**National 5**

**Close Reading**

(or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love ‘Reading for Analysis & Evaluation’)

**Practice Questions**



**In your own words**

These types of questions ask you to explain a point made in the passage **in your own words**.

**Example**

*This may be an urban myth. It matters not. A fairy tale’s power lies in its ability to express authentic fears – and this one reveals the paranoia that now prevails where bringing up children is concerned.*

**Question:**

*“It matters not” (line 32)*

*Explain in your own words why the writer believes it is not important whether this story is true or not.* **2**

**Answer**

2 Marks for:

* *the impact of such a story comes from the way it can express real worries.*
* *this story exposes the ridiculous fears about raising kids.*

**An answer which copies from the passage would score 0.**

This type of question will often ask you to identify the **main ideas,** or **summarise.**

*Steps:*

1. *Identify the main point(s) of the passage/part of the passage*
2. *Highlight or underline them*
3. *Translate them into your own words taking care not to use the words you have underlined*
4. *Bullet point your answer*

**Example**

*Of course, those born in the 1970s may find celebrity on the Taylor scale hard to understand. The whole concept of celebrity has been degraded, over the last two centuries by an avalanche of media coverage which makes no pretence of interest in the actual work that well-known people do, but instead focuses entirely and insidiously on the personal lives, and most particularly the personal appearance, of anyone who has ever been in the public eye for anything, from behaving like an idiot on reality TV, to having sex with a premiership footballer.*

***Question***

1. What three main criticisms does the writer make of the way the media treat celebrities today? (3)

**Answer**

* **It doesn’t care about what work celebrities do**
* **It focuses on their private lives**
* **It gives coverage to people who have put themselves in the limelight for doing the most unimportant, ridiculous things.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***Practice ‘in your own words’ questions:***

**Example 1**

*People think that the written language seen on mobile phone screens is new and alien, but all the popular beliefs about texting are wrong. Its distinctiveness is not a new phenomenon, nor is its use restricted to the young. There is increasing evidence that it helps rather than hinders literacy. Texting has added a new dimension to language use, but its long-term impact is negligible. It is not a disaster.*

**Question**

The writer tells us that “all the popular beliefs about texting are wrong”.

Look at the remainder of the paragraph, and then explain in your own words what two of these popular beliefs are. **2**

**Example 2**

*The BBC is a massive sponsor, uniquely independent through its licence fee – and the guardian of public service broadcasting. But, as the fight for the control of communications hots up, friends of the BBC – both inside and out – are alarmed that all this is in jeopardy: the BBC has become too much of a self-seeking institution, too preoccupied with its ratings at the expense of good broadcasting, and unwisely over-extended financially.*

**Question**

What are the three reasons for causing alarm to friends of the BBC? Use your own words as far as possible.  **3**

**Example 3**

*Rowling is loved for her stories, but also for her story. A contemporary Cinderella, she endured the cold flat and life on single-parent benefit. Then Harry happened and she went to the ball. Neil Murray, her husband, might be abashed to find himself cast as Prince Charming, but her life has changed as much as any scullery-maid turned princess.*

**Question**

Look at lines 15–18. In your own words, explain what comparisons the writer draws between JK Rowling and Cinderella. **4**

**Link**

The link question requires you to show how a sentence joins two arguments together. There are a number of different ways in which this question can present itself, but usually the below steps will ensure you get full marks.

*Steps:*

1. Select a **quotation** (from the link sentence) which **refers back** to the idea(s) of the first paragraph;
2. Explain how it does so;
**AND/OR**
3. Select a **quotation** (from the link sentence) which **refers forward** to the idea(s) of the second paragraph;
4. Explain how it does so.

*For example:*

* **The word(s) ‘\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’ link back to what was discussed in the previous paragraph, which was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**
* **The word(s) ‘\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’ link to what is coming up in the next paragraph, which is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

You may find that that your link involves a question and an answer, you should refer to this.

There may be linking words used, or words that indicate a change in the direction of an argument, refer to them in your answer.

*Additional Information:*

* Sometimes you are required to show that a sentence links both back to a previous point, as well as forward to a point the writer makes afterwards.
* Other times, the question may only require you to show a link in any one direction, either forwards OR backwards.
* On very rare occasions, the question can be worth 3 marks, in this case you are required to specify the technique – that the sentence acts as a link – as well as explain how the link functions for the other two marks.

**Example**

*The 7.15 dance class is full, as was the six o’clock, as is the 8.30. In the reception area of Edinburgh Dancebase, learners, ranging from the middle-aged, fresh from work, to students, mill around waiting to dance.*

*Unlikely as it may at first seem, this is occurring across the country. Against similar winter backdrops people are queuing up to learn to dance. National inhibition is being shed as salsa, meringue, and cumbia beats force hips t sway rhythmically and partners to twist complicatedly. French ceroc classes are filling up, street dancing to hip hop is being used as an exercise class. Even ballroom dancing is enjoying something of a renaissance.*

**Question**

*By referring to specific words or phrases, show how the first sentence in the second paragraph performs a linking function in the line of thought.* **2**

**Answer**

* *The word* ***‘this’*** *links back to what was discussed in the previous paragraph which was the idea of the dance classes in Edinburgh being full*
* *The words ‘****is occurring across the country****’ link to what is coming up in the next paragraph, which is the idea of different styles of dance becoming more popular throughout the nation*

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***Practice ‘linking’ questions:***

***Example 6***

*William Shakespeare is easily the best-known of our English writers. Virtually every man in the street can name some of his plays and his characters, and many people can also recite lines of his poetry by heart. However, despite our familiarity with his work, we know relatively little of the man himself. We do not know when or why he became an actor, we know nothing of his life in London, and almost nothing of his personal concerns.*

**Question**

By referring to specific words or phrases, show how the third sentence acts as a link in the argument. **2**

**Example 7**

*Mary Stuart was certainly rated a beauty by the standards of her own time: even John Knox described her as ‘pleasing’. In her height, her small neat head, and her grace she resembled the contemporary ideal. It was the type of beauty which her contemporaries were already learning to admire in art, and could now appreciate in life, all the more satisfyingly because it was in the person of a princess.*

*Not only the appearance, but also the character of Mary Stuart made her admirably suited to be a princess of France in the age in which she lived. Mary was exactly the sort of beautiful woman, not precisely brilliant, but well-educated and charming, who inspired and stimulated poets by her presence to feats of homage.*

**Question**

Show how the first sentence of the second paragraph acts as a link in the argument. **2**

***Example 8***

*The problem here is political rather than financial capacity. The pinch will come in other resource areas, such as health spending. People over 65 consume three times as many prescription items as other age groups. Nearly half of those with some measure of disability are over 70.*

*But the resource question, meeting the material needs of the old and elderly, is only half the story. The real problem lies elsewhere – in the imagination. What are the old for? Who are they, and do traditional divisions of human life into childhood, youth, middle-age and old-age still fit our experience?*

**Question**

What is the function of the first sentence in the second paragraph in this passage? By referring closely to specific words and phrases, show how it fulfils this function. **3**

**Sentence Structure**

You should be aware of the different types of sentence structure (such as those shown below):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Long and complex/short simple sentences | Complex sentences may mimic complex ideas; short sentences have impact |
| Repetition of words or phrases | Repeated ideas will be emphasised or spotlighted |
| List | Provides detail, complexity, etc. |
| Climax / anticlimax following a list | Creates suspense/shows easing of tension |
| Questions / exclamations / commands | Achieve a particular tone, e.g. emotive (arousing strong feelings) |
| Sentences without verbs (minor sentences) | Create a colloquial (informal) style or build tension |
| Unusual word order, e.g. inversion | Alters emphasis; may build tension |
| Sentences with symmetrical pattern of structure but with contrasting (opposite) ideas | Provide contrast |
| Parenthesis | Adds extra information, comment or clarification |

**Punctuation** is often a good signpost for sentence structure, so you should also remember the ‘jobs’ done by the following kinds of punctuation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Commas | Separate items in a list or clauses in a sentence |
| Pairs of brackets, dashes or commas | Create parenthesis (see above) |
| Colon (or dash) | Introduces a list, example, explanation or quotation |
| Semi-colon | Separate complex items in a list (usually a very long list); separate two distinct, but connected, sentences |
| Inverted commas | Indicate quotation or speech; sometimes used to indicate irony |

There is generally no need to quote directly when discussing sentence structure - a clear explanation of the structural device being used will do fine.

*Steps:*

1. identify the feature of the sentence
2. analyse its effects in relation to the question

**Example**

*The only proviso (according to some devilishly complicated mathematics known as game theory) is this: your superstitions must not impose too much of a burden on those occasions when they are without foundation.*

**Question**

Comment on an aspect of the writer’s use of sentence structure. **2**

**Answer**

* The author uses a colon
* This introduces an explanation of the ‘proviso’ mentioned at the beginning of the sentence

***Practice ‘structure’ questions:***

**Example 9**

*From whence comes this compulsion to climb mountains? Why do I have this compulsion to get to the top of every insignificant bump on the landscape? Why, no matter how breathless, bruised, battered and bedraggled I become while hillwalking, do I return with a grin on my face and a desire to go out and do it again?*

**Question**

Here the author reflects on his need to climb mountains. Comment on how **two** aspects of sentence structure are used to explore his feelings. **4**

**Example 10**

*But as that new way of living arrives—as we retreat from the wild places, and the fences of national parks go up; as we cease the exploitation of animals, and the cow, the camel, the sheep, the chicken and the pig become items in modern exhibition farms, where schoolchildren see how mankind used to live; as our direct contact with our fellow creatures is restricted to zoos, pets and fish tanks; and as every area of natural beauty is set about with preservation orders and rules to keep human interference to a minimum—will we not be separating ourselves from our planet in order, as we suppose, to look after it better?*

**Question**

Identify an aspect of sentence structure being used here and explain how it supports or clarifies the author’s argument. **2**

**Word Choice**

You must **always** quote if you are asked to identify word choice (the only exception to this will be in the questions where the example of word choice is provided for you). You should then offer some sort of analysis either by thinking about the meaning of the words (as in the example below) or the connotations.

*Steps*:

1. Quote the word(s)
2. Analyse the effects of that word in relation to the question

**Example**

*At the beginning of this month I was in a hellish yet beautiful place.*

**Question**

What is surprising about the author’s word choice in this line? **2**

**Answer**

* “hellish yet beautiful”
* These words are contradictory, which makes the expressing surprising

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Example 11**

*By now most of us know that the version of reality on offer is one shaped by a multimillion-pound business with slick production values, and yet we willingly suspend our disbelief week after week, month after month, in the name of entertainment. Is there something lacking in our daily lives that draws us so inexorably into Cowell’s web?*

**Question**

Comment on the writer’s use of word choice in the final sentence of this paragraph. **2**

**Example 12**

*I only began to grasp this a few months ago when I travelled to Xi’an to visit the First Emperor’s mind-boggling mausoleum, home to his Terracotta Army. “This is one of the people who changed the world,” said Neil MacGregor, director of the British Museum. “There are terribly few historical figures whose achievements lasted like that. This is really one of the great, great figures in human history.”*

**Question**

Show how any one feature of Neil MacGregor’s word choice makes it clear that he thinks of Qin as someone special. **2**

**Example 13**

*The missing part of the Cinderella story is what happens when she puts on the glass slipper and disappears into the palace. Rowling filled in the blanks, describing to Jeremy Paxman how she has to cope with begging letters, journalists rifling through her bins, photographers lurking on the beach, and strangers accosting her in the supermarket.*

**Question**

Explain how the writer’s word choice in lines 19–22 helps to show the negative effects of fame. **4**

**Tone**

The personal flavour which a writer puts into his writing. Tone reveals his feelings and attitude towards the topic.

Tone questions are often seen as the most difficult to answer. A first step to being able to answer them is knowing what some of the common examples of tone in close reading papers are, such as humorous, ironic (sarcastic), disapproving, emotive, aggressive, compassionate, sympathetic. In (very) general terms, look for word choice and think of the connotations - this should help you to get an idea of how a tone is being created.

Some examples of tone are:

* Humorous
* Sarcastic
* Ironic
* Mocking
* Cynical
* Flippant
* Formal
* Informal

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Formal** | **Informal** |
| Complete forms of verbs, e.g. ‘I did not’. | Abbreviations, e.g. ‘I didn’t’. |
| Complex, more intellectual words and expressions, e.g. ‘Inevitable compromise’. | Simple, everyday words and expressions, e.g. ‘give in’. |
| Longer, more complex sentences; all sentences will be grammatically complete. | Short, simple sentences; some sentences may be minor sentences, without verbs, or start with words like ‘and’ and ‘but’. |
| ‘Literary’ punctuation marks, such as semi-colons and colons. | Simple punctuation marks such as commas, question marks, full stops and exclamation marks. |
| Standard English, e.g. ‘beautiful’, ‘very important’. | Dialect or slang, e.g. ‘bonnie’, ‘ big deal’. |
| A distant, impersonal tone. | A chatty, personal tone. |

**Example**

*So why, after a decade of phone-in rows, vote-rigging accusations and celebrity-hungry wannabes with bloated egos, does the British public remain so in love with reality television?*

**Question**

Explain fully why any two components of the expression “celebrity-hungry wannabes with bloated egos” (lines 17–18) convey a tone of disapproval. **2**

**Answer**

* ‘celebrity-hungry’ suggests that the people are superficial
* ‘wannabes’ is clearly derogatory and dismissive

**Example 14**

*Those who call themselves environmentalists celebrate this. “Leave nothing and take nothing away,” read the signs at the gates of nature reserves. Practical advice, perhaps, but is there not something melancholy in what that says about modern man’s desired relationship with nature? Will we one day confine ourselves to watching large parts of our planet only from observation towers?*

**Question**

What is the tone of the two sentences above? **1**

**Example 15**

*The tomb itself may never be opened because of the sensitivities of disturbing the Emperor, although some archaeologists hope that improved technology may one day allow some form of exploration.*

**Question**

Show fully how the writer introduces a doubtful tone when he writes about the prospects for opening the tomb. **2**

**Example 16**

*In an age of appearances, her story should reassure us. JK Rowling found success and made millions through trusting her own invention. We will never know her, but we know Harry, and his magic is likely to last.*

**Question**

Identify the writer’s attitude to JK Rowling in this paragraph and give evidence to support your answer. **2**

**Imagery**

Imagery questions test your ability to understand, analyse and - often - evaluate a piece of figurative language.

Questions on imagery with generally be for 2 marks, although sometimes a third mark may be available for stating what the meaning of the image (ie. what two things are being compared). The *Just As/So To* formula below may help you to answer these types of questions.

*Steps:*

* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is being compared to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* This is effective because *just as* ‘\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’ suggests \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* *So to* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Example**

*It is only when a superstition begins to compromise our deeper goals and aspirations that we have moved along the spectrum of irrationality far enough to risk a diagnosis of obsessive compulsive disorder. Take Kolo Touré, the former Arsenal defender, who insists on being the last player to leave the dressing room after the half-time break. No real problem, you might think, except that when William Gallas, his team-mate, was injured and needed treatment at half-time during a match, Touré stayed in the dressing room until Gallas had been treated, forcing Arsenal to start the second half with only nine players.*

**Question**

Explain how effective you find the word “spectrum” (line 71) as an image or metaphor to illustrate people’s “irrationality”. **3**

**Answer**

* The variety of superstitions that exist is being compared to a spectrum
* This is effective becausejust as a ‘spectrum’ suggests a wide range of colours
* So to there are a wide range of different severities of superstitious beliefs

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Example 17**

*“Africans are not dustbins,” declared some of the June 16 placards; and “Beware of Afrikaans, the most dangerous drug for our future.”*

**Question**

Look at the placard text “Beware of Afrikaans, the most dangerous drug for our future”. Explain the metaphor and analyse its effectiveness. **3**

**Example 18**

*Research has made it clear that the early media hysteria about the novelty (and thus the dangers) of text messaging was misplaced.*

**Question**

How effective do you find the writer’s use of “hysteria” as an image or metaphor? **2**

**Example 19**

*Fame, as she implied, freezes you in one frame.*

**Question**

Explain what this image means and analyse its effect. **3**

**PASSAGE 1**

This article is taken from The Times newspaper and centres on the issue of whether prison is the right place for young people who commit crimes.

As Learco Chindamo is about to be released claiming to be reformed, Harriet Sergeant finds jail is also working wonders on her hoodlum friend Tuggy Tug.

1 ‘Hari, I am in prison, call me in a hot minute.” I was standing in a garden centre when I got the message – an unlikely one for a middle-aged, middle-class woman to receive while choosing a rose bush. Tuggy Tug is the leader of a Brixton gang whom I befriended two years ago. Now he had been arrested

5 for stealing mobile phones. He had just turned 18 and this was his first time ‘in a big man’s prison’. His voice turned desperate: “Why aren’t you picking up your phone, Hari?”

 My heart sank. Like half of all prisoners under the age of 25, Tuggy Tug has been in care. Despite the £2∙5 billion the government spends on the care

10 system, nobody had got him employment or training. Now it sounded as if he had graduated from one expensive and failing institution into another: 80% of prisoners under 25 reoffend within 12 months of getting out of prison, where it costs £38,000 a year to keep them.

 How effective is prison? Very, according to Learco Chindamo, who, aged

15 15, fatally stabbed the headteacher Philip Lawrence. In press reports last week Chindamo said that being in jail had transformed him. After serving 14 years of a life sentence and on the verge of being released, he claimed to be a reformed character who wanted only to live a “quiet and decent life.” Might Tuggy Tug’s experience of being locked up turn out to be as positive?

20 I phoned the prison to arrange a visit. The line remained engaged. I tried the main switchboard. No it was not broken, said the operator, just busy. “It’s a terrible system,” she added. Crusher, a former armed robber who helps me with research and had been at the same jail , shook his head and said of Tuggy Tug: ”He’s got a mouth on him. They’ll be taking him down in all different

25 ways. And he’s only little.”

 I began to ring 5-10 times a day. After 4 days a woman picked up. She denied knowledge of Tuggy Tug. Sometimes they were turned away at the gate, she added, and bused elsewhere. No, she had no idea where. I begged her to look again. Surely he could not just disappear. I felt like a Russian trying to

30 track down a relative in the gulag. “There’s nothing here,” she said. “It is like he does not exist.”

 Unlike in the gulag, I could write to the prison governor, who apologised for my “visitor’s experience”. Shortly after, Crusher got through and arranged a visit. Tuggy Tug had magically appeared.

35 It was not the end of the ordeal. In the prison visitors’ centre, we stood in queues mystified by the system. What items, for example, could we leave for Tuggy Tug? I was not the only one confused. In front of me, a retired couple in matching chinos were almost in tears. “But he has to have shower slippers,” they said to the prison officer. Their minds boggled at a life without shower

40 slippers – never mind the soap box and framed family photograph the officer now rejected. By the time it came to the mouth search for drugs, I opened mine without a murmur.

In the hall the prison officer looked down his list then pursed his lips. “Never heard of him, are you sure he’s in this prison?” Beyond, at a table,

1. grinning fit to burst, sat Tuggy Tug.

 I had expected to find him flattened by a system that had defeated me. I had underestimated the desperation of his previous existence. Tuggy Tug now glowed with happiness and health.

 Yes, like any boy new to boarding school, the first days had been

1. trying. Three guards had sat on him. He had been put into solitary. Then he

had to prove himself to the other inmates. He explained: “My rating was this low before,” his hand hovered just off the floor. He beamed: ”Now it’s high, fam.”

 That was not his only achievement. He had a job in the kitchen and was

 55 Doing an NVQ in catering. Before he went to prison, charmed by his brightness and enthusiasm I had tried to find Tuggy Tug a job. Now he had one. “All that time I was trying to find work on the outside,” he said, “and I get it in prison.”

**END OF PASSAGE**

**QUESTIONS PASSAGE 1**

**1.** In your own words as far as possible, give three reasons why this was an unusual call

 for Hari to receive? 3

**2.** Explain who Tuggy Tug is and what has happened to him. 2

**3.** Read lines 5-7. Show how the writer’s word choice emphasises Tuggy Tug’s

 vulnerability. 3

**4.** Show how the language in the second paragraph highlights the author’s concerns over

 the prison system. 4

**5.** Why does the writer begin paragraph three with a question? 2

**6.** Using your own words as far as possible, explain who Learco Chindamo is and why he

 was put in prison. 3

**7.** Read lines 24 and 25. Using your own words explain what Crusher is trying to say will

 be happening to Tuggy Tug. 3

**8.** How effective is the imagery used in lines 29 and 30 to convey the writer’s feelings of helplessness. 3

**9.** How does the language used in line 34 convey the writer’s tone? 2

**10.** In your opinion, why has the writer chosen to include the details in lines 35-41 for the purposes of this article? 3

**11.** How effective do you find the ideas and language of the final paragraph as a conclusion

 to the passage as a whole? 2

 **Total: 30 marks**

**PASSAGE 2**

This passage has been adapted from an article in The Sunday Times and sees journalist Margarette Driscoll ask the question, “What is behind the rise of the cotton-wool kids?”

1 Megan Davies has what is traditionally thought to be an idyllic childhood. She is the youngest of three in a lively, happy family, living on Rose Dew Farm in the picturesque Vale of Glamorgan, a mile from the beach. It’s surprising, then, to hear Megan’s mother Gaynor say:”If you took all this fuss seriously, I

5 should have been locked up and the key thrown away years ago.”

 Gaynor’s crime? Megan, 10, is a “free-range” child, allowed to roam the fields and surrounding countryside. She has been left on her own intermittently since she was two and a half years old. Megan’s mother isn’t always there to pick her up when she gets off the bus from school, so she walks the mile home,

10 either with her sister Delana, 11, or alone. She does not have a mobile phone. “I don’t have regular hours. If I’m not at the bus stop when she gets there she doesn’t panic and if she’s not there I don’t panic either. I know she’ll turn up in an hour or so,” says Gaynor. “If she needs to do anything like get her hair trimmed, she’ll go into the hairdresser’s. She’s very independent. She doesn’t

15 wait there, crying and looking pathetic.

 Gaynor, interestingly, is a trained Norland nanny and quick to point out the increased level of responsibility inherent in looking after someone else’s children, when “you have got to answer for every graze, bruise, scratch and everything else”. But where her own three children are concerned, she has

20 always taken a relaxed – what some people might think lax – approach to child-rearing to foster her children’s sense of independence. She has been lucky in two respects: Megan has never come to any harm and Gaynor has not attracted criticism from neighbours and other parents at her children’s schools. Unlike Oliver and Gillian Schonrock, who recently set off a nationwide debate on child

25 safety and parental rights.

 The Schonrocks have got into trouble for allowing their eight-year-old daughter and five-year-old son to cycle, unsupervised, the mile from their home in Dulwich, south London, to the £12,000-a-year Alleyn’s junior school. After a number of disapproving fellow parents voiced concerns about the children’s

30 safety, the couple were hauled in by the headmaster, Mark O’Donnell, and told that it was inappropriate to let children so young make their way to school alone.

 They are now under threat of being referred to social services under guidance issued by the former Department for Children, Schools and Families that

35 compels a school to act if it ‘believes or suspects that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm’. Public opinion on this issue has been divided. Whereas many people pointed out they had cycled or walked to school at the same age, others were outraged at the thought of social services being involved or at parental authority being questioned. But, there was also unease

40 at the thought of an eight-year-old being made responsible for a younger sibling: “If (God forbid) one of the children was seriously injured or killed in an accident on the way to school, you can bet your bottom dollar the responses would be, ‘What the hell were they doing going to school on their own at that age?’

45 The Schonrocks are unrepentant. They have no quarrel with the school – they completely accept that the headmaster was obliged to act once a complaint had been made – but they are baffled by the furore the case has caused. “The only risk bureaucrats seem to be happy with is zero risk,” said Oliver Schonrock, still ‘shocked’ at the family home coming under siege from

50 reporters and film crews.

 The Schonrock case has flagged up how difficult it can be to make relatively simple decisions for your children in an age of child protection and helicopter parenting. How do you assess danger? How much freedom should your children be allowed? And what is permissible in the hypercritical eyes of other parents?

55 Who needs social services when middle-class parents are so keen to police each other? It’s no accident that the row over the Schonrocks’ children blew up at a competitive private school, says Frank Furedi, professor of sociology at Kent University and the author of ‘Paranoid Parenting’, a denunciation of the safety at all costs that has produced a generation of so-called ‘cotton-wool

60 kids’.

 “This began with other parents, it always does,” he says. “There’s a child protection imperative that turns something like this into a heavy-duty issue but, really, it’s about competitive parenting. Increasingly, parenting has become detached from child-rearing. Child-rearing is just bringing up kids, making

65 sure there is food on the table. ‘Parenting’ has become a lifestyle choice. We live our lives through our parenting so if someone adopts a different strategy with their children, it isn’t just what they do, it’s a condemnation of my lifestyle and my choices. At the sort of school the Schonrocks’ children go to, it’s civil war. The parents don’t like the idea that someone else’s child might be more

70 adventurous or more capable than theirs.”

**END OF PASSAGE**

**QUESTIONS PASSAGE 2**

**1.** Briefly describe the mood created in lines 1-3. 2

**2.** How do Gaynor’s comments in lines 4 and 5 contrast with the rest of paragraph one? 2

**3.** In line 6 Megan is described as a ‘free-range’ child. How effective is this description? 2

**4.** What does the word ‘intermittently’ mean? 1

**5.** Read paragraph 2 . List three things about Megan which make her seem very independent. 3

**6.** Read lines 21-23. Using your own words, explain why Gaynor has been ‘lucky’ so far. 2

**7.** Read lines 26-28. Using your own words as far as possible, why have the Schonrocks

 found themselves in trouble? 3

**8.** Read line 30. Identify one word which suggests the Schonrocks did not go to meet the

 headmaster willingly. 1

**9.** Read lines 36-41. Using your own words as far as possible, explain how public opinion

 has been divided on this issue. 4

**10.** How does the writer’s use of sentence structure in lines 45-47 convey the attitude of the Schonrocks? 4

**11.** Read line 47 again and explain what is meant by ‘furore’. 1

**12.** What do you think is meant by ‘helicopter parenting’? 2

**13.** Read lines 61-70. How do the words of Frank Furedi affect the overall tone of the

 entire passage? You may refer to the passage as a whole in your answer. 3

**Total: 30 marks**

**PASSAGE 3**

As a rebellious youth in 1949 the author John le Carre was captivated by Germany. Britain, too, he says, should embrace the soul of its near neighbour. [Adapted from The Times newspaper]

1 For most of my conscious childhood, Germany had been the rogue elephant in the drawing room. Germans were murderous fellows. They had bombed one of my schools (which I did not entirely take amiss); they had bombed my grandparents’ tennis court, which was very serious, and I was terrified of them.

5 Yet at 16, I decided that 11 years’ hard labour in the English boarding-school gulag was enough for anyone, and in 1949 – only four years after the war’s end – I bolted to Bern in Switzerland, determined to embrace the German soul.

 In my rebellious adolescent state, a country that had been so thoroughly bad was also by definition worth examining. Best of all, I had a teacher who not

10 only loved the language but was also at pains to remind his pupils that there was another Germany, a decent one, far removed from the one we thought we knew. He said something else, which rings in my ear to this day. He said that the love we have for other languages intensifies and explains the love we have for our own. He might even have said, with Charlemagne, that to possess another

15 language is to possess another soul. Whatever he said, it was enough to send me off to immerse myself in German language and letters. With Bern as my springboard, I visited the shattered Ruhr district and shattered Berlin, and walked the empty alleys of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

 Nothing I have ever written in my life has been free of the German

20 influences of my youth. In my most formative years I had, as a result of a blind act of adolescent anger, forfeited my British sixth-form education. Suddenly, instead of Keats I had Holderlin; instead of Byron, Heine – and for my narcissistic hours of self-adoration and impossible loves, The Sorrows of Young Werther. And because poetry didn’t buy the bread, I took part-time employment

25 at the Zirkus Knie, washing elephants.

 After Bern, I served for two years in the British Army of Occupation in Austria, as an intelligence officer. In the refugee camps where we trawled for information, the wretched inmates barely knew any more whether they were running away from the Germans or the Russians. But German was the lingua

30 franca.

 At Oxford I continued my study of German literature. Then I went to Eton for two years to teach German. And from Eton, I gravitated to the British Foreign Service where, from inside its walls, I wrote my first novel – about Germany, of course, and the unreconciled heritage of its recent past.

35 Over time, Germany has never lost its lure for me. As Germany changed, so I tried to catch its history in the making. My most recent novel, ‘A Most Wanted Man’, is set entirely in Hamburg, where I served briefly as British consul. The denouement of the novel that I shall be publishing this September is set in Bern and the surrounding mountains. And at the moment, that’s where my

40 Bildungsroman ends: where it began.

 But why bother with the German language today? Why go to the labour of learning it, reading it, thinking it? Why not let them speak ours? Isn’t English the new Esperanto? No to all of it. No, unless we wish to be second-class Europeans, leaning lazily towards America. Sometimes I wish America spoke

45 Polish or Urdu instead of English, so that we could consider her thoughts and actions objectively. No again, because Germany is an ever-growing part of our European destiny just as our so-called special relationship with America dwindles into myth.

 We would be deceiving ourselves to suppose it is not in our national interest

50 to build a linguistic bridge to our most potent European partner, rather than – out of sheer laziness, and ignorance, and fear – leaving the job to them. Anyone who has acted as an interpreter – as I have – knows that what people say to you in your language isn’t always what they say or even think among themselves in theirs.

55 We Brits, in the large, know almost nothing of the real Germany of today. Oh, or schools teach German history all right. But the history of which Germany? No fewer than 50% of all GCSE history students and 80% of all A level history students study the rise and fall of the Third Reich. Only a fraction of those students will have any idea of the price that Germany itself has since

60 paid, of the miraculous creation of the new German democracy, of the upheavals, the generational agonisings, the determination to tell herself the truth about her past, and to emerge as the strongest and most articulate, most altruistic champion of the original European ideal.

 Instead, one British generation after another is encouraged to moulder in

65 that vanished age when Britain was great and good and all alone, and Germany was awful. So, why should we accept it as a God-given right that others speak our language and we don’t speak theirs? Germany has for decades been our most important partner in Europe. Her appetites and insecurities, her problems of migration, ecology and the reshaping of her society mirror our own, even

70 if the shadings are different.

 Germany and Britain today have nothing to fear from one another, and much to learn, and now is the time to learn it. By learn, I mean listen: listen to the real voice of Germany, listen to its subtext, relish its moods and regional variation. And not only listen, but learn it and speak it: take a leaf from Charlemagne’s

75 book and acquire another soul.

**END OF PASSAGE**

**QUESTIONS PASSAGE 3**

**1.** Show how the writer’s language in lines 1-4 conveys his attitude towards the British

 perceptions of Germany during his childhood. In your answer you may refer to such

 features as sentence structure, word choice, tone etc. 4

**2.** How does the second paragraph reveal the author’s own opinion of Germany? 2

**3.** Read lines 8-14. Using your own words as far as possible, explain how the writer’s

 teacher influenced his decision to go to Germany. 4

**4.** What do you understand from Charlemagne’s comment that ‘to possess another language

 is to possess another soul’? 3

**5.** Read line 17 again. Why has the writer chosen to repeat the word ‘shattered’? 2

**6.** Read lines 19-25. Using your own words as far as possible, explain how Germany

 influenced the writer’s youth. 4

**7.** What do you think ‘lingua franca’ means? 1

**8.** Comment on the writer’s use of sentence structure in lines 40-43. 3

**9.** Read lines 49-54. Give three reasons for the British refusal to learn the German

 language. 2

**10.** Read lines 55-63. Show how the writer’s language reinforces his own opinions here. 3

**11.** In your opinion, is the last paragraph an effective way for the writer to conclude this

 piece? You may refer back to previous sections of the article to support your answer. 2

 **Total: 30 marks**

**ANSWERS – Please note that the following answers are intended as guidelines only.**

**PASSAGE 1**

**1.** Be generous if answer merits it. For example: respectable woman/ gentile activity (plants etc)/

not young and not normally associated with prisoners

**2.** Leader of Brixton gang / author became friends with him couple years ago

**3.** A young man (just 18)/desperation in voice/ his first real crime

**4.** Mark generously here. List statistics which highlight the failures of penal system. Half of under 25s have been in care/in spite of money put into care Tug was unemployed/only 20% don’t re-offend/expensive to keep on prison.

**5.** Encourages the reader/ to consider the same question (ask themselves what they believe)

**6.** Current prisoner serving 14th year of sentence/ due for release in foreseeable future/ killed headteacher Philip Lawrence

**7.** Owing to his propensity for mouthing off and being vocal/ other inmates/will be putting him in his place

**8.** Mark on merit. Idea of Communist/Stalinist Russian prison camps/prisoners only numbers not names/ guards denied knowledge of inmates or knowledge of crimes which led them to being there

**9.** Sarcastic/sceptical ‘magically appeared’ impossibility but authorities in prison bowing to pressure or similar

**10.** Mark on merit but must make reference to the ‘human’ cost of being sent to prison and those left behind to worry

**11.** Mark on merit but students should make reference to the irony of the situation and idea there are better opportunities inside

**PASSAGE 2**

**1.** Idyllic/picturesque/happy family life

**2.** She suggests that she should be in prison/ for being a bad mother or bringing up children in inappropriate setting

**3.** Relates to idea of free range hens/eggs/not kept in ‘batteries’ or strict house rules

**4.** On occasion/at irregular intervals

**5.** Walks home alone/no phone to keep in constant touch through/ visits hair salons on her own

**6.** Nothing bad has happened to the child/her fellow carers have not expressed concern over her methods

**7.** Allowed son and daughter of early primary age/to ride their bikes home after school/without adult supervision (or similar)

**8.** Hauled

**9.** Mark on merit as long as both sides of argument given. ie. aware of risks but in childhood had more freedom.

**10.** Short emphatic sentence stating bald fact/ information in parenthesis emphasises the fact they understand legal imperative even though they don’t agree with it (be generous here)

**11.** Outbreak of public anger or excitement (or similar)

**12.** Idea of constant monitoring/ability to oversee everything children do

**13.** Pours scorn on the idea of ‘cotton wool’ kids and appropriate reference with explanation.

**PASSAGE 3**

**1.** word choice – murderous/bombed/terrified (words which have a negative connotation)

tongue in cheek ‘murderous fellows’/ information in parenthesis sentence structure- use of semi-colon to balance argument or further elaborate etc. 2 points well made

**2.** Refers to British schooling in prison camp terms/ seeks German ‘soul’ makes Germany more appealing

**3.** Teacher adored or had passion for German language/ highlighted the good points about the country/ pointed out by learning other languages/ we appreciate and admire our own much more

**4.** Mark on merit here – idea of becoming one with country and its people via ??????? speech.

**5.** To emphasise damage country suffered during war also/ they are victims too

**6.** As result of teenage angst or impetuosity/ abandoned sixth year at school/ to appreciate German arts/ take employment in German circus

**7.** common language spoken by those who speak different languages

**8.** series of questions/ raising points the reader may have considered before/ will allow him to justify the answers in next paragraphs

**9.** laziness/ignorance/fear – all for 2

**10.** Mark on merit but must mention use of statistics which prove the embarrassment of German content taught in schools today (as if only interested in Nazi epoch)

**11.** Mark on merit here but answer should be positive