



The 2021 English Olympiad

Theme: People and Personas

HOME LANGUAGE EXAMINATION

DATE: Tuesday, 2 March 2021

TIME ALLOCATION: 3 hours, and up 30 minutes of supervised reading time

TEXT: The anthology 'This is My Story'

TOTAL MARKS: 100

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS:

This examination is to be written under normal examination conditions, with full invigilation.

Candidates may have the following with them in the examination venue:

- pens, pencils, rulers and erasers
- the anthology 'This is My Story' (which may contain underlining or highlighting, but no notes)
- a dictionary

During the examination, candidates may not have access to the Olympiad Study Guide or any other notes, documents, cell phones or information retrieval systems of any kind.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

1. Please write clearly and legibly. Marks may be deducted for illegible handwriting.
2. Write all your answers in your Examination Answer Booklet.
3. Write the section and the number of the question above each of your answers.
4. Start each question at the top of a new page.
5. On the cover of the Examination Booklet, please clearly indicate:
 - your school's Olympiad Centre Number
 - your personal Examination Number
 - the **section** and **number** of **each of the questions** that you have answered

NB - Do NOT write your name, your address or your school's name on the cover, or anywhere else in your Examination Answer Booklet.

6. You are expected to answer:
 - a) one question from **SECTION A**
 - b) one question from **SECTION B**
 - c) one question from **SECTION C**

Regarding **SECTION A:**

We invite you to express your own ideas in response to the questions, using your own voice. There are no model answers, but do remember that you are expected to refer liberally to the relevant texts and to provide your personal response to the material contained in the anthology and to the question that you have chosen to answer.

NB - The main focus of your essay should be upon the texts contained in the anthology, but you may also draw upon and refer to your extended reading.

We value your responses. Enjoy the experience.

Select **ONE** of the following options and write an essay of **450 to 550 words** in response to your chosen topic. Candidates will be penalised if they exceed the prescribed maximum length.

REMEMBER TO QUOTE OR TO REFER CLOSELY TO THE TEXT TO SUBSTANTIATE YOUR ARGUMENT.

Question A1:

‘If you're going to have a story, have a big story, or none at all.’ - Joseph Campbell

Explain what you understand by ‘big story’ and, with reference to at least two texts from the anthology, discuss whether or not you agree with Campbell’s statement. (50)

Question A2: ‘On The Blue Train’ by Geraldine Aron
‘Tune In Again Next Week’ by Carla Lever

What is it like to be normal?

Michael Ireland, a former psychology/sociology research analyst, responded to this question with the following:

Even coming from a background in Psychology and Sociology I don’t feel comfortable trying to define **normal**. You see, in many ways it’s easier by far to assign a definition to what could be considered **abnormal** behaviour. I was delighted to see the psychological community begin to grasp that there is no way to assign any sort of accurate description to what being “normal” is. It took a surprisingly long time to recognize that there was more damage being done by letting the general public believe that there IS such a thing. I believe that the definition of “abnormal” is best understood as being any behaviour or habit that causes a person to become unable to perform their duties and responsibilities at work. It becomes difficult or impossible to behave in an acceptable and civil manner with family or friends. The behaviour causes others or themselves discomfort and a real concern for safety exists.

To what extent do you consider Kathy from ‘On The Blue Train’ and Store-all Stan from ‘Tune In Again Next Week’ to be normal? (50)

Question A3:

The theme of hope is prevalent in many of the texts in the anthology. Select two or three texts (50) that contain this theme and write an essay which examines how it is showcased in each text.

Question A4: ‘Rejection’ by Mariama Ba

‘Inequality causes problems by creating fissures in societies, leaving those at the bottom feeling marginalized and disenfranchised.’ - Nicholas Kristof

To what extent are the characters in ‘Rejection’ marginalized and disenfranchised? (50)

Question A5:

‘A writing teacher once told me that the most successful movies and books were simple plots about complex characters. You should be able to articulate your concept in a couple of lines.’
- Author James Scott Bell

In a well-structured essay motivate which character or persona from the anthology is most complex and intriguing to you. (50)

Question A6: ‘New Horizons’ by Miriam Tlali
‘Legal Alien’ by Crystal Butungi
‘Rejection’ by Mariama Ba

All three of these texts touch on the importance of education and further education. Choose (50) three characters (one from each story) and explain how education benefits each of them.

Subtotal: 50 Marks

SECTION B: Creative Responses	30 Marks
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Select ONE of the following options. Remember that your answer will be assessed based on the appropriateness of your register and diction. The format of your response should also be in line with the required text. Your answer should be between 200 and 250 words in length.

CAUTION: YOU MAY NOT ANSWER A QUESTION ON AN AUTHOR WHOSE WRITING YOU DISCUSSED IN SECTION A. IF YOU DO SO, YOUR ANSWER WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. YOU MAY, HOWEVER, ADDRESS A QUESTION WHICH REQUIRES YOU TO INCLUDE A GROUP OF AUTHORS, ONE OF WHICH YOU DISCUSSED IN SECTION A.

Question B1: ‘On the Blue Train’ by Geraldine Aron
‘Tune In Again Next Week’ by Carla Lever

Imagine that Kathy and Store-All Stan have been set up on a blind date. Write a dialogue which (30) captures a few minutes of this blind date.

Question B2: ‘The Call’ by Gabeba Baderoon

Having packed up your belongings and spoken to your mother, you are now on your way to (30) your ‘new place’. Write a travelogue of this experience.

Question B3: ‘Autobiography’ by Nazim Hikmet

You have been awarded a Nobel Prize for literature. Write your acceptance speech which you (30) will deliver at your award ceremony.

Question B4: ‘Legal Alien’ by Crystal Butungi

You are the narrator of ‘Legal Alien’ and back in Australia you have decided to write an article (30) for a local newspaper about life in Uganda. Write a newspaper article in which you debunk some of the myths many Australians believe.

Question B5: ‘Rejection’ by Mariama Ba

You are the narrator of ‘Rejection’. Write a heartfelt note to Binetou, your husband’s second (30) wife, in which you let her know exactly how you feel about her and her situation.

Question B6: ‘On the Blue Train’ by Geraldine Aron

You are Kathy. Write a dramatic monologue in which you talk about life back in England and (30) your thoughts about South Africa.

Subtotal: 30 Marks

SECTION C: Creative Writing**20 Marks**

Several of the texts in the anthology have open-ended conclusions. Keeping to the genre and style of the original, select ONE text in the following list of options, and write an alternative or a rounded-off ending. Your ending should be between 180 and 220 words in length.

CAUTION: YOU MAY NOT ANSWER A QUESTION ON AN AUTHOR WHOSE WRITING YOU HAVE DISCUSSED IN SECTIONS A OR B. IF YOU DO SO, YOUR ANSWER WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

- C1.** 'On the Blue Train' by Geraldine Aron (20)
- C2.** 'Mommy' by Mangaliso Koposani (20)
- C3.** 'The Call' by Gabeba Baderoon (20)
- C4.** 'When He Spoke to Me of Love' by M.A. Mokhomomo (20)
- C5.** 'New Horizons' by Miriam Tlali (20)
- C6.** 'Legal Alien' by Crystal Butungi (20)
- C7.** 'Tune In Again Next Week' by Carla Lever (20)

Subtotal: 20 Marks

GRAND TOTAL: 100 MARKS



The National English Olympiad

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