

EAE 0422 A	Sujet Jury	Sujet Candidat	Code Sujet	CLG 03
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Your main commentary should be focused on TO. Other topics may also be addressed.

Tommy was no longer trying to direct his comments in any particular direction. He was just raving, flinging his limbs about, at the sky, at the wind, at the nearest fence post.

Laura said he was maybe "rehearsing his Shakespeare".
 5 Someone else pointed out how each time he screamed something he'd raise one foot off the ground, pointing it outwards, "like a dog doing a pee." Actually, I'd noticed the same foot movement myself, but what had struck me was that each time he stamped the foot back down again, flecks of mud flew up around his shins. I thought
 10 again about his precious shirt, but he was too far away for me to see if he'd got much mud on it.

"I suppose it is a bit cruel," Ruth said, "the way they always work him up like that. But it's his own fault. If he learnt to keep his cool, they'd leave him alone."

15 "They'd still keep on at him," Hannah said. "Graham K.'s temper's just as bad, but that only makes them all the more careful with him. The reason they go for Tommy's because he's a layabout."

20 Then everyone was talking at once, about how Tommy never even tried to be creative, about how he hadn't even put anything in for the Spring Exchange.

I suppose the truth was, by that stage, each of us was secretly wishing a guardian would come from the house and take him away. And although we hadn't had any part in this latest plan to rile
 25 Tommy, we *had* taken out ringside seats, and we were starting to feel guilty. But there was no sign of a guardian, so we just kept swapping reasons why Tommy deserved everything he got. Then when Ruth looked at her watch and said even though we still had time, we should get back to the main house, nobody argued.

30 Tommy was still going strong as we came out of the pavilion. The house was over to our left, and since Tommy was standing in the field straight ahead of us, there was no need to go anywhere near him. In any case, he was facing the other way and didn't seem to register us at all. All the same, as my friends set off along
 35 the edge of the field, I started to drift over towards him. I knew

this would puzzle the others, but I kept going – even when I heard Ruth's urgent whisper to me to come back.

I suppose Tommy wasn't used to being disturbed during his rages, because his first response when I came up to him was to
 40 stare at me for a second, then carry on as before. It *was* like he was doing Shakespeare and I'd come up onto the stage in the middle of his performance. Even when I said: 'Tommy, your nice shirt. You'll get it all messed up,' there was no sign of him having heard me.

45 So I reached forward and put a hand on his arm. Afterwards, the others thought he'd meant to do it, but I was pretty sure it was unintentional. His arms were still flailing about, and he wasn't to know I was about to put out my hand. Anyway, as he threw up his arm, he knocked my hand aside and hit the side of my face. It
 50 didn't hurt at all, but I let out a gasp, and so did most of the girls behind me.

That's when at last Tommy seemed to become aware of me, of the others, of himself, of the fact that he was there in that field, behaving the way he had been, and stared at me a bit stupidly.

55 "Tommy," I said, quite sternly. "There's mud all over your shirt."
 "So what?" he mumbled. But even as he said this, he looked down and noticed the brown specks, and only just stopped himself crying out in alarm.

60 Then I saw the surprise register on his face that I should know about his feelings for the polo shirt.

"It's nothing to worry about," I said, before the silence got humiliating for him. "It'll come off. If you can't get it off yourself, just take it to Miss Jody."