

Please note: the English Department reserves the right to alter the format of its entrance exam should unforeseen circumstances occur

**University of Haifa
Department of English
BA Entrance Examination September 2020**

Instructions: The purpose of this examination is to test the applicant's ability to write an essay.

Select **ONE** of the topics listed below.

Write a clear essay in response to the issues raised by the topic / question. Plan your essay carefully and organize your ideas logically.

Please note that there is no correct response: your essay will be evaluated on the clarity of your expression in English and the effective development of your ideas.

Your essay should be 600 words in length (2 or 2½ handwritten pages).

You may use a dictionary.

Number your essay according to the topic number on this questionnaire.

Write an essay of about 600 words discussing **one** of the questions below. Please make sure that your essay is well-written and legible.

1. Discuss the following poem, focusing on the following questions: Who, in your opinion, is the speaker in the poem (the persona)? What is his/her position with regard to the scenes described in the poem? How are the poetic devices used in the poem related to the viewpoint of the speaker?

Suburban

Conformity caught here, nobody catches it,
Lawns groomed in prose, with hardly a stutter.
Lloyd hits the ball, and Lorraine fetches it.

Mom hangs the laundry, Fred, Jr., watches it,
Shirts in the clichéd air, all aflutter.
Conformity caught here, nobody catches it.

A dog drops a bone, another dog snatches it.

I dreamed of this life once, Now I shudder
As Lloyd hits the ball and Lorraine fetches it.

A doldrum of leaky roofs, a roofer who patches it,
Lloyd prowls the streets, still clutching his putter.
Conformity caught here, nobody catches it.

The tediumed rake, the retiree who matches it,
The fall air gone dead with the pure drone of motors
While Lloyd hits the ball, and Lorraine just fetches it.

The door is ajar, then somebody latches it.
Through the hissing of barbecues poets mutter
Of conformity caught here, where nobody catches it.
Lloyd hits the ball. And damned Lorraine fetches it.

From *Against Romance* by Michael Blumenthal, published by Viking Penguin, Inc.
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2. Read the excerpt from Kate Tempest's *Brand New Ancients* below.

What is the poem about? What does it compare, and to what effect?

from Brand New Ancients, by Kate Tempest

In the old days,
the myths were the stories we used to explain ourselves

but how can we explain
the way we hate ourselves?

The things we've made ourselves into,
the way we break ourselves in two,
the way we overcomplicate ourselves?

But we are still mythical.

We are still permanently trapped
somewhere between the heroic and the pitiful.

We are still Godly,
that's what's made us so monstrous.
It just feels like we've forgotten
that we're much more
than the sum of the things that belong to us.

Every single person has a purpose in them burning.
Look again.
Allow yourself to see them.

Millions of characters
Each with their own epic narratives
Singing, 'it's hard to be an angel
Until you've been a demon'.

We are perfect because of our imperfections,
We must stay hopeful,
We must be patient;

When they excavate the modern day
They'll find us,
The Brand New Ancients.

3. Following is the famous beginning of Charles Dickens' 1850 novel *David Copperfield*. Without knowing anything about the novel, what can you assume about it based on this first paragraph? You might want to consider some or all of the following questions: What kind of novel will it be? Who is the narrator? You may also want to think about some of the details of this paragraph – are they important? Why?

CHAPTER 1. I AM BORN

Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show. To begin my life with the beginning of my life, I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night. It was remarked that the clock began to strike, and I began to cry, simultaneously.