

**MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD**  
**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA, MSIDA**  
**MATRICULATION EXAMINATION**  
**INTERMEDIATE LEVEL**  
**MAY 2017**

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	ENGLISH – Oral
<b>DATE:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2017
<b>TIME:</b>	P.M. (approx. 10 minutes)

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**CANDIDATE'S PAPER**

**PART 1 – PASSAGE FOR READING**

Smoking is still popular in certain spots. More than three-quarters of men light up in Indonesia, for example. The habit is also becoming more common among men in Africa and the eastern Mediterranean. And though global smoking rates have fallen, population growth means that over a billion people still smoke, roughly as many as did in 2005. That, combined with rising prices, means that the value of retail sales jumped by 29% in the decade to 2015, according to Euromonitor.

New regulations have not snubbed out tobacco returns and investments, either. Countries have passed a battery of laws to discourage smoking, including taxes, and bans on advertising and on smoking in pubs. Tobacco companies have fought these ferociously, suing countries such as Australia for prohibiting logos on cigarette packs, for example. But some rules actually had hidden benefits. For example, bans on advertising lower marketing costs and make it harder for young upstarts to challenge established brands.

Less encouraging for health is the prospect that some smokers might switch to new "lower-risk" products rather than give up tobacco completely. For years companies have sold to a shrinking share of the population. But if enough would-be quitters switch to "safer" cigarettes such as e-cigarettes, instead of actually quitting, this could slow down or even reverse what had seemed a permanent downward trend in tobacco sales. Far from fading away, Big Tobacco might be on the verge of a new boom.

A new company formed by British American Tobacco and Reynolds stands to gain, if so, as it will combine the two companies' research into reduced-risk products. That will help it compete against Philip Morris, which has spent nearly twice as much on research as British American Tobacco. Philip Morris is now seeking approval in America to market its heated tobacco products as safer than traditional cigarettes; it submitted its application to American regulators in December. The company already reckons it might add a billion dollars in profit by 2020 allowing the chief executive to describe a possible future in which his giant cigarette company phases out cigarette sales.

*Adapted from: <http://www.economist.com>*

**(Total: 5 marks)**

**PART 2 – DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC (LONG TURN)**

**Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it with the examiner for an extended period of time.**

- a) The risks of leading a sedentary life
- b) Organised group tours or independent individual travel?
- c) Keeping yourself busy with a project of your choice
- d) The Arts make us more understanding of other people.
- e) Would you relocate to Planet Mars if you could?
- f) The best entertainment location in Malta

**(Total: 5 marks)**

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**CANDIDATE'S PAPER**

**PART 1 – PASSAGE FOR READING**

Maria is a four year old girl from Georgia, and for her, reading is practically a way of life. Although the little girl has yet to start kindergarten, she's managed to blaze through about 1,000 books — an accomplishment that nabbed her the position of Guest Librarian at the Library of Congress earlier this week.

It's fair to say that Maria has spent nearly half her life as an avid reader. As *The Washington Post's* Samantha Schmidt reports, Gainesville's resident bookworm got through her first book by herself just before she turned three. The little girl says she now wants to read a hundred thousand books.

The books she has read weren't just picture books, either, but her favourites include books about dinosaurs.

After Maria's achievement made the news, she won praise from all over her community. But it may be her trip earlier this week to the Library of Congress that took the cake, as she had always desperately wanted to visit what is officially the national library of the United States and also the largest library in the world. Members of the public have limited access to the library, but aren't usually granted free run of the three buildings housing its massive collections.

However, Maria's mother managed to set up a special visit, when she realised just how much it would mean to her daughter. She reached out to the Library of Congress to try and arrange the visit, resulting in the little bookworm getting to spend the day shadowing the Chief Librarian. Over the course of her visit, Maria sat in on top meetings and walked the halls of the largest library in the world. She even recommended that the library install whiteboards so that kids like her could practise their handwriting.

Maria may have blown past her goal, but she's not resting on her laurels. Now, her mother says Maria hopes to bump up her target to 1,500 books read by the time she starts kindergarten next autumn — as well as learning to read in Spanish.

*Adapted from: Danny Lewis smithsonian.com January 13, 2017*

**(Total: 5 marks)**

**PART 2 – DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC (LONG TURN)**

**Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it with the examiner for an extended period of time.**

- a) How would you solve Malta's traffic problems?
- b) Malta as a holiday destination
- c) Free time means being busy doing nothing.
- d) Literature is a vehicle for the deepest human truths.
- e) Driverless cars: how safe do you think they are?
- f) The space you study in during exam time

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**CANDIDATE'S PAPER**

**PART 1 – PASSAGE FOR READING**

For 10 years now, astronomers have been picking up unusual blasts of high-energy radio waves from distant parts of the cosmos. Each transmission of these fast radio bursts has the energy of millions of stars for a fleeting moment, before they disappear in just a fraction of a second. Yet, the source of these powerful signals has scientists baffled.

Astronomers first detected fast radio bursts in 2007, using data from a radio telescope in Australia, and, so far, more than 20 bursts have been discovered. The mystery of what they are has become one of the hottest topics in astronomy. The answer could give us a whole new insight into the nature of the Universe. Fast radio bursts could even be aliens, beaming a signal across space. Scientists aren't ruling it out.

Research published in the journal *Nature* has, for the first time, identified where one of these bursts came from. The international team used a giant radio telescope in Puerto Rico, along with radio telescopes in Mexico and Europe, to hone in on the source of the signal: a small galaxy 2.5 billion light years away.

Now that astronomers are able to identify the galaxies the transmissions come from, the next stage is to zoom in on the exact source. If, for example, the bursts originate from the centre of a galaxy, they are likely to be associated with black holes. If they come from the periphery, they could be emitted from an explosion on a star or planet.

The quest to unravel the mystery of these strange cosmic signals demonstrates just how far we have to go before we fully understand the Universe. It shows we are always learning and willing to hold up our hands and say we don't really know. That's a really important lesson for future scientists.

*Adapted from: <http://www.bbc.com>*

**(Total: 5 marks)**

**PART 2 – DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC (LONG TURN)**

**Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it with the examiner for an extended period of time.**

- a) Athletes are born, not made.
- b) A thrill seeking holiday or a relaxing one?
- c) Getting involved in a voluntary organisation
- d) Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters.
- e) How private are our lives with all the surveillance technology that surrounds us?
- f) The place I visit regularly because I cannot avoid it.

**(Total: 5 marks)**

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**CANDIDATE’S PAPER**

**PART 1 – PASSAGE FOR READING**

It’s an age-old question in parenting: how to get your children to eat more greens? Or indeed, any greens. With figures showing that one in 10 British pupils are obese when they start primary school and only one in five children eat vegetables every day, the issue of how to get kids to eat healthy continues to be fiercely debated. The answer, according to an obesity campaigner, is controversial: bribe them with cash. The spokesperson for the National Obesity Forum suggests that putting small amounts of money into a bank account in exchange for a child eating greens could be a solution to the obesity crisis.

It’s not the first time bribery – or, if you prefer, a reward system – has been touted as a way to combat obesity. However, psychologists argue that coercion of any kind – whether cash in an account or the classic warning to “finish your greens if you want ice cream” – can have longstanding negative effects on a child’s relationship with food. “As long as we make food ‘healthy’ or ‘good’ food an issue we are going to produce anxiety,” says a psychotherapist. “We should just eat well when we are hungry.”

For parents who blanch at the thought of exchanging cash for courgettes with their children, there’s the exposure method. The *Tiny Tastes* game is based on University College London research that revealed that if children tasted a new vegetable at least 10 times, even the most reluctant would eat more of it. The game involves offering a child a tiny piece of a chosen vegetable for 10 days in a row, with accompanying record charts, stickers, and colouring sheets.

Such subterfuge is either regarded as a clever, creative response to veg rejection or a violation of trust that can only backfire. A far cleverer thing would be to help children learn to become adults who choose vegetables consciously, of their own accord. The question is, how on earth do we do that?

*Adapted from: <https://www.theguardian.com>*

**(Total: 5 marks)**

**PART 2 – DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC (LONG TURN)**

**Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it with the examiner for an extended period of time.**

- a) A run is always better than a walk
- b) Travelling with friends or family?
- c) Climate change denial.
- d) How has watching films/series on demand changed the way we view television?
- e) Are smartphones making us stupid?
- f) A day in the life of a refugee

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**CANDIDATE’S PAPER**

**PART 1 – PASSAGE FOR READING**

The University of Cambridge established the new Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development and Learning (Pedal). A Lego Professor of Play will be employed as its director.

When interviewed about this new position, Prof. Anna Vignoles explained that the value of play is relatively under-researched, and there are people who are claiming that it enhances learning, that it’s important, and that it’s good for children’s wellbeing. All of that might be true, but actually there’s remarkably little evidence for that. The aim of the Pedal centre is to conduct rigorous research into the importance of play and how playful learning can be used to improve students’ outcomes. She added that there are a number of scholars who are working on interesting aspects of play in developmental psychology. She is confident that they’ll attract an outstanding scholar.

Although the Lego Foundation, which owns 25% of the Lego business, will have no say over who is appointed, it is committed to funding the role in perpetuity. The university is planning to offer the role to an academic who specialises in educational psychology, to enable the centre to step up its research capabilities in this field.

The Lego Foundation is hoping for a candidate with a “childlike mindset”: an academic who is playful, extremely curious, open-minded, imaginative and creative – someone who can think of new ways of doing research and work across different disciplines.

The foundation believes play has a critical role for children, particularly in high-quality learning. If children are being taught with standardised assessments and results, those children will expect to receive assignments and be led towards pre-defined goals for the rest of their lives. But the skills you need now as an adult are collaboration, problem solving and coming up with ideas. In that sense, play is critical. You use your imagination to plan things, to predict outcomes, to understand how to solve a problem by looking at it from different perspectives.

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**(Total: 5 marks)**

**PART 2 – DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC (LONG TURN)**

**Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it with the examiner for an extended period of time.**

- a) All diets are healthy.
- b) How long should a holiday be?
- c) Scuba diving or snorkeling?
- d) Languages are conduits of human heritage.
- e) How can you tell fake news from real news?
- f) Why are people drawn to new gadgets?

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	ENGLISH
<b>DATE:</b>	20th May 2017
<b>TIME:</b>	9:00 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

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**Answer BOTH sections**

You are advised to spend about 1 hour on each task.

**SECTION A – LANGUAGE**

**1. ESSAY**

**Write approximately 500 words on ONE of the following:**

- a. Write a story entitled: ‘Breaking down walls’.
- b. Describe a good summer evening with friends and/or family.
- c. ‘Music touches us emotionally, where words alone can’t.’ Discuss.
- d. How should schools promote tolerance and respect?
- e. Hunger
- f. You belong to the youth section of an environment protection group in your town/village. Write a report for your local council about the events and fundraising activities your group has been organising during the past year.
- g. Write a formal email to the committee of a students’ organisation you belong to giving a number of reasons why you will have to resign from your position in this organisation.

**(Total: 30 marks)**



## 2. COMPREHENSION AND SUMMARY

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

When I turned 15, my parents sent me alone on a one-month trip to Ecuador, the country where my father was born. This was tradition in our family – for my parents to send their first-generation American kids to the country of their heritage, where we would meet our extended family, **immerse** ourselves in a different culture, and learn some lessons on **gratefulness**.

5 My family’s plan worked. That month in Ecuador did more for my character, education, and sense of identity than any other experience in my early life. And five years later, my experience in Ecuador inspired me to spend more time abroad, studying in South Africa at the University of Cape Town. These two trips not only made me a lifelong traveller, but also a person who believes travelling to developing countries should be a necessary rite of passage for every young American  
10 who has the means.

It is often said that spending time in less **affluent** countries teaches Americans never to take anything for granted. To some extent, this is true. During my time travelling in these areas, I often travelled without access to hot water, Internet, air conditioning, or even basic electricity. I slept in rooms with spiders, mosquitoes, and bedbugs. I rode on public transportation that rarely left on time  
15 and often broke down suddenly in **remote** areas. Stripped of my daily habits and expectations, I was forced to surrender the idea that I have a right to anything – including the luxury of convenience, or days when everything I have planned actually happens. And my minor travel hassles seemed even pettier when I realised that they represented larger systemic problems that locals must deal with every day.

20 But these trips didn’t only teach me to appreciate what I had; they also moved me to consider why I had it in the first place. I realised that much of what I thought was necessity was, in fact, luxury and began to realise how easily I could survive with much less. I did not necessarily need hot water or a timely bus or a comfortable bed to be happy for the day. I did not necessarily need a jaw-dropping landscape or a famous archaeological ruin or a stunning beach to make my travels worth it.  
25 Instead, most of the time, that fulfilment came from the people I interacted with – not the things I had or did. It came from eating soup with locals at a rest stop on a 12-hour bus ride, sharing a meal with Peruvian soccer fans while watching a match, or chatting with the owner of my hostel during his lunch break. Discovering that my best travel moments came from these **subtle**, personal moments instead of the grandiose, materialistic ones made me understand that living contently required little.  
30 What I originally thought I “took for granted”, I now rethought taking at all.

Before travelling, I also assumed people from developing countries would all want the advantages I had as an American. And yet, I discovered that the people in these countries did not necessarily feel like their lives were lacking. During my last visit to South Africa, I worked with John Gilmour, the executive director of LEAP schools, a network for low-income students. Gilmour  
35 told me about an encounter he had visiting a Cape Town community before he decided to open his first school near there. A local showed him a street corner and told him, “This is my favourite place in the whole entire world.” Gilmour was sceptical and argued, “How could you say that? Look at the graffiti, look at the trash covering the floor, look at the unpaved road.” The other man responded, “No, look at the people.”

40 Travelling to these places made me realise that the “advantages” I initially thought I had over others were not necessarily advantages to everyone. Many actually preferred living with the

45 challenges they faced over living in a country like mine, where other things are missing. A professional I met in South America who had turned down a job offer in the United States told me, “I’d never want to move there, even though I’d make more money. The social part of life is better here, I find people happier here, and my quality of life is what matters most.” Rick Steves, the popular travel guidebook writer and television host, expressed similar thoughts in an interview when he said, “It’s a very powerful moment when you’re travelling and realise that people don’t have the American dream. They’ve got their own dream. And that’s not a bad thing. That’s a good thing.”

50 These were important lessons for me to learn as a young person in the midst of making important life decisions. It was empowering to know I had experienced a wide range of perspectives and could use them to make choices for myself – that I had been in situations with few resources or comforts, and I was still okay.

55 This past summer, I volunteered as a programme leader for Global Glimpse, a non-profit organisation that takes American high school seniors on three-week trips to Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Ecuador. My students – who came from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds – visited local museums, cultural centres, and businesses, learned about fair-trade business practices, and volunteered at local non-profit shops. They milked goats and carried wood on their backs to experience a day working like a local farmer. They spent an afternoon visiting the city dump where families work sifting through the trash to gather recyclable materials to make \$1 to \$2 a day. They also learned about families whose lives had been altered by political instability in the region. Many of my students admitted that they had not once learned about Nicaraguan history or culture in their 11 years of education. Before I travelled, my own public school education had taught me little about non-Western people, cultures, and history.

65 Yet, unfortunately, most Americans have not **prioritised** these kinds of experiences. Unlike the U.K., where 75 percent of citizens have passports, in the U.S. the rate hovers around 45 percent, with some surveys showing that more than half of the population has never travelled outside the country. When Americans do travel, the most popular destinations are in Europe or resort locations around the Caribbean – places that cater to a traveller’s sense of comfort and luxury. I can only imagine how American culture, business, and politics might change if more young people decided to forgo a comfortable vacation and instead pursue a genuine travel experience – not a short-lived, consumer-oriented trip, where privileged visitors drop in casually without careful research or consideration of long-term needs – but a trip where people are driven to challenge what we accept as “normal” or “real”.

75 My parents were on to something when they decided to send me to Ecuador years ago, but that trip did far more than teach me lessons on culture and gratitude. It fundamentally changed my life trajectory and the way I wanted to engage with the world. I hope more American students can have the opportunity to experience the same.

*By Amanda Machado, adapted from an article in The Atlantic Daily.*

*This component continues on the next page.*

**IM 10.17m**

- a. Give the meaning of the following words (in **bold**) as they appear in the context: (i) immerse, (ii) gratefulness, (iii) affluent, (iv) remote, (v) subtle, (vi) prioritised. (6)
- b. Explain what the author means when she says ‘travelling to developing countries should be a necessary rite of passage’ (line 9). (3)
- c. How does travelling to ‘less affluent countries’ make the author appreciate what she has at home? (2)
- d. In what way does the author’s first trip to Ecuador alter her understanding of what is necessary in a travel experience? (4)
- e. Using information from the passage, explain what you think is the American dream and what the author discovers about the attitude people in developing countries have concerning this idea. (3)
- f. Limiting your answer to paragraphs seven and eight (lines 53-73), use between 80 – 100 words to summarise how the author is helping American students learn about developing countries and what she thinks of the travel experiences of most Americans. (12)

**(Total: 30 marks)**

## SECTION B – LITERATURE

Choose ONE of the texts below and answer ONE of the three questions set on the text. All answers must be supported by close reference to the text. Essays should be no less than 450 words.

**Text 1: Graham Greene *The Heart of the Matter***

**EITHER**

a. How does Greene depict corruption in the novel *The Heart of the Matter*?

**OR**

b. Discuss why Wilson is so determined to destroy Scobie?

**OR**

c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the novel *The Heart of the Matter*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:

- the relation of the passage to the plot or action of the novel;
- what the passage reveals about any of the characters in the novel;
- the relation of the passage to the central themes of the novel.

It was nearly one in the morning before he returned: the light was out in the kitchen quarters and Ali was dozing on the step of the house until the head-lamps woke him, passing across his sleeping face. He jumped up and lit the way from the garage with his torch.

“All right, Ali. Go to bed.”

He let himself into the empty house – he had forgotten the deep tones of silence. Many a time he had come in late, after Louise was asleep, but there had never then been quite this quality of security and impregnability in the silence: his ears had listened for, even though they could not catch, the faint rustle of another person's breath, the tiny movement. Now there was nothing to listen for. He went upstairs and looked into the bedroom. Everything had been tidied away: there was no sign of Louise's departure or presence: Ali had even removed the photograph and put it in a drawer. He was indeed alone. In the bathroom a rat moved, and once the iron roof crumpled as a late vulture settled for the night. Scobie sat down in the living-room and put his feet up on another chair. He felt unwilling yet to go to bed, but he was sleepy: it had been a long day. Now that he was alone he could indulge in the most irrational act: sleep in a chair instead of a bed. The sadness was peeling off his mind, leaving contentment. He had done his duty: Louise was happy. He closed his eyes. The sound of a car driving in off the road, head-lamps moving across the window, woke him. He imagined it was a police car that night he was the responsible officer and he thought that some urgent and probably unnecessary telegram had come in. He opened the door and found Yusef on the step.

“Forgive me, Major Scobie, I saw your light as I was passing and I thought...”

“Come in,” he said, “I have whisky, or would you prefer a little beer...”

Yusef said with surprise, “This is very hospitable of you, Major Scobie.”

“If I know a man well enough to borrow money from him, surely I ought to be hospitable.”

**(Total: 30 marks)**

*Please turn the page.*

**Text 2: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie *Purple Hibiscus***

**EITHER**

- a. ‘A freedom to be, to do.’ Discuss how *Purple Hibiscus* presents different struggles for freedom that often come at a cost.

**OR**

- b. Ifeoma jokingly asserts, “A week Eugene, they will stay a week. I do not have monsters that eat human heads in my house!” Discuss how Ifeoma’s and Eugene’s different religious beliefs have an effect on the way they raise their children.

**OR**

- c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the novel *Purple Hibiscus*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:
- the relation of the passage to the plot or action of the novel;
  - what the passage reveals about any of the characters in the novel;
  - the relation of the passage to the central themes of the novel.

When I had thought of heaven as a child, I visualized Papa’s room, the softness, the creaminess, the endlessness. I would snuggle into Papa’s arms when harmattan thunderstorms raged outside, flinging mangoes against the window netting and making the electric wires hit each other and spark bright orange flames. Papa would lodge me between his knees or wrap me in the cream blanket that smelled of safety.

I sat on a similar blanket now, on the edge of the bed. I slipped off my slippers and sank my feet into the rug and decided to keep them sunk in so that my toes would feel cushioned. So that a part of me would feel safe.

“Kambili,” Papa said, breathing deeply. “You didn’t put in your best this term. You came second because you chose to.” His eyes were sad. Deep and sad. I wanted to touch his face, to run my hand over his rubbery cheeks. There were stories in his eyes that I would never know.

The phone rang then; it had been ringing more often since Ade Coker was arrested. Papa answered it and spoke in low tones. I sat waiting for him until he looked up and waved me away. He did not call me the next day, or the day after, to talk about my report card, to decide how I would be punished. I wondered if he was too preoccupied with Ade Coker’s case, but even after he got him out of jail a week later, he did not talk about my report card. He did not talk about getting Ade Coker out of jail, either; we simply saw his editorial back in the *Standard*, where he wrote about the value of freedom, about how his pen would not, could not, stop writing the truth. But he did not mention where he had been detained or who had arrested him or what had been done to him.

**(Total: 30 marks)**

**Text 3: Robert Bolt *A Man for All Seasons***

**EITHER**

a. 'Manipulation is a central theme in the play.' Discuss.

**OR**

b. 'In spite of the many characters around him, More can only look inwardly for strength.' Discuss.

**OR**

c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the play *A Man for All Seasons*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:

- the relation of the passage to the plot or action of the play;
- what the passage reveals about any of the characters in the play;
- the relation of the passage to the central themes of the play.

**More** I don't know, my dear, it sounds unlikely. I have seen falcons do some very splendid things.

**Alice** But how could he stoop from a cloud? He couldn't see where he was going.

**Norfolk** You see, Alice – you're ignorant of the subject; a real falcon don't *care* where he's going! Anyway, I'm talking to Meg. (*A sportsman's story.*) 'Twas the very first cast of the day, Meg; the sun was behind us. And from side to side of the valley like the roof of a tent was solid mist –

**Alice** Oh, mist.

**Norfolk** Well, mist is cloud, isn't it?

**Alice** No.

**Rich** The opinion of Aristotle is that mists are an exhalation of the earth whereas clouds –

**Norfolk** He stooped five hundred feet! Like *that!* Like an Act of God, isn't he, Thomas?

**More** He's tremendous.

**Norfolk** (*to Alice*) Tremendous.

**Margaret** Did he kill the heron?

**Norfolk** Oh, the heron was clever. (*Very discreditable evidently*) It was a royal stoop though. (*Sly*) If you could ride, Alice, I'd show you.

**(Total: 30 marks)**

*Please turn the page.*

**Text 4: Ian McEwan *Atonement***

**EITHER**

a. Discuss the theme of manipulation in Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement*.

**OR**

b. Discuss Cecilia's role in *Atonement*.

**OR**

c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the novel *Atonement*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:

- the relation of the passage to the plot or action of the novel;
- what the passage reveals about any of the characters in the novel;
- the relation of the passage to the central themes of the novel.

My fifty-nine-year assignment is over. There was our crime – Lola's, Marshall's, mine – and from the second version onwards, I set out to describe it. I've regarded it as my duty to disguise nothing – the names, the places, the exact circumstances – I put it all there as a matter of historical record. But as a matter of legal reality, so various editors have told me over the years, my forensic memoir could never be published while my fellow criminals were alive. You may only libel yourself and the dead. The Marshalls have been active about the courts since the late forties, defending their good names with a most expensive ferocity. They could ruin a publishing house with ease from their current accounts. One might almost think they had something to hide. Think, yes, but not write. The obvious suggestions have been made – displace, transmute, dissemble. Bring down the fogs of the imagination! What are novelists for? Go just so far as is necessary, set up camp inches beyond the reach, the fingertips of the law. But no one knows these precise distances until a judgment is handed down. To be safe, one would have to be bland and obscure. I know I cannot publish until they are dead. And as of this morning, I accept that will not be until I am. No good, just one of them going. Even with Lord Marshall's bone-shrunk mug on the obituary pages at last, my cousin from the north would not tolerate an accusation of criminal conspiracy.

There was a crime. But there were also the lovers. Lovers and their happy ends have been on my mind all night long. As into the sunset we sail. An unhappy inversion. It occurs to me that I have not travelled so very far after all, since I wrote my little play. Or rather, I've made a huge digression and doubled back to my starting place. It is only in this last version that my lovers end well, standing side by side on a South London pavement as I walk away. All the preceding drafts were pitiless. But now I can no longer think what purpose would be served if, say, I tried to persuade my reader, by direct or indirect means, that Robbie Turner died of septicaemia at Bray Dunes on 1 June 1940, or that Cecilia was killed in September of the same year by the bomb that destroyed Balham Underground station.

**(Total: 30 marks)**