

The luck of the Irish: a how-to guide for the Léamhthuiscint

Comprehension and full understanding are essential components of a successful exam. See how you do with these examples, take your time, and be sure to learn from your mistakes before the day of the exam dawns

AN LÉAMHTHUISCINT (THE MAIN COMPREHENSION)

Páipéar 1: Roinn 2, Ceist 3

Am: 25 nóiméad

Marcanna: 30 marc

Fad: 2 phointe i ngach freagra

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

You must answer every question, and give full and complete answers.

Try and make an effort to put your answers in your own words; you won't get marks for copying, word-for-word, from the text. You have to prove a certain level of understanding and Irish ability to the examiner.

You may quote from the passage to illustrate your answer, as 90 per cent of the marks are for your ability to comprehend the passages.

Sometimes the questions will require that you include more than one point in your answer, so make sure you've read the question carefully and thoroughly and understand everything being asked of you.

The question may, for example, ask what happened to someone, and then go on to ask why. You will miss a lot of points if you don't at least try to answer the full question.

HOW DO I DO IT?

- ◆ Use the Question and Answers basics.
- ◆ If you have no idea of the answer, use the word-matching technique.
- ◆ Be sure to answer all questions, even if you have to use the word-matching technique or even an educated guess. You will get more

marks for a bad answer than you will for not answering the question at all (zero).

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- ◆ Practise using your dictionary, you can improve your vocab drastically between now and the exam, and it may make a world of difference in your understand of the written texts;
- ◆ Practise using the word-matching technique.

DO NOT DO THIS

- ◆ Do not forget to make an effort to put some of your answers in your own words. Even small changes will do.
- ◆ Do not give just half an answer - you will often need two separate points.
- ◆ Do not give too many points in your answer, as you can lose marks by doing this.
- ◆ Do not copy out whole paragraphs or large portions of the text as you will lose marks by doing this.

GUIDELINES FOR THE LÉAMHTHUISCINT

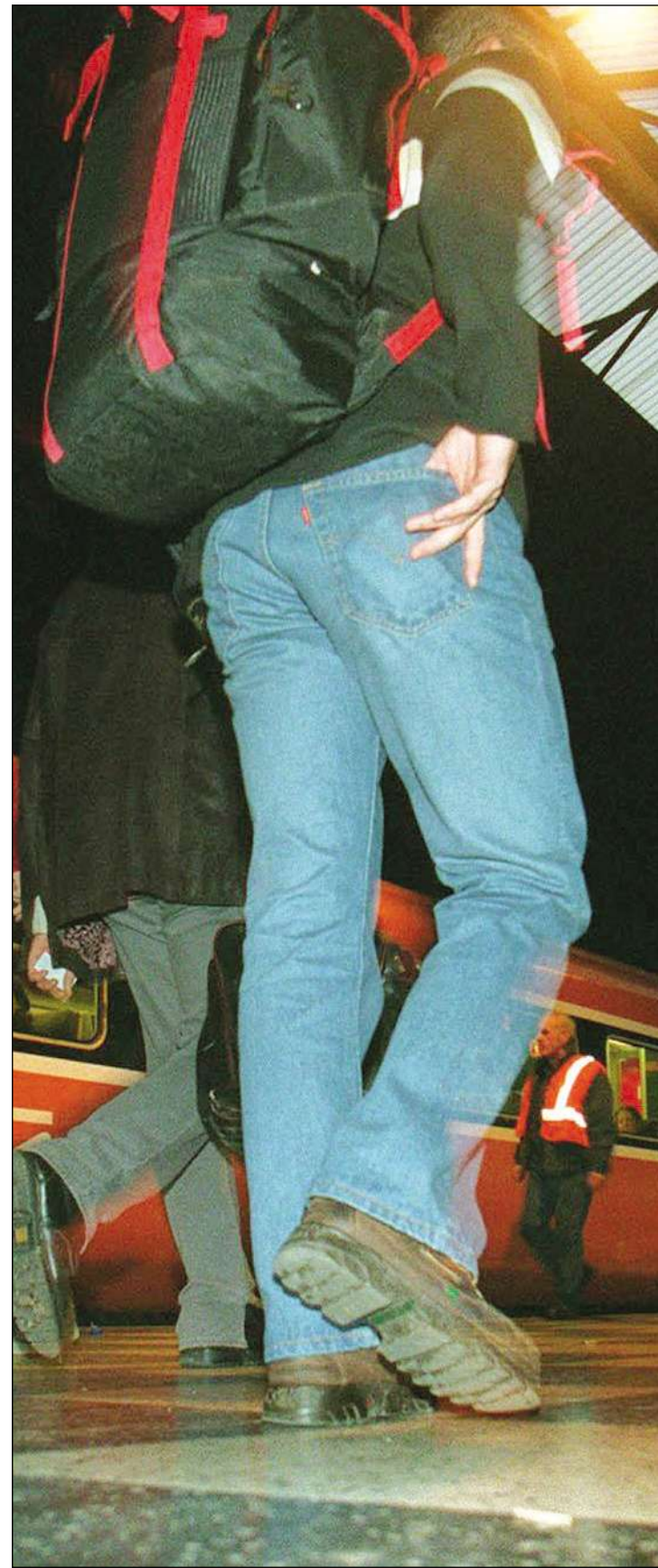
Even the best of students can have difficulty with the comprehensions. Sometimes it happens that a word will come up that a student has never seen before in any past exam papers.

You may, therefore, have to guess some of the answers, but if you use the word-match system you should still get a good few marks.

Remember you don't have to understand every single word con-



The Atlantic's swell: cruinniú na mbad – the 'meeting of the boats' – Galway hookers off Kinvara



The A train: heading west to Galway for the weekend

tained within the passage in order to answer the questions.

Make sure that you write something for each part of the question. Even a word or two can get you marks. Never skip a question. You can't get marks for blank spaces.

As stated previously, do not copy out complete paragraphs. Pick the sentences or phrases in the passage that match the question best and put them together to complete your answer.

It may be necessary to make other subtle changes. Changing "mé" to "sé" or "sí" or first person plural to third person plural, for example "déanfaimid" to "déanfaidh siad" may be sufficient.

You are nearly always told the paragraph in which the answer is found. The questions, and therefore the answers, usually follow the order of the passage.

Once again, don't neglect to give a full answer in every case. This often means two separate points.

Incidentally, it's not necessary to write full sentences to get full marks. A single word or a couple of words will sometimes be enough, as long as it's relevant to the question being asked.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

- ◆ If you don't know the answer, use the word-match system.
 - Underline the principal words in each question, and then underline the same words where they appear in the appropriate passage.
 - As a general guide the following types of words should be underlined and used in the word-match system: placenames, people's names, days and dates, times of day, any other words you may think important, words in inverted commas (because they are quotations from the passage) and words in capital letters.
- ◆ You should answer the question in the tense in which it is asked.
- ◆ If a question begins with "cén fáth" you should begin the answer with the word "mar".
- ◆ Most of the marks (about 90 per cent) are for your comprehension ability.