

Paper 1 mini mock: a vendetta

Source A: The opening of a short story called 'A Vendetta' by Guy de Maupassant.

1 The widow of Paolo Saverini lived alone with her son in a poor little house on the outskirts of Bonifacio. The town, built on an outjutting part of the mountain, in places even overhanging the sea, looks across the straits, full of sandbanks, towards the southernmost coast of Sardinia. Beneath it, on the other side and almost surrounding it, is a cleft in the cliff like an immense corridor which serves as a harbor, and along it the little Italian and Sardinian fishing boats come by a circuitous route between precipitous cliffs as far as the first houses, and every two weeks the old, wheezy steamer which makes the trip to Ajaccio.

5

10 On the white mountain the houses, massed together, makes an even whiter spot. They look like the nests of wild birds, clinging to this peak, overlooking this terrible passage, where vessels rarely venture. The wind, which blows uninterruptedly, has swept bare the forbidding coast; it drives through the narrow straits and lays waste both sides. The pale streaks of foam, clinging to the black rocks, whose countless peaks rise up out of the water, look like bits of rag floating and drifting on the surface of the sea.

15 The house of widow Saverini, clinging to the very edge of the precipice, looks out, through its three windows, over this wild and desolate picture.

20 She lived there alone, with her son Antonia and their dog "Semillante," a big, thin beast, with a long rough coat, of the sheep-dog breed. The young man took her with him when out hunting.

25 One night, after some kind of a quarrel, Antoine Saverini was treacherously stabbed by Nicolas Ravolati, who escaped the same evening to Sardinia.

30 When the old mother received the body of her child, which the neighbors had brought back to her, she did not cry, but she stayed there for a long time motionless, watching him. Then, stretching her wrinkled hand over the body, she promised him a vendetta. She did not wish anybody near her, and she shut herself up beside the body with the dog, which howled continuously, standing at the foot of the bed, her head stretched towards her master and her tail between her legs. She did not move any more than did the mother, who, now leaning over the body with a blank stare, was weeping silently and watching it.

35 The young man, lying on his back, dressed in his jacket of coarse cloth, torn at the chest, seemed to be asleep. But he had blood all over him; on his shirt, which had been torn off in order to administer the first aid; on his vest, on his trousers, on his face, on his hands. Clots of blood had hardened in his beard and in his hair.

40 His old mother began to talk to him. At the sound of this voice the dog quieted down.

"Never fear, my boy, my little baby, you shall be avenged. Sleep, sleep; you shall be avenged. Do you hear? It's your mother's promise! And she always keeps her word, your mother does, you know she does."

40 Slowly she leaned over him, pressing her cold lips to his dead ones.

Then Semillante began to howl again with a long, monotonous, penetrating, horrible howl. The two of them, the woman and the dog, remained there until morning.

Antoine Saverini was buried the next day and soon his name ceased to be mentioned in Bonifacio. He had neither brothers nor cousins. No man was there to carry on the vendetta. His mother, the old woman, alone pondered over it.

Questions

Q1 – 4 marks – 5 minutes

Use lines 1-7.

List four things you learn about the location the story is set in.

Q2 – 8 marks – 10 minutes

Use lines 8-15.

How does the writer use language to describe the setting?

Q4 – 20 marks – 25 minutes

Use lines 16-40.

A student said "The mother is presented as both upset and angry at the death, and the writer creates sympathy for her in this ending"

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write your own impressions about the characters

Q3– 8 marks – 10 minutes

Use the whole source.

How does the writer structure the text to interest you as a reader?

- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with references to the text.

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Paper 1 mini mock: one summer night

Source A: A short story titled 'One Summer Night' by Ambrose Bierce written in 1893.

1 The fact that Henry Armstrong was buried did not seem to him to prove that he was dead: he had always been a hard man to convince. That he really was buried, the testimony of his senses
5 compelled him to admit. His posture -- flat upon his back, with his hands crossed upon his stomach and tied with something that he easily broke without profitably altering the situation -- the strict confinement of his entire person, the black darkness and profound silence, made a body of evidence impossible to controvert and he accepted it without cavil.

10 But dead -- no; he was only very, very ill. He had, withal, the invalid's apathy¹ and did not greatly concern himself about the uncommon fate that had been allotted to him. No philosopher was he -- just a plain, commonplace person gifted, for the time being, with a pathological² indifference: the organ that he feared consequences with was torpid³. So, with no particular apprehension for his immediate future, he fell asleep and all was peace with Henry Armstrong.

15 But something was going on overhead. It was a dark summer night, shot through with infrequent shimmers of lightning silently firing a cloud lying low in the west and portending⁴ a storm. These brief, stammering illuminations brought out with ghastly distinctness the monuments and headstones of the cemetery and seemed to set them dancing. It was not a night in which any credible witness was likely to be straying about a cemetery, so the three men who were there, digging into the grave of Henry Armstrong, felt reasonably secure.

20 Two of them were young students from a medical college a few miles away; the third was a gigantic man known as Jess. For many years Jess had been employed about the cemetery as a man-of-all-work and it was his favourite pleasantry that he knew 'every soul in the place.' From the nature of what he was now doing it was inferable that the place was not so populous as its register may have shown it to be. Outside the wall, at the part of the grounds farthest from the public road, were a horse and a light wagon, waiting.

25 The work of excavation was not difficult: the earth with which the grave had been loosely filled a few hours before offered little resistance and was soon thrown out. Removal of the casket from its box was less easy, but it was taken out, for it was a perquisite⁵ of Jess, who carefully unscrewed the cover and laid it aside, exposing the body in black trousers and white shirt. At that instant the air sprang to flame, a cracking shock of thunder shook the stunned world and Henry Armstrong tranquilly sat up. With inarticulate cries the men fled in terror, each in a different direction. For nothing on earth could
30 two of them have been persuaded to return. But Jess was of another breed.

In the grey of the morning the two students, pallid and haggard from anxiety and with the terror of their adventure still beating tumultuously in their blood, met at the medical college.

'You saw it?' cried one.

'God! yes -- what are we to do?'

35 They went around to the rear of the building, where they saw a horse, attached to a light wagon, hitched to a gatepost near the door of the dissecting-room. Mechanically they entered the room. On a bench in the obscurity sat Jess. He rose, grinning, all eyes and teeth. 'I'm waiting for my pay,' he said.

39 Stretched naked on a long table lay the body of Henry Armstrong, the head defiled with blood and clay from a blow with a spade.

1 apathy: indifference, boredom. 2 pathological: illogical, obsessive 3 torpid: inactive, lifeless
4 portending: foretelling, signalling 5 perquisite: benefit, strong point

Questions

Q1 – 4 marks – 5 minutes

Use lines 1-7.

List four things you learn about Henry.

Q2 – 8 marks – 10 minutes

Using lines 12-17.

How does the writer use language to describe the setting?

Q4 – 20 marks – 25 minutes

Use lines 17-39.

A student said "Although we are scared of the creepy and tense atmosphere, I think the ending is actually very unexpected"

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write your own impressions about the characters

Q3– 8 marks – 10 minutes

Use the whole source.

How does the writer structure the text to interest you as a reader?

- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with references to the text.

Paper 1 mini mock: The splendid cannibals

Source A: The opening of a short story titled 'The Splendid Cannibals' by Ransom Riggs written in 2016.

1 The peculiars in the village of Swampmuck lived very modestly. They were farmers, and though they didn't own fancy things and lived in flimsy houses made of reeds, they were healthy and joyful and wanted for little. Food grew bountifully in their gardens, clean water ran in the streams, and even their humble homes seemed like luxuries because the weather in Swampmuck was so fair, and the

5 villagers were so devoted to their work that many, after a long day of mucking, would simply lie down and sleep in their swamps.

Harvest was their favourite time of year. Working round the clock, they gathered the best weeds that had grown in the swamp that season, bundled them onto donkey carts, and drove their bounty to the market town of Chipping Whippet, a five days' ride, to sell what they could. It was difficult work. The

10 swampweed was rough and tore their hands. The donkeys were ill-tempered and liked to bite. The road to market was pitted with holes and plagued by thieves. There were often grievous accidents, such as when Farmer Pullman, in a fit of overzealous harvesting, accidentally scythed off his neighbor's leg. The neighbor, Farmer Hayworth, was understandably upset, but the villagers were such agreeable people that all was soon forgiven.

15 That very year, just after the festival had ended and the villagers were about to return to their toil in the swamps, three visitors arrived. Swampmuck rarely had visitors of any kind, as it was not the sort of place people wanted to visit, and it had certainly never had visitors like these: two men and a lady dressed head to toe in lush brocaded silk, riding on the backs of three fine Arabian horses. But though the visitors were obviously rich, they looked emaciated and swayed weakly in their bejeweled saddles.

20 The villagers gathered around them curiously, marveling at their beautiful clothes and horses. "We're on a journey to the coast of Meek," explained one of the visitors, a man who seemed to be the only one strong enough to speak. "We were accosted by bandits some weeks ago, and, though we were able to outrun them, we got badly lost. We've been turning circles ever since."

25 "You're nowhere near the Roman Road," said Farmer Sally. "Or the coast of Meek," "We'll never make it," the man said darkly. At that, the silk-robed lady slumped in her saddle and fell to the ground. The villagers, moved to compassion despite their concerns about disease, brought the fallen lady and her companions into the nearest house.

"Give them space!" said Farmer Pullman. "They're exhausted; they need rest!" "No, they need a doctor!" said Farmer Sally.

30 "We aren't sick," the man said. "We're hungry. Our supplies ran out over a week ago, and we haven't had a bite to eat since then." Farmer Sally wondered why such wealthy people hadn't simply bought food from fellow travellers on the road, but she was too polite to ask. Instead, she ordered some village boys to run and fetch bowls— but when it was laid before the visitors, they turned the food away. "I don't mean to be rude," said the man, "but we can't eat this."

35 "I know it's a humble spread," said Farmer Sally, "but it's all we have." "It isn't that," the man said. "Grains, vegetables, animal meat — our bodies simply can't process them. And if we force ourselves to eat, it will only make us weaker."

The villagers were confused. "If you can't eat grains, vegetables, or animals," asked Farmer Pullman, "then what can you eat?" "People," the man replied.

Questions

Q1 – 4 marks – 5 minutes

Use lines 1-6.

List four things you learn about the villagers.

Q2 – 8 marks – 10 minutes

Using lines 7-14.

How does the writer use language to describe the villager's work?

Q4 – 20 marks – 25 minutes

Use lines 16-40.

A student said "The arrival of the visitors seems exciting and unusual for the villagers, but the writer makes us think that something strange is going to happen"

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write your own impressions about the characters

Q3– 8 marks – 10 minutes

Use the whole source.

How does the writer structure the text to interest you as a reader?

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