

English Entry Assessment

Name Date Score

Time: about 75 minutes. Answer ALL questions. This paper is set at the demanding end of GCSE (grade 7-9 standard). Analyse writer's methods with embedded quotation and subject terminology. Longer answers must be developed paragraphs with a clear argument. You have 75 minutes. Total: 54 marks. Show your working where you can. Marks for each question are shown in brackets, like [2]. Total marks: **54**.

READ THIS, THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

They called it progress, and perhaps it was; certainly the road came, straight and grey and indifferent, slicing the valley as a knife slices the rind from a fruit. Where my grandmother had once named every field after the families who farmed them, there was now a single number on a sign, and beneath the number, in smaller letters, a promise of minutes saved. I have driven that road a hundred times and saved, I suppose, whole hours of my life, though I could not tell you what I spent them on. The orchard is a depot now; the well, capped and forgotten, lies somewhere beneath the second lane, and on wet nights I imagine the water still rising in the dark, patient and blind, looking for a mouth that no longer comes to drink. We are very good, my generation, at counting what a thing costs and very bad at saying what it was worth.

- 1 'the road came, straight and grey and indifferent, slicing the valley as a knife slices the rind from a fruit.' Analyse how the writer uses imagery here to present the road. Comment on at least two techniques. [4]

LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

- 2 STRETCH: The passage withholds any named place, person or date (only 'my grandmother', 'my generation'). Analyse how this deliberate lack of specificity universalises the argument, and what the writer risks by it. Use two references and name methods. [3]

THEME / CONTRAST

- 3 'a promise of minutes saved... I could not tell you what I spent them on.' Explain the irony in these lines and how it develops the writer's argument. [4]

IRONY / ARGUMENT

- 4 Analyse the image of the well: 'I imagine the water still rising in the dark, patient and blind, looking for a mouth that no longer comes to drink.' Explore its layers of meaning. [4]

SYMBOLISM / ANALYSIS

- 5 'We are very good, my generation, at counting what a thing costs and very bad at saying what it was worth.' Explain the distinction the writer draws between COST and WORTH, and why this is an effective conclusion. [4]

THEME / STRUCTURE / CONCLUSION

- 6 The opening clause 'They called it progress, and perhaps it was' immediately concedes a point before the critique. [3]
Explain the rhetorical effect of opening with a concession.

RHETORIC / STRUCTURE

- 7 Identify the semicolons in the passage and explain what they contribute to its rhythm and meaning. Refer to at least one specific example. [3]

PUNCTUATION / CRAFT

- 8 'The orchard is a depot now; the well, capped and forgotten, lies somewhere beneath the second lane.' Rewrite this so it foregrounds the loss using a fronted adverbial, keeping the meaning. Then name the structure you used. [3]

GRAMMAR / STRUCTURE

- 9 Choose the most precise meaning of 'indifferent' as used of the road: (a) average (b) uncaring (c) hostile (d) undecided. Explain why 'indifferent' is more damning of progress than 'hostile' would be. [3]

VOCABULARY / CONNOTATION

- 10 Give a single precise word for each: (a) a feeling of longing for a lost past; (b) reducing something rich to bare numbers; (c) a statement that is true but seems to contradict itself. [3]

VOCABULARY

- 11 Identify the narrative voice and tone of the passage, supporting each with a brief quotation. [2]

VOICE / TONE

- 12 Explain how the writer uses the extended metaphor of money/economics across the passage (e.g. 'saved', 'spent', 'costs', 'worth') to structure the argument. [3]

EXTENDED METAPHOR / STRUCTURE

- 13 WRITING TECHNIQUE: Write the closing TWO sentences of a reflective piece about something modern that replaced something older. You must use (i) an antithesis (a balanced contrast) and (ii) precise, non-clichéd diction. Label the antithesis. [4]

WRITING TECHNIQUE

- 14 STRETCH: To what extent does the writer present 'progress' as a genuine good, a genuine loss, or both? Argue a clear line using at least THREE references and naming methods. [4]

CRITICAL EVALUATION / STRETCH

- 15 STRETCH: Compare the function of the buried WELL with the function of the ROAD as symbols in the passage. What does each represent, and how does the writer use them to embody his theme? [4]

SYMBOLISM COMPARISON / STRETCH

- 16 STRETCH: The narrator implicates himself ('I have driven that road a hundred times'; 'We are very good, my generation'). How does this self-implication strengthen the writer's argument compared with simply blaming others? [3]

RHETORIC / PERSONA / STRETCH

End of assessment. Hand your paper back when you are finished. Well done!