



The 2024 English Olympiad

Theme: 'Resilience'

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE (HL) EXAMINATION

DATE: Tuesday, 5 March 2024
STARTING TIME: Between 11:00 and 14:00, at the discretion of your school
TIME ALLOCATION: 3 hours (plus 15 minutes reading time before candidates start writing)
TEXT/ANTHOLOGY: *Now & Then*
TOTAL MARKS: 100

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS:

This examination is to be written under normal examination conditions, with full invigilation.

Candidates may have the following with them in the examination venue:

- pens, pencils, rulers and erasers
- the anthology (*Now & Then*) which may contain underlining or highlighting, but **no notes**
- a dictionary.

During the examination, candidates may **not** have access to an Olympiad Study Guide or to any other notes or documents, or to cell phones or other information systems of any kind.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES:

1. **Please write clearly and legibly.**
 2. Write all your answers in your Examination Answer Booklet.
 3. Start each section at the top of a new page, and **write the number of the question** above each of your answers – e.g. A3, B5, etc.
 4. On the cover of your Examination Answer Booklet, please clearly indicate:
 - your school's Olympiad Examination Centre Number;
 - your personal Examination Number; and
 - the number of each of the questions that you have answered.
- Do NOT write your name, your address or the name of your school on the cover, or anywhere else in your Examination Answer Booklet.**
5. You are required to answer:
 - a) one question from **SECTION A** (60 marks)
 - b) one question from **SECTION B** (40 marks)

You are invited to draw from and to refer to your extended reading, but **the main focus of your essay should be upon the texts contained in the anthology.**

We value your responses. Enjoy the experience.

DO NOT TURN OVER THIS PAGE WITHOUT PERMISSION

Select **ONE** of the following options and write an essay of 450 to 550 words in response to your chosen topic. Penalties may be applied if your essay exceeds the prescribed length.

Notes: You should **express your own ideas** in response to the questions.

There are no model answers.

You should **quote from the texts** in your anthology to substantiate your ideas.

Question A1

"It's a very well written book. The way memoir should be done, in my opinion. It's filled with vivid, amusing anecdotes and interesting characters, sympathetically drawn."

—Alexander Fuller's mother, commenting on one of her daughter's memoirs

Using the above definition of **what constitutes a good memoir**, discuss TWO or THREE of the texts from the anthology that you think meet these criteria.

Question A2

"More than any history textbook can ever convey — through his words, Chris exposed the cruel and ridiculous tenets of the system that divided ordinary children and families across the country."

—from Terry Morris's tribute to Chris van Wyk

Do you agree that it is possible for a **memoir to convey an experience** more effectively than an academic textbook could? In your essay, refer to *Shirley, Goodness & Mercy* and at least one other text from the anthology.

Question A3

*But on you will go
though the weather be foul.
On you will go
though your enemies prowl...
On and on you will hike,
And I know you'll hike far
and face up to your problems
whatever they are.*

— *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* by Dr Seuss

In the texts *Born a Crime* and *Shirley, Goodness & Mercy* the authors "face up to [their] problems" by employing humour to address issues of racism and apartheid.

Examine the important role that **humour** plays in coping with hardship, as demonstrated in the above-mentioned texts. You may refer to a third text from the anthology.

Question A4

"This book and its truths are in many ways a continuation of my own mental-health journey. It's a raw account of my life: the good, the bad, and everything in between."

—Prince Harry on his memoir *Spare*

Discuss how writing a memoir can be a **cathartic experience** for the writer in dealing with "the good, the bad, and everything in between." In your essay refer to TWO or THREE texts from your anthology.

Question A5

“We do not want to remember those times, they break our hearts.”

—Soweto Resident, Sandy ‘Tarzan’ Rapoo, quoted in *The Bang-Bang Club*
by Greg Marinovich and Joao Silva

Discuss the **value of recalling the past** through the medium of autobiography and memoir. Refer to TWO or THREE texts in the anthology to support your views.

Question A6

“Until the lioness can tell its own story, the story of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.”

— African Proverb

The theme of oral tradition and storytelling is emphasised in the autobiography, *To My Children’s Children*. Sindiwe Masona “tells [her] own story” by engaging her reader through her memories, her voice, and her sense of community.

Using the extract from the autobiography *To My Children’s Children* as a foundation for your essay, examine **the value of storytelling**, both in the past and today, and how Masona engages her reader. You may refer to other texts in the anthology.

Question A7

Alexandra Fuller grew up in Rhodesia and had conservative parents; Bridget Hilton-Barber grew up in Johannesburg and had liberal parents.

Discuss to what extent you think that, in 21st century Africa, Fuller and Hilton-Barber have **the right to write** about their childhoods.

Question A8

“The world needs strong women. Women who will lift and build others, who will love and be loved, women who will live bravely, both tender and fierce. Women of indomitable will.”

—Amy Tenney

Mothers are central to several of the texts in the anthology. Explore the theme of resilience evident in **the portrayal of the mothers** in at least THREE of the texts.

Select **ONE** of the following options and write a creative piece, keeping your answer within 250 to 300 words.

Your answer will be assessed based on **your creativity and style** and the appropriateness of your **register and diction**. Better writing will make **creative use of the texts** in the anthology.

NB - You should avoid answering a question based **solely** upon a text that you have already discussed extensively in Section A.

Question B1

Write the **newspaper editorial** that Es'kia Mphahlele would write about South Africa if he were alive today.

Question B2

Imagine you are Sindiwe Magona, author of *To My Children's Children*.

Write a **speech** dedicated to girls on their path to womanhood.

Question B3

Write a **preface** (introduction) to one of the following memoirs: *Shirley, Goodness & Mercy*; *Born a Crime*; or *The Educated Waiter*.

Question B4

In *Shirley, Goodness & Mercy* Chris van Wyk captures many of his memories in poetry.

Write a **narrative poem** that you can imagine Sindiwe Magona, author of *To My Children's Children*, writing about her childhood. (You may use fewer than 250 words.)

Question B5

Write the **dialogue** that Professor Jonathan Janssen, Trevor Noah and Tafadzwa Z. Taruvinga might have if they got to chatting about South Africa in 2024.

Question B6

Fuller and Janssen write extensively about their mothers, while Hilton-Barber and Van Wyk describe their mothers – and then there's the voice of the grandmother in *To My Children's Children*.

Imagine a scenario in which these women feature together. Write this creative piece **in a format of your choice**.

Question B7

Rewrite Zakes Mda's traffic cop bribery experience **in the voice of Trevor Noah**.

Question B8

Write a **journal entry** in the style of the writer of one of the following texts: Es'kia Mphahlele's *Down Second Avenue*, Alexandra Fuller's *Move Fast Travel Light* or Chris van Wyk's *Shirley, Goodness & Mercy*.

You may set it in their context or in a 2024 context.