

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION—1970

ENGLISH EXPRESSION

Time allowed: Three hours

Answer ONE question from Part I, BOTH questions in Part II, and ONE question from Part III.

Note:—You are required to use separate script books for the three parts of this examination—one book for the Part I question, a second book for the two questions in Part II, and a third book for the Part III question. If you should need more space for any part of the paper, the supervisor will provide you with an additional script book for that part.

PART I

If you do not attempt this section of the paper, return the script book for the section, with the word **BLANK** on the first page.

Write an essay of about 400–500 words on one of the topics set out below. If you wish to draw on your reading of the set books, you should avoid repeating this material in Part III.

1. “It isn’t a matter of how long you live that is important, but how well you live.”
What do you think is meant by *living well*?
2. “Even a democratic society must be selective in the freedoms it allows its members.”
3. “The only valid discipline comes from within the individual himself.”
4. And in the naked light I saw
ten thousand people, maybe more.
People talking without speaking,
people hearing without listening.
People writing songs that voices never shared.
No one dared
disturb the sound of silence.
(PAUL SIMON, “*The Sound of Silence*”)
Lines like these suggest a breakdown of communication among the people of today—and yet no other age has had such possibilities for mass communication. Discuss this apparent contradiction.
5. “Thank God I am not free, any more than a rooted tree is free.”
6. “The poet and the lover have always seen more in the moon than the astronaut will ever find.”

—[40 marks]

BEGIN NEW SCRIPT BOOK.

If you do not attempt this section of the paper, return the script book for the section, with the word **BLANK** on the first page.

Read the passages below (7 and 8) and then answer the questions which follow each passage. Remember that you are required to attempt **BOTH** passages.

7. It is absurd to say, as a young parliamentarian recently did, that our future Prime Minister "must be good on television." After all, the Queen just manages one uneasy T.V. performance a year, and if she falls below professional standards her hearers pass it over with a sympathetic cluck. Anyway, *what* do we expect a P.M. to be good at? Must he ride as well as the Queen does at a trooping of the colour, or will it do if he speaks no worse than she does at Christmas?

- (i) We are told that T.V. is the modern hustings. It is really a poor substitute. It is the lazy man's soap-box, brought into his cosy sitting room, and he must be content to see, and the politician content to communicate, only as much as the whims of producer, electrician, and interviewer will permit. Politician and viewer are protected, each from the other.

- (ii) But the dangers of imperfect communication are becoming even more complex. Not long ago it was enough to speak well; now looks count—not the distant gallantry of shoulders hunched under a storm-tossed banner across the village green, but the unforgiving close-up. Soon we shall be able to see the colour of his dirty teeth, the port-wine veins around his hairy nostrils; and it cannot be long before smell is added to vision. Some clever man will find a way to broadcast a penetrating perfume that will inspire housebound smellers to say, "How good he is on T.V."—and to vote for him.

- (iii) There are fatuous people who say T.V. reveals a man's true character. This is nonsense. You can squint, and so look shifty, because the light is in your eyes; you can look uncertain because the producer has shaken you by a flattering reference to your rival; you can look a poor wet fish because the make-up girl said you should not have worn that dress or that shirt, and couldn't you possibly manage without your glasses? No, you are never just talking to people with a camera happening to be there. You are performing. You are a seal in a circus, and as such you should be judged—and only as such.

- (iv) Surely the highest places in the land should not go to the most polished T.V. performers? Is an adroit self-exposure to be the main qualification for a job that might better be done by a shy man staying at home, and reading—or writing—Cabinet papers?

(Adapted from LENA JEGER: *The Guardian*, 18/10/1967.)

- A. Summarize, in two or three lines, the main argument of this writer.
- B. Account, as fully as you can, for the choice of the Queen as a comparison in Paragraph (i). Is it a fair comparison?
- C. The writer questions whether T.V. can accurately be called the modern hustings (a public platform). What essential differences does she see between campaigning on the hustings or on television?
- D. In Paragraph (iii) the writer illustrates her argument by referring to colour close-ups and the possibility of perfume transmission. Are these illustrations equally relevant?
- E. Does Paragraph (v) give a fair answer to the remark of the young parliamentarian, quoted in Paragraph (i)?

—[5 × 3 marks = 15 marks]

8. We all agree that freedom is of high value, and that it is easily lost. The only sound principle, therefore, is to restrict no one's freedom, except where it threatens the freedom of others. True, (i) we cannot leave thieves or murderers at large; but we have no right to restrict a person's freedom in things that concern only himself. Hence the censorship that forbids us to read certain books is wrong in principle.

- (ii) But even those who accept this principle often tell us that an exception must be made in the case of young people, and that it is the duty of us elders to protect them from books calculated to do them harm.

- (iii) My first answer is that there is no proof of any such harm. Professor ABC and Dr. EFG have independently examined crime statistics in states which do, and in states which do not, allow the sale of pornographic books. Both researchers found that there was no significant difference between the rates of sex crime in the various states. This is strong evidence that pornography does no harm.

- (iv) But, even if it did, this would be no good reason for banning it. In our world, we have to make choices every day, and it is our business to learn how to distinguish good from bad and better from worse. Only by practice can we strengthen our powers of moral perception and moral choice, and to deprive young people of this freedom of choice is to stunt their moral growth. Parents and guardians may indeed guide and help them, but they should be free to choose for themselves. No doubt they will sometimes choose wrongly, but all freedom gives us the right to choose wrongly.

- (v) The State has no right to dictate what even children shall read—and in our country it dictates to adults as well as children.

A. In the first sentence the author suggests two reasons why (with one exception) no one's freedom should be restricted. To what extent does the conclusion of Sentence 2 follow from each of these reasons?

B. Assuming that the results of the research mentioned in Paragraph (iii) are correct, how far do they support the conclusion that the writer immediately draws from them?

C. Does the writer justify his conclusion in Paragraph (iv) that censorship stunts the moral growth of the young?

D. Does the statement at the end of Paragraph (iv) that "all freedom gives us the right to choose wrongly" justify the writer's contention that children's reading should be unrestricted?

E. "The State has no right to dictate what even children shall read." Is this statement in Paragraph (v) a fair description of what the State does in book censorship?

—[5 × 3 marks = 15 marks]

BEGIN NEW SCRIPT BOOK.

If you do not attempt this section of the paper, return the script book for the section, with the word **BLANK** on the first page.

Drawing on your reading of the prescribed books, write an answer of about 300 words on **ONE** of the following topics.

9. "Books about extraordinary people tend to idealize them."

Discuss any two or three of the prescribed books, showing to what extent the authors fall into, or avoid, this tendency.

10. "In the end, all visionaries, whether artists, scientists, rulers, or rebels, must submit to the needs and the demands of society."

Has your reading led you to agree, or disagree, with this statement? Concentrate on two or three books.

11. "It was my choice to die!"

How truly could any of the characters you have read about this year make this remark? To what extent did they choose death and to what extent was it forced upon them?

Base your answer on two or three books.

12. "The pioneering scientist has an easier task than the artist or philosopher; he can demonstrate *his* truth."

After comparing several books, would you agree that the scientist has had an easier task?

13. "Protest as you will; it's the voice of authority that people listen to!"

Do the books that you have read this year lead you to agree? Select two or three for consideration.

—[30 marks]