



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2012

ENGLISH - HIGHER LEVEL - PAPER 1

180 marks

WEDNESDAY, 6 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 carefully the following passage and then answer the questions that follow. This text has been adapted from the original, for the purpose of assessment, without the author's prior consent.



The following edited text is adapted from an essay by American writer, Matt Thompson. It appears in a collection called, *Page One: Inside the New York Times and The Future of Journalism*, edited by David Folkenflik. It discusses various changes that have occurred in how news is reported and considers what news reporting might be like in the future.

1. Our media landscape has changed dramatically in the past several decades. We walk around with devices in our pockets that hold more information than citizens of centuries past might encounter in their entire lives. This shift toward a world completely awash in information is very new. A time traveller from a century ago would probably find she has more in common with the media habits of the ancient Romans than with our obsessive scrolling on our smart phones.
2. But amid all this change in our information environment, the basic journalistic formula has remained the same – the latest news, emphasised according to its importance. If you showed our time traveller the home page of the average American news Web site and gave her some time to get over the shock of the Internet's existence, she'd probably more or less recognize the journalistic vernacular*. And if she brought along a stowaway from ancient Rome, he, too, would probably be able to draw similarities to the Acta Diurna (Roman official notices) posted daily in public spots around Rome. In short, the news has been around for a very long time.
3. Journalism today is inclined towards novelty. As newsrooms everywhere consider where to direct their coverage, they begin by asking what's new. In an age of time-bounded media – newspapers and broadcast media that had to supply new material day after day – this approach made sense. The advent of 24-hour cable TV news networks compressed the news cycle, to the point where each new fact in a developing micro-story, no matter how minor, can be seized on as “breaking news”. The press' short attention span means important stories get buried in the avalanche of news.
4. Journalism's appetite for breaking news is often justified as a consequence of the public's desire for it. And by many measures, it's true: users can't seem to get enough news. The flood of minute-to-minute headlines about bomb scares and bank robbers generate a steady flow of on-line clicks. In 2008, the Associated Press [an important global news network] released an in-depth study of a group of young news consumers from around the world. The study describes its participants as having fallen into a state of “learned helplessness” – overwhelmed and unsatisfied with a flood of meaningless,

mostly negative news updates. The researchers depicted the participants as hungering for depth and background in their news diet, but finding instead a steady shallow stream of updates. The study suggests the Web plays a role in intensifying the worst tendencies of both the press and the public to focus on the latest at the expense of the important.

5. If we take advantage of the potential of digital media, we have the opportunity to invent models of journalism uniquely capable of keeping the latest stories in balance with the larger ones. In the future, whenever you encounter a news story, you should be presented with a straightforward pathway for acquiring the background information and context you need to understand that story. You should be able to figure out how the facts of the story were acquired and verified. The story should tell you what it's missing, what we don't yet know. It should invite you to take part in following it up and making it better. And it should give you the option of signing up for any updates or corrections to it. In short, the future news story might look a lot like a Wikipedia* entry. If an entry lacks key information, Wikipedia editors can attach a note to it saying as much, and ask users to help improve it.

6. We often think of journalism as a product – a story or series of stories delivered to the public in their final form. But journalism at its best is a process – a continual effort to paint a truer picture of our world. If we can imagine a future beyond news as we know it, and dispense with the tyranny of the recent, journalism may yet have its golden age.

*Vernacular – language in everyday usage.

* Wikipedia – on-line encyclopedia that users contribute to and edit.

Answer the following **three** questions:

1. Based on the findings of the Associated Press survey, mentioned in paragraph four, would you describe the experience of young news consumers as positive? Explain your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. From your reading of the above extract, what do you think is the most significant challenge facing news journalists today? Explain your answer. (15)
3. Do you think the writer, Matt Thompson, is optimistic about the future development of news journalism? Give reasons for your answer. (15)

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. As part of your job as a newspaper journalist you get to work on a major news story. Write a composition based on your experience.
2. Not all beauty is found in nature. Write a composition in which you describe and explain the beauty that you find in man-made objects, e.g. buildings, machinery, technology, etc.
3. Write a composition inspired by the following phrase: ‘...it was immediately clear that only a super-human force could have been responsible...’
4. Write a story involving a case of mistaken identity.
5. Write a speech for **OR** against the motion: ‘Too many young people today have unhealthy lifestyles’.
6. The importance of friends in my life.
7. Write a short story inspired by the image that appears on **Page 2** of **Paper X** that accompanies this examination paper.

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 school has decided to remove the books from your school library and turn the space into an Internet access facility for students. Write an article for your school magazine in which you respond to this decision.

OR

2. Look at the images on **Page 3 of Paper X** that accompanies this examination paper. These images appear in the prospectus for Kildeasy Secondary School. Using the images as a starting point, write a piece, suitable for publication in the school's prospectus, representing a student's experience of the school.

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

1. **Product placement** occurs when a company pays for its product to be placed in a prominent position as a form of advertising. This practice is increasingly common in films, music videos and television shows, etc.

Read the article about product placement that appears on **Page 4 of Paper X** which accompanies this examination paper, and answer the following questions.

- (a) (i) Outline one possible advantage and one possible disadvantage of the use of product placement as an advertising technique. (10)
- (ii) Do you think that product placement is a good way to advertise a product? Explain your answer. (10)
- (b) The advertising agency you work for is promoting a new brand of fruit juice. Choose a target market for this product. Based on the target market you have chosen, suggest a suitable product placement opportunity for the fruit juice. Explain why you think this product placement would help to promote the fruit juice to your chosen target market. (20)

OR

2. Your school has decided to produce a monthly **school magazine** and you have been appointed editor.
- (a) (i) Many elements of your Media Studies course would be helpful to your work on the school magazine. Identify one such element and explain why you think it would be helpful to your work on the magazine. (10)
- (ii) Identify two regular features you would include in your school magazine. Explain why you think the readers would find each of these features appealing. (10)
- (b) Write the editorial for the first issue of the school magazine in which you welcome readers, tell them about the magazine and encourage members of the school community to contribute to future editions of the publication. (20)

Blank Page

Blank Page