
INTERNATIONAL GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 1 – Literary Non-Fiction and Composition

Monday 5 November 2018

07:00 GMT

Time allowed: 2 hours

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer booklet.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer booklet.
- Answer **all** questions from **Section A**. Answer **one** question from **Section B**.
- Write your answers in the answer book provided.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- You must **not** use a dictionary.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- There are 40 marks for **Section A** and 40 marks for **Section B**.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.
- You will be assessed on your **reading** in **Section A**.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your **writing** in **Section B**. 30 marks are awarded for communication and organisation; 10 marks are awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about one hour on Section A and about one hour on Section B.
- You should make sure you leave sufficient time to check your answers.

Section A

Answer **all** questions in this section.

You are advised to spend about one hour on this section.

The passage below was written by an astronaut. In it he describes his first launch in a spacecraft and his reflections on this launch.

Read **lines 1 to 14** and answer **Question 1**.

One morning a strange thought occurs to me shortly after waking; the socks I am about to put on are the ones I'll wear to leave Earth. That prospect feels real yet surreal, the way a particularly vivid dream does. The feeling intensifies at breakfast, when reporters jostle each other to get a good photo, as though I'm a condemned man and this is my last meal. Similarly, a little later on, when the technicians help me into my custom-made spacesuit for pressure checks, the joviality feels forced. It's the moment of truth. The suit needs to function perfectly – it is what will keep me alive and able to breathe if the spacecraft depressurizes in the vacuum of space – because this isn't a run-through. 5

I am actually leaving the planet today.

Or not, I remind myself. There are still hours to go, hours when anything could go wrong and the launch could be scrubbed. That thought, combined with the fact that I'm now wearing a diaper just in case we get stuck on the launch pad for a very long time, steers my interior monologue away from the portentous and toward the practical. There's a lot to remember. Focus. 14

Question 1

0	1
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 How does the writer feel on the morning of the launch?

[5 marks]

Now read **lines 15 to 30** and answer **Question 2**.

Once everyone in the crew is suited up, we all get into the elevator in crew quarters to ride down to the ground and out to our rocket ship. It's one of those space-age moments I dreamed about as a little kid, except for the slow – *really* slow – elevator. Descent from the third floor takes only slightly less time than it does to boil an egg. When we finally head outside to walk toward the big silver Astro van that will take us to the launch pad, it's that moment everyone knows: flashbulbs pop in the pre-dawn darkness, the crowd cheers, we wave and smile. In the van, we can see the rocket in the distance, lit up and shining, an obelisk. In reality, of course, it's a 4.5-megaton bomb loaded with explosive fuel, which is why everyone else is driving away from it. 15 20

At the launch pad, we ride the elevator up – this one moves at a good clip – and one by one we crawl into the vehicle on our hands and knees. Then the closeout crew helps strap me tightly into my tiny seat, and one of them hands me a note from Helene, telling me she loves me. I'm not exactly comfortable – the spacesuit is bulky and hot, the cabin is cramped, a distinctly un-cushion-like parachute and survival kit is wedged awkwardly behind my back – and I'm going to be stuck in this position for a few hours, minimum. But I can't imagine any place else I'd rather be. 25 30

Question 2

0 2 How does the writer help the reader to picture the scene?

[6 marks]

Now read **lines 31 to 46** and answer **Question 3**.

After the ground crew checks the cockpit one last time, says goodbye and closes the hatch, it's time for pressure checks of the cabin. Banter ebbs: everyone is hyper-focused. This is all about increasing our chances of staying alive. Yet there's still a whiff of make-believe to the exercise because any number of things could still happen – a fault in the wiring, a problem with a fuel tank – to downgrade this to just another elaborate dress rehearsal. 31 35

But as every second passes, the odds improve that we're going to space today. As we work through huge checklists – reviewing and clearing all caution and warning alarms, making sure the multiple frequencies used to communicate with Launch Control and Mission Control are all functional – the vehicle rumbles to life: systems power up, the engine bells chime for launch. When the auxiliary power units fire up, the rocket's vibration becomes more insistent. In my earpiece, I hear the final checks from the key console positions, and my crewmates' breathing, then a heartfelt farewell from the Launch Director. I go through my checklist a quick hundred times or so to make sure I remember all the critical things that are about to happen, what my role will be and what I'll do if things start going wrong. 40

And now there are just 30 seconds left and the rocket stirs like a living thing with a will of its own and I permit myself to move past hoping to knowing: we are going to lift off. 45 46

Question 3

0 3 What do you learn about an astronaut's experience of a spaceship launch from reading these lines?

[6 marks]

Now read **lines 47 to 68** and answer **Question 4**.

Six seconds to go. The engines start to light, and we sway forward as this huge new force bends the vehicle, which lurches sideways then twangs back to vertical. And at that moment there's an enormous, violent vibration and rattle. It feels as though we're being shaken in a huge dog's jaws, then seized by its giant, unseen master and hurled straight up into the sky, away from Earth. It feels like magic, like winning, like a dream. 47 50

It also feels as though a huge truck going at top speed just smashed into the side of us. Perfectly normal, apparently, and we'd been warned to expect it. So I just keep 'hawking it', flipping through my tables and checklists and staring at the buttons and lights over my head, scanning the computers for signs of trouble, trying not to blink. The launch tower is long gone and we're roaring upward, pinned down increasingly emphatically in our seats as the vehicle burns fuel, gets lighter and, 45 seconds later, pushes past the speed of sound. Thirty seconds after that, we're flying higher and faster than the Concorde ever did: Mach 2 and still revving up. It's like being in a dragster, just flooring it. Two minutes after lift-off we're hurtling along at six times the speed of sound when the solid rocket boosters explode off the vehicle and we surge forward again. I'm still completely focused on my checklist, but out of the corner of my eye, I register that the color of the sky has gone from light blue to dark blue to black. 55 60

And then, suddenly, calm: we reach Mach 25, orbital speed, the engines wind down, and I notice little motes of dust floating lazily upward. Upward. Experimentally, I let go of my checklist for a few seconds and watch it hover, then drift off serenely, instead of thumping to the ground. I feel like a little kid, like a sorcerer, like the luckiest person alive. I am in space, weightless, and getting here only took 8 minutes and 42 seconds. 65 68

Turn over ►

Question 4

0 4

How does the writer use language to show what the space launch feels like?

[8 marks]Now read **lines 69 to 88** and answer **Question 5**.

That was my first launch, on Space Shuttle *Atlantis*. More than a quarter-century after I'd 69
stood in a clearing on Stag Island and gazed up at the night sky, I was finally up there myself, 70
orbiting Earth as a mission specialist on STS-74. Our main objective: to construct a docking
module on the Russian space station Mir.

It was an enormously complicated challenge and we had no way of knowing whether the
plan would even work. No one had ever tried to do such a thing before. As it happened, our
eight-day mission didn't come off without a hitch. In fact, key equipment failed at a critical 75
moment and nothing proceeded exactly as planned. Yet we managed to construct that docking
module anyway, and leaving the station I felt – the whole crew felt – a sense of satisfaction
bordering on jubilation. We'd done something difficult and done it well. Mission accomplished.
Dream realized.

Only, it hadn't been, not fully anyway. In one sense I felt at peace: I'd been to space at 80
last and it had been even more fulfilling than I'd imagined. But I hadn't been given a lot of
responsibility up there – no one is on the first flight – nor had I contributed as much as I would
have liked. Training in Houston, I hadn't been able to separate out the vital from the trivial, to
differentiate between what was going to keep me alive in an emergency and what was
interesting but not crucial. There had been so much to learn, I'd just been trying to cram it all 85
into my brain.

So despite having traveled 3.4 million miles, I didn't feel I'd arrived at my destination. An
astronaut was something I was still in the process of becoming. 88

Question 5

0 5

Explain the writer's attitude towards his first launch and mission.

[6 marks]Now think about the **whole** passage and answer **Question 6**.**Question 6**

0 6

What do you learn from the **whole** passage about the skills and abilities an astronaut needs?

Support your answer with reference to the passage.

[9 marks]

Section B

Answer **one** question in this section.

You are advised to spend about one hour on this section.

Remember to:

- spend time thinking about the question and planning your ideas
- organise your ideas into paragraphs
- communicate clearly
- spend five minutes checking and editing your writing.

Either**Question 7**

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 'Money spent on space travel could be put to better use.' Discuss.

[40 marks]

Or

Question 8

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 Describe an unusual journey.

[40 marks]

Or

Question 9

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 Write a story which starts or ends with the words, 'Mission accomplished'.

[40 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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