Read the following text

Sarah had, of course, arrived home – though ‘home’ is a sarcasm in the circumstances – before Mrs Fairley. She had played her usual part in Mrs Poulteney’s evening devotions; and she had then retired to her own room for a few minutes. Mrs Fairley seized her chance; and the few minutes were all she needed. She came herself and knocked on the door of Sarah’s bedroom. Sarah opened it. She had her usual mask of resigned sadness, but Mrs Fairley was brimming with triumph.

‘The mistress is waiting. At once, if you please.’

Sarah looked down and nodded faintly. Mrs Fairley thrust a look, sardonic and as sour as verjuice, at that meek head, and rustled venomously away. She did not go downstairs however, but waited around a corner until she heard the door of Mrs Poulteney's drawing-room open and close on the secretary-companion. Then she stole silently to the door and listened.

Mrs Poulteney was not, for once, established on her throne; but stood at the window, placing all her eloquence in her back.

‘You wish to speak to me?’

But Mrs Poulteney apparently did not, for she neither moved nor uttered a sound. Perhaps it was the omission of her customary title of ‘madam’ that silenced her; there was something in Sarah’s tone that made it clear the omission was deliberate. Sarah looked from the black back to an occasional table that lay between the two women. An envelope lay conspicuously on it. The minutest tightening of her lips — into a determination or a resentment, it was hard to say which — was her only reaction to this freezing majesty, who if the truth be known was slightly at a loss for the best way of crushing this serpent she had so regrettably taken to her bosom. Mrs Poulteney elected at last for one blow of the axe.

‘A month’s wages are in that packet. You will take it in lieu of notice. You will depart this house at your earliest convenience tomorrow morning.’

Sarah now had the effrontery to use Mrs Poulteney’s weapon in return. She neither moved nor answered; until that lady, outraged, deigned to turn and show her white face, upon which burnt two pink spots of repressed emotion.

‘Did you hear me, miss?’

‘Am I not to be told why?’

‘Do you dare to be impertinent!’

‘I dare to ask to know why I am dismissed.’
‘I shall write to Mr Forsyth. I shall see that you are locked away. You are a public scandal.’

This impetuous discharge had some effect. Two spots began to burn in Sarah’s cheeks as well. There was a silence, a visible swelling of the already swollen bosom of Mrs Poulteney.

‘I command you to leave this room at once.’

‘Very well. Since all I have ever experienced in it is hypocrisy, I shall do so with the greatest pleasure.’

With this Parthian shaft Sarah turned to go. But Mrs Poulteney was one of those actresses who cannot bear not to have the last line of the scene; or perhaps I do her an injustice, and she was attempting, however unlikely it might seem from her tone of voice, to do a charity.

‘Take your wages!’

Sarah turned on her, and shook her head. ‘You may keep them. And if it is possible with so small a sum of money, I suggest you purchase some instrument of torture. I am sure Mrs Fairley will be pleased to help you use it upon all those wretched enough to come under your power.’

(591 words)

John Fowles (1926 - 2005), The French Lieutenant’s Woman, 1969

Say whether each of the following statements is True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS). Put a cross on the correct box

1. Mrs Fairley, despite her surname, is far from being honest and unbiased.
   T  F  NS

2. Mrs Poulteney has turned her back on Sarah because she is uncertain as to how to dismiss her.
   T  F  NS

3. Sarah had been previously informed she was going to be sacked.
   T  F  NS

4. Mrs Poulteney announces her intention to summon Mr Forsyth.
   T  F  NS

5. The two ladies manage to find an agreement about the wages at the end of their conversation.
   T  F  NS

Answer the following questions. Use complete sentences and your own words.

6. Analyse the narrator’s comments which portray the relationship between Sarah and Mrs Poulteney and explain what it is like.

7. Focus on the narrative method. What kind of narrator can you find in this passage?

8. What does the writer mean by “placing all her eloquence in her back”? (lines 11-12)
Why is reading in the pub so enjoyable? In praise of a very British pastime

One of my favourite pastimes is reading in pubs. It’s as pleasant on a lively Friday as it is in Sunday morning solitude. It even transcends the seasons: you can get as much pleasure from a summy thriller raced through in a beer garden as you can from a cosy Victorian whodunit read by the fireplace as icy winds batter the pub door.

Reading in pubs should be difficult. It’s loud and kinetic, and there’s the perpetual fear that someone six pints deep will stumble and stain your book with sticky stout. So why does reading in pubs feel so naturally comfortable?

The answer could be simple arithmetic. Reading is good. Social spaces are good. Drinking, in moderation of course, can be good. All three can offer respite and relief.

But there’s also the compelling case that reading in pubs is a British institution. The bond between literature and pubs is time-honoured. Countless books and pubs across the UK celebrate their common history, from Compton Mackenzie’s novel Whisky Galore gently parodying Hebridean islanders’ fondness for a good dram, all the way down to Broadstairs highlighting Charles Dickens’s affection for its Kentish coastline in two separate museums, a week-long Dickens festival, and, inevitably, a pub. London, Dublin and Edinburgh have plenty of literary-themed pub crawls, and you just need to cast your eye over a list of your local pubs to appreciate how many book or writer-inspired names they’ve enthusiastically adopted. […]

Pleasingly, reading in pubs is proving to be a tradition that is still evolving. Hundreds of public libraries have closed down over the last decade, and while their stock is often sold off or donated to other community hubs, sometimes it ends up in pubs. The George & Dragon in Hudswell in Yorkshire even retains the library service – but many pubs adopt a magnanimous “take a book, leave a book” policy.

Additionally, over the past 15 years or so, the rise in the popularity of book clubs has meant that pubs are often now embraced as a neutral meeting spot. Such trends not only reinforce the abstract bonds between literature and pubs, but underline their fostering of community. “Pub” is, of course, short for public house – and they have always been a nucleus for social engagement.

The pleasure of reading in pubs could, therefore, be a just combination of enjoyable activities, a hereditarily British trait or an opportunity to engage and learn. But, ultimately, too much analysis undermines it. It is simply a quiet delight to drink and read among friends and strangers.

(439 words)

1. According to the writer, reading in pubs
   a. is more enjoyable on weekdays than at the weekend
   b. can be the most thrilling experience in a lifetime
   c. provides the reader with a feeling of happiness at any time
   d. alleviates the loneliness many people experience

2. People might object to reading in pubs because
   a. the place seems hardly appropriate
   b. you might feel threatened by heavy drinkers
   c. the activity is disturbed by music and TV
   d. tables provide inadequate space and can be dirty

3. Several famous British towns and cities have
   a. been quoted in novels where pubs are their main setting
   b. felt obliged to allocate reader-friendly areas in pubs
   c. arranged pub tours inspired by famous books
   d. organized a famous festival dedicated to pubs

4. The George & Dragon in Hudswell in Yorkshire hosts
   a. the pub and acts as a village library
   b. a “take a book, leave a book” service
   c. a stopover during a literary-themed pub crawl
   d. the meeting place of the local book club

5. The role a pub plays nowadays
   a. is limited to providing entertainment
   b. is equally divided between culture and social cohesion
   c. has remained unchanged over the years
   d. has been questioned by contemporary writers

Answer the following questions. Use complete sentences and your own words.

6. How does the writer explain the connection between pubs and literature?

7. Explain the phrase “take a book, leave a book” policy by referring to the text.
Complete both Task A and Task.

**TASK A**

1) “One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education First.” (Malala, Speech at the Youth Takeover of the United Nations)

Discuss the quotation in a 300-word essay. Support your ideas by referring to your readings and/or to your personal experience.

**TASK B**

2) Exhibitions have become special mass events and are attracting young people more than ever. Write about an exhibition you have seen, mentioning the parts you particularly admired and giving your opinion about the design of the exhibition, the planning and availability of information. Use about 300 words

END OF EXAMINATION