now learning to write at the speed of talking (i.e. text), sending messages over vast distances, without any physical contextual clues. If you are talking to someone face-to-face, you don't need an additional word or symbol to express "I'm smiling" because you would, presumably, be smiling, but when we're texting many of our communicative tools are negated.
Enter emoji.
4. Emoji were born in a true eureka moment*, from the mind of Shigetaka Kurita, an employee at the Japanese telecom company NTT Docomo. Back in the late 1990s, Kurita hit on the idea of adding simplistic cartoon images to its messaging service as a way to appeal to teenagers.
5. Unsurprisingly, emoji have proved popular with techno-enthusiasts, but emoji have also proved to be popular with the least techno-literate among us, i.e. our parents. Many people I spoke to said that their mothers were the most enthusiastic users of emoji they knew. One woman said that her daily interaction with her mother consists almost entirely of strings of emoji hearts.
6. And now we're getting to the heart of what emoji do well – particularly in the rough-and-tumble world online. The widespread anonymity of the web has created a kind of insidious incivility that we all now accept with resignation. Comment sections are a write-off. "Troll" is a new and unwelcome subspecies of person. Twitter is a hashtag-strewn battlefield. The internet is mean.

7. But emoji are not well designed to convey meanness. They are cartoons, first of all. And the emoji that exist – while very useful for conveying excitement, happiness, bemusement, befuddlement, and even love – are not very good at conveying anger, derision, or hate. There are angry faces and frowning faces and thumbs down and even the so-called *Face with No Good Gesture* (which is a woman with her arms crossed in an X). But, seriously, look at her:



The Face with No Good Gesture, has never actually hurt someone’s feelings.

8. Today’s young people were raised in a digital environment and are well used to navigating digital relationships – it makes sense that they might be drawn to a communicative tool that serves as an antidote to incivility. They might be excited about a tool that counteracts the harshness of life in the online world. They might be drawn to emoji.
9. The word that came up multiple times, in many conversations, with many people about emoji was ‘soften’. “The thing it does is soften things,” says Tyler Schnoebelen. When we use emoji in personal emails we feel like we’re softening the email.
10. These days we are more connected than ever – and we need to know that our connections are not being misunderstood. We need to let people know, even people very far away, staring at a screen, that we’re happy. Or confused. Or joking. Or missing them. With emoji we’ve been given a whole new vocabulary to say “I’m laughing” or “Joy” or “Well done”. This new way will not replace all the old ways but it can enhance them and help us muddle through.
11. Instead of being able to read each other’s faces when we say these things, we’ve developed these surrogate faces. They’re simple. They’re silly. But they work, at least a little, at least right now. We blow each other kisses. We smile with hearts in our eyes. We cry tears of joy. We say “I love you”, but in a million different ways, each one carrying the particular meaning we hope fervently to convey. Then we send them out hopefully, like a smiley face in a bottle, waiting to be received by the exact person it was intended for, and opened up, and understood completely.

* A sudden moment of realisation or discovery.

This text has been adapted from the original, for the purpose of assessment, without the author’s prior consent.

Answer the following **three** questions:

1. According to the above passage, what are the advantages of using emoji in private texts and emails? (10)
2. In paragraph six the writer says, “The internet is mean”. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain your answer. (10)
3. Do you think that Adam Sternbergh succeeds in making this extract engaging for the reader? Support your answer with reference to both the content and the style of the passage. (20)

Write a prose composition on any **one** of the following titles. Except where otherwise stated, you are free to write in any form you wish e.g. narrative, descriptive, dramatic, short story, etc.

1. Write a composition beginning with the line, ‘Finally the reply I’d been waiting for came through. I opened the text and saw that it contained no words – just a solitary emoji.’
2. A Eureka Moment.
3. Write an article entitled, ‘A Message in a Bottle’ for publication in a magazine popular with young people.
4. Write a composition which includes the following phrase: ‘...but if anyone asks, just say that I was here all day.’
5. Write a speech for **OR** against the motion that: ‘Ireland is no longer the land of *A Hundred Thousand Welcomes*.’
6. Sibling Rivalry.
7. Write a story entitled ‘Keeping up Appearances’ that includes **all** of the following elements:
 - A lonely character whose Facebook page falsely displays an exciting life
 - A fear of being exposed
 - A hurtful comment
 - A kind gesture.
8. A Door into the Dark.

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

You will be rewarded for:

- Well-structured answers
- Clarity of expression
- An appropriate tone
- Good grammar, spelling and punctuation.

1. Your youth club has been given funding **either** to hire a youth worker **or** to purchase new equipment for the club. Write a **letter** to the club's committee in which you argue in favour of one of these two options. Your letter should clearly express your views and outline the benefits of your choice to the club.

OR

2. In a bid to raise money for a worthy cause, your class is going to attempt to break an unusual world record. Write the **text for a fundraising page** that you will post on social media, to encourage people to get involved. You should describe what you propose to do and explain why you think your chosen cause is a worthy one.

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

1. Look at Images A and B which appear on **Page 2** of **Paper X** that accompanies this examination paper. The two images represent some of the different ways that people access or consume the news in the world today.
- (a) Look at the five types of news consumer shown in Image A on **Page 2** of **Paper X**. Which type of news consumer would you consider yourself to be? Explain your answer. (10)
- (b) Based on what you can see in Image B on **Page 2** of **Paper X**, how well do you think the broadcaster RTÉ caters for the news consumption habits of different types of people? Explain your answer. (15)
- (c) Identify a news story that captured your attention in the last twelve months. Comment on the ways in which various forms of the media, like online, broadcast, print, etc., helped you to learn more about your chosen story. (15)

OR

2. (a) Look at Image C which appears on **Page 3** of **Paper X**. What point do you think is being made by this cartoon? Support your answer with reference to the cartoon. (10)
- (b) Look at Images D and E on **Page 4** of **Paper X**. What do you learn from the two images about the way people's viewing practices have changed since the 1950s? (15)
- (c) What challenges and what opportunities do you think exist for advertisers in reaching the kind of audience shown in Image E? Explain your answer. (15)

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