

## SOLUTION

## Text 1 – Question B

(50)

**Note:** As always, read the question carefully. Your chosen career must be one which has allowed you to achieve public recognition and great success. It might be a good idea to use your own interests or hobbies as a basis for this piece as that will make your writing more realistic. For example, do you participate in sports? Do you sing or play a musical instrument? Are you keen on science? There are many possibilities here, so try to choose something that really does matter to you and with which you have been involved since you were young. This last point is important because the question also requires you to talk – like Heaney – about the experiences and influences in your youth which contributed to your later success.

**Sample Plan:**

You don't have the time or the space to ramble on so make sure your points are organised before you write. It can help to ask yourself the following four questions before you begin Question B:

**1. What form should this task take?**

This is an interview. The interviewer's questions should be quite short and the interviewee's answers much longer.

**2. What should the content be?**

You should have at least two questions and answers. An anecdote or two would help to bring the piece to life. The interview with Seamus Heaney may give you some ideas for questions.

**3. Who is my audience?**

This interview will be read by anyone with an interest in your chosen career.

**4. What register should I use?**

Your approach could be serious, humorous, narrative, discursive or a mixture of all of these.

**Sample Answer:**

*In this month's episode of 'Before They Were Famous', Colm Dennehy talks to recent Nobel Prize winner Rory Kennedy about his formative years.*

**TIP:** You can write a brief introduction if you like. It makes it easier to abbreviate the interviewer and interviewee's names later on if you have given them in full in the introduction.

**CD:** Good morning, Rory, and thank you for taking the time to come into the studio this morning. Your breakthrough with cold fusion ushered in a new era of safe and cheap energy, and has brought you incredible fame and fortune. However, we're not here today to talk about the discovery; we're here to talk about the man behind it.

I think it's fair to say that many people are surprised to learn that you do not come from a scientific background at all. Can you tell me a little about your parents?

**RK:** My father was a full-time farmer and my mother worked part-time in the local bakery. So no, I didn't exactly come from a scientific background, but my parents placed huge emphasis on their children's education. Every evening after dinner, no matter how tired they were, they made time to check up on our homework and help us out if we were struggling with anything. They never pretended to have all the answers, but they did show us that the answers could be found if you stuck at it. I think that's what made me so tenacious as a scientist; to this day I find it almost impossible to give up on a project. I hear my father's voice in the back of my head, quoting that old chestnut about success being '99 per cent perspiration and 1 per cent inspiration'. It might be annoying, but it's true!

**CD:** You went to a small, local secondary school, and you have been quoted before as saying that the facilities there were fairly basic. Did that make your study of science subjects more difficult?

**RK:** Not really. Don't get me wrong: we'd have loved a brand-new lab with all the bells and whistles, but we had an exceptionally dedicated science teacher who was a genius at making do and who encouraged all the pupils in his class to take science out of the realm of books and exams and into the real world. He helped my friends and me with our entry for the Young Scientist competition – we came up with a way to harness the energy generated by the breakdown of material in compost heaps – and winning first prize for our invention gave me huge confidence and made me believe I had what it took to make a future for myself in scientific research.

**TIP:** Don't fall into the trap of saying 'my friends and I' here. Break it up: 'he helped my friends and he helped me'. 'He helped my friends and me'.

**CD:** When and why did you decide to make the production of low-cost, safe energy your goal?

**RK:** Growing up on a farm and being part of a rural community meant that I saw first-hand the effects of climate change. I remember with awful clarity the devastation that a series of harsh winters, late springs and wet summers wreaked on our farm. My father lost his entire herd because there was no fodder available in this country and the cost of shipping it in from overseas was beyond his means. The farm had been in the family for four generations, and I'll never forget the look of despair on my father's face when he thought he'd lose it all. He just managed to hang on and thankfully the following year was a bit better, but I resolved there and then to devote my future career to seeking out some way of lessening our reliance on climate-destroying sources of energy. Happily, I was successful and the rest is history!

**SOLUTION**

**TEXT 2 – QUESTION A (i)**

**(15)**

**Note:** You could focus on the planetary emergency on its own or you could bring in our failure to deal with it.

**Sample Plan:**

As this is a fifteen mark question, you would be expected to write three well-developed points. Use a separate paragraph for each new point.

1. Effect on people – livelihoods, homes ruined by drought/flooding/rising sea levels.
2. Animals pushed to extinction – 'web of life' frayed.
3. Urgent situation but not enough being done by major powers.

**Sample Answer:**

Al Gore makes a strong case for the idea that we are 'confronting a planetary emergency'. He outlines the effect on humanity and other creatures as well as pointing out our failure to face up to and tackle this 'inconvenient truth'.

**TIP:** This brief introduction touches on the three points that will be dealt with in this answer.

According to Gore, there is hardly a place in the world that is not being negatively affected by climate change. Some countries are struggling with 'massive droughts' which destroy farmers' livelihoods, while at the same time millions of people in other countries are forced to evacuate their homes due to flooding and rising sea levels. Whole cities around the globe are threatened by storms and wildfires. Extremes of heat and cold have killed tens of thousands.

It is not just people who are suffering the effects of our rapidly-changing planet. Al Gore tells us that we are destroying our forests and driving an increasing number of species into extinction. This destruction of the world around us is akin to waging a war on our own planet and is, Gore claims, putting our very survival at risk. We depend on 'the web of life' but are wiping it out at such a rate that we will be eradicated with it.

**TIP:** Try to link your paragraphs whenever possible.

Gore makes it clear that the 'planetary emergency' is exacerbated by our reluctance to recognise the seriousness of the situation and take steps to remedy it. He says we must act 'boldly, quickly and decisively' if we are to have any hope of avoiding the worst of the consequences. However, he believes that the two largest offenders in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – the United States and China – are not doing enough to tackle the problem. These major world powers have an important role to play in helping to make life on earth sustainable.

**TIP:** 'Exacerbated' means 'made worse or more severe'. It is important to use a rich and varied vocabulary in your answers.