

X115/201

NATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS
2008

THURSDAY, 15 MAY
1.00 PM – 2.00 PM

ENGLISH
INTERMEDIATE 2
Close Reading

Answer all questions.

30 marks are allocated to this paper.

Read the passage carefully and then answer **all** the questions, **using your own words as far as possible**.

The questions will ask you to show that:

you understand the main ideas and important details in the passage—in other words, **what** the writer has said (**Understanding—U**);

you can identify, using appropriate terms, the techniques the writer has used to get across these ideas—in other words, **how** he has said it (**Analysis—A**);

you can, using appropriate evidence, comment on how effective the writer has been—in other words, **how well** he has said it (**Evaluation—E**).

A code letter (U, A, E) is used alongside each question to identify its purpose for you. The number



Afar, far away

Matthew Parris describes the harsh conditions of life in North Africa, and suggests what may be in store for the region and the nomadic (wandering) people who live there.

At the beginning of this month I was in a hellish yet beautiful place. I was making a programme for Radio 4 about one of the world's most ancient trade routes. Every year, since (we suppose) at least the time of the Ancient Greeks, hundreds of thousands of camels are led, strung together in trains, from the highlands of Ethiopia into the Danakil
5 depression: a descent into the desert of nearly 10,000 feet, a journey of about 100 miles. Here, by the edge of a blue-black and bitter salt lake, great floes of rock salt encrusting the mud are prised up, hacked into slabs and loaded on to the camels.

Then the camels and their drivers make the climb through dry mountains back into the highlands, where the slabs are bound with tape and distributed across the Horn of
10 Africa. The camels drink only twice on their journey, walking often at night, and carrying with them straw to eat on the way back. Their drivers bring only dry bread, sugar and tea.

Travelling with the camel trains in mid-winter, when temperatures are bearable, I found the experience extraordinarily moving. But my thoughts went beyond the salt trade, and
15 were powerfully reinforced by the journey that followed it—to another desert, the Algerian Sahara.

These reflections were first prompted by a chance remark that could not have been more wrong. Our superb Ethiopian guide, Solomon Berhe, was sitting with me in a friendly but flyblown village of sticks, stones, cardboard and tin in Hamed Ela, 300ft below sea
20 level, in a hot wind, on a hot night. An infinity of stars blazed above. The mysterious lake was close, and when the wind changed you could smell the sulphur blowing from a range of bubbling vents of gas, salt and super-heated steam. On the horizon fumed the volcano, Hertale. With not a blade of grass in sight, and all around us a desert of black rocks, the Danakil is a kind of inferno. How the Afar people manage to live in
25 this place, and why they choose to, puzzles the rest of Ethiopia, as it does me.

“But,” said Solomon, scratching one of the small fly-bites that were troubling all of us, “if we could return here in 50 years, this village would be different. There will be streets, electricity, and proper buildings. As Ethiopia modernises, places like this will be made more comfortable for people. Hamed Ela will probably be a big town.”

30 And that is where Solomon was wrong. As Ethiopia modernises, the Afar will leave their desert home. They will drift into the towns and cities in the highlands. Their voracious herds of goats will die. Their camels will no longer be of any use. The only remembrance this place will have of the humans it bred will be the stone fittings of their flimsy, ruined stick huts, and the mysterious black rock burial mounds that litter the
35 landscape.

There is no modern reason for human beings to live in such places. Their produce is pitiful, the climate brutal and the distances immense. Salt is already produced as cheaply by industrial means. If market forces don't kill the trade, the conscience of the animal rights movement will, for the laden camels suffer horribly on their journey. The
40 day is coming when camels will go down there no more. In fifty years the Danakil will be a national park, visited by rubbernecking tourists in helicopters. Camels will be found in zoos. Goats will be on their way to elimination from every ecologically fragile part of the planet.

Even in America, deserts are not properly inhabited any more. Unreal places such as
45 Las Vegas have sprung up where people live in an air-conditioned and artificially
irrigated bubble, but the land itself is emptier than before. Tribes who were part of the
land, and lived off it, have mostly gone, their descendants living in reservations. The
wilderness places of North America are vast and exceptionally well preserved; but they
are not part of many people's lives, except those of tourists. We are becoming outsiders
50 to the natural world, watching it on the Discovery Channel.

Those who call themselves environmentalists celebrate this. "Leave nothing and take
nothing away," read the signs at the gates of nature reserves. Practical advice, perhaps,
but is there not something melancholy in what that says about modern man's desired
relationship with nature? Will we one day confine ourselves to watching large parts of
55 our planet only from observation towers?

I have no argument against the international development movement that wants to see
the Afars in clean houses with running water and electrical power, and schools, and a
clinic nearby—away, in other words, from their gruesome desert life. All this is
inevitable.

60 But as that new way of living arrives—as we retreat from the wild places, and the fences
of national parks go up; as we cease the exploitation of animals, and the cow, the camel,
the sheep, the chicken and the pig become items in modern exhibition farms, where
schoolchildren see how mankind used to live; as our direct contact with our fellow
creatures is restricted to zoos, pets and fish tanks; and as every area of natural beauty is
65 set about with preservation orders and rules to keep human interference to a
minimum—will we not be separating ourselves from our planet in order, as we suppose,
to look after it better? Will we not be loving nature, but leaving it?

They say there is less traffic across the Sahara today than at any time in human history,
even if you include motor transport. The great days of camel caravans are over. As for
70 the inhabitants, the nomads are on a path to extinction as a culture. Nomadic life does
not fit the pattern of nation states, taxes, frontiers and controls. And though for them
there is now government encouragement to stay, their culture is doomed. Amid the
indescribable majesty of this place—the crumbling towers of black rock, the scream of
the jackal, the waterless canyons, yellow dunes, grey plateaus and purple thorn
75 bushes—I have felt like a visitor to a monumental ruin, walked by ghosts. There are
fragments of pottery, thousands of cave paintings of deer, giraffe, elephant, and men in
feathers, dancing . . . but no people, not a soul.

In the beginning, man is expelled from the Garden of Eden. In the end, perhaps, we
shall leave it of our own accord, closing the gate behind us.

From *The Times*, February 25, 2006 (slightly adapted)

QUESTIONS

Marks Code

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. What is surprising about the writer’s word choice in the first sentence? | 2 A |
| 2. Why does the writer add the expression “we suppose” (line 3) to the sentence here? | 1 U |
| 3. The word “floes” (line 6) usually refers to icebergs.
Explain how it is appropriate to use it as a metaphor to refer to the appearance of the rock salt deposits. | 2 A/E |
| 4. Explain how any one example of the writer’s choice of descriptive detail in lines 10–12 emphasises the hardships of the journey. | 1 A |
| 5. Explain in your own words the contrasting impressions the writer has of the village in Hamed Ela (see lines 18–19). | 2 U |
| 6. Explain what the word “fumed” (line 22) suggests about the volcano, apart from having smoke coming from it. | 1 U |
| 7. Explain why the sentence “And that is where Solomon was wrong” (line 30) is an effective link between the paragraphs contained in lines 26 to 35. | 2 E |
| 8. What does the word “drift” suggest about how “the Afar will leave their desert home” (lines 30–31)? | 1 U |
| 9. The writer tells us “There is no modern reason for human beings to live in such places” (line 36).
Explain in your own words two reasons why this is the case.
Look in the next three sentences (lines 36–39) for your answer. | 2 U |
| 10. Explain fully the appropriateness of the word choice of “rubbernecking tourists in helicopters” (line 41). | 2 A |
| 11. Explain how the writer develops the idea of Las Vegas being “Unreal” (line 44). | 2 A |
| 12. Explain why the expression “watching it on the Discovery Channel” (line 50) effectively illustrates our relationship with “wilderness places”. | 2 E |
| 13. What is the effect of the writer’s inclusion of the words “Those who call themselves” in the sentence beginning in line 51? | 1 U |
| 14. What is the tone of the two sentences in lines 52–55? | 1 A |
| 15. Explain how other words in lines 56–58 help us to work out the meaning or sense of “gruesome desert life”. | 2 U |
| 16. Look at lines 60–67.
(a) Identify any feature of sentence structure the writer uses effectively in this paragraph.
(b) Show how your chosen feature helps to clarify or support the writer’s argument. | 1 A
2 A |
| 17. Explain in your own words why “the nomads are on a path to extinction as a culture” (line 70). | 1 U |
| 18. Explain any reason why the final paragraph (lines 78–79) works well as a conclusion to the passage. | 2 E |

Total (30)

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]

[Open out for Questions]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Text—Article from *We are outsiders to the natural world, preferring to watch it on Discovery* by Matthew Parris taken from The Times, 25 February 2006. Published by The Times. Reproduced by permission of The Times.

X115/202

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2008

THURSDAY, 15 MAY
2.20 PM – 3.50 PM

ENGLISH
INTERMEDIATE 2
Critical Essay

Answer **two** questions.

Each question must be taken from a different section.

Each question is worth 25 marks.



Answer TWO questions from this paper.

Each question must be chosen from a different Section (A–E). You are not allowed to choose two questions from the same Section.

In all Sections you may use Scottish texts.

Write the number of each question in the margin of your answer booklet and begin each essay on a fresh page.

You should spend about 45 minutes on each essay.

The following will be assessed:

- **the relevance of your essays to the questions you have chosen**
- **your knowledge and understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the chosen texts**
- **your explanation of ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to the meaning/effect/impact of the chosen texts**
- **your evaluation of the effectiveness of the chosen texts, supported by detailed and relevant evidence**
- **the quality and technical accuracy of your writing.**

Each question is worth 25 marks. The total for this paper is 50 marks.

SECTION A—DRAMA

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: characterisation, key scene(s), structure, climax, theme, plot, conflict, setting . . .

1. Choose a play in which there is a significant conflict between two characters.
Describe the conflict and show how it is important to the development of the characterisation and theme of the play.
2. Choose a play which has a tragic ending.
Show how the ending of the play results from the strengths and/or weaknesses of the main character(s).
3. Choose a play in which a character encounters difficulties within the community in which he or she lives.
Show how the character copes with the difficulties he or she encounters and how his or her actions contribute to the theme of the play.

SECTION B—PROSE

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax/turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, theme, ideas, description . . .

4. Choose a novel **or** short story which has a turning point or moment of realisation for at least one of the characters.
Briefly describe what has led up to the turning point or moment. Go on to show what impact this has on the character(s) and how it affects the outcome of the novel or story.
5. Choose a novel **or** short story in which you feel sympathy with one of the main characters because of the difficulties or injustice or hardships she or he has to face.
Describe the problems the character faces and show by what means you are made to feel sympathy for her or him.
6. Choose a non-fiction text **or** group of texts which uses setting, **or** humour, **or** description to make clear to you an interesting aspect of a society.
Show how the use of any of these techniques helped you to understand the writer's point of view on the interesting aspect of this society.

SECTION C—POETRY

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: word choice, tone, imagery, structure, content, rhythm, theme, sound, ideas . . .

7. Choose a poem which creates an atmosphere of sadness, pity, or loss.
Show how the poet creates the atmosphere and what effect it has on your response to the subject matter of the poem.
8. Choose a poem about a strong relationship—for example, between two people, or between a person and a place.
Show how the poet, by the choice of content and the skilful use of techniques, helps you to appreciate the strength of the relationship.
9. Choose a poem which reflects on an aspect of human behaviour in such a way as to deepen your understanding of human nature.
Describe the aspect of human behaviour which you have identified and show how the poet's use of ideas and techniques brought you to a deeper understanding of human nature.

[Turn over

SECTION D—FILM AND TV DRAMA

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: use of camera, key sequence, characterisation, mise-en-scène, editing, setting, music/sound effects, plot, dialogue . . .

- 10.** Choose a film or TV drama* which involves the pursuit of power or the fulfilment of an ambition.
Show how the theme is developed through the presentation of character and setting.
- 11.** Choose an opening sequence from a film which effectively holds your interest and makes you want to watch the rest of the film.
Show what elements of the opening sequence have this effect, and how they relate to the film as a whole.
- 12.** Choose a film or TV drama* which reflects an important aspect of society.
Describe the aspect of society being dealt with and show how the techniques used by the film or programme maker help to deepen your understanding of the importance of this aspect.
- * “TV drama” includes a single play, a series or a serial.

SECTION E—LANGUAGE

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: register, accent, dialect, slang, jargon, vocabulary, tone, abbreviation . . .

- 13.** Consider the language of advertising.
In any one advertisement identify the ways in which language is used successfully. Explain what it is about these usages which makes them effective.
- 14.** Consider the language of any form of modern electronic communication.
Identify some features of this language which differ from normal usage and say how effective you think these features are in communicating information.
- 15.** Consider the distinctive language of any specific group of people.
What aspects of the group’s language are distinctive and what advantage does the group gain from the use of such language?

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]