



The 2025 English Olympiad

Theme: "Celebration"

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE (HL) EXAMINATION

DATE: Tuesday, 4 March 2025

STARTING TIME: Between 11:00 and 14:00, at the discretion of your school

TIME PERMITTED: 3 hours (plus 15 minutes reading time before candidates start writing)

TEXT/ANTHOLOGY: *Let Us Celebrate: Love, Life and Land*

TOTAL MARKS: 100

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS:

This examination must 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 *Let Us Celebrate: Love, Life and Land*, which may contain underlining or highlighting, but no notes
- a dictionary

During the examination, candidates may not have access to an English 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.** Marks cannot be awarded for illegible answers.
2. Write all your answers in your examination answer book.
3. Start each section at the top of a new page, and **write the number of the question** above your answers – eg A3, B5, etc.
4. On the cover of your examination answer book, please clearly indicate:
 - your school's Olympiad 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 book.
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. ESSAYS IN EXCESS OF THE PRESCRIBED LENGTH MAY INCUR PENALTIES.

NB: 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.

Section A

A.1 *How can we grow strong*

When the situation is like this

How will we grow and prosper? – ‘Strengthen Love’, Gcina Mhlope

With reference to this poem and at least two other texts in the anthology, write an essay in which you answer Mhlope’s question.

A.2 *The family is one of nature’s masterpieces.* – George Santayana

With reference to ‘Farewell in Advance of Death’, ‘Love’, ‘You cannot know the fears I have’ and one other text from the anthology, critically evaluate to what extent you agree with this statement.

A.3 Consider the title of this year’s Olympiad anthology.

With close reference to at least three texts in the anthology, discuss how the three elements, ‘Love – Life – Land’, sustain each other.

A.4 The Freedom Charter, signed at Kliptown on 26 June 1955, was drawn up by a coalition of political groupings which opposed the apartheid regime. It outlined basic human rights, and called for equality and democracy for all South Africans. The Charter begins as follows:

*‘We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:
that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white ...’*

Discuss the extent to which the pieces on ‘land’ in the anthology reflect this sentiment.

A.5 Archbishop Desmond Tutu once wrote: ‘Ubuntu is the essence of being human. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you cannot exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about your interconnections.’ This term is usually used in political contexts, but it also applies to human relations in general.

Keeping the texts in this year’s Olympiad anthology in mind, to what extent do you agree with this statement?

A.6 On receiving a copy of the 2025 English Olympiad anthology, a teacher wrote to the organisers to say the following: ‘It’s all very well for the author of “Still not dead” to enthuse about having an anthology which is positive. But I’m afraid my learners will find it not very challenging.’

By referring to the anthology, argue whether you agree with this teacher’s viewpoint.

A.7 In your opinion, how would Thabo Mbeki and Nelson Mandela respond to Ashleigh Eichstädt’s poem ‘If I am not a child of Africa’? How do you react to the poem?

A.8 Nelson Mandela once wrote that ‘the greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall’.

Referring to at least two of the texts in the anthology, discuss what you consider to be ‘the greatest glory in living’.

Select **ONE** of the following options and write a creative piece, keeping your answer within the number of words indicated. Your answer will be assessed based on the appropriateness of your register and diction.

NB: In this section you may **not** answer a question based solely upon a text that you have discussed extensively in Section A. If you do, your answer will not be considered.

You **may**, however, answer a question that includes **a group of authors, one of whom** you have discussed in Section A.

B.1 Dialogue (250 to 300 words)

You are a therapist. Because you have so many patients who are riddled with anxiety and fear over various issues, you have decided to start a support group called 'Face your Fears' in which your patients can share their fears and support for one another.

Write a dialogue capturing the opening meeting of the support group. Choose at least three of the following writers to feature in the dialogue: Michelle Friend, Shabbir Banhoobhai, Dylan Thomas and Alan Lazar.

B.2 Song Lyrics (poem) (150 to 200 words)

Imagine that Johnny Clegg and Alan Lazar have decided to collaborate in the writing of a song to be entitled 'Celebration!'

Write the lyrics of this song which include aspects of the themes of love, life and land.

B.3 Report (250 to 300 words)

You are a court spy for Antony in Cleopatra's court.

Write a report for Antony about what you have observed in her court.

B.4 Speech (250 to 300 words)

You have been asked to give a talk to your school for Freedom Day on being positive about your country. You decide to do so by speaking as if you are one of the authors in the anthology.

Write your speech, clearly indicating which author you have chosen.

B.5 Email/formal letter (250 to 300 words)

Imagine that you have compiled a collection of literary works along the lines of the 2025 English Olympiad anthology.

Write to a prospective publisher motivating why you think the anthology is worth publishing for commercial distribution.

B.6 Interview (250 to 300 words)

Imagine that you are a character or writer of one of the texts in this year's anthology.

As such, write an interview with Magee on his experience as a war pilot.

B.7 Blog

You are a blogger who focuses on news or points of interest for South African expatriates. You have recently attended a panel discussion in which learners who entered the 2025 English Olympiad argued the topic: 'South Africa – land of hope or despair?'

Write a blog entry in which you convey the mood and outcomes of this discussion.