



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2019

English - Ordinary Level - Paper 1

Total Marks: 200

Wednesday, June 5 – Morning, 9.30 – 12.20

- This paper is divided into two sections, Section I COMPREHENDING and Section II COMPOSING.
- The paper contains **three** texts on the general theme of SOCIAL MEDIA.
- Candidates should familiarise themselves with each of the texts before beginning their answers.
- Both sections of this paper (COMPREHENDING and COMPOSING) must be attempted.
- Each section carries 100 marks.

SECTION I – COMPREHENDING

- Two questions, A and B, follow each text.
- Candidates must answer a Question A on one text and a Question B on a different text. Candidates must answer only one Question A and only one Question B.
- **N.B.** Candidates may NOT answer a Question A and a Question B on the same text.

SECTION II – COMPOSING

- Candidates must write on **one** of the compositions 1 – 7.

TEXT 1 – MELANIE'S SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERIENCE

The following text is based on edited extracts from *Fully Functioning Human (Almost)* a “part memoir, part life guide” by award-winning lifestyle YouTuber and Dubliner, Melanie Murphy.

1. I'll never forget the first time I created a social networking account back in 2006. I was sixteen. Our internet speed was brain-meltingly slow and our old, massive computer looked like something you'd now see in a museum. At the time this new 'social media' thing was so exciting and I lived for it. I'd shove my homework to one side so I could find funny YouTube videos to share, and I'd judge people's photos from parties I hadn't been invited to. Social media went on to change my life, many times, in different ways. Some great. Others terrible.

2. At dinner, with my parents and my siblings, I'd be texting friends instead of talking to my family. Now I hate that type of behaviour. Nothing annoys me more than sitting with someone who is mentally elsewhere. My relationships suffered because I'd much rather go online than spend time with other people. Internet access became all I cared for. If I was in angry or upset mode, I wouldn't talk to the people around me. I'd plug in and vent virtually rather than turning to an actual human being.

3. My unrestrained time online affected my mood, my ability to spell, my concept of true friendship and of love. Even my sleep and dietary habits suffered. I have found myself in bed at 4 a.m. with an entire extra-large pizza. It's clear to me now that social media was like a bomb in my young, incapable and uneducated hands. It could have utterly destroyed me. There was very little education about social media when I was growing up. I was lucky that I managed to squeeze in a few years of finding joy in things like reading and writing and going

exploring with friends. The reality for many kids nowadays is they're born and then, BOOM, internet.



4. About a year ago I decided to take control and tidy up my online space as it was becoming more out of control. Even now, sometimes, my five-minute Facebook break becomes a two-hour-shaped hole in my life. This is something I'm still struggling with – it's a habit I need to take more steps to change. But at least I'm aware that it's a problem, and that I'd rather spend more of that Facebook time creating, or reading or playing with my cats. Don't get me wrong, I adore social media. It's a big part of my job, it's my main creative outlet. It helps me to feel connected to the world at large. But, I've learned that *what* I follow, *who* I befriend, *how long* I stay plugged in and *how* I behave online matters a lot in how social media makes me feel. I can come away feeling enriched or empty and sad.

5. To a certain degree, I now filter what I see and interact with when I'm online by muting, blocking or straight-up ignoring

people and pages that make me leave the internet feeling worse. I don't know about you, but I'd rather *not* witness shootings or child abuse or animals being kicked. I avoid people who present unobtainable perfection (because perfection doesn't exist) or anyone that thrives on drama. Sometimes I slip up – we all do – and engage with stuff that'll do us no good. On social media our mistakes rarely go unnoticed and these can become the lowest form of entertainment for other people. I've posted things I honestly wish I hadn't and said things in videos that came out completely wrong. My goal with social media is simply this: become expert at sniffing out the stuff that will make me a

better human being and help me discover myself while balancing my internet life with a social life in the real, non-virtual world.



N.B. Answer ONLY ONE Question A and ONLY ONE Question B.

Question A – 50 Marks

- (i) Based on your reading of paragraphs four and five, explain three steps Melanie has taken that helped her to develop a healthy relationship with social media. Support your answer with reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) Do you believe that you are fortunate or unfortunate to live in an age when social media is extremely popular? Give reasons for your answer. (15)
- (iii) (a) In your opinion, what message is conveyed by IMAGE 1? Support your response with reference to IMAGE 1. (10)
- (b) To what extent does IMAGE 2 accurately reflect the impact of mobile devices on your engagement with your friends? Explain your response, supporting your answer with reference to IMAGE 2. (10)

Candidates may NOT answer Question A and Question B on the same text.

Question B – 50 Marks

You have been asked by a mobile phone company to produce **an article for their website**, offering guidance on the polite and appropriate use of mobile phones by people of all ages. The article should include a combination of “dos and don'ts” in relation to polite and appropriate mobile phone usage. Write the article you would produce.

TEXT 2 – THE SELFIE: SOCIAL MEDIA’S OWN ART FORM

This text draws on original material from a variety of sources including: Jerry Saltz (*Art at Arm’s Length: A History of the Selfie*); Ana Peraica (*Culture of the Selfie*); Charissa Coulthard (*Self-portraits and Social Media – The Rise of the Selfie*) and Jo Tweedy (*The Selfie Olympics*).

1. We live in the age of the selfie. This fast self-portrait, made with a smartphone’s camera, has revolutionized how we engage with social media. Images can be shared with unlimited numbers of people. We can control how we are seen across a range of media platforms, becoming our own paparazzi, our own public relations manager. The immediacy of the selfie – Look where I am! Look what I’m doing! Look at what I look like! – is exciting. A search on photo-sharing app Instagram retrieves over 23 million photos uploaded with the hashtag #selfie, and a whopping 51 million with the hashtag #me. For the first time in history millions of people have a tool for self-reflection, self-presentation, and self-promotion.

2. The word “selfie” received official recognition in 2013 when it was declared Word of the Year by Oxford Dictionaries. Selfies have expanded our vocabularies. New words invented to describe variations of this phenomenon include *helfie* (a picture of one’s hair) *melfie* (a selfie taken using a mirror) and *drelfie* (drunken selfie). Terms have also been coined for photos with items of furniture such as *shelfie* and *bookshelfie*. There is even an Olympic dimension to this phenomenon – The Selfie Olympics – an informal social media competition that appears to arise every time there is a summer or winter Games. The phenomenon first appeared during the Sochi Games in Russia, with fans of the Olympics posting photographs of themselves with the strangest of props, including hoovers and mattresses – often dragged into a bathroom.

3. Selfies have become a new visual genre, a different type of self-portrait. This is a very big deal as new genres arise relatively

IMAGE 1



rarely. However it is possible to recognize the selfie’s roots in more traditional art forms. Some experts argue that the painting above, Parmigianino’s Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror (painted in 1524), might be called art’s first attempt at a selfie. This picture displays many of the attributes of the selfie: the awkward angle, the distorted arm, the close-up of the subject – in this case, the artist himself, Parmigianino.

4. Selfies are increasingly seen as an important social and historical record. Astronaut Aki Hoshide’s iconic selfie, seen on Page 5, shows the Sun behind him and the Earth and fellow astronaut, Sunita Williams, reflected in his visor. The image provides a striking visual record of this space mission. As yet academics are not paying much attention to selfies, but they will. Imagine what we could see if we had millions of these images from the streets of ancient Rome. No doubt, in time, our enormous collection of selfies will provide an incredible record of the details of our everyday lives, fascinating the generations who come after us and providing a valuable resource to historians.

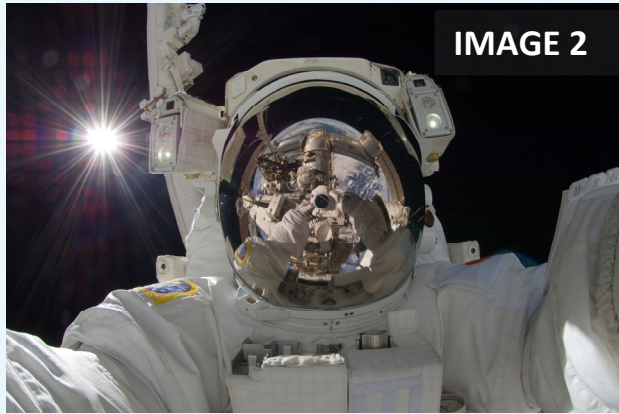


IMAGE 2

5. While the typical person posting selfies probably just wants to have fun taking photos and sharing them online, the selfie trend has attracted significant criticism,

starting with the word itself. Some commentators see the term “selfie” as childish and rather silly. There is even a campaign seeking to create a better name for this new and exciting art form of the social media generation.

Selfies have been criticised for promoting vanity and encouraging self-obsession. There is a psychological condition called “Selfitis”, which is linked to the obsessive posting of self-images online. Worryingly, experts in the area of online safety warn that those who create provocative selfies to get attention may find that they have created something that they have difficulty getting rid of.

N.B. Answer ONLY ONE Question A and ONLY ONE Question B.

Question A – 50 Marks

- (i) Based on your reading of the first three paragraphs on Page 4, explain three ways in which selfies have made an impact on modern life. Support your answer with reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) Do you believe that the influence of selfies on society is mainly positive or mainly negative? Give reasons for your answer. (15)
- (iii) (a) Which of the two images in TEXT 2 do you find more fascinating? Explain your choice, supporting your response with reference to your chosen image. (10)
- (b) Do you think it is possible that selfies will provide an important historical record in the future, as predicted in paragraph four? Give reasons for your response. (10)

Candidates may NOT answer Question A and Question B on the same text.

Question B – 50 Marks

Your local newspaper has published a letter condemning fifteen to thirty year olds as a “vain and selfish generation”. The letter writer specifically refers to selfies as an example of the vanity of people in this age group. Write a **letter to the newspaper editor**, in which you respond to the views expressed in the original letter, and put forward your own views on the subject of selfies.

TEXT 3 – PLASTIC AT THE PICNIC

This text is based on several blog posts from the website of the organisation, Friends of the Earth. The blogs encourage people to act as volunteers with Friends of the Earth at Electric Picnic.



Some of the clean-up operation after Electric Picnic, 2018.

1. Festivals can lead to intense bursts of waste, with up to 55,000 people in a contained area, mostly eating meals from food-trucks and needing to dispose of each food container. Beer cans often blanket the ground, combining with broken tents on the Monday morning to provide a perfectly shameful picture for every Irish newspaper.

2. For the last three years, Friends of the Earth has brought a team of volunteers to Ireland's biggest music, comedy and spoken word festival – Electric Picnic. In 2016, when we took 120 volunteers, 142 tonnes of waste was recycled and 10.24 tonnes of food waste was composted! A whopping €31,000 was given out to festival-goers who participated in a deposit refund scheme, recycling their valuable plastic. The deposit per cup was 20 cent and per bottle it was 10 cent, so that's a lot of cups and bottles!

3. You can help to make Electric Picnic the greenest festival in Ireland. You will work as part of a team of enthusiastic Green Messengers, encouraging festival-goers to separate their waste properly and educating them on Friends of the Earth's campaigns. And, as a reward, you will get a *free weekend pass* to the festival!

4. **You will get:**

- A free ticket to the entire festival.
- Free transport by private coach from Dublin (Merrion Square South) on the Thursday at 2:30pm, there and back (we will refund the cost of your bus ticket from elsewhere in the country).
- Eco-camping.
- A dinner on the evening of August 30th.
- A dinner with the other volunteers on the final evening.

5. **In return, you are required to:**

- Be over 18.
- Volunteer for each of the three days, for six hours each day.
- Attend one training session before the festival.
- Camp with the rest of the volunteers in the eco-campsite.
- Sign a volunteer agreement.
- Supply your own camping equipment.
- Pay a fully refundable €150 deposit, because we can't take the risk that volunteers won't show up. We hope you can understand that! If you cannot afford this, please get in touch with us as we don't want financial difficulties to prevent anyone from taking part.

6. Here's what the volunteers have achieved so far:

- 2015 – 60,000 plastic cups returned.
- 2016 – 139,855 plastic cups returned.
- 2017 – 265,048 plastic cups returned.

So, if you are enthusiastic and willing to help festival-goers figure out which bin their waste goes in, and be part of a real-life deposit refund scheme in action, then we want you to join us.

Apply to volunteer now!



IMAGE 2

The Friends of the Earth deposit refund and recycling centre at Electric Picnic.

N.B. Answer ONLY ONE Question A and ONLY ONE Question B.

Question A – 50 Marks

- (i) Based on your reading of Text 3, explain three reasons why people might want to act as volunteers with the organisation, Friends of the Earth, at Electric Picnic. Support your answer with reference to the text. (15)
- (ii) Do you believe that a deposit refund scheme for plastic items such as cups and bottles, similar to that organised by Friends of the Earth at Electric Picnic, would be successful if introduced in your school or workplace? Give reasons for your answer. (15)
- (iii) (a) Imagine that you recognise *your* tent from Electric Picnic in IMAGE 1. Write a diary entry in which you reflect on abandoning your tent at the campsite and record your feelings in response to the picture. (10)
- (b) Would you support banning people who cause trouble at a festival, including littering, from attending that festival again in the future? Give reasons for your response. (10)

Candidates may NOT answer Question A and Question B on the same text.

Question B – 50 Marks

You would like to establish a deposit refund scheme for plastic items such as cups and bottles in your school or workplace. People would be paid 20 cent for each cup and 10 cent for each bottle returned for recycling. Write **a post for your school or workplace blog** in which you outline your proposed scheme and encourage people to support your proposal.

SECTION II

COMPOSING

(100 marks)

Write a composition on **any one** of the following composition assignments in **bold print** below.

Each composition carries 100 marks.

The composition assignments are intended to reflect language study in the areas of information, argument, persuasion, narration, and the aesthetic use of language.

1. In TEXT 1, Melanie Murphy explains how she dislikes people who thrive on drama.

Write a short story about a character whose determination to be the centre of attention has unexpected consequences.

2. In TEXT 2, we are told that in time our selfies will provide a valuable historical record.

Write a personal essay in which you discuss at least three aspects of life that are considered unremarkable in 2019 that you think may appear strange or remarkable to people in the future.

3. According to Melanie Murphy in TEXT 1, perfection does not exist.

Write an article, for publication in a music magazine, in which you describe your ideas for the perfect music festival. The article should deal with the venue, the line-up, and the facilities available to festival-goers.

4. TEXTS 1, 2, and 3 all deal with aspects of social media.

Write a personal essay in which you discuss what you think your life would be like if you were unable to use any form of social media for a whole year.

5. TEXT 3 is set against the backdrop of the Electric Picnic music festival.

Write a short story in which a group of childhood friends form what becomes a world famous band but live to regret their success.

6. In TEXT 3, members of the public are encouraged to volunteer to help the Friends of the Earth at Electric Picnic.

Write an article, to be published in a popular magazine, on the value of volunteering with at least one sporting or charitable organisation. The article should discuss the possible benefits for the people who volunteer their time and energy, and for the organisation(s) involved.

7. In TEXT 2, we see an image taken by an astronaut during a space mission.

Imagine you are representing Ireland at a United Nations conference on the future. Write a speech, to be delivered at the conference, in which you discuss both the opportunities and responsibilities facing humanity as we explore space and planets beyond the Earth.

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Acknowledgements

Images and texts that appear on this examination paper were sourced as follows:

Text 1: *Fully Functioning Human (Almost)*, Melanie Murphy, Hachette Books Ireland, 2017

Image 1: <https://me.me/i/glasbergen-a-bunch-of-us-are-getting-together-at-my-1b1ca7a99e43410183ed277715b0af4b>

Image 2: <http://blogs.unsw.edu.au/thedigitalage/blog/2017/09/the-effects-of-social-media-on-our-youths-ability-to-learn/>

TEXT 2: Is based on ideas and original material from the following:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22511650>

<https://www.vulture.com/2014/01/history-of-the-selfie.html>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-5413575/The-Selfie-Olympics-back.html>

<http://networkcultures.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CultureOfTheSelfie.pdf>

Image 1: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/parmigianino/self-portrait-at-the-mirror>

Image 2: <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/gallery/images/station/crew-32/html/iss032e025258.html>

Text 3: <https://www.foe.ie/blog/>

Image 1: photo: Ed Rice <https://greennews.ie/level-waste-electricpicnic-heartbreaking-foe/>

Image 2: <https://www.electricpicnic.ie/news/find-out-more-about-electric-picnics-sustainability-programme>

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Leaving Certificate – Ordinary Level

English

Wednesday 5 June

Morning 9.30 – 12.20