

SECTION A: PROSE COMPREHENSION (60 MARKS)

Read the passage below and answer all the questions that follow.

The meanings of words marked * are given at the end.

Cockles and Mussels

Paragraph

- 1 Both the lounge and the dining-room at the front of the Delacourt Guest House commanded a view of the sea. 'There is nothing at all gloomy *here*, nobody has to suffer some dark, poky bedroom with outlook on to a wall', said Mrs Muriel Hennessey, the owner. 'It has always been a little, private longing of mine, to give a few, retired people a very comfortable and happy home'. Though in fairness she was forced to admit that her charges were somewhat higher for the larger front bedrooms.
- 2 It was not the quietness, not the gentle slope of the Guest House garden down towards the promenade, not the different moods of the sea, for which Miss Avis Parson was grateful. They pleased her well enough, but nothing happened, it was all a little dull. 'I am sixty-nine,' she said to herself. 'I am not like old Mr Brotherton, who is fit only to doze and dream and remember little incidents of his naval past. I have my eyes open to modern life and what goes on about me.' For, from the side window of her blue bedroom, she could see towards the Lower Bay, and it was to the Lower Bay that the day trippers came.
- 3 Mrs Hennessey and, indeed, all the property owners and shopkeepers and residents of the upper town, held day trippers in the lowest possible esteem. 'They are not *real* visitors,' she would say, bringing the tea trolley with their late, hot drinks around the lounge, 'they come by the coach-load and throw away their litter, they do nothing for the image of the town.' And, along the foreshore and up and down the narrow streets of the Lower Bay were all the most common attractions, the gift shops full of rose-painted pottery and highly varnished shells, the ice cream and fish and chip parlours with tall stools set against marble counters, the cheap photographers and the sellers of novelty balloons. At the far end of the foreshore was the Fun Fair, and, opposite the Fun Fair, the shellfish booths, where cockles and mussels and shrimps were shovelled into little paper cones and sprinkled with malt vinegar. 'Everything is so vulgar on the Lower Bay,' said Mrs Hennessey, 'everything is so cheap and nasty, it smells so, I wonder anyone at all can bear it.'
- 4 That summer, the weather was almost always good, the days long and hot and the beaches bright and noisy with day trippers. Mrs Hennessey turned away expectant families, evening after evening, at the door. 'I am not a hotel for passing visitors, I am entirely devoted to the care of the elderly, of my permanent residents,' she told them, smoothing down the skirts of her pastel linen dresses, watching them go off in their laden cars hot and tired and disappointed down the drive.

- 5 In the afternoons, tea was served on the terrace and the deckchairs were occupied by old Mr Brotherton and Mrs de Vere and Ethel Haynes, sleeping under striped umbrellas to shade them from the glare of the sun. Miss Parson took little solitary walks up Cliff Terrace, behind the Guest House, and the desire to venture into the streets and shops and arcades of the Lower Bay became an obsession with her.
- 6 In her heart, Miss Parson felt that life as it should be lived was lived along the foreshore of the Lower Bay. At night, she drew back the curtains of her side window and sat, watching the flickering lights of the amusement arcade and the Fun Fair, the carousel a glowing blur of gold and scarlet and the water chute cascading electric blue. If she opened her window and the breeze was in the right direction, she could hear the clamour of people and machines, the shrieks and cries of girls on the rides as their skirts went about their heads, the metallic rasp and rattle of music from loudspeakers.
- 7 She imagined the couples arm-in-arm, the mothers with their grown-up families, the middle-aged men in shirts, open over sun-reddened chests, and, above them all, the big wheel spinning in a flashing circle, as if gathering speed to take off into the sky. She shivered in contemplation of the noisy secrets of the ghost train. She pictured herself devouring cockles, strong as brine and heavily vinegared, then queueing up to buy more, hovering in her choice between the brown-pink whiskered shrimps and mussels, rubber-smooth and yet curiously gritty in the mouth.
- 8 When the lights of the Fun Fair were switched out, Miss Parson left her chair by the window, after drawing the curtains again, and prepared herself for bed. Later, in the abrupt darkness, she remembered that she was sixty-nine years old and knew nothing, and was ready to climb a little stiffly into her bed.
- 9 On the last Friday in July the temperature reached 84 degrees and the season for day trippers was at its height. Sitting in the garden of the Delacourt Guest House, Miss Parson felt restless, felt the summer again passing her by, and was irritated with those around her, by the constant talk of Ethel Haynes, and the snores of old Mr Brotherton. I have no place here, she thought, it is a house for old and dying people and I shall begin to grow like them, the trivialities of everyday life here will assume a greater and greater importance, the times of meals will be all I have to look forward to. And it will be my own fault.
- 10 The hard, straight sunlight lay across the Victorian house, and the terrace and garden. It was too hot, now, for any of the residents except Miss Parson herself, and old Mr Brotherton snoring under a panama hat. From the beaches came the high sharp cries of children, the sea glittered in ridges for miles out.
- 11 In her agitation, Miss Parson got up quickly from the striped deckchair and began to walk round and round the garden, rubbing her fingers about in the palms of her hands, wanting to make a decision.

Adapted from the short story 'Cockles and Mussels' by Susan Hill

1. Reread paragraphs 1 and 2.

For
examiner's
use only

a) **Using your own words**, explain four things the reader learns about the Delacourt Guest House **in paragraph 1**. (4 marks)

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

b) **Using your own words**, identify two aspects of the guest house that we are told are not what makes Miss Parson 'grateful' **in paragraph 2**. (2 marks)

i. _____

ii. _____

c) Explain what you think does make Miss Parson 'grateful' to be living in the Delacourt Guest House **in paragraph 2**. (1 mark)

Q1 TOTAL
/ 7

2. Look again at paragraphs 3, 4 and 5.

a) Select **one quotation** that suggests the Delacourt Guest House was a place where everything happens at the same time each day. (1 mark)

b) Select **one quotation** that suggests there are a large number of things to see and do in the town. (1 mark)

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c) Select **one quotation** that suggests the shops on the Lower Bay sell items designed to help visitors remember their visit there. (1 mark)

d) Explain what the underlined word specifically suggests in this sentence: 'cockles and mussels were shovelled into little paper cones' (2 marks)

e) Explain what the underlined word specifically suggests in this sentence: 'watching them go off in their laden cars hot and tired and disappointed' (2 marks)

f) Explain what the underlined word specifically suggests in this sentence: 'the desire to venture into the streets and shops and arcades of the Lower Bay became an obsession with her' (2 marks)

3. Look again at information concerning Mrs Hennessy, the owner of the Delacourt Guest House, in paragraphs 1, 3 and 4.

*For
examiner's
use only*

a) **From paragraph 1 only**, select:

- i) one quotation that suggests Mrs Hennessy cares about her elderly residents
- ii) one quotation that suggests Mrs Hennessy takes advantage of her elderly residents

Explain how each quotation shows this. Focus on the meanings of individual words as much as possible. (4 marks)

i) Quotation: _____

Explanation (2 marks): _____



ii) Quotation: _____

Explanation (2 marks): _____



- b) The description of Mrs Hennessey and her actions in paragraphs 3 and 4 suggests that her dislike of the ‘day trippers’ goes beyond practical concerns and reveals more about her character.

*For
examiner's
use only*

From paragraphs 3 and 4 only, select **two** quotations detailing what Mrs Hennessey says or does and explain what each could imply about her as a person. Focus on the meanings of individual words as much as possible.

i) Quotation: _____

Explanation (2 marks): _____

ii) Quotation: _____

Explanation (2 marks): _____

Q3 TOTAL
/ 8

5. Reread paragraph 6.

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examiner's
use only

The writer's description of the Lower Bay in this paragraph appeals to the reader's senses in order to make it seem exciting and attractive. Choose **three separate phrases from paragraph 6 only** that make use of sensory imagery. For each, identify the sense appealed to and comment on how the writer makes the Lower Bay seem exciting or attractive. Try to discuss individual words and their effects.

You might wish to refer to the writer's choice of nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs, or to connotation, imagery, metaphor, simile or onomatopoeia.
(9 marks)

a) Phrase: _____

Sense: _____ (1 mark)

Comment: _____

_____ (2 marks)

b) Phrase: _____

Sense: _____ (1 mark)

Comment: _____

_____ (2 marks)

c) Phrase: _____

Sense: _____ (1 mark)

Comment: _____

_____ (2 marks)

For
examiner's
use only

Q5 TOTAL
/ 9

6. Reread paragraph 7.

b) How does the writer's description of what Miss Parsons imagines the fair to be like vividly capture her excitement?

Write a paragraph that includes at least two quotations of examples and comment on the effects of each.

You might wish to refer to the writer's choice of nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs, or to connotation, imagery, metaphor, simile or onomatopoeia.
(6 marks)

SECTION B: DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH (20 MARKS)

Spend 15 minutes on this section.

Write a detailed paragraph paying attention to description and accuracy of spelling and grammar. Marks will be awarded for ambitious and imaginative use of vocabulary and sentences and effective use of imagery.

Take care to craft your writing and check your answer carefully.

Choose **one** of the following topics:

Either

1. The scene shown in this picture:



Or

2. 'Evening in the town'

Circle the number of the topic you have chosen.

