



## Written paper

Wednesday, May 16th, 2018

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

*This paper aims at assessing your ability to read a literary text and to write to argue or to imagine.*

*The allotted time for this paper is 90 minutes.*

*You are advised to spend 45 minutes on reading the text + answering part 1 and 2*

*You are advised to spend 45 minutes answering EITHER part 3-1 OR 3-2*

*No document allowed.*

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I'll never forget what we said when we left Philosophy Hall; even though the words were nothing special, the conversation is burned into my memory as part of that day. We'd started down the steps together. Not exactly together, but next to each other. The air was clear, the sky was blue — and everything had changed. We didn't know it yet.

5 People all around us were talking over one another:

“The twin towers collapsed!”

“School's cancelled!”

“I want to donate blood. Do you know where I can donate blood?”

I turned to you. “What's going on? “

10 “I live in East Campus”, you said, pointing toward the dorm.

“Let's go find out. You're Lucy, right? Where do you live? “

“Hogan,” I said. “And yeah, Lucy.”

“Nice to meet you, Lucy, I'm Gabriel.” You held out your hand. Amid everything, I shook it, and looked up at you as I did. Your dimple came back. Your eyes shone blue. I thought then, for the first time: *He's*

15 *beautiful.*

We went to your suite and watched TV with your roommates, with Adam and Scott and Justin. On the screen bodies dove out of buildings, blackened mounds of rubble sent smoke signals into the sky, and the towers fell in a loop. The devastation numbed us. We stared at the images, unable to reconcile the stories with our reality. The fact that this was happening in our city, seven miles from where we sat, that  
20 those were people —actual human beings— hadn't set in yet. At least not for me. It felt so far away.

Our cell phones didn't work. You used your dorm phone to call your mom in Arizona to tell her you were fine. I called my parents in Connecticut, who wanted me to come home. They knew someone whose daughter worked at the World Trade Center and no one had heard from her yet. Someone else whose cousin had a breakfast meeting at Windows on the World.

25 "It's safe outside Manhattan," my father said. "What if there's anthrax? Or some other biological warfare. Nerve gas."

I told my dad the subways weren't running. Probably not the trains either.

"I'll come get you," he said. "I'll jump in the car now."

"I'll be okay," I told him. "I'm with some friends. We're fine. I'll call you again later." It still didn't feel real.

30 "You know," Scott said, after I hung up. "If I were a terrorist organization, I'd drop a bomb on us."

"What's the fuck?" Adam said. He was waiting to hear from his uncle, who was part of the NYPD.

"I mean, if you think about it academically..." Scott said, but he didn't get any further.

"Shut up," Justin said. "Seriously, Scott. Not the time."

35 "Maybe I should leave," I said to you then. I didn't really know you. I had just met your friends. "My roommates are probably wondering where I am."

"Call them," you said, handing the phone back to me. "And tell them you're going to the roof of the Wien dorm. Tell them they can meet you there if you want."

"I'm going where?"

40 "With me," you said, and you ran your fingers absently along my braid. It was an intimate gesture, the kind of thing that happens after all barriers of personal space have been breached. Like eating off someone else's plate without asking. And all of a sudden, I felt connected to you, like your hand on my hair meant something more than idle, nervous fingers.

I thought of that moment, years later, when I decided to donate my hair and the stylist handed me my braid, wrapped in plastic, looking even darker brown than usual. Even though you were a world away  
45 then, I felt like I was betraying you, like I was cutting our tie.

But then, that day, right after you touched my hair you realized what you'd done and let your hand drop into your lap. You smiled at me again, but it didn't go to your eyes this time.

I shrugged. "Okay," I said.

50 The world felt like it was cracking in pieces, like we'd gone through a shattered mirror into the fractured place inside, where nothing made sense, where our shields were down, our walls broken. In that place, there wasn't any reason to say no.

*The Light We Lost*, Jill Santopolo, 2017

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NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1: reading skills**

*Answer each question as precisely as possible, in your own words.*

1. What city does the scene take place? Quote at least two elements from the text to support your answer.

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2. What major event is referred to? Be as precise as you can, using textual evidence.

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3. Who is the narrator of the passage?

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4. Who are the two main characters? Fill in the grid.

Name		
Occupation		
Physical appearance		
Family		
Relationships		

5. Which characters are not physically present in the scene?

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6. Give the three different locations of the characters in the order of the text.

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7. The narration takes place at the same time as the events: True or False? Explain.

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8. Adam is part of the NYPD: True or False? Quote the passage to support your answer.

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9. Match the adjectives with a character from the passage and explain your choice in your own words

*nervous – shattered – tense–worried – provocative*

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## Part 2: vocabulary & language

*Explain the following phrases in your own words*

1. (l.19.) The fact that this was happening

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2. (l.18) unable to reconcile the stories with our reality

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3. (l.50) our shields were down, our walls broken

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*Suggest a translation in French for the following words.*

1. Dimple (l.14): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Dove out (l.17) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Rubble (l.17) : \_\_\_\_\_

4. Loop(l.18): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Numbed (l.18): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Braid (l.39): \_\_\_\_\_

7. Idle (l.42): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Shrugged (l.48): \_\_\_\_\_

9. Shattered (l.49): \_\_\_\_\_

10. Shields (l.50): \_\_\_\_\_

11. Stared (l.18): \_\_\_\_\_

12. Dorm (l.10): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Wrapped (l.44) \_\_\_\_\_

14. Tie (l.45): \_\_\_\_\_

15. Lap (l.47): \_\_\_\_\_

16. Academically (l.32) \_\_\_\_\_

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 3: writing

*Answer EITHER question 1 OR question 2 in 300 words minimum.*

Question 1: Imagine the sequel to this passage. You must start with the phone conversation between Lucy and her friends.

Question 2: "Major events in the news impact individual lives." Discuss this statement. Use an example from the news or draw on your knowledge of history to illustrate your answer.

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