



Sixth Form Scholarship Examination

General Paper

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions:

There are TWO sections to the paper. You must answer Section A and choose ONE question from Section B.

You must be careful to present all your work coherently and accurately – careless work will be penalised.

You are advised to spend equal amounts of time (30 minutes) on each section.

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SECTION A

The passage for use in this section has been printed separately.

Summarise the argument of the extract in no more than 100 words.

SECTION B

Answer ONE question only from this section.

- 1 “The press has a responsibility to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.”

Discuss this view of the role of the newspapers, particularly in light of the recent MPs expenses scandal.

- 2 “Whatever the need for more foreign aid and even for measures to protect the environment, the world’s greatest need is for improved security against the threat of terrorism.”

To what extent do you agree?

- 3 Discuss the view that the disadvantages associated with using the Internet far outweigh the advantages.

- 4 Do you agree that assisted suicide can never be justified?

- 5 Identify your favourite recreational, cultural or sporting activity and explain what value or satisfaction you derive from pursuing it.

The following is adapted from an article by Martin Kettle in *The Guardian*, 24 February 2007.

Helen Mirren, Judi Dench and Peter O'Toole are what they are principally because of their wonderful talents. But they are also where they are because of the subsidised theatre. All of them have reached the eminence they now enjoy in part because they were given a start and learned their art in theatres that prosper only because of government support. Actors like these know best that beneath them the British theatre is teeming with talent and creativity. This week I saw a truly thrilling production of a fascinating new play, Nicholas Wright's *The Reporter* at the National Theatre. Ben Chaplin's performance as Jim Mossman and Richard Eyre's direction were both award-worthy by anybody's standards. The other day in Stratford I watched Jonathan Slinger's mesmerising *Richard III* in Michael Boyd's Shakespeare history plays project with the Royal Shakespeare Company. People like these are the Oscar nominees of the future.

This country's incredible artistic dynamism is directly related to the fact that the nation has invested in it. The regional theatre is a really good example of all this. In the 1990's a lot of regional theatres were hanging on by their fingernails. But then Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, persuaded Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to find another £25m for them. The Arts Council held a review of how best to use it. The outcome is the widespread theatrical rejuvenation we see around us today: more jobs, more performances, lots of new writing, and now a turnaround in the previous decline in theatre audiences. As a result theatres that were losing £2.1m a year in 2001 have built a steady surplus that can reduce debt and be reinvested in growth. And the next generation of Chaplins and Slingers are now on their way.

But it's not just the theatre. You could tell the same success story about music or about dance or about museums and galleries. It is not an accident that the Russian conductor, Valery Gergiev, has chosen to work in London, or that Cuban dancer Carlos Acosta has done the same at the Royal Ballet. Overall Labour has doubled the amount of public money that is spent on the arts since 1997. The return has come in the shape of more performances, bigger attendances, more jobs, higher turnovers, a broadening of activities and – make no mistake about this – better arts. You can measure some of these things impressively: 42 million visits, 76% of adults attending the arts on some way. But the effect on a generation of a single phrase – Alan Bennett's haunting "Pass it on" – is simply beyond all measuring.

Be clear, though, what the story is and also what it isn't. Yes, it is about spending more in order to get more back. But the point is not that the Blair government has lavished vast amounts of money on anyone in the arts who asks for it. In Britain we still spend less than half the amount per head on culture that France, Germany, Italy or Sweden spend. What the government has done, at last, is to spend enough – neither too little nor too much – but enough to ensure the arts can generate the virtuous circles of investment and creativity. These, however, are now suddenly at risk as Treasury officials working on the three year spending review have asked the Arts Council to look at a 5% cut in arts spending in each of the three years starting from April 2008. That would mean the end of English National Opera (which won both Olivier awards for opera this week), the death of at least one orchestra and the closure of lots of regional theatres. The museums have been told to look at an even bigger annual cut of

7%. The shutting of the Theatre Museum in Covent Garden would be the harbinger of a much larger cull.

Even in a spending review in which all other departmental budgets are being subordinated to health, education and defence, these would be eye-watering losses. Which is why, instinct says, it is probably designed to scare the arts into accepting something that may appear by comparison, less draconian. Yet even that alternative, a cash-standstill budget until 2011, would still be a cut in real terms. Inflation and the likelihood of further raids on the lottery to pay for the Olympics would between them ensure there would be less arts spending and therefore less arts.

The Labour government have a good record on the arts. They have helped to rebuild something that was broken. The current arts boom and global successes are partly down to the politicians. But there are some in the arts who believe anything hostile they hear about this government. David Cameron (Leader of the Conservative Party) smells blood in the water, which is why he circles the arts world, appointing the revered John Tusa (Director of London's famous Barbican Arts Centre) to his policy review.

I gather that, somewhat late in the day, there are now plans, to celebrate the successes in the arts. But it would be crazy to alienate such people still further by cutting the arts budget. Mr Brown above all has a huge opportunity and a major incentive to reclaim the arts. A well-timed inflation-pegged increase would not just be the right thing to do in principle. It would also be a potent act of political self-interest.