

# COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH

The University of the State of New York

REGENTS HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

IN

## ENGLISH

**Monday, January 27, 2014 — 1:15 to 4:15 p.m., only**

The possession or use of any communications device is strictly prohibited when taking this examination. If you have or use any communications device, no matter how briefly, your examination will be invalidated and no score will be calculated for you.

A separate answer sheet has been provided for you. Follow the instructions for completing the student information on your answer sheet. You must also fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet that has a space for it, and write your name at the top of each sheet of scrap paper.

The examination has four parts. Part 1 tests listening skills; you are to answer all eight multiple-choice questions. For Part 2, you are to answer all twelve multiple-choice questions. For Part 3, you are to answer all five multiple-choice questions and the two short constructed-response questions. For Part 4, you are to write one essay response. The two short constructed-response questions and the essay response should be written in pen.

When you have completed the examination, you must sign the statement printed at the bottom of the front of the answer sheet, indicating that you had no unlawful knowledge of the questions or answers prior to the examination and that you have neither given nor received assistance in answering any of the questions during the examination. Your answer sheet cannot be accepted if you fail to sign this declaration.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS EXAMINATION BOOKLET UNTIL THE SIGNAL IS GIVEN.**



## NOTES

**DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**

## Part 1 (Questions 1–8)

### Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (1–8): Use your notes to answer the following questions about the passage read to you. Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

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| <p>1 The speaker contrasts Antarctica with both Alaska and Wisconsin in order to emphasize Antarctica's</p> <p>(1) location                      (3) population<br/>(2) climate                      (4) geography</p> <p>2 According to the account, international agreements related to Antarctica are based on the possibility that</p> <p>(1) natural resources may be discovered there<br/>(2) numbers of tourists may increase<br/>(3) more small ships may be allowed to visit<br/>(4) wildlife may become more plentiful</p> <p>3 The speaker uses “island hopping” to describe</p> <p>(1) an approach to save fuel<br/>(2) a method of penguin migration<br/>(3) an activity for tourists<br/>(4) a way to preserve the shoreline</p> <p>4 For the speaker, the “big moment” occurs when he</p> <p>(1) first sees Antarctica in the distance<br/>(2) first lands on an island<br/>(3) encounters the whale carcass<br/>(4) swims in the Southern Ocean</p> | <p>5 The ice of Antarctica appears blue because of the</p> <p>(1) shape of the icebergs<br/>(2) angle of the sunlight<br/>(3) presence of minerals in the ice<br/>(4) absence of oxygen in the ice</p> <p>6 The speaker includes details about Antarctica's mountains, wildlife, and immensity in order to suggest Antarctica's</p> <p>(1) potential dangers<br/>(2) unique beauty<br/>(3) environmental fragility<br/>(4) economic stability</p> <p>7 The speaker uses a simile when he says</p> <p>(1) “blindingly white mountains clamored skyward”<br/>(2) “albatross and giant petrels soared in lazy circles”<br/>(3) “chunks of glacier ... fall into the sea with a crack like cannon fire”<br/>(4) “subterranean lava heats the water to near-pleasant temperatures”</p> <p>8 The account is developed primarily through description of</p> <p>(1) historical events<br/>(2) personal experiences<br/>(3) geological formations<br/>(4) philosophical reflections</p> |
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## Part 2 (Questions 9–20)

**Directions** (9–20): Below each passage, there are several multiple-choice questions. Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

### Reading Comprehension Passage A

I was lucky enough to discover my passion for flying when I was very young, and to indulge that passion day after day. Lucky that some things went my way; my eyesight, for instance, was good enough to allow me to become a fighter pilot. And lucky that when I left the military, I found work as an airline pilot, when such jobs weren't plentiful.

5 I still feel fortunate, after all these years, to be able to follow my passion. The airline industry has its problems, and a lot of the issues can be troubling and wearying, but I still find purpose and satisfaction in flying.

10 There's a literal freedom you feel when you're at the controls, gliding above the surface of the earth, no longer bound by gravity. It's as if you're rising above the nitty-gritty details of life. Even at a few thousand feet, you get a wider perspective. Problems that loom large down below feel smaller from that height, and smaller still by the time you reach thirty-five thousand feet.

15 I love that flying is an intellectual challenge, and that there's mental math that needs to be done all along the way. If you change the angle of the nose versus the horizon by even one degree while traveling at a typical commercial airliner speed of seven nautical miles a minute, it's enough to increase or decrease your rate of climb or descent by seven hundred feet per minute. I enjoy keeping track of all the calculations, staying aware of the weather conditions, working with a team—flight attendants, air traffic controllers, first officers, maintenance crews—while knowing intimately what the plane can and cannot do. Even  
20 when the controls are being manipulated through automation, pilots have to back up the computer systems with their own mental math. I like the challenge of that.

I also like sharing my passion for flying. It's a disappointment to me that a lot of kids today aren't especially fascinated by flight. I've watched countless children walk past the cockpit without paying much attention; they're too focused on their video games or their  
25 iPods.

When there are children who eagerly want a look inside "my office" at the front of the plane, their enthusiasm is contagious. It's so gratifying to see their excitement about something I care deeply about. If we aren't busy during boarding, the first officer and I enjoy inviting inquisitive children to sit in our seats in the cockpit, ask questions, and let their  
30 parents take photos of them wearing a captain's hat.

Being a pilot has a tangible end result that is beneficial to society. It feels good to take a planeload of 183 people where they need or want to go. My job is to reunite people with family and friends, to send them on long-awaited vacations, to bring them to loved ones' funerals, to get them to their job interviews. By the end of a day, after piloting three or four  
35 trips, I've taken four or five hundred people safely to their destinations, and I feel as if I've accomplished something. All of them have their own stories, motivations, needs—and helping them brings a rewarding feeling.

This is what gets me ready for work, and one of the things I look forward to. ...

—Captain Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger with Jeffrey Zaslow  
excerpted from *Highest Duty*, 2009  
HarperCollins Publishers

- 9 Lines 9 through 12 suggest that flying offers the narrator
- (1) a test of his technical expertise
  - (2) an opportunity for better understanding
  - (3) an appreciation for natural beauty
  - (4) a vision of his future accomplishment
- 10 The narrator's inclusion of details about his mental stimulation demonstrates his
- (1) expertise
  - (2) aggressiveness
  - (3) creativity
  - (4) impatience
- 11 The narrator expresses regret that some children no longer seem to appreciate the
- (1) expanse of the country
  - (2) value of education
  - (3) need to help others
  - (4) wonder of flight
- 12 Which phrase from the passage is used as a transition?
- (1) "purpose and satisfaction" (line 7)
  - (2) "also like sharing my passion" (line 22)
  - (3) "they're too focused" (line 24)
  - (4) "at the front of the plane" (lines 26 and 27)
- 13 The phrase "a tangible end result that is beneficial to society" (line 31) implies the narrator's
- (1) satisfaction
  - (2) affection
  - (3) patriotism
  - (4) optimism
- 14 The genre of this passage can best be described as a
- (1) social satire
  - (2) personal account
  - (3) critical commentary
  - (4) persuasive essay
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## Reading Comprehension Passage B

The steamboat Bertrand was heavily laden with provisions when it set out on the Missouri River in 1865, destined for the gold mining camps in Fort Benton, Mont[ana]. The boat snagged and swamped under the weight, sinking to the bottom of the river. It was found a century later, under 30 feet of silt a little north of Omaha, Neb[raska].

5 Among the canned food items retrieved from the Bertrand in 1968 were brandied peaches, oysters, plum tomatoes, honey, and mixed vegetables. In 1974, chemists at the National Food Processors Association (NFPA) analyzed the products for bacterial contamination and nutrient value. Although the food had lost its fresh smell and appearance, the NFPA chemists detected no microbial growth and determined that the  
10 foods were as safe to eat as they had been when canned more than 100 years earlier. ...

Canned foods are more than a relic dug from the past. They make up 12 percent of grocery sales in the United States. More than 1,500 food products are canned—including many that aren't available fresh in most areas, such as elderberry, guava, mango, and about  
15 75 different juice drinks. Consumers can buy at least 130 different canned vegetable products—from artichokes and asparagus to turnips and zucchini. More than a dozen kinds of beef are canned, including beef burgers and chopped, corned and barbecued beef. ...

Food-spoiling bacteria, yeasts and molds are naturally present in foods. To grow, these microorganisms need moisture, a low-acid environment (acid prevents bacterial growth), nutrients, and an appropriate (usually room) temperature.

20 Dennis Dignan, Ph.D., chief of FDA's [Food and Drug Administration's] food processing section, explains that foods are preserved from food spoilage by controlling one or more of the above factors. For instance, frozen foods are stored at temperatures too low for microorganisms (bacteria, yeasts and molds) to grow. When foods are dried, sufficient moisture is not available to promote growth.

25 It is the preservation process that distinguishes canned from other packaged foods. During canning, the food is placed in an airtight (hermetically sealed) container and heated to destroy microorganisms. The hermetic seal is essential to ensure that microorganisms do not contaminate the product after it is sterilized through heating, says Dignan. Properly  
30 canned foods can be stored unrefrigerated indefinitely without fear of their spoiling or becoming toxic. ...

Dignan also notes that foods packaged in materials other than metal cans are considered "canned" by food processing specialists if the food undergoes the canning preservation process. Thus, today a canned food may be packaged in a number of other types of  
35 containers, such as glass jars, paperboard cans, and plastics that can be formed into anything from pouches to soup bowls to serving trays. ...

Foods with a naturally high acid content—such as tomatoes, citrus juices, pears, and other fruits—will not support the growth of food poisoning bacteria. In tests, when large numbers of food poisoning bacteria are added to these foods, the bacteria die within a day. (The exact amount of time depends upon the bacteria and amount of acidity.) Foods that  
40 have a high acid content, therefore, do not receive as extreme a heat treatment as low-acid foods. They are heated sufficiently to destroy bacteria, yeasts and molds that could cause food to spoil. ...

Low-acid canned foods receive a high dose of heat—usually 107 degrees Celsius (250 degrees Fa[h]renheit) for at least three minutes. (The amount of time the food is heat-  
45 ed, though, depends upon the size of the container and the product.) The canned food is heated in a retort, a kind of pressure cooker. ...

Another critical element in the canned food process is sealing products in airtight containers. It is essential that air be removed from the container before sealing. Air could cause the can to expand during heating, perhaps damaging the seals or seams of the container.

A telltale sign of loss of this vacuum<sup>1</sup>—and a possibly contaminated product—is a can with bulging ends. If a seal is not airtight, bacteria may enter the can, multiply, and contaminate the product. ...

—Dale Blumenthal  
excerpted and adapted from “The Canning Process”  
*FDA Consumer*, September 1990

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<sup>1</sup>vacuum — an airtight seal

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|--|--|
| <p>15 This passage is introduced with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) a historical anecdote</li><li>(2) an effective argument</li><li>(3) a controlling metaphor</li><li>(4) an extended dialogue</li></ul> <p>16 Canning preserves food safely by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) increasing sodium levels</li><li>(2) eliminating microorganisms</li><li>(3) reducing its light exposure</li><li>(4) changing its chemical composition</li></ul> <p>17 Based upon the definition of the word “canned” in lines 32 through 35, which product would <i>not</i> be considered a canned product?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) a jar of peanut butter</li><li>(2) a basket of peaches</li><li>(3) a sealed snack packet</li><li>(4) a bottle of orange juice</li></ul> | <p>18 Tests have indicated that certain foods require less processing because those foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) are not heat tolerant</li><li>(2) can be stored anywhere</li><li>(3) do not change color</li><li>(4) have high acid content</li></ul> <p>19 According to the passage, the vacuum seal on preserved food can be compromised by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) overripe produce</li><li>(2) damaged seams</li><li>(3) lack of refrigeration</li><li>(4) overfilling during preparation</li></ul> <p>20 The passage concludes with a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) summary of the advantages of pressurization</li><li>(2) list of the best foods for preservation</li><li>(3) tip to avoid purchasing spoiled food</li><li>(4) suggestion to shop more economically</li></ul> |
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## Part 3 (Questions 21–27)

**Directions:** On the following pages read Passage I (an excerpt from a short story) and Passage II (a poem) about insight. You may use the margins to take notes as you read. Answer the multiple-choice questions on the answer sheet provided for you. Then write your response for question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet.

### Passage I

...Something appeared in the sky shortly before one o'clock. Many of us were still at lunch, others were already outside, standing motionless on the streets and sidewalks, gazing up. There were shouts and cries, arms in the air, a wildness of gesturing, pointing. And, sure enough, something was glittering, up there in the sky, something was shimmering, in the blue air of summer—we saw it clearly, whatever it was. Secretaries in offices rushed to windows, storekeepers abandoned their cash registers and hurried outdoors, road workers in orange hard hats looked up from the asphalt, shaded their eyes. It must have lasted—that faraway glow, that spot of shimmer—some three or four minutes. Then it began to grow larger, until it was the size of a dime, a quarter. Suddenly the entire sky seemed to be filled with points of gold. Then it was coming down on us, like fine pollen, like yellow dust. It lay on our roof slopes, it sifted down onto our sidewalks, covered our shirtsleeves and the tops of our cars. We did not know what to make of it. ...

In the morning, we woke to a world covered in yellow dust. It lay on the tops of our fences, on the crossbars of telephone poles. Black tire tracks showed in the yellow streets. Birds, shaking their wings, threw up sprays of yellow powder. Again the street-sweepers came, the hoses splashed on driveways and lawns, making a yellow mist and revealing the black and the green underneath. Within an hour the driveways and lawns resembled yellow fields. Lines of yellow ran along cables and telephone wires.

According to the news, the unicellular microorganisms are rod-shaped and nourish themselves by photosynthesis. A single cell, placed in a brightly illuminated test tube, divides at such a rate that the tube will fill in about forty minutes. An entire room, in strong light, will fill in six hours. The organisms do not fit easily into our classification schemes, though in some respects they resemble blue-green algae. There is no evidence that they are harmful to human or animal life.

We have been invaded by nothing, by emptiness, by animate dust. The invader appears to have no characteristic other than the ability to reproduce rapidly. It doesn't hate us. It doesn't seek our annihilation, our subjection and humiliation. Nor does it desire to protect us from danger, to save us, to teach us the secret of immortal life. What it wishes to do is replicate. It is possible that we will find a way of limiting the spread of this primitive intruder, or of eliminating it altogether; it's also possible that we will fail and that our town will gradually disappear under a fatal accumulation. As we follow the reports from day to day, the feeling grows in us that we deserved something else, something bolder, something grander, something more thrilling, something bristling or fiery or fierce, something that might have represented a revelation or a destiny. We imagine ourselves surrounding the tilted spaceship, waiting for the door to open. We imagine ourselves protecting our children, slashing the tentacles that thrust in through the smashed cellar windows. Instead, we sweep our front walks, hose off our porches, shake out our shoes and sneakers. The invader has entered our homes. Despite our drawn shades and closed curtains, it lies in thick layers on our end tables and windowsills. It lies along the tops of our flat-screen televisions and the

40 narrow edges of our shelved DVDs. Through our windows we can see the yellow dust covering everything, forming gentle undulations. We can almost see it rising slowly, like bread. Here and there it catches the sunlight and reminds us, for a moment, of fields of wheat.

It is really quite peaceful, in its way.

—Steven Millhauser  
excerpted from “The Invasion from Outer Space”  
*The New Yorker*, February 9 & 16, 2009

**Passage II**  
**Cold Spring**

The last few gray sheets of snow are gone,  
winter's scraps and leavings lowered  
to a common level. A sudden jolt  
of weather pushed us outside, and now  
5 this larger world once again belongs to us.  
I stand at the edge of it, beside the house,  
listening to the stream we haven't heard  
since fall, and I imagine one day thinking  
back to this hour and blaming myself  
10 for my worries, my foolishness, today's choices  
having become the accomplished  
facts of change, accepted  
or forgotten. The woods are a mangle  
of lines, yet delicate, yet precise,  
15 when I take the time to look closely.  
If I'm not happy it must be my own fault.  
At the edge of the lawn my wife  
bends down to uncover a flower, then another.  
The first splurge of crocuses.  
20 And for a moment the sweep and shudder  
of the wind seems indistinguishable  
from the steady furl<sup>1</sup> of water  
just beyond her.

—Lawrence Raab  
from *Other Children*, 1987  
Carnegie Mellon University Press

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<sup>1</sup>furl — roll up

## Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (21–25): Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

**Passage I** (the short story excerpt) — Questions 21–22 refer to Passage I.

- 21 The phrase “Again the street-sweepers came” (lines 15 and 16) suggests which characteristic of the yellow dust?
- (1) It makes an annoying sound.
  - (2) It has an offensive odor.
  - (3) It has an abrasive quality.
  - (4) It continues to collect.
- 22 As used in the passage, the word “something” (lines 32 and 33) enables the narrator to
- (1) build a dramatic intensity
  - (2) classify data
  - (3) balance viewpoints
  - (4) complete a visual description

**Passage II** (the poem) — Questions 23–25 refer to Passage II.

- 23 The phrase “A sudden jolt of weather pushed us outside” (lines 3 and 4) most likely signals
- (1) the coming of warmth
  - (2) a terrible storm
  - (3) the threat of cold
  - (4) a refreshing shower
- 24 In lines 6 through 13, the narrator fears that he may have
- (1) misunderstood the weather
  - (2) used his time unwisely
  - (3) spent too long outdoors
  - (4) upset his wife and family
- 25 The poet suggests that by observing one’s surroundings a person can find
- (1) danger
  - (2) conflict
  - (3) success
  - (4) clarity
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## Short-Response Questions

**Directions** (26–27): Write your responses to question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet. Be sure to answer **both** questions.

26 Write a well-developed paragraph in which you use ideas from **both** Passage I (the short story excerpt) and Passage II (the poem) to establish a controlling idea about insight. Develop your controlling idea using specific examples and details from **both** Passage I and Passage II.

27 Choose a specific literary element (e.g., theme, characterization, structure, point of view, etc.) or literary technique (e.g., symbolism, irony, figurative language, etc.) used by **one** of the authors. Using specific details from **either** Passage I (the short story excerpt) **or** Passage II (the poem), in a well-developed paragraph, show how the author uses that element or technique to develop the passage.

## Part 4 (Question 28)

### Your Task:

Write a critical essay in which you discuss **two** works of literature you have read from the particular perspective of the statement that is provided for you in the **Critical Lens**. In your essay, provide a valid interpretation of the statement, agree **or** disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it, and support your opinion using specific references to appropriate literary elements from the two works. You may use scrap paper to plan your response. Write your essay beginning on page 3 of the essay booklet.

### Critical Lens:

“...only when it is dark enough can you see the stars.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

“I’ve Been to the Mountaintop”

delivered at Mason Temple, Memphis, TN, April 3, 1968

### Guidelines:

#### Be sure to

- Provide a valid interpretation of the critical lens that clearly establishes the criteria for analysis
- Indicate whether you agree **or** disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it
- Choose **two** works you have read that you believe best support your opinion
- Use the criteria suggested by the critical lens to analyze the works you have chosen
- Avoid plot summary. Instead, use specific references to appropriate literary elements (for example: theme, characterization, setting, point of view) to develop your analysis
- Organize your ideas in a unified and coherent manner
- Specify the titles and authors of the literature you choose
- Follow the conventions of standard written English



