

ESAME DI STATO DI ISTRUZIONE SECONDARIA SUPERIORE

SECONDA PROVA SCRITTA - ESEMPIO

Indirizzo: LI04 – LICEO LINGUISTICO

Tema di: LINGUA E CULTURA STRANIERA 1: INGLESE

PART 1 – COMPREHENSION AND INTERPRETATION

Read the texts for Question A and Question B and answer the questions below. Use complete sentences and your own words.

Question A

“Gretta dear, what are you thinking about?”

She did not answer nor yield wholly to his arm. He said again, softly:

“Tell me what it is, Gretta. I think I know what is the matter. Do I know?”

She did not answer at once. Then she said in an outburst of tears:

5 “O, I am thinking about that song, The Lass of Aughrim.”

She broke loose from him and ran to the bed and, throwing her arms across the bed-rail, hid her face. Gabriel stood stock-still for a moment in astonishment and then followed her. As he passed in the way of the cheval-glass he caught sight of himself in full length, his broad, well-filled shirt-front, the face whose expression always puzzled him when he saw it in a mirror and his glimmering gilt-rimmed
10 eyeglasses. He halted a few paces from her and said:

“What about the song? Why does that make you cry?”

She raised her head from her arms and dried her eyes with the back of her hand like a child. A kinder note than he had intended went into his voice.

“Why, Gretta?” he asked.

15 “I am thinking about a person long ago who used to sing that song.”

“And who was the person long ago?” asked Gabriel, smiling.

“It was a person I used to know in Galway when I was living with my grandmother,” she said.

The smile passed away from Gabriel's face. A dull anger began to gather again at the back of his mind and the dull fires of his lust began to glow angrily in his veins.

20 “Someone you were in love with?” he asked ironically.

“It was a young boy I used to know,” she answered, “named Michael Furey. He used to sing that song, The Lass of Aughrim. He was very delicate.”

Gabriel was silent. He did not wish her to think that he was interested in this delicate boy.

25 “I can see him so plainly,” she said after a moment. “Such eyes as he had: big dark eyes! And such an expression in them—an expression!”

“O then, you were in love with him?” said Gabriel.

“I used to go out walking with him,” she said, “when I was in Galway.”

A thought flew across Gabriel's mind.

“Perhaps that was why you wanted to go to Galway with that Ivors girl?” he said coldly.

30 She looked at him and asked in surprise:

“What for?”

Her eyes made Gabriel feel awkward. He shrugged his shoulders and said:

“How do I know? To see him perhaps.”

She looked away from him along the shaft of light towards the window in silence.

35 “He is dead,” she said at length. “He died when he was only seventeen. Isn't it a terrible thing to die so young as that?”
 “What was he?” asked Gabriel, still ironically.
 “He was in the gasworks,” she said.
 Gabriel felt humiliated by the failure of his irony and by the evocation of this figure from the dead, a
 40 boy in the gasworks. While he had been full of memories of their secret life together, full of tenderness and joy and desire, she had been comparing him in her mind with another. A shameful consciousness of his own person assailed him. He saw himself as a ludicrous figure, acting as a pennyboy for his aunts, a nervous well-meaning sentimentalist, orating to vulgarians and idealising his own clownish lusts, the pitiable fatuous fellow he had caught a glimpse of in the mirror. Instinctively he turned his back more to
 45 the light lest she might see the shame that burned upon his forehead.
 He tried to keep up his tone of cold interrogation but his voice when he spoke was humble and indifferent.
 “I suppose you were in love with this Michael Furey, Gretta,” he said.
 “I was great with him at that time,” she said.
 50 Her voice was veiled and sad. Gabriel, feeling now how vain it would be to try to lead her whither he had purposed, caressed one of her hands and said, also sadly:
 “And what did he die of so young, Gretta? Consumption, was it?”
 “I think he died for me,” she answered.
 A vague terror seized Gabriel at this answer as if, at that hour when he had hoped to triumph, some
 55 impalpable and vindictive being was coming against him, gathering forces against him in its vague world.
 [733 words]

James Joyce (1882 - 1941), *Dubliners*, (1914)

1. Which of these adjectives would best describe Gretta’s state of mind at the beginning of the extract?
 tense – relaxed – worried – responsive – angry – sad – pleased – happy – irritated
2. Why did the song, “The Lass of Aughrim.” (Line 5) make her cry?
3. How did Gabriel react to Gretta’s reply to his question about who she associated with the song? Find three examples.
4. Greta’s friend “the Ivors girl” (Line 29) had just invited her to visit Galway. What “thought flew across Gabriel’s mind?” (Line 28) What does he suspect?
5. Was Gabriel right to be suspicious? Give two reasons why or why not.
6. Why was Gabriel assailed by “a shameful consciousness of his own person” (Lines 41-42)? What triggered this reaction and what happened to his self-esteem?
7. Gabriel’s tone changes (Line 46): is it a voluntary or involuntary change? Justify your answer by referring to the text.
8. What provoked the “vague terror” that seized Gabriel (Line 54)? Explain in your own words how he felt.
9. Has Gabriel’s self-image changed between the beginning and the end of the passage? Give three reasons for your answer.

Question B

The European community was founded nearly forty years ago, with the stated object of promoting the “ever-closer” union of its members. It is a remarkable accomplishment, albeit not quite so remarkable as its advocates suggest. There are few who oppose its objectives in principle, and the practical benefits it affords its members, such as unrestricted trade, are obvious. That, after all, is why nearly everyone
5 wants to join it. It is now engaging in negotiations among its member-states to construct a single European currency and mechanisms for common decision-taking and collective action, while simultaneously holding out to the countries of former Communist Europe the promise of membership in years to come.

The likelihood that the European Union can fulfil its own promises of ever-closer union, while
10 remaining open to new members on the same terms, is slim indeed. In the first place, the unique historical circumstances of the years between 1945 and 1989 cannot be reproduced. Indeed, the disruptive effect of the events of 1989 has been at least as great in the West as in the East. The essence of the Franco-German condominium around which postwar Western Europe was built lay in a mutually convenient arrangement: the Germans would have the economic means and the French would retain the
15 political initiative. In the early postwar years, of course, the Germans had not yet acquired their present wealth and French predominance was real. But from the mid-Fifties this was no longer true; thereafter France’s hegemony in West European affairs rested upon a nuclear weapon that the country could not use, an army that it could not deploy within the continent itself, and an international political standing derived largely from the self-interested magnanimity of the three victorious Powers at the end of the
20 war.

[293 words]

Tony Judt, Europe: The Grand Illusion

<https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1996/07/11/europe-the-grand-illusion/>

1. This article was written more than 20 years ago. What are the two developments the author mentions taking place at that time?
2. What is the main reason why the author says that the “likelihood” of the EU fulfilling “its own promises of ever-closer union while remaining open to new members” (Lines 9-10) is slim?
3. To what extent were Western and Eastern Europe affected by the disruptive effects of 1989 and the fall of the Berlin Wall?
4. What was the initial Franco-German post war agreement built around?
5. When and why did the situation change? Explain in your own words.
6. Explain in your own words the phrase “the self-interested magnanimity of the three victorious Powers at the end of the war” (Lines 19-20).

PART 2 – WRITTEN PRODUCTION

Task A

“In every conceivable manner, the family is link to our past, bridge to our future.”

Alex Haley (1921-1992), *Roots* (1976)

Discuss the quotation in a 300-word essay. Support your ideas by referring to your reading and your personal experience.

Task B

Write a 300-word short story which ends with the phrase “and then it all went black.”

END OF EXAMINATION

La Parte 1 e la Parte 2 della prova devono essere svolte interamente.

Durata massima della prova: 6 ore

E' consentito l'uso dei dizionari monolingue e bilingue.