



# Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2017

## English - Ordinary Level - Paper 2

Total Marks: 200

Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> June – Afternoon, 2.00 – 5.20

Candidates must attempt the following:

- **ONE** question from SECTION I – The Single Text
- **ONE** question from SECTION II – The Comparative Study
- **THE QUESTIONS** on the Unseen Poem from SECTION III – Poetry
- The questions on **ONE** of the Prescribed Poems from SECTION III – Poetry

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Candidates must answer on **ONE** text (A – I).

**A** **EMMA – Jane Austen**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Emma Woodhouse and Harriet Smith. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Emma Woodhouse. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the novel, *Emma*, which you find amusing or entertaining. Explain why you find this episode or incident amusing or entertaining. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine you are a journalist, writing for a popular magazine. You have interviewed Emma Woodhouse. Write an article giving your impression of Emma and telling your readers about her lifestyle and how she spends her time. Your article should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel, *Emma*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the novel are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the novel are more fascinating than the female characters.Explain your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the novel, *Emma*.

**OR**

- (iii) “Despite being published in 1815, Jane Austen’s novel, *Emma*, is both interesting and relevant to readers today.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel.

**B****CIRCLE OF FRIENDS – Maeve Binchy**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Nan Mahon and her mother. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Nan Mahon. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the novel, *Circle of Friends*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine you are a journalist, writing for a popular magazine. You have interviewed Benny Hogan after she moves to Dublin. Write an article giving your impression of Benny and telling your readers how she feels about her new life in Dublin. Your article should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel, *Circle of Friends*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the novel are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the novel are more fascinating than the female characters.Explain your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the novel, *Circle of Friends*.

**OR**

- (iii) “Despite being set in the 1950s, Maeve Binchy’s novel, *Circle of Friends*, is both interesting and relevant to readers today.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel.

**C****THE GREAT GATSBY – F. Scott Fitzgerald**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Daisy Buchanan and Nick Carraway. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Daisy Buchanan. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the novel, *The Great Gatsby*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine you are a journalist, writing for a popular magazine. You have interviewed Jay Gatsby soon after he has moved to West Egg. Write an article giving your impression of Gatsby and telling your readers about his lifestyle and how he spends his money. Your article should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel, *The Great Gatsby*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the novel are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the novel are more fascinating than the female characters.

Explain your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the novel, *The Great Gatsby*.

**OR**

- (iii) “Despite being published in the 1920s, F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel, *The Great Gatsby*, is both interesting and relevant to readers today.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel.

**D****A DOLL'S HOUSE – Henrik Ibsen**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Nora Helmer and Christine Linde. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Nora Helmer. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident from the play, *A Doll's House*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine your class has decided to stage a production of Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*, and you are the set designer. Describe, in words, the set you would create for the Helmers' living room. Your set design should demonstrate your knowledge of the play, *A Doll's House*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the play are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the play are more fascinating than the female characters.

Explain your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the play, *A Doll's House*.

**OR**

- (iii) "Despite being first performed in 1879, Henrik Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*, is both interesting and relevant to readers and theatre audiences today."

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the play.

**E****BIG MAGGIE – John B. Keane**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Maggie Polpin and her daughter, Katie. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Maggie Polpin. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the play, *Big Maggie*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine your class has decided to stage a production of John B. Keane's play, *Big Maggie*, and you are the set designer. Describe, in words, the set you would create for the inside of Maggie Polpin's shop. Your set design should demonstrate your knowledge of the play, *Big Maggie*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the play are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the play are more fascinating than the female characters.Explain your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the play, *Big Maggie*.

**OR**

- (iii) "Despite being first performed in 1969, John B. Keane's play, *Big Maggie*, is both interesting and relevant to readers and theatre audiences today."
- To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the play.

**F****DEATH AND NIGHTINGALES – Eugene McCabe**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Beth Winters and Mercy Boyle. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Beth Winters. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the novel, *Death and Nightingales*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine you are a journalist, writing for a popular magazine. You have interviewed Billy Winters. Write an article giving your impression of Billy and telling your readers about the community and countryside in which he lives. Your article should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel, *Death and Nightingales*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the novel are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the novel are more fascinating than the female characters.

Explain your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the novel, *Death and Nightingales*.

**OR**

- (iii) “Despite being set in the 1880s, Eugene McCabe’s novel, *Death and Nightingales*, is both interesting and relevant today.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel.

**G****THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS – Sean O’Casey**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Nora Clitheroe and Bessie Burgess. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Nora Clitheroe. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the play, *The Plough and the Stars*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine your class has decided to stage a production of O’Casey’s play, *The Plough and the Stars*, and you are the set designer. Describe, in words, the set you would create for inside the Clitheroes’ home. Your set design should demonstrate your knowledge of the play, *The Plough and the Stars*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the play are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the play are more fascinating than the female characters.Explain your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the play, *The Plough and the Stars*.

**OR**

- (iii) “Despite being set in 1916, O’Casey’s play, *The Plough and the Stars*, is both interesting and relevant to readers and theatre audiences today.”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the play.

**H****THE SPINNING HEART – Donal Ryan**

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Bobby Mahon and his father, Frank. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Bobby Mahon. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the novel, *The Spinning Heart*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine you are a journalist, writing for a popular magazine. You have interviewed Réaltín. Write an article giving your impression of Réaltín and telling your readers about the difficulties she has experienced in life. Your article should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel, *The Spinning Heart*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the novel are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the novel are more fascinating than the female characters.Support your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character from the novel, *The Spinning Heart*.

**OR**

- (iii) “Due to its setting in modern Ireland, Donal Ryan’s novel, *The Spinning Heart*, is particularly interesting and relevant to readers today.”

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the novel.

## I **HAMLET** – William Shakespeare

Answer **all** of the questions.

1. (a) Describe the relationship between Claudius and Hamlet. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
- (b) Explain why you do or do not admire Claudius. Support your answer with reference to the text. (10)
2. Identify one episode or incident in the play, *Hamlet*, which you find shocking or surprising. Explain why you find this episode or incident shocking or surprising. (10)
3. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 30 marks]
  - (i) Imagine your class has decided to stage a production of Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*, and you are the set designer. Describe, in words, the set you would create for the scene when Hamlet confronts Gertrude in her room. Your set design should demonstrate your knowledge of the play, *Hamlet*.

**OR**

- (ii) In your opinion, which of the following observations is more accurate?
  - The female characters in the play are more fascinating than the male characters.
  - The male characters in the play are more fascinating than the female characters.Support your answer with reference to at least one male character and one female character in the play, *Hamlet*.

**OR**

- (iii) "Despite being written over four hundred years ago, Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*, is both interesting and relevant to readers and theatre audiences today."
- To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the play.

Candidates must answer **ONE** question from **either A – Hero, Heroine, Villain or B – Theme**.

In your answer you may not use the text you have answered on in **SECTION I – The Single Text**. All texts used in this section must be prescribed for comparative study for this year's examination. Candidates may refer to only one film in the course of their answers.

**N.B.** The questions use the word **text** to refer to all the different kinds of texts available for study on this course, i.e. novel, play, short story, autobiography, biography, travel writing and film. The term **readers** is used to include viewers of films and theatre audiences.

### A HERO, HEROINE, VILLAIN

1. (a) (i) Name **one** of the three texts that you studied on your comparative course and identify a hero, heroine or villain in it. Describe a key moment which reveals an important aspect of this character and explain what you learn about your chosen character from this moment. (15)
- (ii) Name **another** text that you studied on your comparative course and identify a hero, heroine or villain in it. Describe a key moment from this text which reveals an important aspect of this character and explain what you learn about your chosen character from this moment. (15)
- (b) Readers can either like or dislike the characters they encounter in texts.
- Identify one character (hero, heroine or villain) from each of at least **two** texts on your comparative course. Compare the extent to which you like or dislike these characters. Support your answer by reference to the texts. (40)

OR

2. We can learn about heroes, heroines and villains by considering how successful they are at making decisions and taking action when necessary.
- (a) (i) Identify a hero, heroine or villain from **one** of the three comparative texts you have studied. Write about how successful this character is at making decisions and taking action when necessary. Support your answer by reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) Identify a hero, heroine or villain from **another** of the three comparative texts you have studied. Write about how successful this character is at making decisions and taking action when necessary. Support your answer by reference to the text. (15)
- (b) Readers can either like or dislike the characters they encounter in texts.
- Identify one character (hero, heroine or villain) from each of at least **two** texts on your comparative course. Compare the extent to which you like or dislike these characters. Support your answer by reference to the texts. (40)

## B THEME

1. (a) (i) Name **one** of the three texts that you studied on your comparative course and identify a theme in it. Describe a key moment that tells you something important about this theme and explain what you learn about your chosen theme from this key moment. (15)
- (ii) Name **another** text that you studied on your comparative course. Describe a key moment from this text that tells you something important about the same theme that you wrote about in part (i) of this question. Explain what you learn about your chosen theme from this key moment. (15)
- (b) Some texts can contribute more than others to our understanding of a theme.
- Compare the extent to which at least **two** texts on your comparative course contributed to your understanding of the theme you discussed in 1. (a) above. Support your answer by reference to your chosen texts. (40)

### OR

2. (a) Readers can find some aspects of a theme either disturbing or reassuring.
- (i) Identify a theme that you have studied and write about an aspect of this theme that you find either disturbing or reassuring in **one** text on your comparative course. Support your answer by reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) With reference to the same theme that you wrote about in part (i) of this question, write about an aspect of this theme that you find either disturbing or reassuring in **another** text on your comparative course. You may refer to the same or a different aspect of the theme as you discussed in part (i). Support your answer by reference to the text. (15)
- (b) Some texts can contribute more than others to our understanding of a theme.
- Compare the extent to which at least **two** texts on your comparative course contributed to your understanding of the theme you discussed in 2. (a) above. Support your answer by reference to your chosen texts. (40)

Candidates must answer the questions on the Unseen Poem **and** the questions on **one** of the Prescribed Poems – A, B, C, D.

**UNSEEN POEM (20 marks)**

*In this poem, the poet, Brian Bilston, writes about our relationship with mobile phones.  
Read the poem, and the questions that follow, at least twice before writing your answers.*

**For We Shall Stare at Mobile Phones**

Streets shrug as we roam back to our homes,  
obstacle courses of lamp posts and cones.  
For we shall stare at mobile phones.

Landmarks languish and attractions close;  
statues, cathedrals, Byzantine domes.  
For we shall stare at mobile phones.

Reading gets shelved, poetry and prose,  
with the dusty rebuke of neglected tomes\*.  
For we shall stare at mobile phones.

Conversation falters, dries up, unflows,  
feelings once said lie buried, unknown.  
For we shall stare at mobile phones.

Yes, we shall stare at mobile phones,  
when we're together and when we're alone.  
For we shall stare at mobile phones.

And when we die, let us hope that they're thrown  
into the pit with our crumbling bones.  
So that we might stare at mobile phones.

*Brian Bilston*

*(\*tomes are books)*

1. Based on your reading of the above poem, outline the impact the poet claims mobile phones have on our lives today. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
2. Do you like or dislike the above poem? Explain your answer with reference to the poem. (10)

## PRESCRIBED POETRY (50 marks)

You must answer on **ONE** of the following poems: (A - D)

**A**

### THE ARRIVAL OF THE BEE BOX

I ordered this, this clean wood box  
Square as a chair and almost too heavy to lift.  
I would say it was the coffin of a midget  
Or a square baby  
Were there not such a din in it.

The box is locked, it is dangerous.  
I have to live with it overnight  
And I can't keep away from it.  
There are no windows, so I can't see what is in there.  
There is only a little grid, no exit.

I put my eye to the grid.  
It is dark, dark,  
With the swarmy feeling of African hands  
Minute and shrunk for export,  
Black on black, angrily clambering.

How can I let them out?  
It is the noise that appalls me most of all,  
The unintelligible syllables.  
It is like a Roman mob,  
Small, taken one by one, but my god, together!

I lay my ear to furious Latin.  
I am not a Caesar.  
I have simply ordered a box of maniacs.  
They can be sent back.  
They can die, I need feed them nothing, I am  
the owner.

I wonder how hungry they are.  
I wonder if they would forget me  
If I just undid the locks and stood back and  
turned into a tree.  
There is the laburnum, its blond colonnades,  
And the petticoats of the cherry.

They might ignore me immediately  
In my moon suit and funeral veil.  
I am no source of honey  
So why would they turn on me?  
Tomorrow I will be sweet God, I will set them  
free.

The box is only temporary.

*Sylvia Plath*

1. (a) Identify an image that you like in the above poem and explain why you like it. (10)
- (b) Describe a feeling or emotion expressed by the poet in this poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
- (c) Explain what you think the poet means when she says, "I am not a Caesar". (10)
2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
  - (i) Explain what you think the bees symbolise for Sylvia Plath in the above poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem.  
**OR**
  - (ii) Does the language and imagery used by the poet add to your enjoyment of the above poem? Support your answer with reference to the language and imagery used in the poem.  
**OR**
  - (iii) Imagine that you are Sylvia Plath. Write a letter to a friend in which you describe the arrival of the bee box and explain the impact it had on you. Your letter should demonstrate your knowledge of the poem.

When the Master was calling the roll  
 At the primary school in Collegelands,  
 You were meant to call back *Anseo*  
 And raise your hand  
 As your name occurred.  
 Anseo, meaning here, here and now,  
 All present and correct,  
 Was the first word of Irish I spoke.  
 The last name on the ledger  
 Belonged to Joseph Mary Plunkett Ward  
 And was followed, as often as not,  
 By silence, knowing looks,  
 A nod and a wink, the Master's droll  
 'And where's our little Ward-of-court?'

I remember the first time he came back  
 The Master had sent him out  
 Along the hedges  
 To weigh up for himself and cut  
 A stick with which he would be beaten.  
 After a while, nothing was spoken;  
 He would arrive as a matter of course  
 With an ash-plant, a salley-rod.

Or, finally, the hazel-wand  
 He had whittled down to a whip-lash,  
 Its twist of red and yellow lacquers  
 Sanded and polished,  
 And altogether so delicately wrought  
 That he had engraved his initials on it.

I last met Joseph Mary Plunkett Ward  
 In a pub just over the Irish border.  
 He was living in the open,  
 In a secret camp  
 On the other side of the mountain.  
 He was fighting for Ireland,  
 Making things happen.  
 And he told me, Joe Ward,  
 Of how he had risen through the ranks  
 To Quartermaster, Commandant:  
 How every morning at parade  
 His volunteers would call back *Anseo*  
 And raise their hands  
 As their names occurred.

*Paul Muldoon*

1. (a) Identify an image in the above poem that made an impact on you, and explain why it made an impact on you. (10)
- (b) Describe a feeling or emotion that you feel in response to this poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
- (c) Explain what you think the Master means when he says, 'And where's our little Ward-of-court?' (10)
2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
  - (i) Explain what the poet says about discipline and the effects of discipline in the above poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem.

**OR**

  - (ii) Does the language and imagery used by the poet add to your enjoyment of the above poem? Support your answer with reference to the language and imagery used in the poem.

**OR**

  - (iii) Imagine that you are the Master in the above poem. Write the letter you would send to your former student, Joe Ward, in which you respond to reports that he is now "fighting for Ireland". Your letter should demonstrate your knowledge of the poem.

**C****SPRING**

Nothing is so beautiful as spring –  
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;  
Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush  
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring  
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;  
The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush  
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush  
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?  
A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning  
In Eden garden – Have, get, before it cloy,  
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,  
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,  
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

*Gerard Manley Hopkins*

1. (a) Identify an image from the above poem that you like and explain why you like it. (10)  
(b) Describe a feeling or emotion expressed by the poet in this poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)  
(c) Explain what you think the poet means when he says, "What is all this juice and all this joy?" (10)
2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
  - (i) Explain what you learn about Hopkins' relationship with nature from the above poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem.  
**OR**
  - (ii) Does the language and imagery used by the poet add to your enjoyment of the above poem? Support your answer with reference to the language and imagery used in the poem.  
**OR**
  - (iii) Imagine that you are the poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins. Write a letter to a friend in which you express your thoughts and feelings about spring and what it means to you spiritually. Your letter should demonstrate your knowledge of the poem.

**D****SELF-PORTRAIT IN THE DARK (WITH CIGARETTE)**

To sleep, perchance  
to dream? No chance:  
it's 4 a.m. and I'm wakeful  
as an animal,  
caught between your presence and the lack.  
This is the realm insomniac.  
On the window seat, I light a cigarette  
from a slim flame and monitor the street –  
a stilled film, bathed in amber,  
softened now in the wake of a downpour.

Behind the daffodils  
on Magdalen Green, there's one slow vehicle  
pushing its beam along Riverside Drive,  
a sign of life;  
and two months on  
from 'moving on'  
your car, that you haven't yet picked up,  
waits, splattered in raindrops like bubble wrap.  
Here I could easily go off  
on a riff

on how cars, like pets, look a little like  
their owners  
but I won't 'go there',  
as they say in America,  
given it's a clapped-out Nissan Micra ...  
And you don't need to know that  
I've been driving it illegally at night  
in the lamp-lit silence of this city  
– you'd only worry –  
or worse, that Morrissey  
is jammed in the tape deck now and for  
eternity;

no. It's fine, all gleaming hubcaps,  
seats like an upright, silhouetted couple;  
from the dashboard, the wink  
of that small red light I think  
is a built-in security system.  
In a poem  
It could represent a heartache or a pulse.  
Or loneliness: its vigilance.  
Or simply the lighthouse-regular spark  
of someone, somewhere, smoking in the  
dark.

*Colette Bryce*

1. (a) Identify an image from the above poem that you like and explain why you like it. (10)
- (b) Describe a feeling or emotion you feel in response to this poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (10)
- (c) Explain what you think the poet means when she says, "This is the realm insomniac". (10)
2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]
  - (i) Explain what you learn about the poet's reaction to the end of her relationship from reading the above poem. Support your answer with reference to the poem.

**OR**

  - (ii) Does the language and imagery used by the poet add to your enjoyment of the above poem? Support your answer with reference to the language and imagery used in the poem.

**OR**

  - (iii) Imagine that the poet decided to write a letter to the person she refers to in the poem. Write the letter you think she might compose. Your letter should demonstrate your knowledge of the poem.

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