

The University of the State of New York

REGENTS HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

IN

**ENGLISH****SESSION TWO****Thursday, June 17, 2010 — 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., only**

The last page of this booklet is the answer sheet for the multiple-choice questions. Fold the last page along the perforations and, slowly and carefully, tear off the answer sheet. Then fill in the heading of your answer sheet. Now circle “Session Two” and fill in the heading of each page of your essay booklet.

This session of the examination has two parts. For Part A, you are to answer all ten multiple-choice questions and write a response, as directed. For Part B, you are to write a response, as directed.

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

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

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

## Part A

**Directions:** Read the passages on the following pages (a memoir and a poem). Write the number of the answer to each multiple-choice question on your answer sheet. Then write the essay in your essay booklet as described in **Your Task**. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response.

### Your Task:

After you have read the passages and answered the multiple-choice questions, write a unified essay about separation as revealed in the passages. In your essay, use ideas from *both* passages to establish a controlling idea about separation. Using evidence from *each* passage, develop your controlling idea and show how the author uses specific literary elements or techniques to convey that idea.

### Guidelines:

#### Be sure to

- Use ideas from *both* passages to establish a controlling idea about separation
- Use specific and relevant evidence from *each* passage to develop your controlling idea
- Show how each author uses specific literary elements (for example: theme, characterization, structure, point of view) or techniques (for example: symbolism, irony, figurative language) to convey the controlling idea
- Organize your ideas in a logical and coherent manner
- Use language that communicates ideas effectively
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

## Passage I

It was a summertime Saturday morning, and I was up before dawn to go fishing. I tiptoed out of the house so I wouldn't disturb anyone, but when I reached my car, someone was already up and waiting for me—my seventeen-year-old daughter, Holly. She was dressed in jeans, a blue denim shirt, and a khaki fishing vest, and she was checking out her tackle box. I knew that she had something important on her mind.

Holly first became my fishing buddy when she was about six years old. For years, I couldn't go fishing without taking her along, but when she reached her teens, she began to develop other interests. After a while, the only time she'd go with me was when she needed to have a private talk; the most private place we had was our little boat on a remote lake at dawn.

We reached the lake, near West Des Moines, Iowa, before the sun was up, unloaded our boat, and slid it into the water. Holly took her usual place in the bow while I pushed off. I switched on the electric motor, and it propelled us quietly across the calm water. The night mist was just beginning to lift, slowly unveiling the pines and birches that lined the shore. A beaver, irritated by our intrusion, slapped the water with his strong, broad tail to show his displeasure.

"The usual starting place?" Holly asked.

"The usual."

I steered the boat to a quiet inlet dotted with tree stumps and came to a stop. Bass country.

"The usual bet?" Holly asked. She smiled, but her dark-brown eyes were serious, almost sad.

"The usual," I said. That was a dollar for the first fish and a dollar for the largest.

Silently, with studied care, she attached a plug to her line. Then, with a delicate but sure hand, she cast the plug alongside one of the stumps and began a slow retrieve, twitching the plug along to put it in lifelike motion. I picked out two stumps set fairly close together and cast an imitation minnow between them.

We fished around the stumps for several minutes without getting a bite. I couldn't help wondering what was on Holly's mind, but I knew she would talk to me when *she* was ready—it would only hurt to try to hurry her. At times, being a parent demands as much patience as fishing.

"Let's try drifting the bottom," my daughter said. "I have a feeling they're swimming very deep this morning."

I steered the boat out into open water, and we rigged our lures to run deep. I switched off the motor and let the boat drift very slowly, our lines trailing behind us. Now the sun was rising, and the lake and woods were bathed in the pure, clear light of dawn. Holly put on an old, battered fishing hat to shade her eyes. I looked around. There were no other boats on the lake. It was as though we were the only human beings on earth.

"Dad ..."

I knew from her tone that the moment had come. "Yes?"

"You know my plans for college—to go to junior college in town this fall, then transfer after two years to the state university ..."

"They're good plans," I said. "Among other benefits, we'll be able to do this for another two years."

She looked away, and I looked at the long, brown hair that curled out from under the old fishing hat. She looked so little—so fragile. Two short years, and she would be gone.

“Dad, would you be mad if I changed my plans?”

My throat seemed to close. My words had to be forced out. “Don’t tell me you don’t want to go to college ...”

55 “I do, Dad. It’s just ... well, I don’t want you to think I’m unhappy at home or anything, but I want to go away to the university this fall.”

“Well,” I said, grasping at straws, “I suppose we’d still have our summers to do a little fishing.”

60 She turned to look at me. “I wouldn’t be home in the summer. I’d like to stay in school all year long and finish in three years. That way, I’ll have my education and be ready for a job a year earlier.”

And that was it. All of a sudden, good-bye forever to my big little girl. My feelings must have shown in my face, because she gave me an out. “It’s up to you, Dad. I know it will cost more, and I’ll be away most of the time. If you don’t want me to go, I’ll stay here.”

65 Before I could answer, the fishing rod jerked almost out of my hands as the tip plunged into the water. I could tell by the strength of the pull that I had a big one hooked. Holly forgot everything in the excitement of pulling in the big fish. She grabbed the net and dipped it into the water so she could get it under him when he neared the boat. Slowly, with the line taut almost to the breaking point,  
70 I worked the fish in. Holly netted him and used both hands to hoist him into the boat. What we had was the most beautiful bass I’d ever tangled with.

“Oh, Dad,” Holly said, “this is one you have to take home and have mounted for your study wall. It’s the biggest bass I’ve ever seen!”

75 Her words sank in, and I took a long, hard look at that bass, considering. Finally, I unhooked him carefully, lifted him, and, as Holly stared in disbelief, put him gently back into the lake. In an instant, he was gone.

80 “Honey,” I said, “I’ve always dreamed of having a fish like that mounted on my wall, where I could look at him whenever I wanted to. But a fish on a wall is a lifeless thing, no matter how much you prize it. That fish was so full of life and fought so hard for his freedom that I had to let him go back where he belonged, to live his own life.”

Our lines went back into the water again, and we resumed our drifting and fishing. Holly’s back was toward me. “Thanks, Dad,” she said, without turning around. “I knew you’d understand.”

85 But she didn’t know. And she couldn’t know. And she won’t know until some day in the future, when her own child—with or without a word of warning—turns a back on home and walks out into the grown-up world forever.

—Henry G. Felsen  
“A Private Talk with Holly”  
from *Seventeen*, September 1981

## Passage II

### Wild Boy of the Road

A boy came by the house today,  
he asked for food.  
He couldn't pay anything, but Ma set him down  
and gave him biscuits  
5 and milk.  
He offered to work for his meal,  
Ma sent him out to see Daddy.  
The boy and Daddy came back late in the afternoon.  
The boy walked two steps behind,  
10 in Daddy's dust.  
He wasn't more than sixteen.  
Thin as a fence rail.  
I wondered what  
Livie Killian's brother looked like now.  
15 I wondered about Livie herself.  
Daddy asked if the boy wanted a bath,  
a haircut,  
a change of clothes before he moved on.  
The boy nodded.  
20 I never heard him say more than "Yes, sir" or  
"No, sir" or  
"Much obliged."

We watched him walk away  
down the road,  
25 in a pair of Daddy's mended overalls,  
his legs like willow limbs,  
his arms like reeds.  
Ma rested her hands on her heavy stomach,  
Daddy rested his chin on the top of my head.  
30 "His mother is worrying about him," Ma said.  
"His mother is wishing her boy would come home."

Lots of mothers wishing that these days,  
while their sons walk to California,  
where rain comes,  
35 and the color green doesn't seem like such a miracle,  
and hope rises daily, like sap in a stem.  
And I think, some day I'm going to walk there too,  
through New Mexico and Arizona and Nevada.  
Some day I'll leave behind the wind, and the dust  
40 and walk my way West  
and make myself to home in that distant place  
of green vines and promise.

*July 1934*

—Karen Hesse  
from *Out of the Dust*, 1997  
Scholastic Inc.

## Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (1–10): Select the best suggested answer to each question and write its number in the space provided on the answer sheet. The questions may help you think about the ideas and information you might want to use in your essay. You may return to these questions anytime you wish.

**Passage I** (the memoir) — Questions 1–6 refer to Passage I.

- 1 What does Holly's presence at the car signal to her father?  
(1) She is troubled.           (3) She is relaxed.  
(2) She is enthusiastic.   (4) She is impatient.
- 2 The familiar nature of Holly and her father's fishing routine is conveyed in lines 18 through 25 by the use of  
(1) contrast                   (3) simile  
(2) metaphor               (4) repetition
- 3 The father's reaction to Holly's original junior college plans emphasizes his desire to  
(1) reduce financial college costs  
(2) keep her near home  
(3) suggest an alternative school  
(4) support his alma mater
- 4 One purpose of lines 65 through 71 is to  
(1) exaggerate the danger  
(2) personify the boat  
(3) change the mood  
(4) suspend the action
- 5 By the end of the passage, the father recognizes the fish as a symbol of  
(1) security                   (3) happiness  
(2) pride                      (4) independence

6 The final paragraph suggests that the father believes Holly is

- (1) unable to understand her father's viewpoint
- (2) looking forward to becoming a parent
- (3) dissatisfied with her father's answer
- (4) afraid of an uncertain future

**Passage II** (the poem) — Questions 7–10 refer to Passage II.

7 The narrator indicates that the family's attitude toward the boy is one of

- (1) hesitation               (3) amusement
- (2) sympathy                (4) admiration

8 Line 6 characterizes the boy as

- (1) honorable               (3) fearful
- (2) stubborn                (4) intelligent

9 In lines 11 through 15, the boy's physical appearance causes the narrator to

- (1) become indifferent
- (2) feel jealous
- (3) recall acquaintances
- (4) seek comfort

10 Lines 37 through 42 reveal the narrator's desire to

- (1) become a better farmer
- (2) exercise more vigorously
- (3) preserve the environment
- (4) imitate the boy's actions

After you have finished these questions, turn to page 2. Review **Your Task** and the **Guidelines**. Use scrap paper to plan your response. Then write your response to Part A, beginning on page 1 of your essay booklet. After you finish your response for Part A, go on to page 7 of your examination booklet and complete Part B.

## Part B

### 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 in Part B, beginning on page 7 of the essay booklet.

### Critical Lens:

“The difficulty in life is the choice...”  
—George Moore  
*The Bending of the Bough*, 1900

### 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









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**ANSWER SHEET**

Student ..... Sex:  Male  Female

School ..... Grade ..... Teacher .....

**Write your answers to the multiple-choice questions for Part A on this answer sheet.**

**Part A**

- |         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 1 _____ | 6 _____  |
| 2 _____ | 7 _____  |
| 3 _____ | 8 _____  |
| 4 _____ | 9 _____  |
| 5 _____ | 10 _____ |



**HAND IN THIS ANSWER SHEET WITH YOUR ESSAY BOOKLET,  
SCRAP PAPER, AND EXAMINATION BOOKLET.**

**Your essay responses for Part A and Part B should be written in the essay booklet.**

I do hereby affirm, at the close of this examination, that I had no unlawful knowledge of the questions or answers prior to the examination and that I have neither given nor received assistance in answering any of the questions during the examination.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

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