

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level

THINKING SKILLS

8436/02

Paper 2 Critical Thinking

November 2005

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.
Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.
There are **3** questions on this paper. Answer **all** the questions.
Start each question on a new Answer Sheet.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.
The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question.

This document consists of **6** printed pages and **2** blank pages.



1 Read the following passage, including the appendices, and answer the question that follows.

Alicia Bonewska, a 47-year-old office-worker, is taking her employers to an Employment Tribunal, claiming that she has been the victim of sexual harassment. She states that her line manager, Theo Watson, 35, who in her opinion should not have been promoted above her in the first place, verbally abused and intimidated her, and belittled her in front of junior members of staff, thus undermining her position as a team leader.

Alicia's record shows that she has been off work twice in the last eighteen months with stress, and has finally given in her notice saying this was forced upon her because she '...could not face returning to work with him (Watson) there'. She is claiming compensation for the loss of her job.

Dr May, the consultant Alicia was referred to by her own doctor, told the Tribunal that her symptoms were 'entirely consistent with workplace stress'. Dr May added: 'I see people in this condition all the time these days. I have made a special study of stress; it's a big problem. Relationships at work can seriously affect people's health and make life intolerable. It is very understandable that Ms Bonewska could not face returning to the office.'

Alicia's lawyer described two incidents. On the first, in March, Watson came into Alicia's office whilst she was meeting with two members of her team. Apparently he did not knock or say 'excuse me'. He interrupted Alicia to ask her if she had finished a report. She began to explain that she was waiting for some figures to come in, but he simply shut her up, saying she wasn't paid to sit gossiping – or words to that effect – and that he wanted the report on his desk the next day. The lawyer added that Watson would never have spoken to a man that way. On the second occasion, in July, it is stated, Alicia was called in to see Watson, who began shouting at her about a very trivial matter. 'She was really frightened by his temper,' the lawyer claims. 'When she recalled the incident months later, I saw that she became very agitated and distressed. Obviously it had had a bad effect on her nerves.'

Jake Teale, 30, one of the two staff who had witnessed the March incident said that Watson had a rather sarcastic manner at times, with everyone, and if he had said anything about gossiping it was probably a joke. 'You have to know how to take Theo,' he said, 'and Alicia didn't. I never heard him shout or be abusive to anyone.'

The other witness, 24-year-old Kim Sawyer, who had just joined the firm, could not remember the incident at all. Asked how she found Watson as a boss, she said, 'Fine. He's a good laugh, and he's always been quite friendly to me.' Asked what Alicia was like as a team leader, she said: 'She needed to lighten up. I used to feel a bit sorry for her at times because she always seemed very anxious and serious. I think she had been in the job too long.'

Another employee, Vineeta Bisla, recalls finding Alicia in the ladies' toilet one day in July. 'She was in a terrible state, sobbing uncontrollably. She told me that she had just seen Watson, who told her she wasn't pulling her weight and wasn't carrying out his instructions. He'd shouted at her and told her she was a 'resentful old cow'. Those were his words. They've really never got on ever since they both applied for the Department manager's job. But that's no reason for him to talk to her like that. He doesn't do it to any of the other team leaders.'

Watson denied ever having shouted at Alicia, or any other of the employees, or of saying anything which a reasonable person would take exception to. In his defence he said that it was Alicia herself who caused the problems, by being awkward and obstructive, not passing on his wishes to her team, not attending social functions, not meeting deadlines, etc. He said she took every opportunity to oppose him, and that under the circumstances he had really been very patient with her.

Jake Teale was promoted to Team Leader (TL) by Theo Watson after Alicia gave her notice.

Appendix 1:**Department Personnel as of September 2004:**

Manager: Mr T Watson

Team A: Mrs A McArthur (Team Leader), Mr C O'Hare, Mrs V Bisla, Miss J Chan

Team B: Mr R Gupta (Team Leader), Mrs R Reed, Ms P Hari, Mr M Aziz

Team C: Ms A Bonewska (Team Leader), Miss K Sawyer, Mr J Teale, Mr I Huat

Appendix 2:

State law defines sexual harassment as: Treatment of a particular kind, based on the sex of the victim, which causes offence and which would not have been used against a similarly placed member of the opposite sex.

Critically evaluate all the evidence provided above and use it to decide how strong you consider Alicia Bonewska's appeal.

In answering the question you should:

- (a) Carefully consider the credibility of Alicia's claim that she was subjected to sexual harassment, according to State Law, and the evidence that there is to support or challenge it. [10]
- (b) Make a reasoned case for **either** accepting **or** rejecting her claim for compensation. [5]

2 Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Many traditionalists in the art-world consider that modern 'conceptual' art is rubbish. Twice in recent years this view has been given a comic twist by cleaners who have accidentally, or so they say, thrown away exhibits by world-famous artists because they thought they were just that – trash.

A plastic bag filled with discarded paper was part of an exhibit created by Gustav Metzger to show that art has a 'finite existence'. His certainly had: it only lasted a few days. Then there was the art gallery left littered with the ash-trays, half-filled coffee cups, beer cans, etc., by the celebrated conceptual artist Damien Hirst, which similarly ended up in a cleaner's refuse bin before the public got to see it.

Both pieces of work were hurriedly replaced with similar collections of junk, a fact seized upon by those who hold the 'load-of-rubbish' view of modern art. One of them went as far as to say that the cleaner ought to be promoted to an art critic, because he obviously had a fine eye and could spot rubbish when he saw it.

People might have expected the artist to be angry at this apparent insult. But Hirst was evidently delighted by the story, saying it was 'fantastic; very funny'. It proved that his exhibit had been recognised as rubbish in the proper sense of the word and not in the derogatory* way some of his critics meant it. (Some suspicious-minded reporters even suggested that the cleaner may have been told to throw it away, as part of the show!) It also proved that the exhibit had succeeded in making its intended point, that art does not have to be something permanent or precious, like a fine painting or marble statue: it can be something very ordinary and everyday. It is therefore quite wrong to say that this kind of exhibit has little or no value as art.

What the traditionalists fail to understand is that art does not depend on special skills or techniques. What makes art art is ideas and imagination, not the ability to paint with oils or carve in stone. Anything that provokes a response or makes you think is art. For this reason there is no work of art that can legitimately be called 'rubbish'. Even rubbish is art if it is understood properly.

Critics who scorn the work of artists like Hirst and Metzger, are merely showing themselves for what they are: elitists. They probably despise rock-bands and DJs as well, and listen to nothing but classical music. They would like us all to return to the days of 'proper' artists, who had impressive skills with the paint-brush but never had an original idea in their lives. Indeed, if you want to see some real rubbish, go to any classical art gallery and look at the rows of dreary, brown portraits lining the walls. Compared with these modern conceptual art is alive and vibrant, unlike its dull and narrow-minded critics.

* rude, unkind, offensive

- (a) (i) Briefly summarise the viewpoint **against** which the author is arguing. [1]
- (ii) Why might traditionalists 'seize on' the fact that the two exhibits were able to be 'hurriedly replaced'? (Paragraph 3). [2]
- (b) (i) What does the author mean by 'rubbish' in the first sentence of the passage, and what is the different meaning of 'rubbish' in the last sentence of paragraph 5? [2]
- (ii) What explanations does the author offer for the fact that Hirst was not angry that the cleaner had thrown away his exhibit? (Paragraph 4) [2]
- (c) As well as the claims she makes, what must the author assume in paragraph 4 to conclude Hirst's and Metzger's exhibits were not without value as art? [1]
- (d) 'Any idiot can put together a collection of junk.' Would this or a similar statement be a challenge to the argument, and if so how strong? How would you expect the author to respond to it? [2]
- (e) Identify and describe two examples of flawed reasoning in paragraphs 5 and 6. [4]
- (f) If it turned out that the cleaner who threw away Damien Hirst's exhibit really had been 'told to do it as part of the show', would that significantly weaken or strengthen the author's argument – or neither? [4]

3 Critically evaluate the following argument. In your evaluation you should:

- Show that you have a clear understanding of the argument by identifying its main conclusion and the reasoning used to support it, including any counter-arguments the author considers.
- Point out any assumptions that the argument makes, and/or points that need to be clarified.
- Decide whether or not it is a good argument, and identify any flaws or weaknesses.
- Offer **two** further reasons, or short arguments, which could be used for or against the conclusion.

Kidnapping by terrorist organisations has become one of the most gruesome consequences of modern warfare. The recent rash of such incidents in various war-torn regions, some tragically ending in the murder of the victims, is horrific. What is more these terrible ordeals are often videoed and televised around the globe, presenting governments with a dilemma. Should the broadcasting be suppressed, thus denying the 'oxygen of publicity' to the kidnappers and their cause and sparing audiences (including the victims' families) the anguish of watching? Or should the dreadful scenes be shown in the interests of openness?

The right choice has to be to broadcast them in full. For, persuasive though the arguments may be for censorship and manipulation of the news, the whole truth must be told.

Of course, there is big temptation for leaders to restrict the news to 'acceptable' snippets, to make the civilian populations, voters and tax-payers, believe that their government and security forces are adopting the right policies and winning the war against terrorism. That is one way to preserve morale and to save citizens from living in a perpetual state of fear. And all governments use it to a greater or lesser extent.

But it is wrong. People have an absolute right to know what is happening in the world and, the worse and more frightening it is, the more important it is that they know. And no politician has the right to withhold the truth. We are not fools or children: we are intelligent educated adults with as much ability to make judgements and decisions as those we elect to lead us. To deny people information of any kind is an infringement of basic human rights.

That is the first thing. The second is that terrorist acts do not generally occur without a reason. Usually they are a response to some war or occupation or repression in the past. In other words violence leads to violence. If people are made fully aware of the darkest truths about war and its consequences, they will be more likely to stand up and oppose military action by their own governments in the future. If, on the other hand, they think wars can be won quickly and painlessly, with few casualties and none of these hideous acts of retaliation, they will go on being persuaded that the use of force is an acceptable solution to world problems.

[17]

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