

DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

LISTENING SECTION

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN ENGLISH

Tuesday, August 17, 2004—8:30 to 11:30 a.m., only

BE SURE THAT THE LISTENING SECTION IS ADMINISTERED TO EVERY STUDENT.

- 1 Before the start of the examination period, say:

Do not open the examination booklet until you are instructed to do so.

- 2 Distribute one examination booklet and one essay booklet to each student.

- 3 After each student has received an examination booklet and an essay booklet, say:

Tear off the answer sheet, which is the last page of the examination booklet, and fill in its heading. Now circle “Session One” and fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet.

- 4 After the students have filled in all headings on their answer sheets and essay booklets, say:

Look at page 2 of your examination booklet and follow along while I read the **Overview** and **The Situation**.

Overview:

For this part of the test, you will listen to an account about sculptor Casimer Michalczyk, answer some multiple-choice questions, and write a response based on the situation described below. You will hear the account twice. You may take notes on the next page anytime you wish during the readings.

The Situation:

As a member of your school’s art club, you have been asked to write a feature article about an artist you admire for your club’s newsletter. You have decided to write about sculptor Casimer Michalczyk and to describe his admirable qualities. In preparation for writing your feature article, listen to an account by writer Edie Clark about sculptor Casimer Michalczyk. Then use relevant information from the account to write your feature article.

Now I will read the passage aloud to you for the first time.

- 5 Now read the passage aloud, including the attribution at the end. Read with appropriate expression, but without added comment.

Listening Passage

When Casimer Michalczyk graduated from Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in 1938, he set forth to be a sculptor. But a sculptor is nothing without tools. As a student during the Depression, Casimer knew how to save money, and as a man of creative talent, he knew how to turn something that isn't into something that is. "I originally bought tools like everyone else, but they were expensive, and I found I could make my own and save money."

Over the course of his more-than-60-year career, carving everything from wind-tunnel models for experimental aircraft at Pratt & Whitney to the Justice statue that adorns the Old State House in Hartford to gravestones from slate, Casimer has amassed a fortune in tools — nearly 3,000 chisels, spatulas, brushes, knives, scrapers, saws, scribes, loops, pounders, gouges, and picks, the vast majority of them of his own devising. The homemade standard was not always about salvage. He found that what started out as a matter of thrift ended up as its own kind of art. "There's a reward in making your own tools. There were things I wanted to do that commercial tools could not do. Sculptors search for the best tool to bring a concept into being. A lot of times what I was looking for was a piece with an interesting shape or a different curve that could give the effect I was looking for in my work." He kept his eyes open wherever he went — scrap heaps, yard sales, and his own backyard.

Casimer, who has worked his entire career in dual studios in Glastonbury, Connecticut, and on Martha's Vineyard, used whatever he could find that was made of good hard steel, bronze, or brass: umbrella wire, threaded rod, bicycle-tire rims, motorcycle-chain links, old saw blades, C-clamps, lawn-mower blades, old dental tools, brass plumbing fixtures. For the handles, he turned to bamboo and steel tubing, which he especially liked for their hollow nature, shrub stalks, wooden dowels, tree branches, pencils. Old bones and animal horns worked well, as did, of course, discarded knife handles.

He calls these tools his "findings," but they are much more than that. Using a high-speed abrasive wheel, Casimer shaped the tools to his needs. "It's still the human hand that's the finest tool," he says. Long ago, Casimer trained himself to work ambidextrously so that when one hand gets tired, he can switch to the other. In his career, he has crafted markers for some 150 graves, not just stone markers but exquisite works of art.

Casimer is now 85 and looking at retirement. Over the past couple of years, he began to take apart his collection of tools. He brought them down from their shelves, where they have been set like paintbrushes in extra-large coffee cans and rinsed-out number-ten tomato cans. He selected 900 tools, many of them embedded with the dust of the slate stones he has carved, and donated them to the sculpture department at RISD. "I hope these will be useful to the students learning to work in three dimensions," he wrote in his letter informing the school of his decision. Michael Beresford, head of RISD's sculpture department, pronounced Casimer's unusual endowment "a wonderful opportunity."

By the year 2000, Casimer had hoped to endow his other alma mater, the Yale School of Art, with a similar gift. However, the school declined his offer, explaining that it no longer instructs its students in the art of carving in three dimensions. Rather, its sculpture department teaches only "assembly."

"I was astounded," Casimer says, clearly unhappy about this turn of events in the art world. He turned then to the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts in Old Lyme, Connecticut. Another 500 of his tools will go to that relatively new school, which he is delighted to know teaches the traditional art of sculpture.

In spite of all this generosity, Casimer has not left himself barren of tools. He continues to carve. He recently finished two new gravestones, one of them for the mother of Mary Travers (of Peter, Paul, and Mary fame). "I'm not working on a stone right now, but I'm thinking about one for myself," he says. "Just thinking."

— "Casimer's Gift"
from *Yankee*, December 1999

6 After reading the passage aloud once, say:

You may take a few minutes to look over **The Situation** and your notes.
(Pause) Now I will read the passage aloud a second time.

7 Read the passage a second time.

8 After the second reading, say:

Now turn to page 4 of your examination booklet, read the directions, and answer the multiple-choice questions. Be sure to follow all the directions given in your examination booklet and your essay booklet. You may now begin.

