

IGCSE English Literature Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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Questions

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- 1. Which option best describes the action of 'presenting'?**
 - A. Hiding information for clarity**
 - B. Showing something in a particular manner**
 - C. Forgetting about the subject**
 - D. Making assumptions**
- 2. Which term best represents an event that is typically unwelcome?**
 - A. Experience**
 - B. Incident**
 - C. Conduct**
 - D. Exhibition**
- 3. How does setting influence the mood of a play?**
 - A. By dictating the plot progression**
 - B. By providing historical context only**
 - C. By creating an atmosphere that affects how the audience feels**
 - D. By being irrelevant to the overall theme**
- 4. How would you define an "incident"?**
 - A. A planned event that is usually enjoyable**
 - B. An unexpected and usually unpleasant thing that happens**
 - C. A joyful gathering of friends or family**
 - D. A formal announcement about a future event**
- 5. What does the verb 'effect' mean?**
 - A. To instigate change without any consequence**
 - B. To prevent something from happening**
 - C. To cause something and make it happen**
 - D. To ignore or overlook**

- 6. Which of the following best describes the concept of dramatic irony?**
- A. A situation where characters are unaware of the context**
 - B. An intentional exaggeration for effect**
 - C. A humorous situation that only the audience understands**
 - D. A plot twist that resolves the conflict**
- 7. The term "lament" signifies what?**
- A. An expression of happiness or celebration**
 - B. An expression of sorrow or sadness**
 - C. A type of persuasive argument**
 - D. A method of describing something vividly**
- 8. What is a key feature of something done 'effectively'?**
- A. Taking the most time possible**
 - B. Producing the same result every time**
 - C. Reaching the intended outcome**
 - D. Making it look easy**
- 9. Which word means strange or funny because a situation is different from what is expected?**
- A. Ironic**
 - B. Significant**
 - C. Tense**
 - D. Compelling**
- 10. What characteristic does something described as vivid have?**
- A. It's very detailed and clear**
 - B. It's tense and nerve-wracking**
 - C. It has a significant meaning**
 - D. It is very dramatic**

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. A
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. A

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Explanations

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1. Which option best describes the action of 'presenting'?

- A. Hiding information for clarity
- B. Showing something in a particular manner**
- C. Forgetting about the subject
- D. Making assumptions

The action of 'presenting' is best described as showing something in a particular manner. This involves not just displaying or sharing information but also considering how the presentation changes the audience's perception or understanding of the subject. For example, the choice of words, style, tone, and the context in which something is presented all contribute to how the information is interpreted by the audience. In literature and communication, the way an idea or theme is presented can significantly influence its impact and resonance with the audience. This can include visual elements, narrative techniques, or even the arrangement of ideas in an argument. Therefore, the emphasis on how something is shown underscores its importance in effective communication. Other options do not accurately capture the essence of 'presenting.' Hiding information contradicts the idea of presenting, as it involves concealment rather than revelation. Forgetting about the subject suggests a lack of engagement, while making assumptions can lead to misunderstandings rather than a clear presentation of facts or ideas.

2. Which term best represents an event that is typically unwelcome?

- A. Experience
- B. Incident**
- C. Conduct
- D. Exhibition

The term "incident" is best suited to represent an event that is typically unwelcome. An incident often implies something unforeseen or unfortunate, such as an accident, disturbance, or conflict, which aligns with the notion of being unwelcome. When we refer to an incident, it usually has negative connotations, suggesting that it disrupts normalcy or creates a problem. In contrast, "experience" can be neutral and even positive, encompassing both good and bad events. "Conduct" pertains to the manner in which someone behaves, and "exhibition" refers to a public display of works, ideas, or skills, typically seen as positive or celebratory. These terms do not carry the same implication of negativity or unwelcome nature as "incident" does. Therefore, the choice of "incident" clearly encapsulates the essence of something unexpected and undesirable.

3. How does setting influence the mood of a play?

- A. By dictating the plot progression
- B. By providing historical context only
- C. By creating an atmosphere that affects how the audience feels**
- D. By being irrelevant to the overall theme

The setting of a play significantly influences the mood by creating an atmosphere that can evoke specific emotions in the audience. For instance, a dark and stormy environment might instill feelings of tension or foreboding, while a bright, sunny location could elicit joy or comfort. The details of the setting—such as the time period, location, and environmental conditions—serve to enhance the emotional landscape of the narrative. This atmosphere can dictate how the audience perceives the characters and their actions, ultimately shaping their overall experience of the play. In this context, while the other choices touch on elements that could relate to the play, they do not capture the primary role of setting in shaping mood. Dictating plot progression is more about narrative structure than emotional impact. Providing historical context, while useful, does not necessarily create an emotional atmosphere. Lastly, stating that setting is irrelevant to the overall theme overlooks its integral role in establishing the emotional undertones and resonances that contribute to the thematic depth.

4. How would you define an "incident"?

- A. A planned event that is usually enjoyable
- B. An unexpected and usually unpleasant thing that happens**
- C. A joyful gathering of friends or family
- D. A formal announcement about a future event

Defining an "incident" often involves understanding its context in everyday language and usage. The correct choice highlights that an incident typically refers to an unexpected occurrence, especially one that carries a negative connotation, making it unpleasant. This aligns with common interpretations of the term, where an incident suggests an unforeseen event that disrupts normalcy or poses a problem. In contrast, the other options describe different types of events that do not capture the essence of an incident. A planned event that is enjoyable or a joyful gathering implies a level of anticipation and positivity that's contrary to the unexpected nature of an incident. Similarly, a formal announcement pertains to communication about future events rather than reflecting an occurrence that has happened. Therefore, the defining characteristics of an incident—unpredictability and unpleasantness—are well represented in the selected answer.

5. What does the verb 'effect' mean?

- A. To instigate change without any consequence**
- B. To prevent something from happening**
- C. To cause something and make it happen**
- D. To ignore or overlook**

The verb 'effect' means to cause something to happen or to bring about a change. It implies a direct action that leads to a particular result or outcome. This definition aligns perfectly with the chosen answer, as it highlights the active role someone might take in creating change or in initiating a process. In the context of the other options, 'to instigate change without any consequence' does not accurately describe 'effect,' since 'effect' specifically involves a tangible result. Similarly, 'to prevent something from happening' contradicts the meaning of 'effect,' as it suggests the opposite action. Lastly, 'to ignore or overlook' also diverges from the meaning of 'effect,' since it implies inaction rather than a decisive and impactful action. Thus, 'to cause something and make it happen' is indeed the most precise interpretation of the verb 'effect.'

6. Which of the following best describes the concept of dramatic irony?

- A. A situation where characters are unaware of the context**
- B. An intentional exaggeration for effect**
- C. A humorous situation that only the audience understands**
- D. A plot twist that resolves the conflict**

Dramatic irony is best described as a situation where characters are unaware of the context or the true situation, while the audience is fully aware. This creates a contrast between what the characters perceive and what the audience knows to be true, which often leads to heightened tension or poignancy in the narrative. In many literary works, this technique allows the audience to engage more deeply with the story, as they can anticipate outcomes and feel the weight of the characters' ignorance. For instance, in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," the audience knows that Juliet is alive, while Romeo believes she is dead, which adds emotional depth to their tragic confrontation. The other options don't align with the correct understanding of dramatic irony. Intentional exaggeration for effect refers to hyperbole, while humor related to audience understanding may refer more to comedic irony. A plot twist that resolves conflict does not specifically relate to dramatic irony, as it lacks the element of audience awareness against character ignorance.

7. The term "lament" signifies what?

- A. An expression of happiness or celebration**
- B. An expression of sorrow or sadness**
- C. A type of persuasive argument**
- D. A method of describing something vividly**

The term "lament" signifies an expression of sorrow or sadness, which is why the chosen answer is correct. In literature, a lament often takes the form of a poem or song that mourns the loss of someone or something significant, conveying deep emotional pain or grief. This characteristic connects strongly with themes of loss and mourning, making lamentation a powerful literary device used by authors to evoke empathy and reflect on human experiences of hardship and bereavement. In contrast, the other options do not align with the definition of "lament." An expression of happiness or celebration, a type of persuasive argument, and a method of describing something vividly all convey different meanings that do not capture the essence of what it means to lament. Therefore, the context and emotional weight associated with the term clearly indicate that it signifies sorrow or sadness.

8. What is a key feature of something done 'effectively'?

- A. Taking the most time possible**
- B. Producing the same result every time**
- C. Reaching the intended outcome**
- D. Making it look easy**

The key feature of something done 'effectively' is reaching the intended outcome. Effectiveness is primarily about achieving the desired goals or results in a given context. Whether in communication, action, or decision-making, effectiveness is measured by how well an approach fulfills its purpose or meets specific objectives. While taking more time, producing consistent results, or making a task appear easy can be aspects of different processes, they don't necessarily equate to effectiveness. For instance, spending excessive time may hinder progress rather than contribute to achieving goals. Consistency in results can be important in some contexts, but effectiveness is not restricted to producing identical outcomes; it's about achieving what is intended regardless of the variation in the approach. Similarly, tasks may look easy but may not be effective if they fail to achieve the desired goals. Therefore, the essence of effectiveness lies in successfully reaching the intended outcome.

9. Which word means strange or funny because a situation is different from what is expected?

- A. Ironic**
- B. Significant**
- C. Tense**
- D. Compelling**

The term "ironic" is used to describe a situation where there is a notable difference between what is expected and what actually occurs, often leading to humor or a sense of strangeness. This word captures the essence of unexpected outcomes that can be both amusing and thought-provoking. For example, if someone plans a picnic on a sunny day and it unexpectedly rains, the irony lies in the contrast between their intention and the outcome. In contrast, "significant" refers to something important or meaningful, without the connotation of surprise or humor. "Tense" describes a state of mental or emotional strain, which does not relate to the notion of expectation. Meanwhile, "compelling" typically means something that draws attention or is convincing; while it may be interesting, it does not convey the specific sense of unexpectedness and humor that "ironic" does. Therefore, "ironic" is the most accurate choice for the definition given in the question.

10. What characteristic does something described as vivid have?

- A. It's very detailed and clear**
- B. It's tense and nerve-wracking**
- C. It has a significant meaning**
- D. It is very dramatic**

Describing something as vivid typically means that it is very detailed and clear, allowing the reader or observer to visualize and experience it effectively. This quality often pertains to visual experiences but can also extend to descriptions of emotions, sounds, and other sensory details, making them more impactful and memorable. Vivid imagery often enhances storytelling by creating a strong mental picture that engages the audience, allowing them to immerse themselves in the context or narrative being presented. On the other hand, while options suggesting that something can be tense, meaningful, or dramatic may also depict intensity or engagement, these do not specifically capture the clarity and detail inherent in the term "vivid." Clarity and detail are central to achieving that strong mental picture, which is why the choice related to this characteristic is the most accurate.