

2ND EXAMINATION**Memories of the Black Stairs****I. SENTENCES**

Find the complete subject and underline it once; that is, underline the subject plus associated modifiers. Find the complete predicate and underline it twice; that is, underline the main verb plus auxiliary verbs plus objects or complements plus associated modifiers. If you are uncertain whether an introductory phrase or clause modifies the remainder of the sentence or just the predicate alone, underline the phrase or clause twice. Every part of the sentence should be underlined one way or another (unless there is an interjection). All sentences are worth 2 points except where noted.

1. Once formed, the warrior clans of Ireland, the fianna, were said never to part but in death.
2. Romanticizing these heroes, storytellers perpetuated this manifest untruth.
3. In the winter season following Samhain, our Halloween, with hunting forbidden, the brave fenians broke into small bands, more easily fed by the people.

The fianna of ancient Ireland, comprised mainly of younger sons who would not inherit land, were fighting companies that maintained shaky allegiance to regional or provincial kings. An individual member was known as a fenian. Cailte, described here, was a member of the most storied fianna band, that captained by Fionn mac Cumhaill (or Finn McCool). The Black Stairs is a mountain range overlooking Leinster province.

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II. ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

Identify the voice of the verb in the following sentences; then rewrite the paragraph reversing the voice in each sentence. While you do not have to use each word in your revised sentences, the general sense of the original must remain. Just change the voice.

At this time, some fenians were solitary figures, walking alone across Eire. During one such dark season, Cailte traversed the Black Stairs without companions, striding from peak to peak, visiting cairns built atop those heights, chanting poetry. On the eve of Imbolc, the start of spring, the valleys of south Leinster, home to victorious cattle lords, were gazed upon by this hero. After this, his descent was begun.

4. Voice of 1st _____

5. Voice of 2nd _____

6. Voice of 3rd _____

7. Voice of 4th _____

8. _____

See next page for additional space

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9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

III. PREPOSITIONS AND PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Place parentheses around all the prepositional phrases in the following sentences.

In a hollow, high on the mountain, Cailte came upon a beautiful woman [who carried a new-born lamb, followed by the mother sheep]. The woman appeared to be a young maid, with golden hair in a twisted braid far down her back. Her eyes were hazel green; her skin was smooth and white as new-made cream. She wore a cloak of light blue.

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Place parentheses around all prepositional phrases in the following sentences and draw an arrow to the word(s) that each phrase modifies.

16. "I am Cailte, son of Ronan," spoke the fenian. I have crossed over the mountains, and I have been fasting."

17. Looking intently at the big man, the woman replied: "The time of hunger nears its end."

For one extra point, describe the grammatical function of "The time of hunger nears its end" in sentence no. 17; for a second point explain the grammatical function of "nears."

IV. VERB OBJECTS & COMPLEMENTS

Identify the verb object(s) and complement(s) in the following sentences by underlining and writing DO, IO or OC or PA or PN above the appropriate word. If there are verbals or verbal phrases functioning as verb objects or complements, identify them as noted above. If there is more than one clause in a sentence, identify the verb objects and complements in each clause. If dependent clauses function as verb objects or complements, identify them appropriately. Note that subordinate conjunctions if present have been placed in small caps; for this test it is safe to ignore them.

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18. Cailte gave the woman a smile and, noting the new-born lamb, described his great thirst.

19. She gently caressed the animal, the firstborn, and requested Cailte hold it for a time.

Tricky

20. [AS he cradled the young sheep], she chanted a powerful magic; her words were verses of remembrance.

21. “On the Black Stairs at the close of day, Cailte receives a gift for a gift; three drinks for life bestow three draughts of memory.”

22. [AFTER the verse, thrice chanted, faded to silence], she squatted by the ewe and began to milk.

23. [AS she undertook this task], her arms were the arms of an old, old woman.

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24. Yet [WHEN she stood and offered Cailte the cup], she was once again a young maid.

25. “First a drink, then a memory.”

For two extra points, explain in grammatical terms your analysis of sentence no. 25.

26. Putting the cup to his lips, Cailte drank the sweet, life-giving sustenance.

27. Images of a time gone by came to his mind and, holding the empty drinking cup, he voiced these words.

28. “I am with my people, a boy, and we are bringing the cattle to high pasture [BECAUSE the time is summer and grass grows thick closest to the sun].

Tricky – 2 extra points if correct.

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V. PHRASES

Identify the type of verbal(s) or verbal phrase(s) underlined, italicized, and/or placed in small caps in the following sentences. You don't have to explain their function – just identify them. Please take care to identify verbals as phrases where appropriate.

29. Watching over the cattle is the *fated* task of women and boys at this time of producing.

30. In the highlands we gather to milk the cows and *make butter and cheese*.

31. Surrounded by family, as memorable as a feast day, I childishly pretend to guard the cattle against monsters and demons.”

Underline and then identify all verbals and verbal phrases. Then tell how each functions by labeling its function or drawing an arrow to the word(s) that it modifies.

32. Squatting by the ewe for a second time, the woman stretched out her arms to the task.

33. To look at them was to see the arms of an old, worn woman.

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34. Yet having stood, offering the cup to Cailte, she appeared as a young maid.

35. “Drinking a second drink, brave Cailte, will stir a second moving memory.”

36. Putting cup to his lips, the fenian drank deeply, speaking these words.

37. “To be singing softly seemed her defining trait.

38. My beloved spoke of her mother as a queen turned into a deer, and I believed her.

Below, identify the type of phrases underlined or italicized (name them). Then tell how each functions by labeling its function or drawing an arrow to the word(s) that it modifies. There may be several examples in each sentence. Review each carefully.

39. Quick to her feet she was, rejoicing at my return at the close of day; her fingers were nimble at her weaving; her eyes held deep melancholy, even when smiling.

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40. For a summer I tarried with love, knowing [THAT I should not have done so], [FOR to delay until near summer's end was dangerous] and soon Fionn sent a summons: 'We defend the shores, old friend.' ”

Note the two phrases to be identified in this sentence.

41. For a third time, the woman squatting by the sheep revealed the arms of an old woman; yet [when she stood and offered Cailte the cup], she appeared to be a young maid.

VI. Case

Choose the correct pronoun.

42. “[**Who/whom** drinks a final drink] will have a final memory.”

43. Cailte, [**who/whom** no one knew to be slow to a request], put the cup to his lips and drank deeply.

For one extra point, explain in grammatical terms the function of your answer in sentence no. 44.

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44. [When he passed the cup between **he/him** and the woman, he spoke these words.

45. “Battle ravens feasting upon those [**who/whom** died in needless combat]. Fionn and Oscar dead. Shattering ruin; the harvest of a dead king. In the valley of Gabhra ...”

VII. SOMETHING IS WRONG

In terms of rule-based grammar explain the way(s) that the following sentences are incorrect.

46. Cailte spoken, “No memory of this have I; these things I have not seen; this place I have not been. Do I see what is to come?”

47. The maiden to chant: “Unlooked for, a warrior on the Black Stairs chants sacred verse; following the land, recalling past with words. Past, present, future, connected they turn.”

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48. As she spoke, Cailte looked to the horizon and weeped tears at his remembrances.

49. His family was gone before him into the darkness; his beloved was not his to keep; and the fianna, oh, the fianna [who he loved] was fated to meet desperate destruction.

50. With that the woman embraced the lamb and continued up the mountain, sheep following close behind.

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Extra Credit

Some say [THAT Cailte mac Ronan was nephew to Fionn mac Cumhaill by way of his mother, sister to Fionn]. Others speak differently. Widely accepted is his ability to run great distances with striking speed. He knew the languages of animals. His great fame, beyond his prowess as a warrior, is as a poet. His ability to recite poetry was second only to Ireland's greatest warrior poet, Fionn's son, Oison.

Explain fully the grammatical function of "sister" in the first sentence above 2 pts.

Underline every verbal or verbal phrase in the third sentence above. Explain the grammatical function of each. 3 pts.

Identify the phrase "to recite poetry" in the final sentence and explain its grammatical function. 2 pts.
