

OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/ENGLISH IB/TOPS/MACS/HOMEWORK 13

NAME: _____ GRADE: ____ CLASS: _____

Read the following selections and answer the questions that follows.

SELECTION 1/4

Once I got around the cafeteria, building three was easy to spot. A large black “3” was painted on a white square on the east corner. I felt my breathing gradually creeping toward hyperventilation as I approached the door. I tried holding my breath as I followed two unisex raincoats through the door.

The classroom was small. The people in front of me stopped just inside the door to hang up their coats on a long row of hooks. I copied them. They were two girls, one a porcelain-colored blonde, the other also pale, with light brown hair. At least my skin wouldn’t be a standout here.

I took the slip up to the teacher, a tall, balding man whose desk had a nameplate identifying him as Mr. Mason. He gawked at me when he saw my name — not an encouraging response — and of course I flushed tomato red. But at least he sent me to an empty desk at the back without introducing me to the class. It was harder for my new classmates to stare at me in the back, but somehow, they managed. I kept my eyes down on the reading list the teacher had given me. It was fairly basic: Brontë, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Faulkner. I’d already read everything. That was comforting . . . and boring. I wondered if my mom would send me my folder of old essays, or if she would think that was cheating. I went through different arguments with her in my head while the teacher droned on.

When the bell rang, a nasal buzzing sound, a gangly boy with skin problems and hair black as an oil slick leaned across the aisle to talk to me.

“You’re Isabella Swan, aren’t you?” He looked like the overly helpful, chess club type.

“Bella,” I corrected. Everyone within a three-seat radius turned to look at me.

“Where’s your next class?” he asked.

1. For each of the words below, give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning that the word or phrase has in the passage.

i. Gawked	
ii. Gangly	

2. Physically, what is the narrator self-conscious about?

- a. Her pale skin.
- b. Her status as a new student.
- c. How well-read she is.
- d. Her hyperventilation.
- e. All of the above.

3. How does the narrator feel when Mr. Mason reads her name on the slip?

- a. Fearful
- b. Homesick
- c. Nervous
- d. Embarrassed
- e. None of the above

4. How do we know that the narrator has transferred from one school to another? Check the points that apply.

The location of building three is not immediately obvious to her.	
She takes a slip to a teacher.	
The teacher does not introduce her to the class.	
The narrator mentions sarcastically, "It was harder for my new classmates to stare at me in my back."	

5. Based on the fact that the narrator has kept a folder of her old essays from her previous school (instead of, say, discarding them), what can you reasonably surmise about her character or attitude as a student? Explain your answer.

SELECTION 2/4

There was nowhere to look without meeting curious eyes.

"I'm headed toward building four, I could show you the way. . . ."
Definitely over-helpful. "I'm Eric," he added.

I smiled tentatively. "Thanks."

We got our jackets and headed out into the rain, which had picked up. I could have sworn several people behind us were walking close enough to eavesdrop. I hoped I wasn't getting paranoid.

"So, this is a lot different than Phoenix, huh?" he asked.

"Very."

"It doesn't rain much there, does it?"

"Three or four times a year."

"Wow, what must that be like?" he wondered.

"Sunny," I told him.

"You don't look very tan."

"My mother is part albino."

He studied my face apprehensively, and I sighed. It looked like clouds and a sense of humor didn't mix. A few months of this and I'd forget how to use sarcasm.

We walked back around the cafeteria, to the south buildings by the gym. Eric walked me right to the door, though it was clearly marked.

"Well, good luck," he said as I touched the handle. "Maybe we'll have some other classes together." He sounded hopeful.

I smiled at him vaguely and went inside.

The rest of the morning passed in about the same fashion. My Trigonometry teacher, Mr. Varner, who I would have hated anyway just because of the subject he taught, was the only one who made me stand in front of the class and introduce myself. I stammered, blushed, and tripped over my own boots on the way to my seat.

6. For each of the words below, give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning that the word or phrase has in the passage.

i. Tentatively	
ii. Eavesdrop	
iii. Apprehensively	

7. What is the narrator's attitude towards Eric?

- a. Guarded but civil
- b. Acrimonious
- c. Fearful
- d. Cynical
- e. All of the above

8. Eric misses the sarcasm in possibly two of the following replies from the narrator. Check the replies that sound sarcastic to you, and briefly explain in the space provided why they contain sarcasm.

Replies	Sarcastic or not? (Insert checkmark)	Your explanation
"Very."		
"Three or four time a year."		
"Sunny."		
"My mother is part albino."		

9. What do you think might be Eric's attitude towards the narrator? Choose the best answer or the best combination of answers.

- I. He is interested in the narrator
- II. He likes the narrator's wittiness.
- III. He likes the narrator's complexion.

- a. I only
- b. I and II
- c. All of the above
- d. II only
- e. III only

SELECTION 3/4

One girl sat next to me in both Trig and Spanish, and she walked with me to the cafeteria for lunch. She was tiny, several inches shorter than my five feet four inches, but her wildly curly dark hair made up a lot of the difference between our heights. I couldn't remember her name, so I smiled and nodded as she prattled about teachers and classes. I didn't try to keep up.

We sat at the end of a full table with several of her friends, who she introduced to me. I forgot all their names as soon as she spoke them. They seemed impressed by her bravery in speaking to me. The boy from English, Eric, waved at me from across the room.

It was there, sitting in the lunchroom, trying to make conversation with seven curious strangers, that I first saw them.

They were sitting in the corner of the cafeteria, as far away from where I sat as possible in the long room. There were five of them. They weren't talking, and they weren't eating, though they each had a tray of untouched food in front of them. They weren't gawking at me, unlike most of the other students, so it was safe to stare at them without fear of meeting an excessively interested pair of eyes. But it was none of these things that caught, and held, my attention.

They didn't look anything alike. Of the three boys, one was big — muscled like a serious weight lifter, with dark, curly hair. Another was taller, leaner, but still muscular, and honey blond. The last was lanky, less bulky, with untidy, bronze-colored hair. He was more boyish than the others, who looked like they could be in college, or even teachers here rather than students.

The girls were opposites. The tall one was statuesque. She had a beautiful figure, the kind you saw on the cover of the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue, the kind that made every girl around her take a hit on her self-esteem just by being in the same room. Her hair was golden, gently waving to the middle of her back. The short girl was pixielike, thin in the extreme, with small features. Her hair was a

11. For each of the words below, give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning that the word or phrase has in the passage.

i. Prattled	
ii. Statuesque	

12. What is it about the five students sitting in the corner of the cafeteria that catches and holds the narrator's attention?

- a. One of them is very muscular.
- b. One of them has bronze-coloured hair.
- c. One of them had a beautiful figure.
- d. They look like vampires.
- e. None of the above.

13. Based on the selection, could you infer what the models on *Sport Illustrated* swimsuit issue look like? Circle all the possible inferences.

- a. They look physically attractive.
- b. The models are all males with twenty-inch biceps.
- c. They look ill.
- d. They are tanned.
- e. They are probably scantily clad, looking quite risqué.

14. Write a short paragraph about a time in your life when you, or one of your friends, felt socially awkward in school.

SELECTION 4/4

deep black, cropped short and pointing in every direction.

And yet, they were all exactly alike. Every one of them was chalky pale, the palest of all the students living in this sunless town. Paler than me, the albino. They all had very dark eyes despite the range in hair tones. They also had dark shadows under those eyes — purplish, bruise-like shadows. As if they were all suffering from a sleepless night, or almost done recovering from a broken nose. Though their noses, all their features, were straight, perfect, angular.

But all this is not why I couldn't look away.

I stared because their faces, so different, so similar, were all devastatingly, inhumanly beautiful. They were faces you never expected to see except perhaps on the airbrushed pages of a fashion magazine. Or painted by an old master as the face of an angel. It was hard to decide who was the most beautiful — maybe the perfect blond girl, or the bronze-haired boy.

They were all looking away — away from each other, away from the other students, away from anything in particular as far as I could tell. As I watched, the small girl rose with her tray — unopened soda, unbitten apple — and walked away with a quick, graceful lope that belonged on a runway. I watched, amazed at her lithe dancer's step, till she dumped her tray and glided through the back door, faster than I would have thought possible. My eyes darted back to the others, who sat unchanging.

"Who are *they*?" I asked the girl from my Spanish class, whose name I'd forgotten.

As she looked up to see who I meant — though already knowing, probably, from my tone — suddenly he looked at her, the thinner one, the boyish one, the youngest, perhaps. He looked at my neighbor for just a fraction of a second, and then his dark eyes flickered to mine.

He looked away quickly, more quickly than I could, though in a flush of embarrassment I dropped my eyes at once. In that brief flash of a glance, his face held nothing of interest — it was as if she had

15. How would you describe the narrator Isabella Swan's character/personality? Circle the adjectives that describe her.

oversensitive emotional intelligent arrogant
self-absorbed introspective analytical introverted

Choose one of the adjectives that you just circled and explain it by using evidence anywhere from all four reading selections in this homework.

i. Bella is _____ because _____

THE END