



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2009

ENGLISH - HIGHER LEVEL - PAPER 1

180 marks

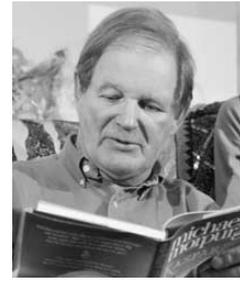
WEDNESDAY, 3 JUNE - MORNING, 9.30 - 12.00

**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.

*In the following edited extract (from **Singing for Mrs Pettigrew: A Storymaker's Journey**) the award-winning writer, Michael Morpurgo, talks about the "creative fusion" behind his writing and explains how he goes about his craft.*



1. I have often wondered in four decades of writing how it is that time and again my stories seem to gather themselves, write themselves almost (the best ones really seem to), cover the empty pages almost effortlessly – once I get going, that is. Each one is, I believe, the result of forces of a creative fusion, a fusion that simply can't happen unless certain elements are in place, a fusion I don't properly understand, but can only guess at. But it is an informed guess.
2. At the core of it is the life I have lived: as a child in London, as a son and a brother on the Essex coast, away at boarding school, then as a soldier, a student, a husband, a father, a teacher, farmer, traveller, lecturer, storyteller, grandfather. I didn't live this life in order to write stories, of course – for at least half of my life I had no idea I even wanted to write – but without its joys and its pain, its highs and its lows, I would have precious little to write about and probably no desire to write anyway.
3. For me, memory is the source material that is needed for creative fusion – the memory of falling off a bike into a ditch; of collecting shells on a beach near Zennor; of running away from boarding school; of loving the paintings of Cezanne, the music of Mozart and the poetry of Ted Hughes; of a single lark rising into the blue. So it is no accident that every one of these things has made its way later into a story of mine.
4. But memories themselves are not enough to create the fusion that fires a story. To read widely and deeply, to have soaked oneself in the words and ideas of other writers, to have seen what is possible and wonderful, to have listened to the music of their words and to have read the work of the masters must be a help for any writer discovering his own technique, her own voice.
5. My own writing has taken years to develop – it is still developing, I hope – and it has happened in parallel with my life and my reading. Once the spark is there then comes the time for research, and with research a growing confidence that I have the wherewithal to write it and then a conviction that I have a burning need to write it.
6. But I must wait for the moment before I begin, until the story is ripe. This process can be five minutes (unlikely) or five years. All I know is that you can't hurry it. The story will be written when the moment is right. I learnt some time ago not to force the pace, not to dictate the story but to allow the story time to find its own voice to weave itself, to dream itself out in my head so that, by the time I set pen to paper, I feel I am living inside that story. I must know the places; I must know the people. I may still not know exactly what will happen – and certainly how it might end. That often emerges through the writing. But I do know by now the world of my story intimately, its tone and tune and rhythm. I feel like I am living inside it, that even as I am writing about it I am not the creator of it at all, but simply telling it as it happens, as I witness it. And when it is written, I read it over, to hear the music of it in my head, to be sure the tune and the story are in harmony. No note must jar, or the dream of the story is interrupted.

7. The last and most important element in the magic that produces this creative fusion is the sheer love of doing it, of seeing if you can make magic from an empty page and a pen. The truth is that it is not a trick. It is an art and a craft and a marvellous magic, and I long with every story to understand it better and to do it better too.

Answer the following **three** questions:

1. In this passage the writer mentions a number of elements that enable him to write.
- (a) Identify two of these elements that the writer says contribute to his writing. (5)
- (b) Basing your answer on the passage, explain how one of these elements contributes to the writing of his stories. (10)
2. In paragraph six Morpurgo says “the story will be written when the moment is right”. From your reading of the passage what do you think he means by this comment? (10)
3. From what you have read above do you think that Morpurgo enjoys being a writer? 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. Magical moments from my childhood.
2. My secret life as a superhero.
3. Things that make me angry.
4. Write a composition including the line, “That really was the last straw”.
5. Write a speech for **OR** against the motion, “Mobile phones should be banned in schools”.
6. The rudest person I have ever met.
7. Look at the picture on **Page 2** of **Paper X**, which accompanies this examination paper, and write a composition inspired by it.

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. You have been asked by the Principal of your school to speak to the students preparing to take their Junior Certificate examinations in June 2010. Based on your experience of preparing for your own Junior Certificate examinations write the text of **the talk** you would give to the students offering them guidance and encouragement.

OR

2. In Section One of this examination paper Michael Morpurgo writes about the elements that he considers important to produce a piece of writing.
Write **a letter** to the author in which you recount a time when you feel you wrote particularly well and explain what you think contributed to the success. In your letter you may, if you wish, comment on the earlier passage by Morpurgo or seek his advice as a writer.

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

1. Look at the advertisement for RTE 2fm on **Page 3** of **Paper X** which accompanies this examination paper.
 - (a) Based on your reading of the advertisement, identify the target audience it is aimed at and explain how you arrived at this conclusion. You must refer to the advertisement in your answer. (20)
 - (b) There is a perception that many young people only want to listen to music-based radio. Based on your experience of Media Studies, what do you think would make talk-radio more attractive to young people? (20)

OR

2. Look at the information about the on-screen classification of television programmes provided on **Page 4** of **Paper X** which accompanies this examination paper.
 - (a) Explain fully the term watershed as it applies to the on-screen classification system. (10)
 - (b) Explain what kinds of programmes can be shown before the watershed. (10)
 - (c) Give reasons why you do or do not think that the classification system is a good idea. (20)

Blank Page

Blank Page