

# COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH

The University of the State of New York

REGENTS HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

IN

## ENGLISH

**Tuesday, January 24, 2012 — 1:15 to 4:15 p.m., only**

A separate answer sheet has been provided for you. Follow the instructions for completing the student information on your answer sheet. You must also fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet that has a space for it, and write your name at the top of each sheet of scrap paper.

The examination has four parts. Part 1 tests listening skills; you are to answer all eight multiple-choice questions. For Part 2, you are to answer all twelve multiple-choice questions. For Part 3, you are to answer all five multiple-choice questions and the two short constructed-response questions. For Part 4, you are to write one essay response.

When you have completed the examination, you must sign the statement printed at the bottom of the front of the answer sheet, indicating that you had no unlawful knowledge of the questions or answers prior to the examination and that you have neither given nor received assistance in answering any of the questions during the examination. 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.**



## NOTES

**DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**

## Part 1 (Questions 1–8)

### Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (1–8): Use your notes to answer the following questions about the passage read to you. Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

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| <p>1 From birth to age eight, Alfred Nobel's life was strongly affected by his</p> <p>(1) poverty                      (3) diet<br/>(2) travels                      (4) health</p> <p>2 Evidence of Alfred Nobel's academic ability is reflected by his</p> <p>(1) published stories<br/>(2) linguistic accomplishments<br/>(3) school awards<br/>(4) mathematical theories</p> <p>3 By the age of forty, Alfred Nobel's view of his "homeland" was closely associated with his</p> <p>(1) global interests              (3) nuclear family<br/>(2) patriotic feelings              (4) vacation residence</p> <p>4 Alfred Nobel is described as "a perfectionist" because he continuously</p> <p>(1) reduced business costs<br/>(2) kept meticulous records<br/>(3) refined previous inventions<br/>(4) eliminated inefficient workers</p> | <p>5 The speaker suggests that Alfred Nobel's will surprised his contemporaries because it revealed his</p> <p>(1) spiritual beliefs              (3) social prejudice<br/>(2) financial debts              (4) unique thinking</p> <p>6 Responsibility for choosing the Nobel Prize winners is given to</p> <p>(1) Sweden's king              (3) the Nobel family<br/>(2) specified institutions      (4) famous scientists</p> <p>7 Nobel prizewinners are known as</p> <p>(1) laureates                      (3) notables<br/>(2) stars                              (4) lords</p> <p>8 The current financial award each prizewinner receives suggests that</p> <p>(1) ceremonies are underfunded<br/>(2) research is expensive<br/>(3) costs have stabilized<br/>(4) funds have increased</p> |
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## Part 2 (Questions 9–20)

**Directions** (9–20): Below each passage, there are several multiple-choice questions. Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

### Reading Comprehension Passage A

That night, Susan and I stood on the banks of the river, which was moving blackly with its load of white ice floes.<sup>1</sup> The floes were flat on the top and big as the floor of my cabin. Some were as big as a river barge. They all moved downstream in a ghostly procession, separated by jagged black lines where the water was bare. The edges crunched when they  
5 touched and hissed when they swept by. In the center of the river, where the current ran swifter, a band of floes moved much more quickly than those near the sides.

The moon was full, which would make the footing easier for Susan, for she must jump from floe to floe to cross the river. We stood alone—hand in hand at the edge of water, our skin separated by the wool of our mittens. No other eyes, no other soul, would watch her  
10 go. Silence, stillness, cold. They chimed about us as one snowy chord. ...

When I saw Susan step upon the ice, I bit my lower lip till the blood flowed down my chin and crusted in the cold. Here the riverbank was no higher than a step, as from house to yard. In the moonlight, new snow like sugar glittered atop the sheet of ice lying along the bank. Behind her, in a lengthening path, Susan's footprints indented the sparkling snow. She  
15 moved toward the center of the river as calmly as though crossing a broad moonlit road cut through the brush and trees of the wilderness.

When she came to the first black edge, she stepped across the open water as though it were a mere stream. The next floe was smaller, and the next even smaller; they dipped or tilted slightly when she stepped onto them. The spans of open water between them seemed  
20 wider and wider, and sometimes she waited for the current to bring the ice rafts closer together. Then she leapt the narrowed fissure and walked on. ...

As the current accelerated and the spaces between floes widened, Susan ran and jumped from raft to raft; my heart hung in the air with her. In the center of the river, the swifter current zipped the ice rafts downstream, with Susan standing on one of them. Her  
25 arms fluttered once for balance, twice. ...

At last the treacherous midsection of river was traversed. She was far from me now—a dark upright using the flatness: flying and landing, running and leaping, from floe to floe. I saw shapes in the ice rafts, mostly like enormous animals, flat, not like a natural swan or bear but flat as a cookie animal or a tin weathervane. Near the other side,  
30 approaching a bend, she had to wait for her floe to come close to the bank. Holding the stitch<sup>2</sup> in my side, I continued walking as rapidly downstream as I could till I came to a high but tangled shoreline that thwarted me. Soon the current would sweep Susan's floe beyond my sight. *O, carry her close, carry her close, now,* I prayed to the ice, and I prayed that Susan would not feel herself passing beyond my sight and take the risk of trying to jump  
35 ashore when the gulf remained too great. The floe that wheeled her toward the far shore was like the palm of a hand, open and presentational.

Patient Susan! Her ice raft nudged the shore, and she jumped. Even as her shoes landed on the snowy bank, she turned and looked exactly where I stood. Together we lifted our arms, blowing each other a kiss across the water, for we had not kissed on

<sup>1</sup>floes — pieces of moving ice

<sup>2</sup>stitch — sharp pain

40 parting, saving it till she should be safe, and trusting the sweet air to be our go-between. And then one shout, though it was small from the distance, from Susan: *Freedom!*

—Sena Jeter Naslund  
excerpted from *Ahab's Wife*, 1999  
William Morrow and Company, Inc.

- |  |   |   |                                    |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 9 In paragraph one, the narrator uses imagery to establish both the<br>(1) mood and setting<br>(2) conflict and characters<br>(3) theme and structure<br>(4) tone and dialogue | 12 The comparison between the floes and the “spans of open water” (line 19) suggests an increasing<br>(1) pace<br>(2) depth | (3) danger<br>(4) excitement  |                                    |
| 10 The language of paragraph two creates a sense of the characters’<br>(1) frustration<br>(2) fascination  | (3) satisfaction<br>(4) isolation   | 13 The “dark upright using the flatness” (line 27) most likely refers to Susan<br>(1) climbing up the river bank<br>(2) waving in the darkness<br>(3) sitting on an ice raft<br>(4) moving across the water |                                    |
| 11 The description of Susan’s movements in lines 17 through 21 indicates that she is<br>(1) reckless<br>(2) courageous   | (3) frightened<br>(4) encouraged  | 14 One conclusion that can be drawn from the final line is that Susan has<br>(1) escaped<br>(2) found friends   | (3) become wealthy<br>(4) competed |
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## Reading Comprehension Passage B

Lynda LaPlante, 45, just wanted to do something nice for her boyfriend, Roland. So when she heard that singer John Mayer was performing at the Tweeter Center in Mansfield, Massachusetts, she surfed the Internet hoping to buy a pair of tickets. A “Buy Tickets Now” Web link took LaPlante to TheSeats.com, where she nabbed two lawn seats at \$60 each, plus an additional \$15 for shipping and \$18 in service fees. Total price: \$153.

Too bad the tickets really cost \$24.95 each. Unbeknownst to LaPlante, she had just made a way-overpriced, sorry-no-refunds deal on an Internet ticket site. There are two types of ticket sellers, on the Web: the first, primary sellers, includes box offices and authorized companies such as Ticketmaster and Tickets.com. The next group is known as secondary sellers. These more risky dot-coms range from ticket brokers—companies that scoop up in-demand tickets and resell them for more than face value (using automated software and phone banks, resellers can snap up thousands of tickets within minutes of a sale)—to marketplace websites such as StubHub, RazorGator, eBay, and Craigslist, where individuals can sell tickets for any price, with almost zero guarantees for the buyer. The result: a Wild West ticket market that’s become anywhere from a \$3 billion to \$20 billion industry.

One of the scalper’s best weapons: deception. Thanks to the Internet, sellers can lure buyers to sites that look official but are actually havens for high-priced tickets. That’s how AARP THE MAGAZINE deputy editor Nancy Graham, 51, was duped. While searching the Internet for “Wolf Trap”—a performing arts center in Virginia—and “tickets,” she mistakenly ended up on GreatSeats.com and bought a pair of orchestra seats to a Doobie Brothers concert for \$160 each. Face value \$40. “I feel like a fool,” she says. ...

Price, however, isn’t the only problem: all too often buyers of scalped tickets don’t get what they paid for. Arline Zatz, 69, forked over \$200 for two \$25 seats she bought while personally visiting a local broker. “I knew they were overpriced and I resented it, but I took them because they were supposedly in a superior location,” she says. Instead, her view was blocked by a large television camera. Adding to her irritation: “We saw plenty of empty seats.” ...

Some artists are fighting back. In 2006 rock star Tom Petty launched a new fan club to give faithful followers the first shot at the best seats for his summer tour. When ticket brokers and independent scalpers joined the club to buy and then resell premium seats for five times their retail value, Petty’s management and promoters had the last laugh. Ticketmaster, the official distributor for Petty’s tour, and the various arenas painstakingly matched seat locations listed for sale online with those purchased during the fan-club presale—and voided more than 1,400 tickets so they could be resold to true fans. Buyers had to show an ID to pick up their tickets on show night. Petty’s manger, Tony Dimitriades, calls it “a step in the right direction and a major strike on behalf of the good guys.” ...

Even industry giant Ticketmaster is making a stand with its online channel, “Stop the Scammers” ([www.ticketmaster.com/stopthescammers](http://www.ticketmaster.com/stopthescammers)). The site allows consumers to report ticket fraud and includes links to consumer-protection agencies. ...

—Laura Daily  
excerpted from “Good Seats, Bad Deals”  
*AARP THE MAGAZINE*, May/June 2007

- 15 According to the passage, when Lynda LaPlante purchased John Mayer tickets she became a victim of
- (1) cyber lingo
  - (2) corporate advertisements
  - (3) price gouging
  - (4) spam e-mail
- 16 Evidence of the passage's use of informal language is shown in which word?
- (1) "nabbed" (line 4)
  - (2) "risky" (line 10)
  - (3) "deception" (line 17)
  - (4) "mistakenly" (line 21)
- 17 The purpose of the dashes as used in lines 10 through 13 and line 20 is to
- (1) provide definitions
  - (2) introduce contrast
  - (3) identify the narrator
  - (4) present direct quotations
- 18 According to the passage, artists like Tom Petty work with legitimate ticket brokers and venue sites to
- (1) organize tours
  - (2) protect consumers
  - (3) promote songs
  - (4) increase sales
- 19 The overall tone of the passage can best be described as
- (1) fascinated
  - (2) confused
  - (3) amused
  - (4) aggravated
- 20 A major purpose of the passage is to
- (1) encourage new artists
  - (2) attract more fans
  - (3) educate ticket buyers
  - (4) advertise secondary sellers
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## Part 3 (Questions 21–27)

**Directions:** On the following pages read Passage I (an excerpt from a biography) and Passage II (a poem) about creativity. You may use the margins to take notes as you read. Answer the multiple-choice questions on the answer sheet provided for you. Then write your response for question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet.

### Passage I

...The course started with woodworking, and Jade Snow made a bookcase; proceeded to paints and pigments, and she painted the bookcase with linseed oil and pigment which she herself had ground together; metal work, and she slaved to snip off a round of copper, anneal<sup>1</sup> and pound it into an ashtray; weaving, and she made herself a primitive loom from  
5 an old berry crate; paper work, and she made her own paste and paper dolls and decorated paper beads. Finally there was work in clay, emphasizing ceramic sculpture and pottery.

One day, the class transferred to the pottery studio which was little more than a gray shack underneath some lovely cork elm trees. In this small room, about ten by twenty feet, were a sink, one electric, and three foot-treadled potter's wheels, many shelves and one  
10 cabinet. Two auxiliary rooms held a firing kiln, an old pie oven for drying green ware, glazes and glazing equipment. Fine clay dust had settled over everything. But what marvels the shelves in the main room held! The instructor told them to wander around and get acquainted with the place, but to be careful of breakage.

On some shelves were drying, half-completed forms. Others held finished work, and  
15 when Jade Snow's eyes lighted on them she felt shocked excitement. The articles were reaching out and speaking to her! She couldn't herself understand the stimulation and response. Among these completed examples of student pottery were pitchers, vases, cups, bowls. Some were imperfect, thick, warped, or crude. But they were all glazed in beautiful, clear, and unfamiliar shades of blues, greens, and yellows. Some were delicate, and some  
20 virile,<sup>2</sup> but they all had that hand quality which was the stamp of a creator's love of his craft. It was a provoking awakening, a discovery of another new thing in the world at which to wonder and marvel.

This wonder and marvel of pottery never ceased for Jade Snow. The instructor now gave them simple lectures on the nature of clay, what they should and should not do with it, on  
25 glazes and firings, and then left them alone with their hands and the materials. As the class hours were short, Jade Snow would return at odd times, on week ends and evenings, to make little bowls or to trim or glaze pots. She played with simple forms, decorations, and textures, and the hours, like the fishing trips during her childhood, would simply fly while all troubles were forgotten in the joy of creating. The clay forms became a satisfying  
30 reflection of personal will and skill. ...

In crafts, she found, one learned more by seeing and feeling for oneself than by instruction. She did not ask her instructor for much personal help, but all about her in various stages of completion were his own pottery forms and colors to serve as silent standards of criticism. He himself seemed a tireless worker, maintaining the best possible  
35 equipment and stock of materials for his students, and constantly re-establishing new and higher requirements for making pottery. Whenever he had perfected one technique or form he progressed to another unknown. Whatever formulas he discovered and all his voluminous notes on experiments, were at the disposal of his students. Through

<sup>1</sup>anneal — to heat and cool

<sup>2</sup>virile — masculine

40 innumerable informal talks with him as each worked separately, Jade Snow developed a  
“feeling” for art, an inspiration for good pottery, and the knowledge that sober, hard work  
was the most important quality of all.

45 Her first products were certainly bad or mediocre. While inspired by the work of  
others, her pottery was nevertheless her own creation, a combination of the clay she chose,  
the form she achieved, and the glazes she used. They reflected the quality of her  
workmanship and the impulses of her heart more than any other material she had used.  
50 The final satisfaction was that they were physical remembrances of certain personal  
moments in time which could never be considered lost so long as the pottery was not  
broken beyond repair. Jade Snow made as many pieces as time and energy would allow in  
the short month remaining before graduation, and while she regretted that she had  
discovered the fascination of clay so late in her college days, she rejoiced that at least she  
had discovered it. ...

—Jade Snow Wong  
excerpted from *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, 1950  
Harper & Brothers

**Passage II**  
**Gathering Leaves in Grade School**

They were smooth ovals,  
and some the shade of potatoes—  
some had been moth-eaten  
or spotted, the maples  
5 were starched, and crackled  
like campfire.

We put them under tracing paper  
and rubbed our crayons  
over them, X-raying  
10 the spread of their bones  
and black, veined catacombs.

We colored them green and brown  
and orange, and  
cut them out along the edges,  
15 labeling them deciduous  
or evergreen.

All day, in the stuffy air of the classroom,  
with its cockeyed globe,  
and nautical maps of ocean floors,  
20 I watched those leaves

lost in their own worlds  
flap on the pins of the bulletin boards:  
without branches or roots,  
or even a sky to hold on to.

—Judith Harris  
[www.poetryfoundation.org](http://www.poetryfoundation.org)

## Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (21–25): Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

**Passage I** (the biography excerpt) — Questions 21–22 refer to Passage I.

21 The phrase “But what marvels the shelves in the main room held!” (lines 11 and 12) indicates that when entering the room, Jade Snow was filled with

- (1) anxiety
- (2) delight
- (3) envy
- (4) hope

22 Passage I implies that Jade Snow’s favorite craft is

- (1) woodworking
- (2) weaving
- (3) painting
- (4) pottery

**Passage II** (the poem) — Questions 23–24 refer to Passage II.

23 In the first line of the poem, the pronoun “They” refers to

- (1) leaves
- (2) moths
- (3) campfires
- (4) potatoes

24 In stanza three of the poem, the poet appeals to the reader’s sense of

- (1) taste
- (2) sight
- (3) smell
- (4) sound

**Question 25 refers to both passages.**

25 Jade Snow in Passage I and the narrator in Passage II are similar in that they are

- (1) determined to be successful
- (2) eager to finish class
- (3) appreciative of artistic beauty
- (4) destined to become artists

### Short-Response Questions

**Directions** (26–27): Write your response to question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet. Be sure to answer **both** questions.

26 Write a well-developed paragraph in which you use ideas from **both** Passage I (the biography excerpt) and Passage II (the poem) to establish a controlling idea about creativity. Develop your controlling idea using specific examples and details from **both** Passage I and Passage II.

27 Choose a specific literary element (e.g., theme, characterization, structure, point of view, etc.) or literary technique (e.g., symbolism, irony, figurative language, etc.) used by **one** of the authors. Using specific details from **either** Passage I (the biography excerpt) **or** Passage II (the poem), in a well-developed paragraph, show how the author uses that element or technique to develop the passage.

## Part 4 (Question 28)

### 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 beginning on page 3 of the essay booklet.

### Critical Lens:

“No two persons regard the world in exactly the same way...”

— J. W. von Goethe

“Introduction to the Propyläen”

from *Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books*, 1910

### 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



