



# **Study Guide**

for the

## **2025 National English Olympiad**

**COMPILED BY**

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**FOR THE**

**SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR ENGLISH EDUCATION  
EASTERN CAPE BRANCH**

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## THE AIMS AND APPROACH OF THE OLYMPIAD

The English Olympiad aims to enrich young people through the study of English, while at the same time encouraging learners to explore the English language and its literature beyond the scope of the school curriculum.

In providing learners with an opportunity to prepare for the Olympiad through a process of self-study and self-motivation, the English Olympiad encourages learners:

- ✓ to take responsibility for their own learning;
- ✓ to think critically and creatively;
- ✓ to be empowered through the rigours of academic writing;
- ✓ to see the relevance of what they study – both to themselves and to the world around them;
- ✓ to question their assumptions and to explore alternative ways of thinking and of experiencing the world in which they live;
- ✓ to express those experiences in critically and creatively written responses to the English Olympiad examination questions; and
- ✓ to substantiate their opinions with close reference to the texts prescribed for the Olympiad.

## THE SYLLABUS FOR 2025

The theme for the 2025 Olympiad is 'Celebration'. It is based on the Anthology *Let us Celebrate – Love, Life, Land*. The texts celebrate love, life and land (which here refers to our land, South Africa). FAL candidates will, however, not be required to study the following two items: Extracts from *Antony and Cleopatra* and 'Do not go gentle into that good night'.

## DATE OF THE EXAMINATION

As usual, there will be two Olympiad examinations in 2025 – one for candidates who have entered the English Home Language (HL) competition and one for English First Additional Language (FAL) candidates.

Both examinations will be written on **Tuesday, 4 March 2025**.

We realise that this date may not suit all schools, but the date of the examination is determined by the time needed to assess scripts, moderate the assessments and process the results before the end of April, so that the Top 12 HL and the Top 3 FAL achievers may be invited to attend the Olympiad Prize Giving ceremony that is to take place during the midyear National Schools' Festival in Grahamstown/Makhanda.

Schools may start the examination/s at any time between 11:00 and 14:00, provided candidates have three hours to write. In addition, invigilators should allow sufficient time for administration at the beginning of the session, as well as 15 minutes for candidates to read the examination instructions and the questions thoroughly before they start writing.

## THE RULES OF THE EXAMINATION

On the day of the examination, candidates must obey the following examination rules that the invigilators will be required to enforce –

- Candidates may take the following into the examination venue:
  - pens, pencils, rulers, erasers
  - a **clean copy** (i.e. not annotated) of the anthology, *Let us Celebrate*
  - a dictionary. (Note: If the school cannot supply every candidate with a dictionary, candidates may bring their own.)
- Because this is an open-book examination, candidates may only underline and/or highlight or place labels or Post It markers on the text already printed in the anthology. They may not make any other notes or annotations of any kind in the anthology, or in the dictionary that they may take into the exam venue.
- Candidates may not take any other papers, documents, cell phones or digital retrieval devices into the examination venue.
- **The Study Guide may NOT be taken into the examination venue.**

## THE EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER

The examination will require you to answer:

- one question from **Section A**
- one question from **Section B**

### **Section A: Discursive Essay (60 marks)**

This section will require a thorough understanding of the texts in the anthology.

The recommended length of your essay will be between 450 and 550 words.

Each of the questions will require an answer in the form of a formal essay with an introduction, logical argument/reasoning in the body of the essay and a conclusion. Logical/sensible paragraphing and substantiation (accurate quoting and clear referencing) to support the ideas presented will be essential.

## Section B: Creative Response (40 marks)

This section will require you to compose a creative or transactional piece of writing related to, or inspired by, one or more texts in the anthology.

You will have a choice of genres which may include poems, speeches, letters, dialogues, interviews, diary entries, newspaper reports and reviews.

The recommended length of poems is between 150 and 250 words. For all other genres the length should be between 250 and 300 words.

You will find question papers from previous English Olympiads at  
<https://sacee.org.za/projects/english-olympiad/>

These will give you an idea of the types of questions that you may encounter in the 2025 examination.

*We strongly recommend that you have a look at these papers and suggest that you draw up some questions of a similar kind based on the 2025 anthology, prepare answers to those questions and then assess your questions – or get a fellow student to do so – in terms of the assessment criteria below.*

## ASSESSMENT

### SECTION A

Answers are assessed in accordance with the following criteria.

#### Content:

<b>Understanding</b>	Does the candidate clearly understand the question?	<b>These are fundamental criteria – not adhering to these means that your answer cannot be highly-rated.</b>
<b>Relevance</b>	How well does the answer relate to the question?	
<b>Insight</b>	Does the answer show an engagement with and understanding of the text/s?	

<b>Substantiation</b>	Are statements and arguments appropriately supported by textual reference?	<b>These are the <i>distinguishing</i> criteria for ranking answers that fulfil the fundamental criteria above.</b>
<b>Coherence</b>	Is the answer logically structured?	
<b>Creativity</b>	Does the answer show originality and freshness of thought ('spark')?	
<b>Critical thinking</b>	Do the responses reflect the critical awareness normally associated with academic writing?	

### Language and Style:

<b>Language</b>	How accurate is the language in terms of grammar, punctuation, spelling and paragraphing? (Importantly, whether or not these detract from the answer.)
<b>Style</b>	How concise is the style? Is the register appropriately formal but nevertheless conveys a distinctive own voice?

## SECTION B

Answers are assessed in terms of the following criteria -

### Content:

<b>Relevance</b>	Does the answer show understanding of the question and does it clearly relate to the question?
<b>Appropriateness</b>	Are the content, tone and structure appropriate to the genre and suitable for the intended audience?
<b>Creativity</b>	Does the answer show originality and freshness of thought ('spark')?

### Language:

<b>Accuracy</b>	How accurate is the language in terms of grammar, punctuation, spelling and paragraphing? (Importantly whether or not these detract from the answer.)
<b>Style</b>	Is the style and register appropriate to the genre?

On the basis of the above criteria, the assessment of each script is assigned to one of the following classes of achievement:

Diamond	90 – 100%
Gold	80 – 89%
Silver	70 – 79%
Bronze	60 – 69%
Merit	50 – 59%
Participation	Under 50%
Unclassified	Examination incomplete

### **Detailed Assessments**

The Call for Entries made provision for a maximum of two candidates per school to apply for detailed written comment on their scripts, subject to the payment of an additional fee that was payable before the closing date for entries. The requested detailed assessments will be sent to the candidates via their schools after the Olympiad results have been released in July 2025.

### **Examination Answer Scripts**

Please note that answer scripts are not returned to candidates or to schools.

## **PRIZES AND AWARDS**

Each candidate (other than one whose work is ‘Unclassified’) will receive an English Olympiad certificate via his/her school.

In 2025 the top three Home Language candidates will receive the following cash prizes:

- 1st Prize R30 000
- 2nd Prize R25 000
- 3rd Prize R20 000

Candidates placed 4th to 20th in the Home Language examination and in the Top 10 in the First Additional Language examination will receive cash prizes of lesser value.

The Top 12 HL candidates and the Top 3 FAL candidates will be invited to attend the National Schools’ Festival in Makhanda/Grahamstown in July 2025, free of charge.

The Top Home Language Gr 9 pupil will be awarded a minimum prize of R1000, provided he/she has achieved a Gold Certificate or higher.

## **Rhodes University Scholarships**

The Top 42 Home Language and the Top 8 First Additional Language achievers in the 2025 Olympiad will be offered free tuition scholarships for their first year of any programme of study at Rhodes University after successful completion of their matriculation examinations, subject to their meeting the University's normal entry requirements.

## **Trophies**

At the prize-giving ceremony that takes place during the National Schools' Festival, FLOATING TROPHIES will be presented to the top candidate in each of the HL and FAL competitions. The trophies may not be removed from the prize-giving venue, but the winners will receive miniature trophies that they may keep as mementos of their achievements.

## **WRITING A DISCURSIVE ESSAY FOR SECTION A**

A discursive essay is a formal piece of academic writing.

### **Language Conventions**

- Write in a formal style, but the essay should not read like a textbook. You should rather allow your own voice to be heard in your writing.
- Do not use contractions (e.g. *can't*) as they are too informal for this kind of writing – and do not use clichés, slang or colloquialisms.
- Avoid second person pronouns (you and your), as this may create the impression that you are preaching to your reader.
- Always refer to the contents of a text in the present tense.
- Underline titles of longer works (plays, novels and memoirs), and use inverted commas for titles of shorter works (poems, short stories.)
- Refer to authors by their last name, e.g. Shakespeare, not William.
- Make use of connectors (eg: 'first', 'furthermore', 'in addition', 'nevertheless', etc) to add structure and flow to your essay.
- Quoted words and phrases must be part of your sentence. Do not insert them randomly – even if they are relevant.

### **Structure of a Discursive Essay**

#### *Introduction:*

The introduction is a general statement of the topic. Try to restructure the essay question so that it reads like a statement. A good introduction also elaborates on the theme of the essay by outlining the argument to follow.

### *Body:*

- This should consist of three or four paragraphs, or possibly more.
- Each paragraph should contain only one main idea.
- It is usual to state a paragraph's main idea in its first sentence: this is your topic sentence. The sentences that follow should expand, illustrate or support the main idea, analysing the text and using suitable quotes.
- Use connectors (as previously mentioned) to help your essay to flow from one paragraph to the next.
- Remember to "signpost" by linking each major point to the topic.

### *Conclusion:*

- The conclusion is a brief summary of the main points of your essay.
- No new information should be presented in the conclusion.

## **ADVICE REGARDING SECTION B**

Section B will call for creativity. The format of the answers will vary. For example, the questions may ask students to write a letter, a dialogue, a poem or an alternative ending to a story. Candidates are expected to follow the formats that they have been taught at school. Where students have not yet been taught, or are not familiar with, certain formats, it is advisable not to attempt those questions. In terms of register and style, it is important that students understand what the question is asking for.

Questions often require candidates to write from the perspective of a character from the anthology. It is important then to 'get inside a character's mind' by paying attention to how he/she speaks, how the character interacts with others and what their actions are.

Some questions ask candidates to write a piece in the style of a writer featured in the anthology. Here it is important to look at the writer's piece to understand his/her register, diction and sentence construction.

Other questions will ask candidates to write from the perspective of an outsider (for example, a journalist) and to report on an incident or story contained in the anthology.

For any of the Section B questions, subtle referencing, by incorporating certain elements or themes from the anthology and the overall theme, elevates the quality of the work. This means there should be subtle referencing to themes, elements and characters found in the anthology.



## PREPARATION FOR THE EXAMINATION

The Olympiad is not only about preparation for an examination. Participation in the project should allow you to experience learning in a different way from most of the formal learning that you encounter at school. It is hoped that the experience will encourage you to continue to read and appreciate a wide range of literature as you approach adulthood.

The Olympiad is based upon a process of self-preparation. Your teachers are therefore not expected to play an active role in your preparation for the examination, although they may guide you through the preparation process. In the past many of the more successful candidates have formed study groups in which they themselves have shared ideas about the prescribed texts and their answers to the questions in the study guide. You may ask your English teacher for advice on how to establish a study group, but your teacher should not participate actively in such sessions.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Although the Olympiad assessment takes the form of an 'open book' examination, you need to ensure that you engage thoroughly with all the texts in the anthology before the examination. You may have your anthology with you in the examination (PROVIDED it does not contain any handwritten notes, underlining or highlighting), so you need not memorise any passages or key quotes that you may wish to use in your answers, but unless you have familiarised yourself thoroughly with each of the works in the anthology, you may have difficulty in finding the appropriate passage when you are under pressure during the examination.

We suggest that you study each of the texts in the anthology using the notes and questions in this study guide. Remember that the examination will not contain any short questions. They are included here simply to guide you as you read and study each text carefully. This will help you as you refer to the texts when you substantiate your statements and arguments in Section A of the examination.

**NB - You need to go beyond merely understanding the individual texts in isolation. You need to see how they relate to the theme of the 2025 Olympiad, namely 'Celebration', and how they relate to each other. The questions in Section A will require you to have seen 'the bigger picture'.** Possible responses to the questions can be found on the SACEE website, but you should try to answer the questions yourself before you look at the answers on the website.

## NOTES, QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES ON THE TEXTS

### LOVE

#### LOVE

##### Julia Read

**The Writer:** Julia Read attended St Mary's Diocesan School for Girls. 'Love' was published in *English Alive* in 1995 while Julia was still at school.

**Vocabulary:** *plethora* = a large or excessive amount of something; *malleability* = the quality of something that can be shaped into something else without being broken; *obscure* = unclear, uncertain; *wispy* = flimsy or weak; *amoeboid* = an amoeba, often called an amoeboid, is a type of cell or unicellular organism with the ability to alter its shape, primarily by extending and retracting; *engulf* = envelop or cover completely; *menagerie* = diverse collection of people or things; *enchanted* = filled with delight, charmed; *adamantly* = in a way that suggests one will not be persuaded to change one's mind; *uncontrived* = not showing the effects of planning, not artificial.

**Note:** Consider the style of writing that Julia Read employs to describe her family, home and her ideas on love. Often sentimental, sometimes funny, Read has created a rich, honest and fresh essay, which exhibits her world.

##### Questions/Exercises:

1. In which way does Read suggest that love and home are similar?
2. How does the opening paragraph relate to the rest of the essay?
3. How does the last paragraph sum up the essay?
4. Write a paragraph in a similar style to Read, explaining what love means to you.

#### THAT ... LOVE ISSUE

##### Margot Pienaar

**The Writer:** This poem was published in *English Alive* in 1983 while Margot Pienaar was a pupil at Pretoria High School for Girls.

**Notes:** The use of 'you know' in conversational language will often create a small break in the 'flow' of the speech. It allows time for a deep breath, while the speaker subconsciously gathers her thoughts. It could also indicate a reluctance to say something, or a verbal 'tic'. In this poem, it indicates the speaker's state of mind. How is she feeling?

### Questions/Exercises:

1. Why is the speaker reluctant to tell her love-interest that she loves him?
2. Show how she nevertheless admits her feelings to her love-interest. Quote phrases or sentences to answer this question.
3. Compose a poem in a style similar to Pienaar's in which you ask someone to show interest in you.

## MEETING POINT

### Louis MacNeice (1907 – 1963)

**The Writer:** MacNeice was born in Belfast, Ireland. His first collection of poetry, *Blind Fireworks*, appeared in 1929 and was followed by more than a dozen other anthologies. MacNeice wrote and produced radio plays for the BBC and later went on to write fiction and nonfiction prose. He was part of a group of poets in the 1930s who were committed to an 'unpoetic' approach to poetry, including the use of colloquial language rather than flowery expressions and free verse.

**Vocabulary:** *limpid* = glass-like, transparent; *brazen* = bold, shameless; *calyx* = the outer part of a flower formed by the sepals ( the outer parts) which covers and protects the petals as they develop; *verify* = check or make sure

**Note:** The description of the camels crossing miles of sand 'that stretched across cups' and 'ash that bloomed again in tropic trees' makes it seem that the couple is transported through time into some mystical world that exists just for them.

### Questions:

1. The title of the poem can be interpreted in two ways. Suggest two interpretations.
2. 'Time was away and somewhere else.' What does this suggest?
3. Do you think the escalator had really stopped (in stanza 1), or that the waiter really did not come (in stanza 5)? What evidence is there in the poem that supports your answer?
4. Make a list of the images which indicate (a) that the two are totally absorbed in each other, and (b) a sense of time coming to a stop.
5. Why do you think MacNeice chose to start and end every stanza with the same line? Is this effective?

6. MacNeice made a revision when re-printing the poem in a later anthology: he changed the line 'And all the room a glow' to 'And all the room one glow'. Why do you think he did that?
7. What similarities are there between this poem and Dowling's 'What I want to say'?

**EXTRACTS FROM *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA* [Home Language only]**  
**William Shakespeare (1564 – 1614)**

**The Writer:** Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, and later moved to London. No one would disagree that he is the most famous dramatist of all time, but he also produced no fewer than 154 sonnets.

**Notes:** *Antony and Cleopatra*, as the name suggests, features the relationship between Mark Antony, a Roman general at the time of Julius Caesar, and Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt. At the height of his power, Mark Antony neglects his duty because of his commitment to his mistress, Cleopatra. Torn between love and duty, his passion leads them to tragedy as both commit suicide.

In the first extract, Cleopatra sings the praises of Antony to Charmian, a trusted servant and advisor. In the second, Enobarbus, a devoted follower of Antony's, describes the appearance of Cleopatra when Mark Antony first clapped eyes on her and fell head-over-heels in love with her as she sailed on her barge down the river Cydnus. Enobarbus tells them that any attempt to describe Cleopatra's appearance would be poor in comparison with the real thing. (This appears to be the origin of the phrase 'beggars all description'). Nevertheless, he has a go. He describes her as she lay in a pavilion made of fine material interwoven with gold (a sort of gossamer tent on the barge), looking like an artist's depiction of the Roman goddess of love, Venus, where the 'fancy' or imaginative work of the artist outdoes the reality (or 'nature'). In other words, she looked like a work of art, not a mortal woman or even a goddess.

In one of the most famous lines from the whole play, Enobarbus says that age cannot wither her, and her charms are so varied that she will never grow boring to Antony. Mark Antony is so love-struck that she will always appear to him as she did on that barge.

**Vocabulary:** *wot'st thou* = you know; *demi-Atlas* = one who bears half the world on his shoulders (referring to Anthony and his share of the Roman Empire); *serpent of old Nile* = Cleopatra (Serpents were believed to be bred from fertile mud, and were venomous, as Cleopatra's death will later confirm. The image also suggests the sinuous sensuality and devilish temptation presented by Cleopatra.); *riggish* = lustful or sexually unrestrained (typically used in reference to a woman)

**Questions:**

1. Show how Cleopatra uses exaggeration to describe Antony.
2. Show how the description of Cleopatra conveys the idea that she is beyond natural beauty.
3. Show how, in both cases, love can take the form of 'idealisation' (the action of regarding or representing someone as perfect or better than she is in reality).
4. In what way could this have contributed to the tragedy of the play?

## **busstop**

### **Michele Friend**

**The Writer:** Michele Friend attended Cape Town High School and her poem, 'busstop', was published in *English Alive* on 1970 while she was attending high school.

**Notes:** This cringe-worthy poem celebrates incidents with which we can all identify. After all, life is not just 'a haze of rosy dreams'.

**Vocabulary:** Sideburns = facial hair grown down the sides of a man's face

**Questions/Exercises:**

The following questions would work well for group work.

1. Highlight all the positive words in the poem, using a warm-coloured highlighter, and all the negative words in a cool colour. What do you then notice about the poem?
2. Recount a similar embarrassing moment which you have experienced or witnessed.
3. Imagine that you are the speaker in the poem. Write a letter from your future self about this incident.

## YOU CANNOT KNOW THE FEARS I HAVE

SHABBIR BANOOBHAI

**The Writer:** Banoobhai was born in Durban in 1959. For financial reasons, he was initially unable to attend university and instead studied teaching at Springfield College. He became President of the Students' Representative Council, and was assistant editor of the student newspaper, *Aspect*, which was occasionally banned for its protests against the apartheid state. While later working as a teacher, Banoobhai completed a Bachelor of Commerce degree, taught for a short time, then became an accountant.

**Notes:** This poem is set in the early 1980s, when things were in turmoil in South Africa. Shabbir wrote the poem when he and his wife were contemplating having a child. The poem is about a hypothetical argument he has with himself as to whether he should have a child. Shabbir is scared that his child will be oppressed by apartheid.

**Vocabulary:** *bewildered* = perplexed or confused; *eclipse* = the partial or total blocking of light from one celestial object by another

### Questions:

1. To whom is this poem addressed?
2. Find the lines in which he says:
  - a) he wants to ensure that the child is never in need;
  - b) he realises that he will be dependent on the child too;
  - c) he longs to provide a beautiful environment, not just a mundane one;
  - d) he is afraid the child will be swamped, not enriched, by his care;
  - e) he fears that his child will be hurt.
3. Why would the baby be overwhelmed and bewildered?
4. Explain the reference to an 'eclipse' in stanza 5. What word, later in the poem, suggests a contrast?
5. What is the significance of finding a name for the child?
6. Banoobhai implies that the term 'shadows of the sun-darkened land' refers to the apartheid system. Does reading about other parental fears or societal struggles as 'shadows' instead of the apartheid system bring the poem into a more modern context, or does this mar its original significance and meaning?
7. Do you think the fears of the speaker are excessive? Why?

## WHAT I WANT TO SAY

### Finuala Dowling

**Notes:** Ms Dowling had this to say when asked about how this poem came into being: 'I wrote "What I want to say" after a visit to Goudini Spa in 2005, ten years after the birth of our new constitution. The idyllic moment in the hot water under the stars took place after a lover's quarrel. I wasn't sure how to express my feelings in the poem, but once I'd written the words "What I want to say", the rest just followed, as if I was giving myself permission to tell the truth. When I began writing, I wasn't sure how it would end, but in the course of putting the words down I was aware that what I wanted to say was something much bigger than "I love you". It was all-encompassing: a love poem to the extraordinary – beautiful, unspoilt, nurturing, ancient – landscape that had allowed us to come together just as it had allowed our whole nation to come together. Ultimately, the feeling I was trying to put my finger on transcended our individual experience. I'd like anyone reading the poem aloud to say the last line in a tone of wonder – at our good luck in living here.'

She recently added: 'I hope you have the courage to write what you really feel. It's fine to start your poem or story without knowing where it will end. Trust the writing itself, put your ear against its heart: it will tell you what you need to say.'

**Vocabulary:** The word 'enjoin' usually means to tell someone to do something or to behave in a certain way, but here the poet uses the word to mean 'join' or 'together'; *spa* = a natural hot spring which comes from underground water; *buoyancy* = the ability to float in water (or any liquid); *submerged* = to be covered by water (or any liquid); *balmy* = mild and refreshing, soft and soothing

#### Questions:

1. Refer to stanza 1. Write down a short description of the area.
2. Refer to: 'the place that could have said so much' (in stanza 2):
  - a) What could 'the place' have said?
  - b) Referring to lines 24 – 31: 'this is my name ... don't arrest them', what is the nature of what 'the place' says?
3. The speaker does not finish or express her thoughts until the last stanza. What does this suggest about her state of mind?
4. In the last stanza, the speaker finally arrives at what she wants to say. In your opinion, to what extent is this stanza a suitable ending to the poem? Justify your answer.

## **A FAREWELL IN ADVANCE OF DEATH**

**CHRIS MANN** (1949 – 2021)

**The Writer:** An eminent South African poet, Chris Mann was born in Port Elizabeth. As a Rhodes Scholar, he attended Oxford University. He lectured in the English Department at Rhodes University and worked for years for an NGO outside Durban. He founded Wordfest, a multilingual festival of South African languages, while living in Grahamstown. He later became Professor of Poetry at Rhodes University. He won numerous awards for his writings. He was married to artist Julia Skeen for 40 years.

**Notes:** This poem was read by Chris Mann's widow at his funeral service in Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown) on 19 March 2021, following his death from cancer ten days earlier.

Chris Mann often features the concept of 'shades' in his writing. He describes these as follows: 'Put simply, the shades are memories of people who influence our inner life.'

### **Questions:**

1. Does the speaker expect to die before or after his wife? Explain by reference to the first stanza.
2. Why do you think Mann decided to write this poem? Refer to stanzas 2 and 3.
3. Which stanzas convey the speaker's first love and which his desire for continued love? Explain how the poet does this in each of these two instances.
4. How is the concept of the 'shades' relevant to this poem?
5. What do you think of the last line of the poem? Was this what you were expecting?



# ***LIFE***

## **LIFE**

**Charlotte Brontë** (1816 – 1855)

**The Writer:** Born in Yorkshire, England, Charlotte Brontë was an English novelist and poet, the eldest of the three Brontë sisters whose novels became classics of English literature. She is best known for her novel *Jane Eyre*. Together with her sisters, she published a volume of poetry called *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell* (the pen names of the sisters). This was one of the poems included in the volume. Charlotte entitled it 'Life'.

**Vocabulary:** *sages* = profoundly wise people; *transient* = lasting only for a short time; *lament* = express passionate grief about; *buoyant* = able to float, figuratively cheerful and optimistic

### **Questions:**

1. Show how the first two lines sum up the poem.
2. Which word in the first two lines indicates that the poet is confident about her view of life?
3. Show how the writer conveys her view of life by balancing negatives with positives.
4. A commentator made the following comment about this poem:

*She was in her twenties when it was written, and some might think it juvenile, naive, childish or overly optimistic. But to me it is simple yet unpretentious, both hopeful and reassuring, displaying a pleasant youthful innocence that so many cynics have forgotten.*

Explain why you agree or disagree with this comment.

**Exercise:** Imagine that you are Charlotte Brontë, and you are presiding over a support group called 'Courage Can Quell'. Today two new members, Guy Butler and Don Mattera, have joined. Write a dialogue of their interactions during the course of this meeting.

## **HIGH FLIGHT**

**John Gillespie Magee Jr** (1922 – 1941)

**The Writer:** John Gillespie Magee Jr (Junior) was a World War II Royal Canadian Air Force fighter pilot and war poet.

**Notes:** 'High Flight' was sent to Gillespie's parents in September 1941, with a letter in which he wrote: 'I am enclosing a verse I wrote the other day. ... It started at 30,000 feet, and was finished soon after I landed.' The verse, or 'ditty', as Magee later referred to it, was a sonnet entitled 'High Flight', a fourteen-line paean (a song of praise) to the sublimity (gloriousness) and sheer joy of flight felt by Magee during a solo run in his Spitfire aircraft. Magee was killed in an accidental mid-air collision over England later that year.

**Questions:**

1. Show how the poet uses the following techniques to convey his sense of joy and movement: alliteration, personification, enjambment (the continuation of a sentence or phrase from one line of poetry to the next), and diction (choice of words).
2. In what way do the last three lines suggest that the poem is more than just about the joy of flying?

**Exercise:** Imagine you are John Gillespie, and you operate a flying school. Write a short speech that you have been asked to make at a career exhibition, inspiring prospective students to take up a career in flying.

## **STILL NOT DEAD**

**ANDREW RENARD**

**The Writer:** Andrew Renard is a retired English teacher who was for a number of years the Chief Examiner of the English Olympiad.

**Comments:** Andrew sent SACEE the following comment when he learnt about the theme for the 50<sup>th</sup> Olympiad:

*I am so pleased that the 50th Olympiad will have a positive theme. I have long believed that pupils are put off literature because so much of the poetry and text that is prescribed is so depressing. At one stage I think 12 of the 15 poems prescribed in matric were about death.*

*A few years back I attended the McGregor Poetry Festival, where one of the poets started off by saying, 'All good poetry deals with death.' Hardly life-affirming. I wrote the poem below when I got back to Grahamstown.*

When we asked him if we could include his poem in the anthology, he responded as follows: *You are welcome to use the poem; a nice gesture to have a contribution from a former Olympiad examiner in the 50th version.*

### Questions:

1. The poet expresses his views about the contents of much poetry. What does he say here?
2. The poem, however, goes beyond dealing with poetry. Show how he uses an extended metaphor to include life as well.
3. Show how the poet uses repetition to emphasise his point.

## STILL I RISE

### Maya Angelou (1928 – 2014)

**The Writer:** Maya Angelou had a broad career as a singer, dancer, actress, composer, and Hollywood's first female black director, but became most famous as a writer, editor, essayist, playwright, and poet. As a civil rights activist, Angelou worked for Dr Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X. In 2000, Angelou was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Bill Clinton. In 2010, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honour in the United States, by President Barack Obama. Angelou was awarded over 50 honorary degrees before her death.

**Notes:** Although this poem was written with oppressed black American women in mind, it has transcended time and has become emblematic for many women across the world. 'Still I Rise' is an unapologetic celebration of self-love and self-esteem and asserts that anything can be accomplished with these two qualities.

**Vocabulary:** *sassiness* = bold, cheeky but stylish and distinctively smart; *beset* = troubled (persistently); *haughtiness* = self-importance, superiority; *wondrously* = extremely well, marvellously

### Questions:

1. Who is the 'you' to whom this poem is directed?
2. This poem makes use of situational irony: how society expects people to behave versus how people actually behave.
  - a) Quote phrases from the poem which suggest how society expected black women to behave.
  - b) Using the poem as your reference, write down a list of the ways in which the speaker does behave.
3. What is the tone of the poem?
4. What is the main message of the poem?
5. Take a look at the rhythm and rhyme scheme of this poem. What patterns do you find?

## **DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT [Home Language only]**

**Dylan Thomas (1914 – 1953)**

**The Writer:** Thomas was born in Swansea, Wales. His father had had ambitions of becoming a poet but, failing to do so, settled for the job of teaching English. Although Dylan Thomas wrote exclusively in the English language, he has been acknowledged as one of the most important Welsh poets of the 20th century. He is noted for his original, rhythmic, and ingenious use of words and imagery.

**Notes:** It has been suggested that the poem was written for Thomas's dying father. His father had been a strong, healthy man all his life, but, when he was in his eighties, he became blind and weak. Thomas found this hard to bear and wrote this poem, urging his father to be strong. Interestingly, it seems that he never shared the poem with his father; so perhaps it was written so that he could handle the grief which he felt. The poem is written in the form of a 'villanelle', which is a very structured poetic form comprising five tercets (three-lined verses) followed by a quatrain (four-lined verse), with two repeating rhymes and two refrains. The poem has no title other than its first line, 'Do not go gentle into that good night', a line that appears as a refrain throughout the poem along with its other refrain, 'Rage, rage against the dying of the light'.

### **Questions:**

1. What two phrases are used to refer to dying in stanza 1?
2. In general terms, how do stanzas 2, 3, 4 and 5 follow from the introductory opening stanza?
3. In stanzas 2 – 5, decide what particular group does 'not go gentle into that good night'. Explain how they have lived and what they feel they have not achieved. Consider the imagery Thomas uses in each case and decide why that was appropriate for that group. What do the first two groups have in common? What do the second two groups have in common?
4. Show how the structure of the poem as a 'villanelle' conveys a sense of urging, of pleading.
5. Refer to the last stanza. Why would Thomas be glad to accept his father's cursing?
6. In what way can the poem, though referring to death, be regarded as celebrating life?

# LAND

## A PRAYER FOR ALL MY COUNTRYMEN

**Guy Butler** (1918 – 2001)

**The Writer:** Born in Cradock, Guy Butler attended Rhodes University and Oxford University. He was later appointed as Professor of English at Rhodes. Butler had an enormous influence not only on Rhodes University, but on South African English culture in general, and in particular South African writing in English. In this respect, he fought to have writings by South African authors recognised and included in school and university syllabuses. He has been described as ‘a performer of chameleon literary roles (professor, poet, playwright, autobiographer and historian), as well as cultural politician and opponent of apartheid legislation’. He was a great supporter of the English Olympiad.

**Notes:** ‘Now’ refers to the 1960s during the apartheid era, when the poem was written. ‘Ordain’ means to take action to ensure that something will happen.

### Questions:

1. On whose behalf does Butler offer this prayer?
2. What made it difficult in those times for people to retain their faith in God?
3. List some words and phrases that convey how many people felt at that time about South Africa.
4. In this prayer Butler is concerned about the future. What two scenarios does he present?
5. Would you say that Butler is hopeful or pessimistic about the future of South Africa after apartheid? Explain why.
6. What does Butler see as a prerequisite for peace?

**Exercise:** Using ‘A Prayer for my Countrymen’ and the knowledge of more than sixty years of history which has passed since he wrote this poem as a starting point, write a poem entitled ‘Answer to “Prayer for all my Countrymen”’.

## REMEMBER

### Don Mattera (1935 – 2022)

**The Writer:** Born in the Western Native Township outside Johannesburg, Mattera's grandfather, Francesco Mattera, was an Italian sailor who jumped ship while in Cape Town and married a Griqua woman. Having lived in Sophiatown, the forced removal of people from this multiracial, multicultural city turned him into an activist and he was banned for eight and a half years. His writings reflect the socio-political issues of the day. Despite his sufferings at the hands of the apartheid government, he did not learn to hate. In one of his poems he says:

*Yet amid all of the hate and hostility  
I did not hate those who hold us in servitude  
though I have tried hard to do so  
I just cannot hate.*

As a result, his poetry has been described as follows: 'Mattera ... addresses South Africa as he would address a loved one, and the several variations all demonstrate the poet's deep concern for his country and his wish to see destruction and havoc avoided.' He also wrote plays and short stories and won a number of awards for his writings.

**Notes:** This poem was written during the apartheid era. It is an example of a dramatic monologue – in which the poet addresses an unseen audience.

**Vocabulary:** *prejudice* = judgement without knowledge; *bliss* = perfect happiness, joy

#### Questions:

1. Consider lines 6-9: Which of these lines refers to the oppressor and which to the oppressed?
2. What is the poet's 'long-awaited dream'? Does he expect to see his dream come true?
3. How does the poem convey the view that a new South Africa should not harbour hatred?
4. Imagine that you are Charlotte Brontë, and you are presiding over a support group called 'Courage Can Quell'. Today two new members, Guy Butler and Don Mattera, have joined. Write a dialogue of their interactions during the course of this meeting.

## LOVE POEM FOR MY COUNTRY

**Sandile Dikeni** (1966 – 2019)

**The Writer:** Dikeni was born in Victoria West, Western Cape. His writings form part of the long and turbulent history of black political protest and resistance against apartheid. He says he was from the '85 generation really' – when ANC leaders became aware of the possibility of using culture as a 'weapon of the struggle'. Many of the poems written in this generation were read at meetings, protest rallies, demonstrations and cultural functions. One of the poets whose work was read was Dikeni, who became known as '*the people's poet of the Western Cape*'. His poetry reflects a change from the 'protest' poetry of 70s, which was characterised by bitterness, anger, and, at times, frustration and cynicism, causing critics to label these writings as merely 'reactive or whining'. His poetry, though expressing anger, also celebrates what is heroic amongst the despised and downtrodden, and encourages people to believe in and look forward to a democratic society rather than merely to harbour feelings of revenge. This was quite something coming from a person whose father had been detained when he was very young and who himself had spent time in jail for his political activism.

**Notes:** The poem is written in free verse and in a style which makes it easy to read aloud or perform for an audience.

### Questions:

1. List the physical aspects of the country in the poem which relate to the first four lines.
2. Show how the poet uses anthropomorphism (the attribution of human characteristics or behaviour to creatures) to achieve the same objective.
3. What do all the stanzas have in common?
4. In addition to the poet conveying his love for his country, what further message is contained in the poem?

## SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL ANTHEM

### Enoch Sontonga / CJ Langenhoven

**The Writers:** Enoch Sontonga (1873 – 1905) was a Methodist mission school teacher. Cornelis Jacobus Langenhoven (1873 – 1932), who published under his initials CJ Langenhoven, was a South African poet who played a major role in the development of Afrikaans literature and cultural history.

**Notes:** *Die Stem van Suid-Afrika* is a poem written by CJ Langenhoven in 1918. The music was composed by the Reverend ML de Villiers in 1921. For many years the South African Broadcasting Corporation played both *God save the King* and *Die Stem* to close their daily broadcasts, and the public became familiar with the latter. It was first sung publicly at the official hoisting of the national flag in Cape Town on 31 May 1928, but it was not until 1957 that government made the announcement that *Die Stem* had been accepted as the official national anthem of South Africa.

*Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* was composed in 1897 by Enoch Sontonga. The words of the first stanza were originally written in Xhosa as a hymn. Seven additional stanzas in Xhosa were later added by the poet, Samuel Mqhayi. A Sesotho version was published by Moses Mphahlele in 1942. It became a popular church hymn that was later adopted as an anthem at political meetings, and it was sung as an act of defiance during the Apartheid years. The first stanza is generally sung in Xhosa or Zulu, and is followed by the Sesotho version. As a hymn, there is apparently no standard version or translation of *Nkosi* and the words vary from place to place and from occasion to occasion.

A proclamation issued by the (then) State President on 20 April 1994 stated that the Republic of South Africa would have two national anthems. They were *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* and *The Call of South Africa* (*Die Stem van Suid-Afrika*). A subsequent proclamation in the *Government Gazette* dated 10 October 1997 declared that a shortened, combined, version of *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* and *The Call of South Africa* would become the new national anthem of South Africa.

#### Questions:

1. What do the first two verses have in common in terms of theme?



2. The last verse of the current National Anthem is not taken directly from either of the two songs that were combined to form the new anthem. The following are some of the words of the original version of *The Call of South Africa*, the English version of *Die Stem*:

Where the echoing crags resound;  
From our plains where creaking wagons  
Cut their trails into the earth,  
Calls the spirit of our country,  
Of the land that gave us birth.  
At thy call we shall not falter,  
Firm and steadfast we shall stand,  
At thy will to live or perish,  
O South Africa, dear land.

Why do you think that the above lines are not in the new Anthem?

## STRENGTHEN LOVE

### Gcina Mhlophe

**The Writer:** Mhlophe established herself as a multi-talented multilingual actor and activist, poet and playwright, composer and director, infusing storytelling with poetry. With her work having been widely translated into all of South Africa's official languages as well as internationally – into German, French, Italian, Swahili and Japanese – Mhlophe has received an array of prizes and awards from across the globe.

**Note:** One should read 'Africans' as people living in Africa, and in particular, South Africa.

**Vocabulary:** *dedication* = the quality of being committed to a task or purpose; *collaboration* = the action of working with someone to produce something

### Questions:

1. Mhlophe calls on Africans to 'strengthen love' as a solution to the problems we face. To what extent do you believe love can solve our problems?
2. List the other actions or qualities Mhlophe feels are lacking in Africans.
3. Make your own list of qualities or actions which people should strengthen to 'stand rock solid' as a nation.

## AFRICA RISING

### Johnny Clegg (1953 – 2019)

**Composer:** Jonathan Paul Clegg, OBE OIS, was a South African musician, singer-songwriter, dancer, anthropologist and anti-apartheid activist. He first performed as part of a duo, *Johnny & Sipho*, with Sipho Mchunu. The two then went on to form the band Juluka. Clegg later founded the band Savuka, and also recorded as a solo act, occasionally reuniting with his earlier band partners. Sometimes called *Le Zoulou Blanc* (French for 'The White Zulu'), he was an important figure in South African popular music and a prominent white figure in resistance to apartheid.

His songs mixed English with Zulu lyrics, and also combined working-class African music with various forms of Western popular music. Johnny travelled extensively with his bands, and was awarded several honorary doctorates from universities all over the world.

#### Translations:

*Isoka lapha wena ukhatizwe:* Friend here you are weary.

*Suka lapha wena weqathizwe:* Leave this place, you who incited the nations to fight.

*Baleka wena weqathizwe:* Flee, you who incited the nations to fight.

*Sesikhatele:* We are tired.

#### Questions:

1. Discuss who this song is aimed at. Quote to support your answer.
2. What could 'this' (line 1) be?
3. Consider lines 7 and 8: 'Africa rising from blood on the stones'. What is implied by these lines?
4. Write down all the phrases that you can find which suggest difficult times or hardships people have had to endure.
5. Both *African Dream* and *Africa Rising* refer to dreams and a 'new day'/'new tomorrow'. What do these symbolize within the context of these two songs?
6. Quote at least 3 lines which show Clegg's optimism about the future of (South) Africa.
7. What is the overall message of this song and how does it tie in with the theme 'celebration'?

## AFRICAN DREAM

### Alan Ari Lazar

**Composer:** Alan Lazar, born in 1967, is a South African-born composer and novelist. He has written music for numerous films and TV shows, including a string of Netflix productions. He was a member of the South African band Mango Groove and is the author of the book *ROAM*.

**Notes:** This anthemic song strikes a chord with many South Africans. It speaks of unity, hope and peace.

#### Translations:

*Mawetbu we Afrika:* This is my African dream.

*Nine kusasa Elitlbe:* You have a bright future.

*Igugu e Afrika:* Pride of Africa

*Sizoni landela ma Afrika:* We shall follow you as Africans.

*Siyayibona Intlanzi:* We can see the future.

*Ukubanya Kwentokozo:* The light of joy

*Igugulethu le Afrika:* African pride

*Ukupela Kwenkinga Zonke:* The end of all tribulation

#### Questions:

1. What could 'shadows in the dark' represent?
2. Explain the double sadness of 'weary hearts be[ing] denied'.
3. Refer to lines 7 – 8: 'my heart beating like a drum'. Explain the effectiveness of this simile within the context of this poem.
4. Refer to line 9: 'all I hear are the voices, telling me to go'. What could be the 'voices' and why would they be telling the singer 'to go'?
5. Refer to the chorus: "'Cause in my African dream, there's a new tomorrow/ My African dream, is a dream that we can follow." Explain what is implied by the singer's dream.
6. 'I always feel a little patriot when I listen to this song.' To what extent do you agree with this statement? Why?
7. What is the tone of the last stanza?
8. How are 'My African Dream' and Mhlophe's 'Strengthen Love' similar and different?
9. To what extent does this song resonate with you?
10. Many South Africans say that this song rouses a patriotic feeling within them. What element(s) of the song create(s) this effect in people?

## EXTRACT FROM *CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY*

Alan Paton (1903 – 1989)

**The Writer:** Alan Paton was born in Pietermaritzburg. A man of many talents, he made his mark on what he called this ‘strange and beautiful country’ in three areas – as an eminent educationist (he was a teacher and later a principal of a reformatory), a world-renowned author (he wrote novels, short stories, biographies and poetry) and as a committed liberal politician and balanced political commentator. Commenting on his tussle between being a political activist and an author, he commented as follows: ‘Although politics has played a major role in my eighty-four years, it has not dominated my life. Literature and the love of the word, and the love of writing the word have been equally important.’ And he adds, ‘I am grateful that life made it possible for me to pursue a writing career.’ His writings display his insight into, and his Christian compassion for, humankind in general and the peoples of South Africa in particular.

**Notes:** Paton made his name as an author with his highly acclaimed novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*. Published in 1948, it has been described as ‘arguably, the best-known and most influential novel to have emerged from the canon of South African literature’. It sold millions in his lifetime, was translated into dozens of languages, and has been filmed twice.

It tells the story of a journey by a father (the Reverend Stephen Kumalo) from rural South Africa to and through the city of Johannesburg in search of his son, who is facing trial for the murder of a white man—a man who ironically cared deeply about the plight of the native South African population and had been a voice for change until his untimely death.

The novel shows the brutality and gross inequalities of apartheid. But despite its unflinching portrayal of darkness and despair in South Africa, it still offers hope for a better future. The novel itself is a cry for South Africa, which we learn is beloved in spite of everything; a cry for its people, its land, and the tentative hope for its freedom from hatred, poverty, and fear. It envisions the possibility of a more liberal society in South Africa by suggesting that there is enough humaneness and practical goodwill in the world for the beloved country to be regenerated as a just and racially harmonious society. The most famous quote from *Cry, the Beloved Country* is probably: ‘The tragedy is not that things are broken. The tragedy is that things are not mended again. But there is only one thing that has power completely, and this is love.’

### Questions:

1. The opening passage depicts some of the inequalities of South Africa in the 1940s by describing the land. Analyse the passage to show how this contrast is conveyed.
2. This passage hardly suggests that there is hope for this divided country. However, besides the story, the closing paragraph of the novel conveys that there is – once again through Paton's description of the land. At the end, the Reverend Stephen Kumalo's son, Absalom, is executed for the murder of Arthur Jarvis. The night before the execution, Stephen climbs the mountain outside his village. He sleeps on the mountain and wakes just before the dawn. And this is how the novel ends by returning to the opening scene:

Yes. It is the dawn that has come. The titihoya wakes from sleep, and goes about its work of forlorn crying. The sun tips with light the mountains of Angeli and East Griqualand. The great valley of the Umzimkulu is still in darkness, but the light will come there. Ndotsheni [the area which Jarvis had been regenerating for the people] is still in darkness, but the light will come there also. For it is the dawn that has come, as it has come for a thousand centuries, never failing. But when that dawn will come, of our emancipation, from the fear of bondage and the bondage of fear, why, that is a secret.

How does this ending convey a sense of hope?

### ***LONG WALK TO FREEDOM: AN EXTRACT***

**Nelson Mandela** (1918 – 2013)

**The Writer:** Mandela was the South African anti-apartheid activist, politician and statesman who served as the President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999. He was the country's first black head of state and the first appointed following a fully representative democratic election. During his 27 years of imprisonment on Robben Island, he became the most well-known political prisoner in the world. As a leader he focused on dismantling the legacy of apartheid by fostering racial reconciliation.

**Notes:** Nelson Mandela's inauguration as President took place on 8 May 1994. The government's initial proposal was for an inauguration in Cape Town at the Good Hope Centre, a confined venue, but the political parties insisted that it had to be at the seat of political power, the Union Buildings in Pretoria, with invited guests in the amphitheatre and the public on the lawns, all witnesses to the swearing in of the President. It was to be not

only the induction of South Africa's first democratically elected President, but the sealing of the international community's acceptance of a democratic South Africa.

**Questions:**

1. Mandela, in a number of places, refers to *then* vs *now*. List these references.
2. What is his attitude towards these comparisons? Is he bitter, triumphant or what?
3. Having referred to the past and the present, Mandela refers to the future. Where does he do this? What does he say there?

**'I AM AN AFRICAN' (EXTRACTS)**

**Thabo Mbeki**

**The Author:** Born in 1942 in the Transkei, Mbeki left South Africa at the age of twenty to attend university in England, and spent almost three decades in exile abroad until the ANC was unbanned in 1990. After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, he was appointed national deputy president. In subsequent years, it became apparent that he was Mandela's chosen successor. He was elected unopposed as ANC president in 1997, and was President of South Africa from 1999 to 2008.

**Notes:** 'I Am an African' was a speech made by Thabo Mbeki in Cape Town on 8 May 1996, on the occasion of the adoption of the new Constitution for the Republic of South Africa. At that time, Mbeki was the Deputy President.

**Names:** *Khoi* and *San* = original peoples of South Africa, before the arrival of the Europeans or black peoples; *Hintsa* = Xhosa king; *Sekhukhune* = Paramount King of the Marota, more commonly known as the Bapedi (Pedi people); *Cetshwayo* = King of the Zulu kingdom; *Mphephu* = first president of the bantustan of Venda, which was granted nominal independence from South Africa in 1979; *Moshoeshoe* = first king of Lesotho; *Ngungunyane* = a tribal king and vassal of the Portuguese Empire, who rebelled, was defeated and lived out the rest of his life in exile; *Isandhlwana* = place of a decisive victory of the Zulus over British troops in 1879; *Khartoum* = capital of Sudan; *St Helena* and the *Bahamas* = islands where the Boer prisoners were sent to during the Second Boer War (1899 – 1902); *Nongqause* = Xhosa prophet whose prophecies led to the mass slaughter of cattle and the resultant famine of 1856/7.

### Questions/Exercises:

1. Mbeki starts by referring to the landscape of Africa. Show how he stresses the variety of its features.
2. What does he focus on in each of the subsequent paragraphs?
3. It could be said that Mbeki was foreshadowing the new motto for South Africa, that was introduced on Freedom Day, 27 April, 2000. Would you agree? Explain your answer.

(The motto is !ke e: /xarra //ke, written in the Khoisan language of the /Xam people, literally meaning 'diverse people unite'. It addresses individual efforts to harness the unity between thought and action. On a collective scale it calls for the nation to unite in a common sense of belonging and national pride – i.e. unity in diversity.)

4. Write a paragraph in the style of Mbeki's speech in which you describe what formed you.

## IF I AM NOT A CHILD OF AFRICA

### Ashley Eichstadt

**The Author:** This poem was published in *English Alive* in 2007, while Ashley was still at school.

**Note:** Let us look at this poem with personal identity and belonging in the back of our minds. Consider the following:

- Which culture(s) do you have in your family? With which do you identify most strongly?
- Does your physical appearance and/or your culture determine the identity which you have assigned yourself?
- Do you think someone has the right to tell you that your chosen identity is wrong?

**Vocabulary:** *unwavering* = continuing in a strong and steady way; *azure* = bright blue or turquoise; *alien* = belonging to a foreign country.

### Questions/Exercises:

1. Divide your page into two columns. Head the first column 'Feels out of place/unwelcomed' and the second 'Feels "at one" with Africa'. Quote phrases under each heading to show the speaker's thought process.
2. In the last stanza, the speaker arrives at a decisive declaration.
  - a) What is the declaration?
  - b) is the tone of the last stanza?
3. Having answered the questions on personal identity, describe to what extent What Eichstadt has the right to call herself an African?

## NEW COUNTRY

### Kelwyn Sole

**The Author:** Kelwyn Sole is a South African poet who was born in 1951. After studying English at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits), and obtaining an MA through the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, he later gained a PhD from Wits for a thesis on the South African Black Consciousness Movement of the 1970s. Sole is the author of six collections of poetry for which he has received several awards, including the Olive Schreiner Prize and the Thomas Pringle Award for Poetry, both awarded by the English Academy of Southern Africa. As well as a poet, he is a prolific and acclaimed critic, and is currently a Professor of English at the University of Cape Town.

**Vocabulary:** *calluses* = thickened and hardened parts of the skin, usually in areas of the body that have been subjected to repeated friction caused by, for example, farming or mining equipment.

#### Questions:

1. Consider the juxtaposing of the 'soft part of our palms' to the 'calluses and scars'. What does each of these symbolize, and why have these images been used?  
Evaluate the effectiveness of the hand as a symbol within the context of the title 'New Country'.

WE WISH YOU ALL THE BEST FOR THE 2025 OLYMPIAD.

*And remember -*

*Success isn't about winning; it's about the consistent process of learning through participation.*

*It's an ongoing journey, not a destination. Enjoy it.*

*The experience you will have gained throughout this process will be more valuable than the outcome itself.*