

Name:

Part One: Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Applied Grammar

Note: No dictionaries may be used for this part of the examination. All the following exercises are contextual; the meaning of a given word or expression in an exercise is the same as in the short story.

Exercise 1: Comprehension and Interpretation

Answer these questions about Graham Greene's short story. Use your own knowledge of English; don't simply copy from the text.

«Powers of observation» appear to be a major literary quality. Which person in the story clearly displays such powers, and which person does not? Explain your decision.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

The girl wants to change her fiancé's plans of a professional career. What does he seem to be inclined to do and what does she suggest instead?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What does the young man's mother apparently think about the future of the young couple?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Why is the girl disappointed when her fiancé says, »I thought azure was blue« (l. 80)?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

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What does the narrator mean when he says that »reviewers, as well as publishers, are human« (l. 107-108)?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What's the first-person narrator's profession, and what does he think of it?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Exercise 2: Vocabulary Definitions

Copy words from the short story that match the following definitions:

polite, showing good manners (l. 2-20)
a low sound or words that are not clear or distinct (l. 2-20)

.....
strips of wood etc. forming part of the surface of a wall (l. 2-20)

.....
the process of being raised to a higher position or rank (l. 2-20)

.....
unwillingly, resentfully (l. 21-47)

.....
a support in the form of a pole (l. 21-47)

.....
making sb feel ashamed or foolish, injuring sb's dignity or pride (l. 48-86)

.....
made weak and powerless (l. 48-86)

.....
to understand, to bring two things together (l. 87-112)

.....
intentionally not direct or completely honest; avoiding a difficult situation (l. 87-112)

.....

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Exercise 3: Synonyms and Antonyms

Find a one-word synonym:

Find a one-word antonym:

tongue (l. 3)	.....	rarely (l. 3)	.....
glasses (l. 4)	.....	thin (l. 7)	.....
change (l. 42)	.....	weakness (l. 20)	.....
ought to (l. 70)	.....	better (l. 24)	.....
perhaps (l. 73)	.....	sadly (l. 41)	.....
party (l. 76)	.....	agreed (l. 46)	.....
abruptly (l. 95)	.....	future (l. 52)	.....
aid (l. 98)	.....	virtues (l. 56)	.....
disaster (l. 101)	.....	well (l. 58)	.....
eventually (l. 101)	.....	important (l. 63)	.....

Exercise 4: Word Formation

Write the part of speech indicated (v: verb, n: noun).

Example: incomprehensible (l. 3): v *comprehend*

glance (l. 5): v	.....
serious (l. 5): n	.....
appeared (l. 13): n	.....
resembled (l. 18): n	.....
declaration (l. 22): v	.....
know (l. 30): n	.....
certain (l. 55): n	.....
human (l. 56): n	.....
strength (l. 97): v	.....
wise (l. 107): n	.....

Exercise 5: Questions

Ask questions about the parts in italics:

They spoke to *each other* rarely in their incomprehensible tongue.
.....
They spoke to each other rarely in their *incomprehensible* tongue.
.....

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She *had thin blonde hair and her face was pretty and petite in a Regency way, oval like a miniature.*

.....
He *refilled their glasses with Chablis.*

.....
The *eldest Japanese gentleman leant across the table.*

.....
She would help *him* at the start.

.....
The bill had been lying beside them *for some time now.*

.....
This is *her* celebration.

Exercise 6: Reported Speech

Put the following into reported speech:

He asked, »Who's Dwight?«

.....
She said, »Listen carefully.«

.....
He asked, »What did you say?«

.....
He said, »I see what you mean.«

.....
She said, »My next novel is going to be about St Tropez.«

.....
She said, »Another advance will be due when the next book's finished.«

.....
She asked, »Is this a quarrel?«

.....
She said, »I've done that in *The Chelsea Set*. I don't want to repeat myself.«

Exercise 7: Active and Passive Voice

Put active into passive and passive into active; don't change the tenses:

All but one of them wore glasses.

.....

Name:

Sometimes the pretty girl who sat in the window beyond gave them a passing glance.

.....
.....

They are giving me an advance of five hundred pounds, and they've sold the paperback rights already.

.....
.....

Mr. Dwight is going to pay for our marriage.

.....
.....

The girl looked at me.

.....
.....

Will *The Chelsea Set* be read in five years?

.....
.....

Exercise 8: Conditional Sentences

Make conditional sentences that make sense in the context of the story:

The gentlemen were Japanese. The narrator didn't understand what they said.

If the gentlemen (not be Japanese, type III) ...

.....
.....

The girl is being given an advance. She celebrates in an expensive restaurant.

If the girl (not be given, type II) ...

.....
.....

The girl hasn't objected to changing the title of her book. The publisher is pleased.

If the girl (object, mixed type) ...

.....
.....

The young man stirred his Chablis with a fork. He was absent-minded.

The young man (not stir, type III) ...

.....
.....

The girl gets fifteen percent. More than five thousand copies will be sold.

The girl (get, type I) ...

.....
.....

The young man doesn't accept his uncle's offer. He can go to St Tropez.

If the young man (accept, type II) ...

.....
.....

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The publisher is wise. He puts a photo on the jacket of the book.
If the publisher (not be wise, type I) ...

.....
.....

Exercise 9: Verb Patterns

The publisher wants to call the book *The Chelsea Set*.

He enjoys (change) the title.

He advises the author (change) the title.

He makes the author (change) the title.

He expects the author (change) the title.

He would like (change) the title.

The young man doesn't want to go to St Tropez.

He can't stand (go) to St Tropez.

He decides (not go) to St Tropez.

He refuses (go) to St Tropez.

He doesn't look forward to (go) to St Tropez.

He warns his fiancée (not go) to St Tropez.

Exercise 10: Various Verb Forms

After the young man (hear) about his fiancée's plans, he went home
and (think) about his own future. He
(always mean) to accept his uncle's offer. He (not forget) what his
mother (tell) him about writing. It
(appear) there was a choice to make. No doubt he (know) more
about wine than about novels, but that (can be changed). But he
..... (feel) uneasy about marrying so soon, about leaving London, and,
above all, he (not be) so sure at all whether he
(want) the kind of life Alice seemed to have (choose) for him. In the
morning, after he (take a shower) and
(drink) two cups of coffee, he (sit) down at his desk and
..... (write) a letter:

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Dear Alice

When I (come) home from Bentley's last night, I
(feel) terrible. I (go) straight to bed but I
(can not sleep). In fact, I (spend) the whole night thinking about
what you (tell) me. You seem to be so confident and so sure of
yourself. But (you ever think) about me? It
(be) only half a year since we first (meet) and
(fall) in love with each other, and those few months (pass) so
quickly. I know I love you, but that's about all I know. We (never
really discuss) our future. I (think) there was plenty of time. And
now you want to marry within a week and leave for France.

Remember that afternoon in August when we (drive) to Brighton,
..... (lie) on the beach, (hold) hands,
..... (eat) ice-cream and (throw) pebbles in
the water. You (wear) your new swimming costume. That was when
we promised to make one another happy.

Since that wonderful day I (try) my best. But then suddenly you
..... (change). Your book, your publisher
(become) more important than I. At first I (not realize), then I
..... (think) it (will pass), but what you
..... (say) last night (make) it clear. You
..... (make) up your mind, you have your plans ready.

However, I'm afraid I'm not ready yet. When we (drink) wine and
..... (talk) at Bentley's, I (not know). But
now I do. Give me more time, Alice; there is a lot of talking we
(have) to do. We cannot marry so soon, I (not decline) that job at
my uncle's, and I (not leave) London. Please understand! Every-
thing (come) so quickly! I know if I do what you want me to do, I
..... (be) unhappy - and as you love me, you
(not be) happy either.

Please come and see me as soon as you can. I (wait) for you.

John

Part Two: Essay Writing

Note: You may use your English-English dictionary for this part of the examination.

Choose ONE of the following topics and write a composition of about 250 words. Find a suitable and plausible title.

1. »A good crutch«? — Write about the pros and cons of professional writing.
2. »A fresh eye's terribly important.« — Do you agree? What (else) makes a good writer?
3. »Old age saves us from the realization of a great many fears.« — Discuss.
4. Write about your favourite author. Why do you find his/her books fascinating? (The author needn't be an English author.)
5. »Human nature is not black and white, but black and grey.« (Graham Greene)

Graham Greene: The Invisible Japanese Gentlemen

There were eight Japanese gentlemen having a fish dinner at Bentley's¹. They spoke to each other rarely in their incomprehensible tongue, but always with a courteous smile and often with a small bow. All but one of them wore glasses. Sometimes the pretty girl who sat in the window beyond gave them a passing glance, but her own problem seemed too serious for her to pay real attention to anyone in the world except herself and her companion.

5 She had thin blonde hair and her face was pretty and *petite*² in a Regency³ way, oval like a miniature, though she had a harsh way of speaking — perhaps the accent of the school, Roedean or Cheltenham Ladies' College⁴, which she had not long ago left. She wore a man's signet-ring on her engagement finger, and as I sat down at my table, with the Japanese gentlemen between us, she said, »So you see we could marry next week.«

10 »Yes?«

Her companion appeared a little distraught⁵. He refilled their glasses with Chablis⁶ and said, »Of course, but Mother ...« I missed some of the conversation then, because the eldest Japanese gentleman leant across the table, with a smile and a little bow, and uttered a whole paragraph like the mutter from an aviary⁷, while everyone bent towards him and smiled and listened, and I couldn't help attending to him myself.

15 The girl's fiancé resembled her physically. I could see them as two miniatures hanging side by side on white wood panels. He should have been a young officer in Nelson's⁸ navy in the days when a certain weakness and sensitivity were no bar to promotion.

20 She said, »They are giving me an advance of five hundred pounds, and they've sold the paperback rights already.« The hard commercial declaration came as a shock to me; it was a shock too that she was one of my own profession. She couldn't have been more than twenty. She deserved better of life.

25 He said, »But my uncle ...«

»You know you don't get on with him. This way we shall be quite independent.«

»You will be independent,« he said grudgingly.

»The wine-trade wouldn't really suit you, would it? I spoke to my publisher about you and there's a very good chance ... if you began with some reading ...«

30 »But I don't know a thing about books.«

»I would help you at the start.«

»My mother says that writing is a good crutch ...«

»Five hundred pounds and half the paperback rights is a pretty solid crutch,« she said.

»This Chablis is good, isn't it?«

35 »I daresay⁹.«

I began to change my opinion of him — he had not the Nelson touch. He was doomed to defeat. She came alongside and raked¹⁰ him fore and aft¹¹. »Do you know what Mr. Dwight said?«

»Who's Dwight?«

»Darling, you don't listen, do you? My publisher. He said he hadn't read a first novel in the last ten years which showed such powers of observation.«

40 »That's wonderful,« he said sadly, »wonderful.«

»Only he wants me to change the title.«

¹ expensive fish restaurant in London

² small and attractive [woman]

³ era in British history and art in the early 19th century

⁴ two renowned and expensive schools for upper class girls

⁵ sad, upset, worried, confused

⁶ dry white wine from Burgundy in France

⁷ a large cage or building for keeping birds in

⁸ victorious English admiral (1758-1805); defeated the French and Spanish fleets at Abukir and Trafalgar

⁹ I agree

¹⁰ to fire a gun at sth while moving it from one side to the other

¹¹ at the front and at the back [of a ship]

»Yes?«

»He doesn't like *The Ever-Rolling Stream*. He wants to call it *The Chelsea*¹² Set.«

45 »What did you say?«

»I agreed. I do think that with a first novel one should try to keep one's publisher happy. Especially when, really, he's going to pay for our marriage, isn't he?«

50 »I see what you mean.« Absent-mindedly he stirred his Chablis with a fork — perhaps before the engagement he had always bought champagne. The Japanese gentlemen had finished their fish and with very little English but with elaborate courtesy they were ordering from the middle-aged waitress a fresh fruit salad. The girl looked at them, and then she looked at me, but I think she saw only the future. I wanted very much to warn her against any future based on a first novel called *The Chelsea Set*. I was on the side of his mother. It was a humiliating thought, but I was probably about her mother's age.

55 I wanted to say to her, Are you certain your publisher is telling you the truth? Publishers are human. They may sometimes exaggerate the virtues of the young and the pretty. Will *The Chelsea Set* be read in five years? Are you prepared for the years of effort, »the long defeat of doing nothing well?« As the years pass writing will not become any easier, the daily effort will grow harder to endure, those »powers of observation« will become enfeebled; you will be judged, when you reach your forties, by performance and not by promise.

60 »My next novel is going to be about St Tropez¹³.«

»I didn't know you'd ever been there.«

»I haven't. A fresh eye's terribly important. I thought we might settle down there for six months.«

65 »There wouldn't be much left of the advance by that time.«

»The advance is only an advance. I get fifteen per cent after five thousand copies and twenty per cent after ten. And of course another advance will be due, darling, when the next book's finished. A bigger one if *The Chelsea Set* sells well.«

»Suppose it doesn't.«

70 »Mr. Dwight says it will. He ought to know.«

»My uncle would start me at twelve hundred.«

»But, darling, how could you come then to St Tropez?«

»Perhaps we'd do better to marry when you come back.«

She said harshly, »I mightn't come back if *The Chelsea Set* sells enough.«

75 »Oh.«

She looked at me and the party of Japanese gentlemen. She finished her wine. She said, »Is this a quarrel?«

»No.«

»I've got the title for the next book — *The Azure Blue*.«

80 »I thought azure was blue.«

She looked at him with disappointment. »You don't really want to be married to a novelist, do you?«

»You aren't one yet.«

»I was born one — Mr. Dwight says. My powers of observation ...«

85 »Yes. You told me that, but, dear, couldn't you observe a bit nearer home? Here in London.«

»I've done that in *The Chelsea Set*. I don't want to repeat myself.«

The bill had been lying beside them for some time now. He took out his wallet to pay, but she snatched the paper out of his reach. She said, »This is my celebration.«

»What of?«

90 »*The Chelsea Set*, of course. Darling, you're awfully decorative, but sometimes — well, you simply don't connect.«

»I'd rather ... if you don't mind ...«

»No, darling, this is on me. And Mr. Dwight, of course.«

95 He submitted just as two of the Japanese gentlemen gave tongue simultaneously, then stopped abruptly and bowed to each other, as though they were blocked in a doorway.

¹² trendy part of London (Westminster); at the time of the story a lot of artists lived there

¹³ fashionable seaside resort in southern France

I had thought the two young people matching miniatures, but what a contrast in fact there was. The same type of prettiness could contain weakness and strength. Her Regency counterpart, I suppose, would have borne a dozen children without the aid of anaesthetics¹⁴, while he would have fallen an easy victim to the first dark eyes in Naples¹⁵. Would there one day be a dozen books on her shelf? They have to be born without an anaesthetic too. I found myself hoping that *The Chelsea Set* would prove to be a disaster and that eventually she would take up photographic modelling while he established himself solidly in the wine-trade in St James's¹⁶. I didn't like to think of her as the Mrs. Humphrey Ward¹⁷ of her generation — not that I would live so long. Old age saves us from the realization of a great many fears. I wondered to which publishing firm Dwight belonged. I could imagine the blurb¹⁸ he would have already written about her abrasive¹⁹ powers of observation. There would be a photo, if he was wise, on the back of the jacket²⁰, for reviewers, as well as publishers, are human, and she didn't look like Mrs. Humphrey Ward.

I could hear them talking while they found their coats at the back of the restaurant. He said,
110 »I wonder what all those Japanese are doing here?«
»Japanese?« she said. »What Japanese, darling? Sometimes you are so evasive I think you don't want to marry me at all.« [first published in 1965]

¹⁴ a substance that makes a person unable to feel pain

¹⁵ city in southern Italy

¹⁶ very elegant part of London (Westminster)

¹⁷ conservative English writer of popular novels (1851-1920)

¹⁸ a description of the contents of a book that is printed on the cover or jacket

¹⁹ sharp, aggressive

²⁰ a loose paper cover for a book