C

CHILD OF OUR TIME
(for Aengus)

Yesterday I knew no lullaby
But you have taught me overnight to order
This song, which takes from your final cry
Its tune, from your unreasoned end its reason;
Its rhythm from the discord of your murder
Its motive from the fact you cannot listen.

We who should have known how to instruct
With rhymes for your waking, rhythms for your sleep,
Names for the animals you took to bed,
Tales to distract, legends to protect,
Later an idiom for you to keep
And living, learn, must learn from you, dead,

To make our broken images rebuild
Themselves around your limbs, your broken
Image, find for your sake whose life our idle
Talk has cost, a new language. Child
Of our time, our times have robbed your cradle.
Sleep in a world your final sleep has woken.

Eavan Boland, 17 May 1974

1. (a) From your reading of the above poem, describe the poet's reaction to the child's murder. Support your answer with reference to the poem.   (10)

(b) Describe, in your own words, the childhood experiences the poet writes about in lines eight, nine and ten of the poem.   (10)

(c) Based on your study of "Child of Our Time", explain what you think the poet is saying in the last line of the poem.   (10)

2. Answer **ONE** of the following: [Each part carries 20 marks]

(i) Imagine you are the poet, Eavan Boland. Write a diary entry in which you reflect on the tragedy that inspired you to write the above poem. Discuss what you hope society will learn from the child's death and what needs to change in order to make the future better than the past. Your diary entry should demonstrate your understanding of the poem, "Child of Our Time".

OR

(ii) In your opinion, is the above poem still relevant today? Explain your response, supporting your answer with reference to the poem.

OR

(iii) You have been asked to give a talk to your class about Eavan Boland's use of language and imagery in her poem, "Child of Our Time". Write the text of the talk you would give. Support your talk with reference to the poem.