

**ADVANCED GCE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

Experience into Words

MONDAY 29 JANUARY 2007

Reading Booklet

2719/RB

Afternoon

Time: 2 hours 15 minutes



- **The first fifteen minutes of the examination are for reading the passages in this reading booklet.**
- During this time you may make any annotations you choose on the passages themselves.
- The questions for this examination are given on a separate sheet.
- **You must not turn over the question sheet, or write anything in your answer booklet, until instructed to do so.**
- The Invigilator will tell you when the fifteen minutes begin and end.
- You will then be allowed to open the question paper.
- You will have **two hours** to work on the tasks.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.

Passage A

The passage below is an extract from the mid-twentieth century American novel *The End of the Road* by John Barth. The narrator, Jake Horner, describes how a sudden lack of motivation overcame him as he was about to embark on a journey, and how he felt both physically and mentally isolated from the people around him.

‘Cincinnati, Ohio,’ I repeated, unconvinced. ‘Crestline, Ohio; Dayton, Ohio; and Lima, Ohio. Thank you very much. I’ll make up my mind and come back.’

So I left the ticket window and took a seat on one of the benches in the middle of the concourse to make up my mind. And it was there that I simply ran out of motives, as a car runs out of gas. There was no reason to go to Cincinnati, Ohio. 5
There was no reason to go to Crestline, Ohio. Or Dayton, Ohio; or Lima, Ohio. There was no reason, either, to go back to the Bradford Apartment Hotel, or for that matter to go anywhere. There was no reason to do anything. My eyes, as Winckelmann said inaccurately of the eyes of the Greek statues, were sightless, gazing on eternity, fixed on ultimacy, and when that is the case there is no reason to do anything – even 10
to change the focus of one’s eyes. Which is perhaps why the statues stand still. It is the malady *cosmopsis*, the cosmic view, that afflicted me. When one has it, one is frozen like the bullfrog when the hunter’s light strikes him full in the eyes, only with *cosmopsis* there is no hunter, and no quick hand to terminate the moment – there’s 15
only the light.

Shortsighted animals all around me hurried in and out of doors leading down to the tracks; trains arrived and departed. Women, children, salesmen, soldiers, hurried across the concourse toward immediate destinations, but I sat immobile on the bench. After a while Cincinnati, Crestline, Dayton, and Lima dropped from my mind, and their place was taken by that test pattern of my consciousness, *Pepsi-Cola hits the spot*, intoned with silent oracularity. But it, too, petered away into the void, and nothing appeared in its stead. 20

If you look like a vagrant it is difficult to occupy a train-station bench all night long, even in a busy terminal, but if you are reasonably well dressed, have a suitcase at your side, and sit erect, policemen and railroad employees will not disturb you. I was sitting in the same place, in the same position, when the sun struck the grimy station windows next morning, and in the nature of the case I suppose I would have remained thus indefinitely, but about nine o’clock a small, dapper fellow in his fifties stopped in front of me and stared directly into my eyes. He was bald, dark-eyed, and dignified, a Negro, and wore a graying mustache and a trim tweed suit to match. The 30
fact that I did not stir even the pupils of my eyes under his gaze is an index to my condition, for ordinarily I find it next to impossible to return the stare of a stranger.

‘Weren’t you sitting here like this last night?’ he asked me sharply. I did not reply.

Passage B

The passage below is an extract from the book *Eats, Shoots & Leaves* by Lynne Truss. In it she explains how her highly motivated concern for accurate punctuation in the world around her makes her feel different from other people.

It's tough being a stickler for punctuation these days. One almost dare not get up in the mornings. True, one occasionally hears a marvellous punctuation-fan joke about a panda who "eats, shoots and leaves", but in general the stickler's exquisite sensibilities are assaulted from all sides, causing feelings of panic and isolation. A sign at a health club will announce, "It's party time, on Saturday 24th May we are have a disco/party night for free, it will be a ticket only evening." Advertisements offer decorative services to "wall's – ceiling's – door's ect". Meanwhile a newspaper placard announces "FAN'S FURY AT STADIUM INQUIRY", which sounds quite interesting until you look inside the paper and discover that the story concerns a quite large mob of fans, actually – not just the lone hopping-mad fan so promisingly indicated by the punctuation. 5 10

Everywhere one looks, there are signs of ignorance and indifference. What about that film *Two Weeks Notice*? Guaranteed to give sticklers a very nasty turn, that was – its posters slung along the sides of buses in letters four feet tall, with no apostrophe in sight. I remember, at the start of the *Two Weeks Notice* publicity campaign in the spring of 2003, emerging cheerfully from Victoria Station (was I whistling?) and stopping dead in my tracks with my fingers in my mouth. Where was the apostrophe? Surely there should be an apostrophe on that bus? If it were "one month's notice" there would be an apostrophe (I reasoned); yes, and if it were "one week's notice" there would be an apostrophe. Therefore "two weeks' notice" requires an apostrophe! Buses that I should have caught (the 73; two 38s) sailed off up Buckingham Palace Road while I communed thus at length with my inner stickler, unable to move or, indeed, regain any sense of perspective. 15 20

Part of one's despair, of course, is that the world cares nothing for the little shocks endured by the sensitive stickler. While we look in horror at a badly punctuated sign, the world carries on around us, blind to our plight. We are like the little boy in *The Sixth Sense* who can see dead people, except that we can see dead punctuation. Whisper it in petrified little-boy tones: dead punctuation is invisible to everyone else – yet we see it *all the time*. No one understands us seventh-sense people. They regard us as freaks. When we point out illiterate mistakes we are often aggressively instructed to "get a life" by people who, interestingly, display no evidence of having lives themselves. Naturally we become timid about making our insights known, in such inhospitable conditions. Being burned as a witch is not safely enough off the agenda. A sign has gone up in a local charity-shop window which says, baldly, "Can you spare any old records" (no question mark) and I dither daily outside on the pavement. Should I go in and mention it? It does *matter* that there's no question mark on a direct question. It is appalling ignorance. But what will I do if the elderly charity-shop lady gives me the usual disbelieving stare and then tells me to bugger off, get a life and mind my own business? 25 30 35

Passage C

The passage below is an extract from a transcription of an interview with a teenager from London. In it she describes her different attitudes to motivation and her relationships with people around her.

The following key can be used as a guide:

- (.) – micro pause
 _____ – stressed word or phrase

er (.) when it comes to er my studying er (.) ive gotta lot of motivation really to get things organised n er (.) doin in a (.) yeh i dont no (.) it is just a fear of failure (.) i (.) dont (.) value (.) myself really (.) more than anything else (.) its just the situation (.) its (.) more what i feel about myself that i failed (.) er (.) it was mainly cos i was bullied (.) n it just kind of started to believe everything they were saying (.) and er because 5
 i was conscientious i used t (.) it wasnt exactly fashionable t (.) be hardworking (.) really (.) i went through a phase where i was ashamed to (.) do well in school (.) n er (.) it wasnt a cool thing to do (.) but then i finally thought (.) well ya no (.) these people are goin to end up working somewhere bad n ill get somewhere eventually 10
 (.) er (.) sometimes theres no real reason for it (.) i just get in a certain mood where i (.) dont want to do anything (.) it just comes in phases (.) theres no point in doin anything because (.) its just gonna end up goin wrong anyway (.) like when im sposed to go out or something (.) n then i dont know i just get this sense well whats the point in goin out (.) n whats it gonna achieve (.) n i just sit there n listen to music (.) theres nothin i can do to stop it (.) like ill try to motivate myself (.) think positively 15
 n things (.) but (.) its got better (.) i started t go out n have a social life (.) build up my self esteem (.) other people started to see me in a better light (.) started to think better about myself (.) i wasnt the labelled geek any more but a human being (.) i think it was something i mainly achieved on my own (.) like im learnin to deal with panic attacks (.) i do get threatened by other people because my mental state just 20
 goes a bit (.) i just feel like everyones in on it (.) but (.) ive got more confidence t deal with this as well (.) now more rational n mature (.) im not gonna let people get t me (.)

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