

MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI, CERCETĂRII ȘI TINERETULUI
OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ
FAZA PE JUDEȚ / MUNICIPIUL BUCUREȘTI, 16 MARTIE 2008
Clasa a X-a

Subject 1 (100 points)

Read *Ask me Tomorrow* by Stan Barstow and write a 300-word essay. Make sure you include:

- the central idea of the fragment;
- the characters' feelings and apprehensions;
- the implications of the collocation 'an attitude of mind' suggested by one of the characters;

They walked on together. 'What do you want out of life, Arthur?' Wilf asked after a silence. The question appeared to surprise Arthur; probably nobody had ever asked him it before, and reflective talk of that kind was rare in Bronhill. His surprise showed in his quick glance at Wilf. 'A bit of a tall order for this time of day, isn't it?' 'Oh, I know this is the kind of subject you get round to after a couple of pints, if at all,' Wilf said. 'But I'm serious, Arthur. I'm not trying to take the mickey; I want to know.' 'Well, I dunno,' Arthur mused. 'I suppose, I want a bit more of what I've got.' 'Which is?' 'You mean what have I got? Well, a good job, the beginnings of a nice little home, a wife and family... Oh, and I'd like to win a hundred thousand quid on Littlewoods' treble chance, but it doesn't keep me awake a night.' 'And that's it?' 'Well... yes.' 'You don't walk about with a constant uneasy feeling at the back of your mind that somehow life, real life, is passing you by somewhere else and that next week or next year will be better than today if only you can get to the centre of it and find what you want?' Arthur shook his head. 'No, I don't. But I think a lot of people do, and I'm sorry for them.' They had to cross a stile into a field and Arthur, going first, stopped halfway over and looked back at Wilf with a smile playing about his eyes and mouth. 'Some people spend all their time thinking about what they haven't got. I think about what I have got and how lucky I am to have it.' There was in Arthur's look an element of amused perception of the foolishness of men that was as unexpected as the spark of sympathy it kindled in Wilf. He followed his companion over the stile and clapped him on the shoulder. 'You know what, Arthur? You're a happy man.' Arthur chuckled. Being held up as a criterion of something pleased him. 'I supposed I am,' he said. 'I don't think about it much.' Suddenly at a loss before this young man whom he had always regarded with mild contempt, Wilf fell back on facetious banter: 'And to what do you attribute this spectacular success in life, Mr. Ryder? Come along now, give the audience the benefit of your experience and superior knowledge.' Arthur thought seriously about it for a moment. 'Well, I don't think it's got much to do with how money you have, an' all that, for a start,' he said. 'It's more the way you look at things. You know, an attitude of mind, like.' 'Ah, yes,' Wilf said, suddenly serious again. 'You've put your finger on it there, lad. That's the rub. Perhaps what we need is a psychiatrist each to turn us all into contented puddings.'

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Subject 2 (100 points)

Imagine you have the magic power of teleporting yourself in another century. Describe the people you encounter, at least two places you can visit, and the atmosphere of the time you are travelling in.

Write a 300-word descriptive essay. Remember to use specific details and colourful adjectives to help make your description seem real to your reader!

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