



Rewarding Learning

General Certificate of Secondary Education  
2011

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**English**

Paper 1  
Foundation Tier

[G2901]

MONDAY 16 MAY, MORNING

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**TIME**

2 hours.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklet provided.  
Answer **all four** questions.  
Answer the **three** questions in Section A and the **one** question in Section B.  
Spend **one hour** on Section A and **one hour** on Section B.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

The total mark for this paper is 60.  
Figures in brackets printed down the right-hand side of pages indicate the marks awarded to each question.



## Section A

This section tests **reading** skills.

- Spend about **15 minutes reading** the passage carefully.
- Answer **all three** questions.

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*Holly Hogan is running away from her foster parents in London. She is making her way to Fishguard Harbour in Wales to catch a ferry to Ireland where she used to live with her mother.*

I followed the sign and found the train station. The ticket office was shut and nobody was around. You could just walk through to the platforms. I stood looking at the train timetables like a serious traveller planning my next move. That's how I found out about the night train.

I crossed over and walked up along the other platform where I'd spotted an electric sign. The amber message said the next train was the 00.47 to Fishguard Harbour. I sat on a cold bench and did my lips. I had thirty minutes to wait. I put my iPod on and hugged myself and stamped my feet while music sang in my ear. The cold got into my bones. I took out the earphones. My nose was dripping. I had to keep pinching myself so I didn't drop off to sleep on the seat and then I'd look down at the dark track. I could get down and lie on that track on those things called sleepers, I thought. And I could sleep on the sleepers. I got up and kept pacing the platform trying to stay awake. 5 10

After what seemed an age a rumble came in the distance. At first I thought it was thunder. Then I thought of the old trains in movies, how steam rises around the wheels. I listened. The noise stopped and I thought I'd imagined it.

*No there it was again.* 15

A light went from red to green. Electricity hissed down the rails. I peered into the dark and saw beams of light coming round a bend, getting closer. It won't stop, I thought. A carriage whizzed past. It was first class, with fancy lamps and curtains and a woman reading. It didn't look like stopping. Then the brakes screeched. Another carriage passed, then another. The train slowed and stopped with a jerk and a shiver. 20

I heard a door slam somewhere up the front but I didn't see anyone. I was down the other end, facing right up to a big metal door handle, as if it had stopped there especially for me. I pressed down. The heavy door opened.

Inside it was dim and damp. Warm air curled around me, pulling me in. I stepped up and closed the door behind me. A second later, the train moved off and the station platform slowly disappeared. 25

I huddled in the corridor, thinking, *If I get caught, that's it.* The time I'd run away on a train before, I'd only got as far as East Croydon, then I'd had to turn myself in because the creepy men on the train had scared me. But on this train there was nobody. It was just the engine and the hiss of the wheels and the dark shadows running over the floor and walls and ceilings. Maybe I was the only person on the train. Maybe there wasn't a driver, even. Me and the dream train, hurtling off the face of the earth. 30

Then a man with a baseball cap approached. I froze. The man nodded as he walked towards me. His eyes were red, but he was no raving lunatic, just a fellow needing sleep, same as I did. 35

"Is it free?" he said.

I thought he meant the train ride. "Free?"

"The toilet?" He pointed and I saw I was standing by a toilet door that said VACANT.

I smiled. “Yeah. Sure.”

I moved aside and he went in. I went along the way he’d come and stepped over the wonky bit between the carriages. The doors slid apart and I was in a long compartment. There were people scattered, not many. Two murmuring. One snoring. Empty coffee cups. A woman had her arm around a small boy whose head was tucked in her armpit. He was sleeping with his mouth open and he had freckles on his nose. His mam was reading and yawning and she shifted, careful so he wouldn’t wake. She blew on his hair so the fringe lifted and she smiled, like he was her own private treasure. She didn’t see me walk by. She was in a whole other world. 40

It was as if I didn’t exist the way nobody looked at me.

I kept walking, nervous, expecting the ticket man to pounce. 45

Up the next corridor I saw a man lurking who looked like a guard maybe, so I dashed back the way I’d come. Somebody had opened the window a crack and it was cold. I shivered. Then I saw that the toilet said VACANT again so I locked myself in. 50

I breathed. I looked in the mirror. Apart from my lipstick mirror, I’d not seen myself in ages. Do you know what I saw? It was enough to make a willow weep, big time.

The glamour girl had gone. I looked as if I’d been dragged backwards through a hedge. I was all blotchy cheeks, smudges, hair mish-mashed clumps of blonde and brown and mud stains on my collar. My eyes and nose were red and itching and I’d bitten my lips so much they were bleeding. My hand shook as I got the brush out. I took the wig off. First I brushed my own hair, then I cupped the wig over my fist and brushed it. I washed my face. I took out my toothbrush but realised I had no toothpaste. I tried to wipe my collar, only the mud smudged. Then I sat on the toilet seat and cried. The tears made my eyes worse but I couldn’t stop. 55

Eventually the train slowed. From somewhere down the corridor a guard’s voice called, “Have your tickets ready please.” I stared in the mirror and the face I saw was chalk-white. I ran some hot water and dabbed it on. The reflection misted over and drops of water scuttled down the glass. The train swerved and braked. My face appeared through the mist, crooked in the water drops. I got a paper towel and cleaned the mirror. 60

Someone fiddled with the toilet door. Then the train stopped. It was silent. No doors slammed so I knew it wasn’t a station, just a stop in the middle of nowhere. I took off mam’s amber ring and dropped it into the front pocket of my backpack, safe. 65

A voice came over the speaker: “*We will be shortly arriving at Fishguard Harbour. Please ensure you have all your belongings when leaving the train.*” With a groan the train started again. I picked up the backpack, opened the toilet door and looked out. People had gathered in the corridor, standing with cases and backpacks strewn around their feet. I stepped over a holdall to find a free bit of space and put the backpack down. The train speeded up, then slowed, and finally we jerked to a stop on a silent platform. 70

A man put his arm out the window and released the outside handle. One by one we shuffled out. I was last. The air was cool to the cheek. Somewhere above my head came a mournful cry – a seagull who’d forgotten to go to sleep. 75

You could smell the sea but you couldn’t hear it. 80

Fishguard, I thought. Is this real? I drifted down the platform and nobody stopped me. Along a ramp. Around a corner. Down a corridor. I came to a queue to board the boat. That was where every last one of us was heading. The boat. Every step brought us closer. Soon, I thought. We’ll be sailing away into a dream. Soon.

Then I came up against a guard checking the tickets. I froze. *Point to a woman with kids ahead of you. Say you’re with her.* But there wasn’t any woman. The woman I’d seen with the small boy sleeping earlier was nowhere. Anyway, I didn’t look like a kid myself, not with the wig on. I was too grown up for that trick. 85

“Ticket?” said the guard.  
 I looked at him like I didn’t understand. 90  
 “Your ticket? Where is it?”  
 I stared at him staring at me and thought, *That’s it.*  
 “Your ticket, love. I – need – to – see – it,” the guard said like I was stupid.  
 Slowly I went to get the backpack off my shoulder. Maybe I could just open up all the  
 compartments and pretend how I’d lost the ticket. Maybe – my hand groped my shoulder 95  
 and the familiar strap wasn’t there. The backpack had gone. It wasn’t on the ground by my  
 feet. It was nowhere.  
 “My bag!” I gasped. “It’s gone.”  
 The guard sighed like he’d seen it all before. “Did you leave it on the train? Up on the  
 rack, maybe?” 100  
 “Must have.” I was shaking.  
 “Go on. Hurry back, love, before the train pulls out. Quick. We’re due to sail.”  
 I nodded in a frenzy, then turned round and ran back towards the station platform. *Hurry,*  
*hurry, Holly Hogan.* I was running, running. The train still sat there like a sleeping dragon.  
 I ran down past the carriages. Which one had I been in? I got to the last but one. That’s it, 105  
 I thought. That’s the corridor where I’d left the backpack. That’s it – Then the lights in the  
 corridor went out.  
 I didn’t want to get back on that dark train but I knew I had to. I stepped forward to open  
 the door. But just as I did, the train shuddered, began to move and pulled out of the station,  
 back into the night. 110  
 I watched it go, my backpack and all. My iPod, my pink fur purse, my mobile, my SIM  
 card, my lipstick and mirror, my toothbrush, my hairbrush. And in the special zip-up pocket  
 at the front, Mam’s amber ring. I’d lost all my worldly possessions. I had nothing.

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- 1** Spend about **10 minutes** on this question. Use **evidence from lines 1 to 14** to support your answer.

How does the writer create a sense of Holly's lonely and uncomfortable wait for the train? [8]

- 2** Spend about **15 minutes** on this question. Use **evidence from the whole passage**.

What do you learn about Holly? [10]

- 3** Spend about **20 minutes** on this question. Use **evidence from the whole passage**.

How has the writer tried to capture and sustain the reader's interest?

You should consider how the writer:

- describes events from Holly's point of view
- makes events exciting
- uses descriptive words and phrases.

[12]

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**TURN OVER FOR SECTION B**

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## Section B

This section tests **writing** skills: to **review, analyse and comment**.

- Write in a way that suits this type of task.
  - To answer this question effectively, you should aim to write **at least two sides**.
  - Leave **enough time to re-read your work** so that you can make any changes you feel are necessary.
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4 Consider the following statement and the issues it raises:

**School is great. It's just cool to pretend it isn't.**

The opinions listed below raise a series of points about school. The examiner wants you to review the points that you consider to be important. Analyse these in an extended piece of writing. You will also be expected to include your own comments and conclusions on the topic.

*“School is the best time of your life. I loved every minute of school. I’d do it all again if I could. I wish I was 20 years younger.”*

“I hated school and left at 16. I now run my own business. School? What a waste of time!”

*“It’s a great way of socialising. Without schools we wouldn’t have such a selection of friends.”*

“The best days of your life? No way! I have to wake up early and head to school feeling awful and do the same thing over and over again every day.”

[30]

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**THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTION PAPER**

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