

ZIMBABWE SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

O' LEVEL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PAPER 2

OCTOBER 2010



Section A – 40 marks

Read the following passage very carefully before you attempt any questions.

In this passage, an old man James, is on his death bed and is trying to give Mary, a care giver, some gold from his tin box. He has also requested that she burns one of his wills. (A will in this passage refers to a personal document where one gives details of how one's wealth should be distributed upon one's death.)

1. That night Mary relieved the nurse in James's room. Mary sat there alone through the early hours. She often chose this task, in which she found some pleasure, notwithstanding the old man's demands for her attention. There were intervals in which she could sit perfectly still, enjoying the outer stillness and the subdued light.
2. Mary was fond of her own thoughts. She could amuse herself well, sitting in the twilight with her hands in her lap. She believed that things were not likely to be arranged for her special benefit and was neither astonished nor annoyed by that fact. She had already come to take life very much as a comedy and she had resolved not to be mean or cruel. She might have become cynical if she had not had parents whom she loved and respected and had learnt to make no unreasonable claims.
3. Mary was secretly convinced that in spite of James's fondness for having his in-laws about him, they would be disappointed as any of the relatives whom he kept at a distance. She thought anxiously of the way in which Fred would be affected if it should turn out that his uncle James had left him as poor as ever.
4. For the first hour or two James lay remarkably still, until at last Mary heard him rattling his bunch of keys against the tin box which he always kept under the bed. He said with remarkable distinctiveness, "Mary, come here!"
5. Mary obeyed and found that James had already drawn the box from under the bed. He had selected the key and now unlocked the box. He lowered his tone with an air of deep cunning and asked Mary to take the gold in the box and to burn one or two of his wills.
6. "No I cannot do that. I must refuse to do anything that might lay me open to suspicion. I will not let the close of your life soil the beginning of mine.



I will not touch your gold or your will." Mary said in a firm voice and moved to a little distance from the bedside.

7. The old man paused with a blank stare for a little while, holding the key. Then with an agitated jerk, he began to work, with his bony left hand, at opening the box before him. He made an effort to stretch out the key towards her as far as possible and Mary again retreated. He murmured something but it was inaudible.
8. He let his hand fall and for the first time in her life Mary saw old James begin to cry childishly. Mary, in as gentle a tone as she could command, told James to put the key away. She then went away to her seat by the fire, hoping this would help to convince him that it was useless to say more. He beckoned to her, but Mary ignored that gesture.
9. Mary's heart began to beat more quickly. Various ideas rushed through her mind as to what the taking of the gold might imply. She had to make a difficult decision in a hurry. She did not like her position – alone with the old man who showed a strange burst of nervous energy – which enabled him to speak again and again without falling into his casual cough. At that point, Mary heard him whisper her name.
10. Mary, now standing by the fire, saw its red light falling on the frail old man, propped up on his pillows. He tried to lift his head up. His hand was still holding the key to the box in which lay the gold. Mary never forgot that vision of a man wanting to do as he liked at the last.
11. Then Mary saw him dropping his keys and trying to grasp his stick, while he stared at her like an aged hyena, the muscles of his face getting distorted with the effort of his hand. He lifted the stick and threw it a hard effort which was ineffectual. It fell, slipping over the foot of the bed. Mary let it lie, and retreated to her chair by the fire.
12. Mary thought of giving the old man some sedative to calm and perhaps help him to sleep. However, she realized that if she went near him, the irritation might start again. Mary began to walk towards him with inaudible steps. She then paused at a safe distance, where she watched the old man scratching his beard.
13. But Mary herself began to be more agitated by the memory of what she had gone through. She thought of her meager resources in life and what she could do with the instant fortune. But the manner in which he had put the offer of the gold urged her to speak with harder resolution than ever. She resolved not to touch the gold and not to burn the will.



14. Presently, the dry wood sent out a flame which illuminated every crevice and Mary saw that the old man was lying quietly with his head turned a little on one side. When she touched him and listened for his breathing, she could not trust her conclusions. She went to the window and gently propped aside the curtain and blind so that the still light of the moon fell on the bed.

*Adapted from Middlemarch by George Eliot Published by Penguin books Ltd
Middlesex 1965*

Answer all questions.

From paragraph 1

- 1a)i. Give one word from this paragraph which means the same as in spite of.
ii). What two aspects of the night did Mary appreciate? Number your answers
1 and 2. (2)

From Paragraph 2

- b). Mary was 'fond of her own thoughts' Explain in your own words what the underlined words mean. (2)

From Paragraph 3 and 4

- c). Suggest a possible reason why Mary was anxious about Fred. (1)
d). From the information in paragraph 4, give two possible reasons why James was "...rattling his bunch of keys against the tin box...." (2)

From Paragraph 5

- e). "Mary obeyed..." What did she do?" (1)

From Paragraph 7

- f). Give two phrases which show that James was:
i). emotionally disturbed



- ii). Physically affected (2)

From Paragraph 8

- a). In what way did Mary try to calm James? (1)

From Paragraph 9

- b). Quote a phrase of five consecutive words, from this paragraph, that shows that James had been ill for a long time. (1)

From Paragraph 12

- c). What does the expression 'with inaudible steps' tell you about how Mary walked towards James. (1)

From Paragraph 13

- d). "She resolved not to touch the gold..." What information are we given about Mary's life that might have tempted her to take the gold?

From the whole passage

- e). Choose five of the following words or phrases. For each of them, give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning that the word or phrase has in the passage.

1. intervals (paragraph 1)
2. comedy (paragraph 2)
3. remarkable (paragraph 4)
4. strange (paragraph 9)
5. distorted (paragraph 11)
6. gone through (paragraph 13)
7. resolved (paragraph 13)
8. illuminated (paragraph 14) (5)

3. Part of the passage describes what the old man did as lay on his death bed.



Write a summary of James' actions from the time Mary decided to move a distance from the sick man's bedside up to the time she drew open the curtains to let in more light.

Use only material from Paragraph 7 to the end of the passage.

Your summary, which should be in continuous writing, must not be more than 160 words, including the 10 words given below. Begin your summary as follows:

Mary watched the old man from a distance and James.... (20)

Section B – 10 marks

4a). Your mother has recently bought a new cell phone and she comes home one day to find you playing with it. She says:

i). "What is this? Oh, I see you bought yourself a new cell phone."

ii). "You are playing with my new cell phone? I will skin you alive!"

In each of the statements, what strategy is your mother using to show her disapproval? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). (2)

b). When your brother gets back home after a long hard day, he says;

i). to your sister, 'Jane, give me food now!'

ii). to your mother, 'Mum, may I please have my food, I am starving.'

How would i). the sister
ii). the mother

react to the manner he asked for food? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). (2).

c). Your friend is excluded from the school choir which is going for a regional competition. In response he says the following to the choir master;



- i). "I know that I have not been attending practice sessions, but I still think I should be given a chance."
- ii). " I wonder how the frogs that makes up your choir are expected to win at the regional competition."

In each case, how does your friend take the choir master's decision to exclude him? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). (2)

- d). Your classmate skids down a freshly polished floor and falls down heavily.

You react by closing your mouth tightly with both hands.

What two different meanings could your reaction have? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). (2)

- e). From a school report, the teacher's comments given in A are meant to achieve certain purposes stated in B. Write down the number only of each of the comments and against that number, write out the appropriate purpose.

A. Comments

- i). A good mark but pay attention to Maths.
- ii). If she doesn't pull up her stocks she will be demoted.
- iii). Out of 7 subjects, she has passed 4 with average marks.
- iv). Well done. Keep it up.

b. Purposes

to praise
to inform
to advise
to flatter
to caution
to shame

(2)



