

James Ruse Agricultural High School Common Module Practice Paper 2019 Section 1**Question 1 (20 marks)**

Examine **Texts one, two, three, four** and **five** carefully and then answer the questions on page 8.

Text One – Image

Please note: this is only a sample based on the guidelines provided by NESAs. This is not a true reflection of what the final HSC exam may look like.

Text Two – Poem**Ego****Denise Duhamel**

I just didn't get it—
even with the teacher holding an orange (the earth) in one hand
and a lemon (the moon) in the other,
her favorite student (the sun) standing behind her with a flashlight.
I just couldn't grasp it—
this whole citrus universe, these bumpy planets revolving so slowly
no one could even see themselves moving.
I used to think if I could only concentrate hard enough
I could be the one person to feel what no one else could,
sense a small tug from the ground, a sky shift, the earth changing gears.
Even though I was only one mini-speck on a speck,
even though I was merely a pinprick in one goosebump on the orange,
I was sure then I was the most specially perceptive, perceptively sensitive.
I was sure then my mother was the only mother to snap,
“The world doesn't revolve around you!”
The earth was fragile and mostly water,
just the way the orange was mostly water if you peeled it,
just the way I was mostly water if you peeled me.
Looking back on that third grade science demonstration,
I can understand why some people gave up on fame or religion or cures—
especially people who have an understanding
of the excruciating crawl of the world,
who have a well-developed sense of spatial reasoning
and the tininess that it is to be one of us.
But not me—even now I wouldn't mind being god, the force
who spins the planets the way I spin a globe, a basketball, a yoyo.
I wouldn't mind being that teacher who chooses the fruit,
or that favorite kid who gives the moon its glow.

Text Three – Prose Fiction extract

I stay outdoors fussing with the last batch of bread, resting my arms on the balustrade between the cooling loaves and the pots of basil and the branches of a lemon tree, my legs pressing against the velvet of my dress into the wisteria, into the jasmine. It's warm on this evening in December, and I left my face to every sublime trembling of a breeze. I arranged and rearranged the bread, a carnival lady with her walnut shells. I've always liked to bring bread or cakes or whatever I've just pulled from the ovens to cool outdoors. Pies on a windowsill in Saratoga. But I am not in Saratoga anymore. Nor in Cold Springs nor Sacramento nor St Louis. Not in Venice, not in San Casciano, but here on a great stone island in an ancient palazzo on a terrace in the sky and I stand here watching the moon. Half a moon: tenuous, pale, barely glistening up out of the white fogs the clouds make. Who knows why, but a scene comes to mind, powerful in its way and which I'd witnessed not so long before on a train to Rome. Now, of all moments, it plays itself over and over again.

In a second class car, I sit behind an American couple. "You're over the top, Susan. This whole trip is over the top. Did you really have to have that hat? That ridiculous hat. And that wine you just had to drink at lunch cost thirty-five dollars. And now you sit here in ecstasy over corn fields and cows and a few decrepit villages. Hell if you wanted to see corn fields I could have taken you to Iowa. Could have saved myself a whole lot of travel. We travel seven thousand miles to look at cows."

"I'm not just looking at cows, Jeffrey. I'm looking at Italy. That's the part you don't understand. And I love my hat. And I'll tell you another thing Jeffrey, I *am* over the top. Almost everything and everyone in this world is over the top. Over your top. And I'll tell you why. Your cup is too small. Your cup is mean and small and nothing fits in it except whatever drips and dribbles you but into it. There isn't room for another thing. But let me tell you, Jeffrey, there's more to life than what you can fit into your cup. Get a bigger cup. For God sake, Jeffrey, get a bigger cup."

As I pass them on my way to exit the train the two sat there separated by a large black felt hat stuck with a full blown pink rose, she, still looking out the window, he, staring straight ahead or deep inside or maybe even into the bottom of his cup. And on this evening, especially on this evening, I am wishing that Jeffrey has found a bigger cup.

Text Four – Non Fiction extract

During the eighteen months I spent travelling around the West Bank, I would often come back to Tel Aviv and tell my friends about the things I'd seen. Their reactions ranged from surprise to disbelief. Are there really neighborhoods, like Ras Khamis in East Jerusalem, where Israeli residents live on the Palestinian side of the wall? Do these tenuous, fluid, lawless areas really exist, places with no clear municipal or national governance? Are the settlements truly spread out all over the West Bank and not only in the settlement blocs? Do Palestinians and settlers take the same roads and get stuck in the same traffic jams? Are there so many secular settlers? I gradually came to understand that the Israel I know is separated from the West Bank, not only by checkpoints like Kalandia, but also – and more significantly – by a cognitive barrier, which is growing higher all the time.

In fact, for most Israelis the West Bank has become a domain that exists somewhere out there beyond the tall mountains, far from sight. They know that certain events occur there, they sometimes talk about the occupation and the settlements, but they have no inkling what the West Bank looks like today or how its inhabitants conduct their lives. It's difficult to talk about a solution when you have no idea what the problem you are discussing looks like.

In the course of 2014 and 2015, I spoke with hundreds of people, Jewish and Arab, from all classes and political affiliations. I listened to them, asked questions, invited them to describe their lives, their aspirations, their goals for the future. I met them in their homes, at their workplaces, at checkpoints, on roads, in their natural habitats, and I tried to perceive their hardships at eye-level.

Sometimes I listened to people I had always viewed as political enemies – Hamas members or outpost settlers – and I got to know the stories they believed in and their plans for the future. I came to realise that the familiar division between peace-lovers and war mongers is over-simplified and unhelpful, because in fact the intricate reality that has evolved in the West Bank cannot be understood by answering the question “Two states: yes or no?” This reality comprises different perceptions of time and space, divergent understandings of history's formative events, religious consciousness, fears of the other, daily customs, tribulations and ideologies. Listening to people helps formulate a more complex picture of the world, one that is often full of contradictions, but it also enables us to talk about the future in a less entrenched manner, to genuinely examine different ideas, and, above all, to understand the connection between one's political viewpoint and the reality on the ground. “You must learn how to listen to the land,” a young Palestinian from Balata Refugee Camp told me, “and I mean really listen.”

Nir Baram

Extract from *A Land Without Borders*

Text Five – Prose Fiction extract

“You have to swear.” Jutta says. “Do you swear?” Amid rusted drums and shredded inner tubes and wormy creek bottom muck, she has discovered ten yards of copper wire. Her eyes are bright tunnels.

Werner glances at the trees, the creek, back to his sister. “I swear.”

Together they smuggle the wire home and loop it back and forth through nail holes in the eave outside the attic window. Then they attach it to their radio. Almost immediately, on a shortwave band, they can hear someone talking in a strange language full of z’s and s’s.

“Is it Russian?”

Werner thinks it’s Hungarian.

Jutta is all eyes in the dimness and heat. “How far away is Hungary?”

“A thousand kilometres?”

She gapes.

Voices, it turns out, streak into Zollverein from all over the continent, through the clouds, the coal dust, the roof. The air swarms with them. Jutta makes a log to match a scale that Werner draws on the tuning coil, carefully spelling the name of each city they manage to receive. *Verona 65, Dresden 88, London 100.* Rome. Paris. Lyon. Late night shortwave: province of ramblers and dreamers, madmen and ranters.

One night Werner and Jutta tune in to a scratchy broadcast in which a young man is talking in feathery, accented French about light.

The brain is locked in total darkness, of course children, says the voice. It floats in a clear liquid inside the skull, never in the light. And yet the world it constructs in the mind is full of light. It brims with colour and movement. So how, children, does the brain, which lives without a spark of light, build for us a wonderful world of light?

The broadcast hisses and pops.

“What is this?” whispers Jutta.

Werner does not answer. The Frenchman’s voice is velvet. His accent is very different from Frau Elena’s, and yet his voice is so ardent, so hypnotising, that Werner finds he can understand every word. The Frenchman talks about optical illusions, electromagnetism; there’s a pause and a peal of static, as though a record is being flipped, and then he enthuses about coal.

Consider a single piece glowing in your family’s stove. See it, children? That chunk of coal was once a green plant, a fern or reed that lived one million years ago, or maybe two million, or maybe one hundred million. Can you imagine one hundred million years? Every

summer for the whole life of that plant its leaves caught what light they could and transformed the sun's energy into itself. Into bark, twigs, stems. Because plants eat light in much the way we eat food. But then the plant died and fell, probably into water, and decayed into peat, and the peat was folded into the earth for years upon years – eons in which something like a month or a decade or even your whole life was just a puff of air, a snap of two fingers. And eventually the peat dried and became like stone, and someone dug it up, and the coal man brought it to your house, and maybe you yourself carried it to the stove, and now that sunlight – sunlight one hundred million years old – is heating your home tonight ...

Time slows. The attic disappears. Jutta disappears. Has anyone ever spoken so intimately about the very things Werner is most curious about?

Open your eyes, concludes the man, and see what you can with them before they close forever, and then a piano comes on, playing a lonely song that sounds to Werner like a golden boat traveling a dark river, a progression of harmonies that transfigures Zollverein: the houses turned to mist, the mines filled in, the smokestacks fallen, an ancient sea spilling through the streets, and the air streaming with possibility.

Anthony Doerr

Extract from *All the Light We Cannot See*

Question 1:**Text 1 – Image****3 marks**

- a) How does the image represent the changing nature of the human experience in the 21st Century?

Text 2 – Poem**3 marks**

- b) How does the poet explore the innate human desire to understand our place in the world?

Text 2 and 3 – Poem and Prose Extract**5 marks**

- c) Compare how the composers represent the different reactions individuals can have to meaningful experiences.

Text 4 – Non-fiction Extract**4 marks**

- d) How does the composer use the reflective tone to reveal how assumptions about the collective human experience can be challenged?

Text 5 – Prose Fiction Extract**5 marks**

- e) ‘We tell stories in order to live.’

Evaluate how the composer shows the power of stories to inspire hope.