



**The Examination**

Carefully read Texts **A**, **B** and **C** and then answer the questions about the texts.

**Text A**

You read the following article:

# THE HIGHFIELD CHRONICLE

## Why humour matters

*Psychologist, Steven Ng, reflects on humour*

There are many different types of humour, from slapstick comedy (such as Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy) to satire (such as The Simpsons or Family Guy). What makes someone laugh varies from person to person and in certain contexts, a joke can sometimes cause offense. However, I am going to focus on the reasons why many people consider humour to be essential.

**Entertainment**

Humour provides us with an escape from the mundane aspects of life. Whether we are watching a stand-up comedian or a funny movie, humour brings people together. Laughing together can be the key to social development and forming new friendships. There is no doubt that humour can be harmful if it is used to be cruel. However, using humour to lift someone’s mood can have a positive impact, not only on them but on the person telling the jokes, as it boosts confidence.



*Sharing a joke*

**Everyday life**

Humour is part of everyday life. From playful banter at a party, sharing an amusing story with a friend, or hiding the embarrassment of falling over our own feet, laughter is everywhere. Charlie Chaplin famously said that ‘a day without laughter is a day wasted’. We would rather be happy than miserable, so we look for humour everywhere.

**Health**

No one is quite sure who first said ‘laughter is the best medicine’ and while laughter should not be considered as a replacement for medical treatment, it is true that it has health benefits. Mentally, it lifts our mood and relieves anxiety or stress. Laughter is a way of letting off steam and releasing tension in negative situations. Physically, it reduces blood pressure and, in turn, improves our circulation, heart and muscle function. It has also been said to boost our immune system.

**Conclusion**

Not everyone shares the same sense of humour, but having one is undeniably what makes us human.

Glossary	
Slapstick comedy	Physical comedy, often involving props
Mundane	Lacking interest or excitement

## Text B

You read the following letter:

# THE HIGHFIELD CHRONICLE

## Letters to the Editor

Dear editor,

It was with great interest that I read Steven Ng's article in last week's paper on the importance of humour. What caught my attention was his conclusion that it is humour that makes us human. This suggests that we are the only beings on this planet with a sense of humour. I am not so sure.

Of course, it depends on what you mean by 'humour'. Numerous theories have been put forward, but as Dr Ng suggests in his article, it is a complex issue. In the simplest terms, humour is the ability to find things funny. For humans, humour often includes wordplay and verbal jokes, but do animals use language in the same way?

Clearly, animals do have fun. Young animals enjoy playing and chasing each other - even older animals still play with toys. But 'having fun' is different from 'being funny'. When animals have fun, it is usually more physical than thoughtful.

Primates, such as chimpanzees or bonobos\*\*, often bare their teeth into what looks a bit like a smile to show friendliness. They also make a noise that sounds something like laughter when they are play fighting. Some researchers have suggested that this is where human laughter developed from. There was a famous gorilla, named Koko, who learned to recognise over 2000 words and used 1000 pieces of sign language. On one occasion, she tied her keeper's shoelaces together and then signed 'chase'. However, she was probably an exceptional case.

Furthermore, rats will often 'laugh' when they are tickled. They make a chirping sound and will follow the fingers of the tickler as if wanting more. There are 65 animal species that make sounds that we would recognise as laughter, though it is unclear if laughter means the same thing to them as it does for us.

It is impossible to know what goes on inside the head of an animal. They certainly feel emotions. Anyone who has a dog knows that they can develop a close bond with their owner. They show fear when threatened and mourn the loss of another pet, but do they understand a funny situation? They often appear to 'smile' but that may just be a sign of pleasure at seeing their owner or receiving a treat. Parrots have been known to mimic their owner's voice to fool the family dog or tip seed out of their food bowl just after the floor has been swept. The question is, did they really understand the joke?

It appears that some animals have a basic sense of fun; what is not clear is whether they have a sense of humour. Further research is probably needed. However, to get back to Dr Ng's conclusion, what makes us human, I believe, is that our humour seems to have evolved from that of our primate ancestors into something more sophisticated than the tickling and play-fighting enjoyed by non-human animals.

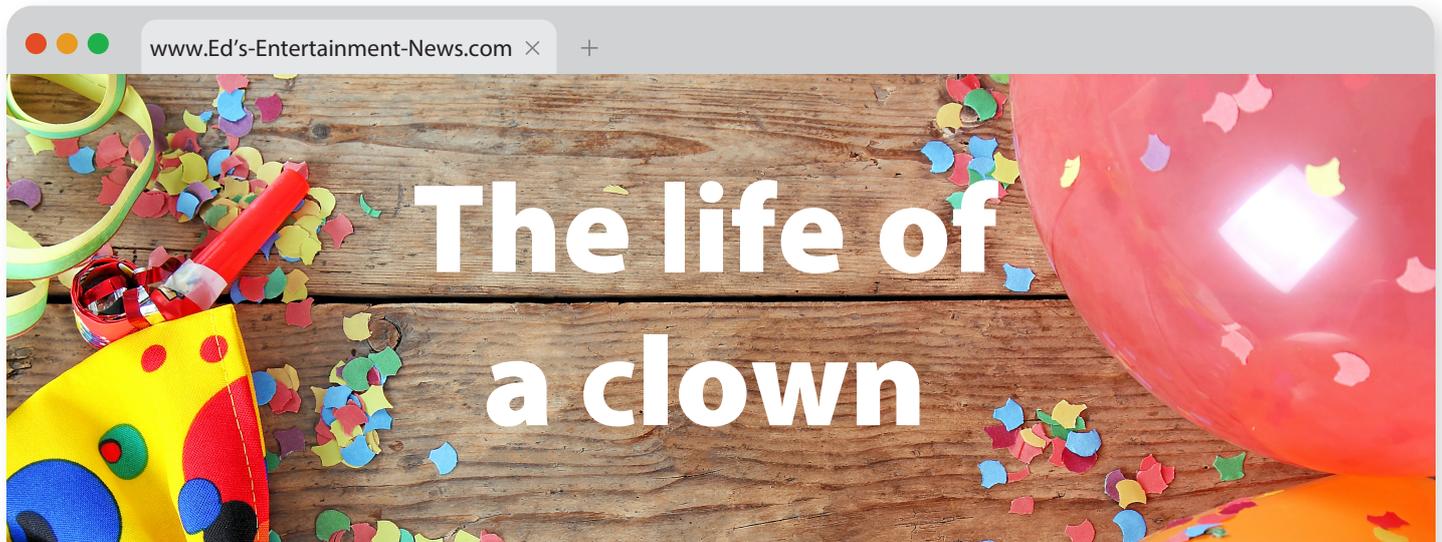
Yours faithfully,

Martin Fellowes

*\*\* Editor's note: if you have not heard of a bonobo, it is also known as the pygmy chimpanzee.*

## Text C

You read the following interview on an entertainment website:



*Entertainment journalist, Ed McGovern, talks to Pete Pritchard aka Bobbo Baggypants*

### **What made you decide to become a clown?**

After all those boring years of school, I could never imagine myself as a doctor or a solicitor. I'm from a circus family, so a job in the circus was the natural choice. However, I can't stick to a script, I'm terrified of heights and I'm not flexible enough to be an acrobat. I've always been good at making people laugh though, so clowning it was.

### **Do you think people still enjoy 'slapstick' comedy?**

I hope so. I think being able to make people laugh is really important. Modern life is stressful and everyone needs to let their hair down once in a while. Laughter is a tonic that helps make life worthwhile.

### **What do you enjoy about clowning?**

I know it's a cliché, but there's no better feeling than making people laugh. I love showing off my clowning skills like juggling, riding a unicycle and throwing custard pies (the timing is crucial!). I also like having to think on my feet - sometimes the audience does something I don't expect! No performance is ever the same. After the audience have watched nail-biting stunts and spooky magic tricks, I get to make sure that they go home feeling refreshed and uplifted.

### **Is there a downside to being a clown?**

There's not many circuses around these days. There's more interest in streaming services and games consoles, so modern clowning is often more about kids' parties and street performances. Unfortunately, some folks do find clowns scary, so some of these are also beginning to disappear.

### **What advice would you give someone who wishes to become a clown?**

You can learn all the skills, but clowning must be in you. Keep learning by watching other clowns (I sometimes give workshops on clowning skills) and study the famous clowns of the past, such as Joseph Grimaldi and Bobo the clown. As I said, clowns aren't as common as they used to be. Your career may be a short one, so make sure you've got a backup plan. One final tip to remember - you've got to be really good at something before you can deliberately mess it up!

## 1a

The **main** purpose of Text A is to:

Tick (✓) one box

(1 mark)

<b>A</b>	persuade the reader to like comedy	
<b>B</b>	explain why humour is important	
<b>C</b>	instruct the reader on how to be funny	
<b>D</b>	describe how Steven uses humour	

## 1b

The writer of Text A uses **quotations** and **factual statements** to support the purpose.

Using the text, give **one** example of each of these.

(2 marks)

Quotation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Factual statement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 2

Look at the 'Entertainment' section in Text A.

The writer states that 'humour provides us with an escape from the mundane'.

What does 'mundane' mean?

(1 mark)

_____
_____
_____
_____

**3**

Identify **two** organisational features used by the writer of Text A.

Using the text, state what information **one** of these features helps the reader to find.

**(3 marks)**

Organisational feature 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisational feature 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Information: \_\_\_\_\_

**4**

Look at the 'Health' section in Text A.

Identify **two** ways laughter benefits us **physically**.

**(2 marks)**

Way 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Way 2: \_\_\_\_\_

**5**

Look at the fourth paragraph in Text B.

The writer states that Koko the gorilla 'was probably an exceptional case'.

What is the writer suggesting?

(1 mark)

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**6**

Look at the third paragraph in Text B.

According to the writer, what is the difference between 'having fun' and 'being funny'?

Give **one** example from the text of how animals can have fun.

(2 marks)

Difference: \_\_\_\_\_

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Example: \_\_\_\_\_

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**7**

According to Text B, what is a bonobo also known as?

*(1 mark)*

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**8**

Give **one** reason why the writer of Text B has used different font colours.

*(1 mark)*

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9

In Text C, Bobbo Baggypants has mixed views about the life of a clown.

Identify **two** positive and **two** negative comments from the text which show this.

(4 marks)

Positive:

1: \_\_\_\_\_

2: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative:

1: \_\_\_\_\_

2: \_\_\_\_\_

10

Look at the 'What do you enjoy about clowning?' section in Text C.

What tone of voice has the writer used when talking about what they enjoy?

Provide **two** examples from the text to support your answer.

(3 marks)

Tone of voice: \_\_\_\_\_

Example 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Example 2: \_\_\_\_\_

11

Look at the 'What advice would you give someone who wishes to become a clown?' section in Text C. Bobbo Baggypants advises potential clowns to have 'a backup plan'.

What does this imply?

(1 mark)

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12

Analyse the **vocabulary** used in Texts B and C and state whether they are **formal** or **informal**.

Explain your answers.

(4 marks)

Text B: \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

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Text C: \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 13a

Compare Text A and Text C.

Identify **two** similarities or differences about **humour**.

(2 marks)

Comparison 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Comparison 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 13b

Compare **two** ways the information has been conveyed in Text A and Text C.

In your answer, you could consider the use of:

- vocabulary
- style of writing
- tone of voice

(2 marks)

Way 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Way 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**END OF ASSESSMENT**

## For official use only:

	1a	1b	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13a	13b	TOTAL
Mark(s) available	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	4	3	1	4	2	2	30
Marker																
2 <sup>nd</sup> line marker																

Marker:	
Date:	

2 <sup>nd</sup> line Marker:	
Date:	



# Level 2

## Reading

### Highfield Qualifications

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*We listen and respond*