



AQA Level 1/2 Certificate

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Paper 1
Higher Tier

87051H

Specimen

H

In addition to this paper you will require:

- an AQA 12-page answer book;

Time allowed: 2 hours

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is 87051H.
- Answer **all** questions.
- Write your answers in the answer book provided.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.
- You must **not** use a dictionary in this examination.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- Mark allocations are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. All questions should be answered in continuous prose.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your Reading in Section A.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your Writing in Section B.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about one hour on section A and about one hour on section B

SECTION A: READING

Answer **all** questions in this section.
Spend about one hour on this section.

The following extract is from an account of the writer's time spent in the Western Highlands of Scotland. In it, he and his dog, Moobli, meet up with an old friend.

Read the full passage and then answer **all** the questions which follow it.

It was on the last day of September in the seventh autumn at Wildernessee that the extraordinary end came to the experiences with Harry, the heron whose life I had saved as a young nestling over nine years before. As I walked down to the shore in the morning with Moobli, he put his nose down as if receiving a strange scent. Then he stood, ears cocked,
5 peering forward, telling me as he had been trained to do that there was something unusual ahead. Moving carefully, I went down the steps below the log archway, and suddenly a heron shot up from right beside the old sea boat and flew, but slowly, a mere fifty yards to a small bay to the east, where it landed again with an awkward folding of its long blue-grey wings.

10 I had no chance to see the tell-tale broken outside toe of the left foot which would tell me it was Harry. Hoping to find out, and get a good picture, I dodged back behind the lochside ashes and alders and tried to stalk him with the camera from above. But I over-estimated the distance and, when my head appeared over the bank above him, he spotted me and took off round the shore edge of the east wood where he was lost to sight through
15 the leafy trees. I stalked more carefully across the burn, peered through the bracken and located him amid the shore-side tussocks. Hissing Moobli back, I crawled nearer and got a photo of him partly obscured by grasses. Then he was off again, gliding to a bay thirty yards on, and I thought I could see the toe sticking out. Now there was nothing between us but open land and further stalking was impossible. Having much work to do, I went back to my
20 desk.

Next day, the incident forgotten, I went out early and saw the heron again tucked into the grasses right by the boat. Our sudden appearance made it try to take off but it tripped on the rocks and fell over, its wings held wide apart as if in supplication. It was clearly very weak. I hastened over and caught it gently by the lower neck, taking care to
25 keep my face and eyes away from that dagger beak. Just as Harry had done as a young nestling when a falling pine had dislodged him from his nest and I had found him trapped by a leg in a bush, so this heron tried to peck. It was thin, breast-bone sharp, its gullet and crop empty and it was extremely frail. Tucking its body carefully under one arm, I examined its feet.

30 It was Harry, for sure; the outside toe of his left foot was hard, unbending, and twisted out at right angles.

Here was confirmation that the heron I had occasionally seen in the area since our second year (I had hardly believed my one sighting of the broken toe) had indeed been Harry all the time. Now, in his extremity, he had clearly felt a real instinct to seek help from
35 me. Why else would he be there two days running, below the only human dwelling in fifteen miles of roadless loch, and right by my boat? And, after being scared away by our sudden appearance the first day, why else would he have come back to the very same spot on the second?

Another striking fact was that he had not sought the new boat, now up on the trolley, but to lie beside the old boat, the one I had used at the sea island and had rowed round the bays he himself had adopted after flying the nest, the very boat he had swooped low over on the day I had left the island. He had no doubt often seen me rowing the same boat up this fresh water lock too. He obviously knew the boat well, and that it was mine. Once could be accidental. Twice could not.

Yet if by some strange deep instinct he had sought my help, he was still terrified when I actually came close and he pecked at me, albeit weakly. I felt his beak; not razor sharp, as when young, but blunt. His claws too were old, grey and blunt and his plumage seemed pale with age, lacking the bluey sheen of the heron in its prime. By this time he would be nine years old. Perhaps he was dying of old age.

I carried him up to the cottage. Having no fish and knowing herons will eat mice, voles, even rats, I fed him some small lumps of meat, talking soothingly. He stopped pecking then and made no more attempts to stop me touching, stroking and holding his long neck while easing the meat down his long elastic gullet with gulps of water. He just squatted on his rear knee joints, his long legs weak, blinking his eyes slowly as if finding he had to accept what was now happening to him, but knowing he was in good hands.

A sick animal needs peace at such a time, so Moobli and I went for a trek, covering ten miles of loch shore and back over the high hills, keeping an eye open for a frog or two to give Harry. For the first time, when coming through steep tussocks, I actually fell down twice. It's not only Harry who's getting old, I thought. I stalked two groups of stags and hinds but in the poor light took no photos. When we got back Harry was looking even worse, his head and neck stretched across the floor. He had brought up all the meat given him. We hadn't found a single frog so I tried to feed him a few even small pieces of meat but again, with weak movements, he brought these up too. It seemed he was too far gone; his stomach could not cope with food any more.

I decided that if he was dying I wouldn't let him go in a human kitchen but outside, with the open sky above and wild scenery of his life about him. I fed him some warm bread and milk in the hope he might at least be able to digest that. Then, so a prowling fox would not attack him, I put him among the long grasses of the now unused wildcat pens a few yards from the cottage, with a deep bowl of water and some meat beside it in case he recovered.

When I went out the next morning he was dead, his eyes half closed as if he had not wanted to leave without seeing the sky that had borne him on all his travels between the locks. As I gathered up the limp and wasted body and folded the 5-foot 3-inch span of his wings, I felt sad, remembering the times we had shared in so strange a relationship, especially on the sea island. He had lived a full life, and had certainly reared some young, and from the moment I had found him dangling from his left foot in the bush below the heronry and had overcome my fear of heights to put him back into his nest, he had survived well over nine years. I read somewhere a heron could live as long as twenty-four years but I was sure Harry had died of old age – life can be tough for such big birds on Scottish lochs. That he had returned at the end, apparently to seek help from the human who had saved him once before, was an enormous if tragic compliment, and my only regret was that he had left it too late. It was a poignant experience.

Now answer **all three** questions

- 01** What have you learned about the interests and character of the writer from reading this passage? *(7 marks)*

Re-read lines **21 to 55**.

- 02** How do the writer's methods encourage the reader to share his admiration and compassion for the heron? *(8 marks)*

- 03** How likely is it that this heron is Harry? Why is this important to the writer?

In your answer you should:

- examine the evidence used by the writer to support his belief that this heron is Harry and any other evidence that might suggest this is not the case
- consider the importance of the heron to the writer.

(10 marks)

SECTION B: WRITING

Answer **one** question in this section.
Spend about one hour on this section.

Remember to:

- spend time thinking about the question and planning your ideas
- organise your ideas into paragraphs
- communicate clearly
- spend five minutes checking and editing your writing.

EITHER

- 04** Describe a place that changes in appearance and atmosphere at different times of the day and night. The place can be real or imagined. (25 marks)

OR

- 05** Write a story in which a discovery plays an important part. (25 marks)

OR

- 06** “Young people spend too much time indoors.” Write the words of a speech for a podcast in which you argue for or against this idea. (25 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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Questions 1-3 Source: Mike Tompkins, *A Last Wild Place*, Jonathan Cape, 1984

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