

**SECONDA PROVA SCRITTA**

Indirizzo: LI04, EA03 – LICEO LINGUISTICO

Tema di: LINGUA E CULTURA STRANIERA 1 (INGLESE)

**PART 1 • COMPREHENSION AND INTERPRETATION****Read the text below.**

"Yes, of course, if it's fine tomorrow," said Mrs. Ramsay. "But you'll have to be up with the lark," she added.

To her son these words conveyed an extraordinary joy, as if it were settled the expedition were bound to take place, and the wonder to which he had looked forward, for years and years it seemed, was, after a night's darkness and a day's sail, within touch. Since he belonged, even at the age of six, to that great clan which cannot keep this feeling separate from that, but must let future prospects, with their joys and sorrows, cloud what is actually at hand, since to such people even in earliest childhood any turn in the wheel of sensation has the power to crystallise and transfix the moment upon which its gloom or radiance rests, James Ramsay, sitting on the floor cutting out pictures from the illustrated catalogue of the Army and Navy stores, endowed the picture of a refrigerator, as his mother spoke with heavenly bliss. It was fringed with joy. The wheelbarrow, the lawn-mower, the sound of poplar trees, leaves whitening before rain, rooks cawing, brooms knocking, dresses rustling — all these were so coloured and distinguished in his mind that he had already his private code, his secret language, though he appeared the image of stark and uncompromising severity, with his high forehead and his fierce blue eyes, impeccably candid and pure, frowning slightly at the sight of human frailty, so that his mother, watching him guide his scissors neatly round the refrigerator, imagined him all red and ermine on the Bench or directing a stern and momentous enterprise in some crisis of public affairs.

"But," said his father, stopping in front of the drawing-room window, "it won't be fine." Had there been an axe handy, a poker, or any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father's breast and killed him, there and then, James would have seized it. Such were the extremes of emotion that Mr. Ramsay excited in his children's breasts by his mere presence; standing, as now, lean as a knife, narrow as the blade of one, grinning sarcastically, not only with the pleasure of disillusioning his son and casting ridicule upon his wife, who was ten thousand times better in every way than he was (James thought), but also with some secret conceit at his own accuracy of judgement. What he said was true. It was always true. He was incapable of untruth; never tampered with a fact; never altered a disagreeable word to suit the pleasure or convenience of any mortal being, least of all of his own children, who, sprung from his loins, should be aware from childhood that life is difficult; facts uncompromising; and the passage to that fabled land where our brightest hopes are extinguished, our frail barks founder in darkness (here Mr. Ramsay would straighten his back and narrow his little blue eyes upon the horizon), one that needs, above all, courage, truth, and the power to endure.

"But it may be fine — I expect it will be fine," said Mrs. Ramsay, making some little twist of the reddish-brown stocking she was knitting, impatiently. If she finished it tonight, if they did go to the Lighthouse after all, it was to be given to the Lighthouse keeper for his little boy, who was threatened with a tuberculous hip; together with a pile of old magazines, and some tobacco, indeed whatever she could find lying about, not really wanted, but only littering the room, to give those poor fellows who must be bored to death sitting all day with nothing to do but polish the lamp and trim the wick and rake about on their scrap of garden, something to amuse them. For how would you like to be shut up for a whole month at a time, and possibly more in stormy weather, upon a rock the size of a tennis lawn?

(657 words)

from *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)

**Read the following statements and say whether each one is True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS). Put a cross in the correct box.**

1. The prospect of good weather on the following day fills the child with a feeling of dread.  
T                                       F                                       NS
2. James has been looking forward to the proposed trip for a long time.  
T                                       F                                       NS
3. James and his mother are alone in the room while they are speaking.  
T                                       F                                       NS
4. His mother is convinced that James will have an important career.  
T                                       F                                       NS
5. Mrs. Ramsey feels little sympathy for the lighthouse keeper and his son.  
T                                       F                                       NS

**Answer the questions below. Use complete sentences and your own words.**

6. What do we learn about the relationship between James and his parents from this extract? Justify your answer by referring to the text.
7. How are we shown that James is a particularly sensitive and emotional child?
8. Are feelings and emotions or actions and events given more importance in this narrative? Show how this is conveyed through the language and imagery. Support your answer by referring to the text.

**PART 2 • WRITTEN PRODUCTION**

*"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. [...] You must do the thing you think you cannot do."*

(Eleanor Roosevelt, 1884-1962)

It is often said that you gain maturity through the experiences that present some form of difficulty. Doing what you know and feel confident about might strengthen your confidence but you only really grow by confronting challenges that you are unsure of or contain an element of risk. Discuss the quotation in a 300-word essay giving reasons for your answer.

## PART 3 • QUESTION

B

Read the text below.

**Can you capture the complex reality of the pandemic with numbers? Well, we tried...**

Individual experiences and suffering are, of course, at the heart of the pandemic. But one way to understand what has happened is through putting those experiences together – and statistics are those personal stories writ large. And this pandemic has brought unprecedented demand to explain all the numbers that have been flying around.

5 This has not been without its problems and we've had to learn some hard lessons, such as the journalistic skill of brevity. Since January 2021, we've been writing a weekly column in this paper about Covid numbers, covering everything from infections to deaths, vaccines to mental health, masks to lockdowns.

10 It can be frustrating not being able to show all the graphs, but the same holds for radio and TV interviews and *More or Less* on Radio 4 has shown how much can be done to explain statistics without visual aids. Mathematical formulae and technical jargon need to be avoided, but we have also had to be sparing with numbers, which is harder when they are so precious to us.

15 We had to agree our purpose, as a particular challenge is to fend off the voracious media appetite for blame, speculation and controversy, naturally fed by the broad spectrum of opinion among experts. One camp has supported viral suppression and even elimination, while others have expressed scepticism about the measures taken [...].

20 In the theatre of political combat, numbers are often weapons to beat opponents, but they should really be used to raise the quality of the debate. So we see ourselves as part of a group who have attempted to keep away from policy disputes and some of our most trusted sources are skilled individuals doing analyses in their spare time, who then share their insights on Twitter – to inform rather than persuade.

[314 words] *The Guardian*, 2 January 2022

**Choose the correct option. Put a cross in the correct box.**

- 1 According to the authors of the article, the pandemic has brought about the need to
- A  learn some difficult lessons analysing statistics.
  - B  write individual stories.
  - C  make sense of all the personal suffering in a larger context.
- 2 To what extent has the pandemic affected the job of statisticians?
- A  They have had to provide short and clear explanation.
  - B  They have had to create lots of graphs to show.
  - C  They have had to develop a technical vocabulary to be understood.
- 3 What does the phrase “to be sparing” (Line 12) refer to?
- A  Statisticians had to be generous.
  - B  Statisticians had to be tolerant.
  - C  Statisticians had to be frugal.

*Answer the questions below. Use complete sentences and your own words.*

- 4 What do the authors mean when they say that a particular challenge “is to fend off the voracious media appetite for blame, speculation and controversy” (Lines 14-15)?
- 5 What were the current contrasting positions about the pandemic?
- 6 According to the authors, what should the statisticians’ task be in times of crisis?