

Before answering the questions, read the following instructions carefully:

- All topics are compulsory.
- If you are required to respect a limit of lines, number each line. All the surplus lines will not be taken into account.
- The working time lasts for 3 hours.

Read each text attentively, then answer the questions.

TOPIC 1

30 points

Everything, Everything

By Nicola Yoon

THE SUNROOM IS my favorite room in the house. It's almost all glass—glass roof and floor-to-ceiling glass windows that look out onto our perfectly manicured back lawn. The room's decor is like a movie set of a tropical rain forest. It's filled with realistic and lush-looking fake tropical plants. Banana and coconut trees laden with fake fruit and hibiscus plants with fake flowers are everywhere. There's even a babbling stream that snakes its way through the room, but there are no fish—at least no real ones. The furniture is aged white wicker that looks like it's been sitting in the sun. Because it's meant to be tropical, my mom keeps a heated fan running and a slightly too-warm breeze fills the room.

Most days I love it because I can imagine that the glass has fallen away and I'm Outside. Other days I feel like a fish in an aquarium.

By the time I get there, Olly has managed to climb halfway up the rocky back wall, hands and feet wedged into crevices. He's pinching one of the large banana leaves between his fingers when I walk in.

"It's not real," he says to me.

"It's not real," I say at the same time.

He lets go of the branch but remains where he is on the wall. Climbing for him is like walking for the rest of us.

"Are you going to stay up there?" I ask, because I don't know what else to say.

"I'm thinking about it, Maddy. Carla said I had to stay as far away from you as possible and she doesn't seem like the kind of lady that you piss off."

"You can come down," I say. "Carla's not as scary as she seems."

"OK." He slips effortlessly to the floor. He puts his hands into his pockets, crosses his feet at the ankles, and leans back against the wall. I don't think I've ever seen him so still. I think he's trying not to spook me.

"Maybe you should come in," he says, and then I realize that I'm still in the doorway holding on to the knob. I close the door but don't take my eyes off him. His eyes track my movements as well.

After all the IMs I felt like I knew him, but now with him standing in front of me it doesn't feel that way at all. He's taller than I thought and way more muscled, but not bulky. His arms are lean and sculpted and his biceps fill the sleeves of his black T-shirt. His skin is a tanned golden brown. It would be warm to touch.

"You're different than I thought you'd be," I blurt out.

He grins and a dimple forms just under his right eye.

"I know. Sexier, right? It's OK, you can say it."

I guffaw. "How do you manage to carry around an ego that size and weight?"

"It's the muscles," he shoots back, flexing his biceps and raising a single comical eyebrow.

Some of my nervousness falls away but then comes right back when he watches me laugh without saying anything for a few seconds too long.

"Your hair really is so long," he says. "And you never said you had freckles."

"Was I supposed to?"

"Freckles might be a deal breaker." He smiles and the dimple comes back. Cute.

I move to the couch and sit. He leans against the rock wall across the room.

"They're the bane of my existence," I say, referring to the freckles. This is a ridiculous thing to say because, of course, the bane of my existence is that I'm sick and unable to leave my house. We both realize this at the same time and then we're both laughing again.

"You're funny," he says after our laughter subsides.

I smile. I've never thought of myself as a funny girl, but I'm happy that he thinks so. We are awkward together for a few moments, unsure what to say. The silence would be much less noticeable over IM. We could chalk it up to any number of distractions. But right now, in real life, it feels like we both have blank thought balloons over our heads. Actually, mine's not blank at all, but I really can't tell him how beautiful his eyes are. They're Atlantic Ocean blue, just like he'd said. It's strange because of course I'd known that. But the difference between knowing it and seeing them in person is the difference between dreaming of flying and flight.

"This is some crazy room," he says, looking around.

"Yeah. My mom built it so I could feel like I was outside."

"Does it work?"

"Most days. I have a really excellent imagination."

"You really are a fairy tale. *Princess Madeline and the Glass Castle*."

He's quiet again, like he's trying to build up to something.

"It's OK to ask me," I say.

He's wearing a single black rubber band around his wrist and he pulls at it a few times before continuing. "How long have you been sick?"

"My whole life."

"What would happen if you went outside?"

"My head would explode. Or my lungs. Or my heart."

"How can you joke...?"

I shrug. "How can I not? Besides, I try not to want things I can't have."

"You're like a Zen master. You should teach a class."

"It takes a long time to learn." I smile back at him.

He crouches and then sits, back against the wall, forearms on his knees.

Even though he's still, I can feel the need to move coming off of him. The boy is kinetic energy.

"Where do you want to go the most?" he asks.

"Besides outer space?"

"Yes, Maddy, besides outer space." I like the way he says Maddy, as if he's been calling me that my whole life.

"The beach. The ocean."

"Want me to describe it for you?"

I nod more vigorously than I expected to. My heart speeds up like I'm doing something illicit.

"I've seen pictures and videos, but what's it like to actually be in the water? Is it like taking a bath in a giant tub?"

"Sort of," he says slowly, considering. "No, I take it back. Taking a bath is relaxing. Being in the ocean is scary. It's wet and cold and salty and deadly."

That's not what I was expecting. "You hate the ocean?"

He's grinning now, warming to his topic. "I don't hate it. I respect it."

He holds up a single finger. "Respect. It's Mother Nature at her finest— awesome, beautiful, impersonal, murderous. Think about it: All that water and you could still die of thirst. And the whole point of waves is to suck your feet from under you so that you drown faster. The ocean will swallow you whole and burp you out and not notice you were even there."

"Oh my God, you're scared of it!"

"We haven't even gotten to great white sharks or saltwater crocodiles or Indonesian needlefish or—"

"OK, OK," I say, laughing and holding up my hands for him to stop.

"It's no joke," he says with mock seriousness. "The ocean will kill you."

He winks at me. "It turns out that Mother Nature is a lousy mom."

I'm too busy laughing to say anything.

"So, what else do you want to know?"

"After that? Nothing!"

"Come on. I'm a fount of knowledge."

"OK, do one of your crazy tricks for me."

He's on his feet in a blink and begins assessing the room critically.

"There's not enough room. Let's go out—" He stops himself midsentence.

"Crap, Maddy, I'm sorry."

"Stop," I say. I stand up and hold a hand out. "Do not feel sorry for me." I say this harshly, but it's too important a point. I couldn't stand pity coming from him.

He flicks his rubber band, nods once, and lets it go. "I can do a one armed handstand."

He steps away from the wall and simply falls forward until he's upside down on his hands. It's such a graceful and effortless movement that I'm momentarily filled with envy. What's it like to have such complete confidence in your body and what it will do?

"That's amazing," I whisper.

"We're not in church," he whisper-shouts back, voice slightly strained from being upside down.

"I don't know," I say. "It feels like I should be quiet."

He doesn't answer. Instead, he closes his eyes, slowly removes his left hand from the floor, and holds it out to the side. He's almost perfectly still. The quiet bubbling of the pond and his slightly heavier breathing are the only sounds in the room. His T-shirt falls up and I can see the hard muscles of his stomach. The skin is the same warm, golden tan. I pull my eyes away.

"OK," I say, "you can stop now."

He's upright again before I can blink.

"What else can you do?"

He rubs his hands together and grins back at me.

One backflip later he sits back down against the wall and closes his eyes.

"So, why outer space first?" he asks.

I shrug. "I want to see the world, I guess."

“Not what most people mean by that,” he says, smiling.

I nod and close my eyes as well. “Do you ever feel—” I begin, but then the door opens and Carla bustles in to rush him out.

“You didn’t touch, right?” she asks, arms akimbo.

We both open our eyes and stare at each other. All at once I’m hyperaware of his body and mine.

“There was no touching,” Olly confirms, his eyes never leaving my face.

Something in his tone makes me blush hard, and heat travels a slow wave across my face and chest. Spontaneous combustion is a real thing. I’m certain of it.

A. (4 points: 1 point for each correct answer)

Circle the right answer:

1. The sun room:
 - a. is made up entirely of glass.
 - b. lacks windows.
 - c. is full of artificial plants.
 - d. is a movie set.
2. Olly’s eyes are:
 - a. blue.
 - b. brown.
 - c. black.
 - d. red.
3. From Olly’s point of view, the ocean:
 - a. looks like a gigantic bath tube.
 - b. stands for the supreme work of nature.
 - c. is a relaxing space.
 - d. represents a source of knowledge.
4. Maddy stays in the house because:
 - a. she is sick.
 - b. she is grounded.
 - c. she is bored.
 - d. she is sad.

B. (4 points: 0.5 point for each correct answer)

Set the right order of the following ideas according to the text, and write down only the number of the idea stated below.

1. Maddy asks not to be pitied.
2. Maddy notices that Olly is different from the way she imagined him before.
3. Maddy closes her eyes.
4. Maddy shuts the door of the room.
5. Maddy confesses that she would like to go to the beach.
6. Maddy acknowledges that the leaf of the banana tree is faked.
7. Maddy sits on the couch.
8. Maddy wants to see one of Olly’s sketches.

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C. (12 points: 3 points for each correct answer)

Write down complete statements.

1. Mention Olly's two physical features remarked by Maddy.
 2. Mention the importance of heater in the sun room.
 3. Explain the reason of Olly's calling Maddy a *Zen master*.
 4. Explain the meaning of the final paragraph: *Spontaneous combustion is a real thing. I'm certain of it.*
- D. Write a 15 lines text to present a possible development of Maddy's question "Do you ever feel—". Consider the context of the reply and the character's style.

TOPIC 2

20 points

HOW TO USE HASHTAGS: FOUR USEFUL ADVICE TO USE THEM CORRECTLY

By Calin Biris

I wrote this article because I would like to see more posts with relevant hashtags and fewer messages containing a (#) before all the words in a sentence.

What are hashtags used for? A hashtag has only one role: to group all messages under a particular topic during a single searching session, similar to a blog category.

Basically, a word category is created in #hashtag. So if you're interested in tracking your Facebook posts about the Untold Festival or the Open Your City campaign, click on the hashtag when you see a message containing #UntoldFestival or #OpenYourCity and you will open a search created automatically by Facebook, where you will find the posts of other people who used that hashtag in their messages. Obviously, you can search for it directly in the Facebook search field. You will get the same thing. [...]

Tips on using hashtags

1. In your social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, Google+, Twitter, etc.) use only those hashtags which define the category or the categories that your post belongs to. The linking words, such as # and # in #la, etc. do not define categories, nor do they have relevant searches you would like to fit your posts in, so do not put them in front of them.
2. Use only relevant hashtags. If you go to the mall and do a selfie in the test booth (it happens to us all), do not use hashtags such as #OpenYourCity or #UntoldFestival because they are unrelated to the subject. Instead, you can use the #Selfie hashtag.
3. Use up to 3 hashtags in posts ... they are enough to define a message / image / article. [...]
4. Before using a hashtag, check what has been posted about it. [...]

A. (10 points: 2 points for each correct answer)

Write down your answers considering the above quoted text

1. Mention at least one reason Calin Biris decide to write this article for.
2. Make up the definition of hashtag using the information provided by the text.
3. Explain why some phrases are bolded.

4. Present the reason of avoiding prepositions while using hashtags.

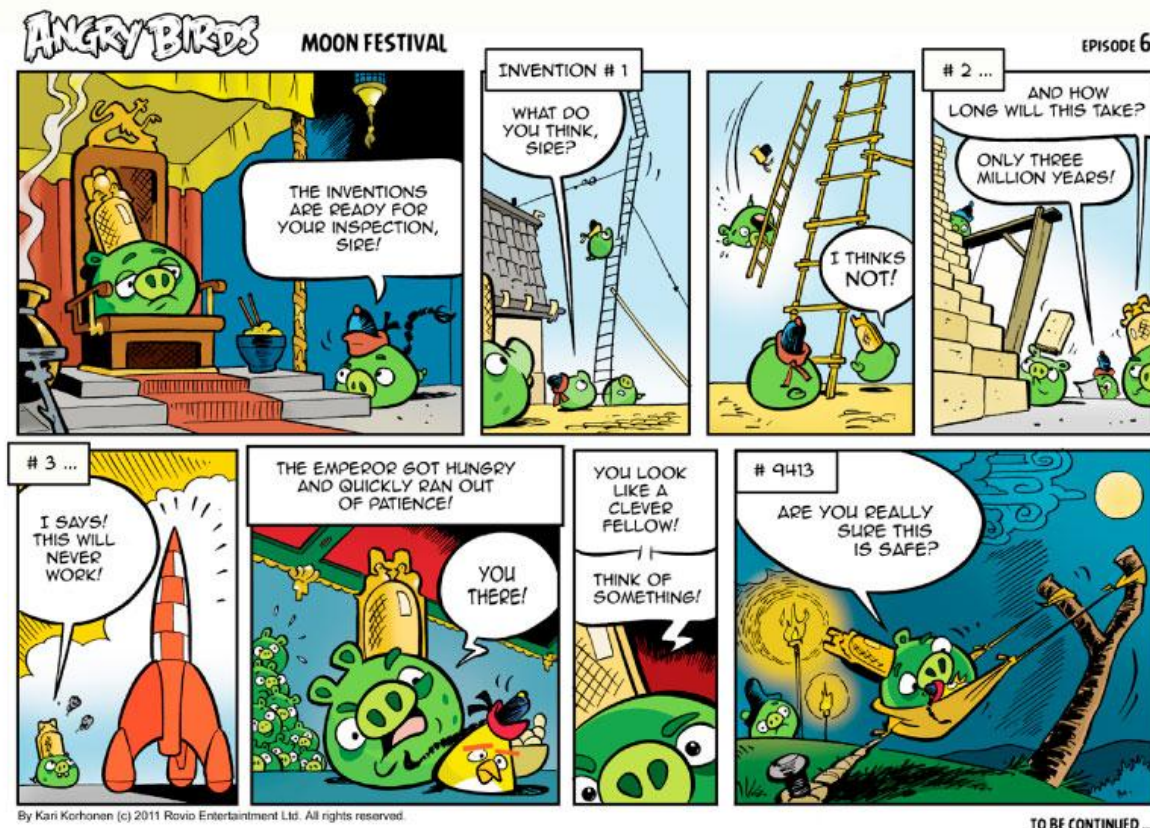
B. (10 points)

Except for the official name of the Olympiad you attend, what other hashtag would you use for this event? Write down a 10 lines text to support/motivate your answer.

TOPIC 3

10 points

Look at the comic strip attentively!



1. Identify the inventions presented in the text.
2. Replace the imperative sentence *Think of something!* with a sentence having the same meaning.
3. Explain the meaning of the sentence *I think NOT.*
4. Present the struggle of the characters in a 10 lines paragraph.