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## International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme SAMPLE ADMISSIONS EXAMINATION PAPER ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The sample examination paper provided below is an example of the questions that will appear in the exam. Please note that the questions and content in the actual exam may vary in wording, length, and difficulty level, and there may be more questions than those presented in this sample. The exam will consist of three sections: **Reading Comprehension and Literary Analysis**, **English in Use**, and **Writing**. After the sample questions, suggested answers are provided to help you prepare for the exam.

### SECTION A: READING COMPREHENSION AND TEXT ANALYSIS

(40 POINTS)

Read the extract below carefully and answer the questions that follow. Give articulate responses using evidence from the text where necessary.

#### The Kingdom by the Sea

*This excerpt is from Robert Westall's 1990 novel, set in 1940s Northern England during WWII.*

He was an old hand at air raids now. As the yell of the siren climbed the sky, he came smoothly out of his dreams. Not scared. Only his stomach clamped down tight for action, as his hands found his clothes laid ready in the dark.

Hauled one jumper, then another, over his pyjamas. Thrust both stockinged feet together through his trousers and into his shoes. Then bent to tie his laces thoroughly. A loose lace had tripped him once, in the race to the shelter. He remembered the smashing blow as the ground hit his chin; the painful week after, not able to eat with a bitten tongue.

He grabbed his school raincoat off the door, pulling the door wide at the same time. All done by feel; no need to put the light on. Lights were dangerous.

"He passed Dulcie's door", heard Mam and Dulcie muttering to each other, Dulcie sleepy and cross, Mam sharp and urgent. Then he thundered downstairs, the crack of light from the kitchen door lighting up the edge of each stair-tread. Dad was sitting in his warden's uniform, hauling on his big black boots, his grey hair standing up vertically in a bunch.

There was a strong smell of Dad's sweaty feet, and the fag he had burning in the ashtray. That was all Harry had time to notice; he had his own job – the two objects laid ready in the chair by the door. The big roll of blankets, wrapped in a groundsheet because the shelter was damp, done up with a big leather strap of Dad's. And Mam's precious attaché case with the flask of hot coffee, insurance policies, and other important things, and the little bottle of brandy for emergencies. He heaved the blankets onto his back, picked up the case with one hand, and reached to unlock the back door with the other.

'Mind that light,' said Dad automatically. But Harry's hand was already reaching for the switch. He'd done it all a hundred times before. He slammed the door behind him, held his breath, and listened. The engines of a single aircraft, far out to sea. *Vroomah, vroomah, vroomah.* A Jerry. But nothing to worry about yet. Two guns fired, one after another. Two brilliant points of white, lighting up a black landscape of greenhouse, sweet-pea trellises, and cucumber frames. A rolling carpet of echoes. Still out to sea. Safe, then.

He ran down the long back garden, with his neck prickling and the blankets bouncing against his back comfortingly. As he passed the greenhouse the rabbits thumped their heels in alarm. There was a nice cold smell of dew and cabbages. Then he was in through the shelter door, shoving the damp mould-stinking curtain aside.

He tossed the things onto Mam's bunk, found the tiny oil lamp on the back girder, and lit it, and watched the flame grow. Then he lit the candle under the pottery milk cooler that kept the shelter warm. Then he undid the bundle and laid out the blankets on the right bunks and turned back to the shelter door, ready to take Dulcie from Mam. He should be hearing their footsteps any second now, the patter of Mam's shoes and the crunch of Dad's hobnailed boots. Dad always saw them safe in the shelter before he went on duty. Mam would be nagging Dad – had he locked the back door against burglars? They always teased Mam about that; she must think burglars were bloody brave, burgling in the middle of air raids.

God, Mam and Dad were taking their time tonight. What was keeping them? That Jerry was getting closer. More guns were firing now. The garden, every detail of it, the birdbath and the concrete rabbit, flashed black, white, black, white, black. There was a whispering in the air. Gun-shrapnel falling like rain . . . they shouldn't be out in *that*. Where were they? Where were they? Why weren't they tumbling through the shelter door, panting, and laughing to be safe?

That Jerry was right overhead. *Vroomah. Vroomah. Vroomah.* And then the other whistling. Rising to a scream. Bombs. Harry began to count. If you were still counting at ten, the bombs had missed you. The last thing he remembered was saying 'seven'.

## **SECTION A: READING COMPREHENSION AND TEXT ANALYSIS (40 POINTS)**

1. What does 'He was an old hand at air raids now' mean? **(3 MARKS)**

*This sentence implies that the character is no longer afraid of the air raids because he has experienced so many that he is now well-prepared for another raid and knows what he has to do.*

2. 'Lights were dangerous.' (Line 11) How does this statement reflect the **setting** of the extract? **(3 MARKS)**

*The story is set in the North of England in 1940 during the Second World War, during the German Blitz. Everyone had to turn off their lights at night to protect themselves from the German Luftwaffe raids when they bombed England.*

3. Harry 'had his own job – the two objects laid ready in the chair by the door.' (Lines 19– 26) What are these objects and what does Harry have to do with them? **(4 MARKS)**

- "The big roll of blankets, wrapped in a groundsheet because the shelter was damp, done up with a big leather strap" that belonged to his father.
- He took "Mam's precious attaché case with the flask of hot coffee, insurance policies, other important things, and the little bottle of brandy for emergencies."
- He also took "the blankets onto his back and a case."
- He takes these items to the shelter, where his family will follow and stay for the night.

4. What does the narrator mean when he claims, 'But nothing to worry about yet.' (Line 31) **(3 MARKS)**

Harry hears the guns rattling, but they are still too far away to cause him & his family any harm. The fighter planes are firing "Still out to sea. Safe, then."

5. Name three things Harry does when he reaches the air raid shelter. **(3 MARKS)**

He tosses the things he has been carrying onto Mam's bunk, finds the tiny oil lamp on the back girder, lights it, and watches the flame grow. Then, he lights the candle under the pottery milk cooler that keeps the shelter warm. He undoes the bundle lays out the blankets on the right bunks, and turns back to the shelter door, ready to take Dulcie from Mam.

6. Write a brief **character** sketch of Mam. Why does Harry think it is amusing that his Mam is worried about burglars? **(4 MARKS)**

- Mam's voice is sharp and urgent – she is probably bossy.
- She is cautious about what she thinks is important and must take to the shelter → the narrator refers to "Mam's precious attaché case with the flask of hot coffee, insurance policies, and other important things, and the little bottle of brandy for emergencies."
- He also says, "Mam would be nagging Dad – had he locked the back door against burglars?"
- "They always teased Mam about that; she must think burglars were bloody brave, burgling in the middle of air raids."

7. Quote the words/phrases that are the first hint that something will go wrong. **(5 MARKS)**

- "God, Mam and Dad were taking their time tonight. What was keeping them?"
- "More guns were firing now."
- "The garden... the bird-bath and the concrete rabbit, flashed black, white, black, white, black."
- "There was a whispering in the air."
- "Gun-shrapnel falling like rain . . ."

8. Identify the **climax** and explain why you think this is the climax of the extract. **(4 MARKS)**

When Harry wonders, "*What was keeping them? That Jerry was getting closer.*" The narrator repeats the question, 'Where were they?'

9. Identify the **conflict** in the text and specify what **type of conflict** you think it is. **(5 MARKS)**

- The conflict is external → The German Luftwaffe has bombed the area and has killed Harry's family.
- It is also internal → Harry wonders what has happened to his family: "They shouldn't be out in *that*. Where were they? Where were they?" "Why weren't they tumbling through the shelter door, panting and laughing to be safe?"

10. What is the reader left thinking at the end of the passage? **(6 MARKS)**

The answer to the question is open-ended.

**Exercise A (5 points)****Exercise A: Fill in the blank spaces using the appropriate verb tense in parentheses. (5 points)**

1. It's a beautiful drive. I am sure you will enjoy (enjoy) the scenery.
2. I put the five-pound notes into one of the books, but the next day it took (take) me ages to find it because I forgot (forget) which book I had put (put) it in.
3. He has been playing (play) the bagpipes since six this morning. He has just stopped (just/ stop).
4. While we were fishing (fish), someone broke (break) into the house and left (leave) us this note.
5. It won't be easy to leave the country. The police are watching (watch) all the ports.

**EXERCISE B (5 points)**

Complete the sentences using a word or phrase in the box and the verb in brackets. Make sure you use each word once only. (5 points)

*Even though**but for**if**unless**as long as*

1. You can \_\_\_\_\_ eat \_\_\_\_\_ as much as you want, \_\_\_\_\_ as long as \_\_\_\_\_ it is healthy. (eat)
2. She didn't seem at all tired \_\_\_\_\_ even though \_\_\_\_\_ she \_\_\_\_\_ drove / had been driving \_\_\_\_\_ all day. (drive)
3. The town hall is a beautiful old building. It would be a great shame \_\_\_\_\_ if \_\_\_\_\_ it \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_ to be pulled down. (be)
4. He \_\_\_\_\_ would have carried \_\_\_\_\_ on working until he was 70 \_\_\_\_\_ but for \_\_\_\_\_ his poor health (carry).
5. Our director \_\_\_\_\_ would not have signed \_\_\_\_\_ the contract \_\_\_\_\_ unless \_\_\_\_\_ she had had a lawyer present (not / sign)

**Exercise C (10 points)**

**Rewrite the sentences below in reported speech. Use the appropriate introductory verb that reflects the meaning of the direct statement. You may choose from the word bank below. Make sure you use each word only once. (10 points)**

persuade	remind	refuse
admit	beg	suggest
deny	prefer	insist
complain	accuse	urge

1. "Jack, don't give up!" said his coach.

His coach urged (1) Jack not to give up. (2) /  
His coach insisted that (1) Jack (should) not give up. (2)

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2. "Please, give me another chance!", Mary said to her boyfriend.

Mary begged (1) her boyfriend to give her (2) / for (2) another chance.

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3. "You can stay at my place over the weekend.", Robert said.

Robert suggested (1) I (should) stay (2) at his place over the weekend.

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4. "I didn't want to talk to Tim on my way home last night," John said.

John admitted (1) that he didn't want (2) to talk to Tim on his way home the previous night.

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5. "I have been trying to phone you all day!" my mum said.

My mum complained (1) that she had been trying (2) to phone me all day.

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**SECTION C: WRITING****(40 POINTS)**

Complete ONE of the following tasks. You must write between 300 and 400 words.

Imagine that you have had the opportunity to talk to a celebrity. Write a text in which you explain how the person's experiences have helped him/her rise to stardom. Consider the lessons that others can learn from this success story. Choose the most appropriate text type for this task and make sure the text is free of spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors.

<b>Essay</b>	<b>Speech</b>
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OR

As the student council president, you have been assigned by the school's principal to raise awareness among your fellow students about the risks associated with loss of privacy when using social networks. To fulfill this task, you need to explain which common uses of social networks are dangerous for privacy and why and then provide suggestions on how students can protect themselves. Please choose the most appropriate text type for this task, and also ensure that your writing is clear, concise, and free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.

<b>Essay</b>	<b>Speech</b>
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