CAPITOLO

9

Moments of Being: Virginia Woolf and Modernism

"First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air." — Virginia Woolf, Mrs Dalloway (1925)

OBIETTIVI

1. I can describe Britain after 1918 — the vote for women, Bloomsbury, the General Strike — and the new ideas of mind and time of James, Freud, Bergson and Einstein.
2. I can define Modernism and distinguish stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech.
3. I can analyse the opening of *Mrs Dalloway*, a passage of "Modern Fiction" and the story of Judith Shakespeare, using the literary present.
4. I can recognise and produce the five forms of represented speech and thought, with the right shifts of tense, person and deixis.
5. I can tackle an INVALSI-style reading task, mediate a text for someone who has not read it, and write an interior monologue with a commentary.
6. I can compare Woolf with Pirandello, and link Eliot's Sibyl to Petronius and Big Ben's hours to relativity.

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English 5 · Parte III · The Modernist Revolution · versione 1.0
Capitolo 9: Moments of Being: Virginia Woolf and Modernism · pagine 297–328 del volume completo · estratto per lo studio

On a fine morning in June 1923 a woman of fifty-one walks out of her house in Westminster to buy flowers for a party. Nothing else happens, or almost nothing: she meets an old friend, an aeroplane writes letters in the sky, Big Ben strikes the hours. Yet by the evening the reader has lived through thirty years of her life, the war of a young man she will never meet, and his death. *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) is the novel of a single day, and one of the books that changed what a novel could be.

This chapter follows Virginia Woolf and the movement we call Modernism through the years after the First World War (chapter 7), when women won the vote, psychologists and philosophers drew new maps of the mind, and physicists showed that even time is not what it seems. You will read the first page of *Mrs Dalloway*, Woolf's manifesto for a new fiction, and her story of Shakespeare's imaginary sister; learn the grammar a writer uses to put a mind on the page; practise INVALSI-style reading; and meet a Sibyl in a bottle in Petronius.

9.1 History and Society: Britain after 1918 and the New Ideas of Mind and Time

The Armistice of 11 November 1918 ended the fighting, but not its effects. Almost every family in Britain had lost someone; hundreds of thousands of men came home wounded in body or mind, and the doctors still called their breakdowns "shell shock" (chapter 7). The old certainties of the Victorian and Edwardian age — that progress was steady, that the Empire was secure, that the world could be described from the outside, as a solid and orderly thing — did not survive the trenches intact. In *Mrs Dalloway* Peter Walsh, back from five years in India, feels it in the street: "Those five years—1918 to 1923—had been, he suspected, somehow very important."

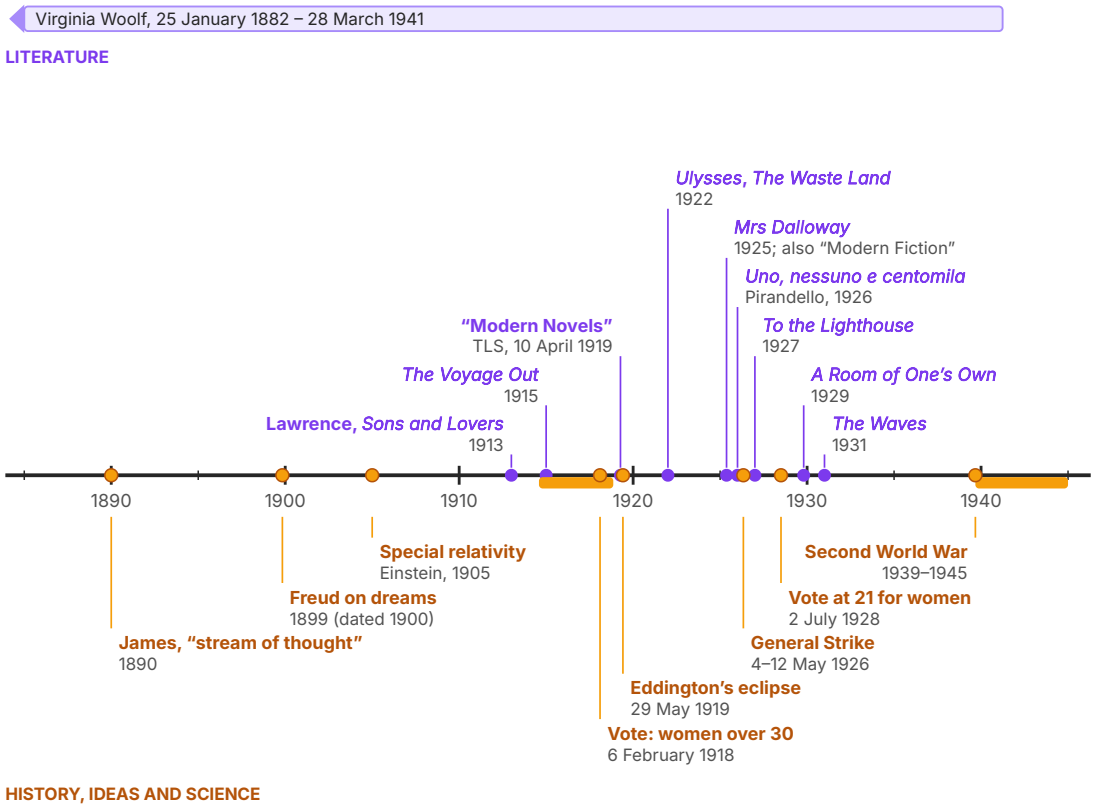


Figura 9.1 Woolf, Modernism and the new ideas, 1885–1945, on a proportional axis (ticks every 5 years, labels every 10): literary events above the axis (violet), history, ideas and science below (amber); the two amber bands are the world wars.

Figura 9.1 sets the chapter's books against the events and the ideas of their time.

9.1.1 Votes for women, 1918 and 1928

In English 2 (Unit 8) you met the suffragettes and their campaign. The war changed the argument: women had kept factories, hospitals and offices running for four years, and refusing them the vote had become hard to defend. The **Representation of the People Act** (6 February 1918) gave the vote to all men over 21 and to women over 30 who met a property qualification — they, or their husbands, had to occupy land or premises of a minimum value — or who voted in a university seat as graduates. Most young working women, many of whom had done war work, were still excluded. A second law of the same year allowed women to stand for Parliament; in 1919 Nancy Astor became the first woman to take her seat in the House of Commons.

Ten years later the **Equal Franchise Act** (2 July 1928) gave women the vote at 21, on the same terms as men. Woolf wrote *A Room of One's Own* the following year: political equality had arri-

ved, and she asked what was still missing — money, time, education and a room with a lock on the door.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ «Nel 1918 tutte le donne britanniche ottennero il diritto di voto.» → ✓ Nel 1918 votarono le donne **sopra i 30 anni** con un requisito di proprietà (o laureate nei collegi universitari); il voto a 21 anni, alle stesse condizioni degli uomini, arrivò solo nel **1928**.

✗ «Il gruppo di Bloomsbury fu una scuola letteraria con un manifesto.» → ✓ Fu una **cerchia di amici** (scrittori, pittori, critici, un economista) senza programma comune; il nome si diffuse più tardi.

9.1.2 Bloomsbury

After the death of their father, the critic Sir Leslie Stephen, in 1904, Virginia Stephen, her sister Vanessa and their brothers Thoby and Adrian moved from respectable Kensington to 46 Gordon Square, in the then unfashionable district of Bloomsbury. From 1905 Thoby's Cambridge friends came on Thursday evenings to talk until late about art, truth and friendship. The **Bloomsbury Group**, as it was later called, included the painters Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, the critics Clive Bell and Roger Fry, the biographer Lytton Strachey, the economist John Maynard Keynes, the novelist E. M. Forster and the writer and publisher Leonard Woolf, whom Virginia married in 1912. They were never a school with a programme, but they shared a dislike of Victorian hypocrisy, an unusual frankness about sex and an equality between the men and the women of the circle that was rare at the time.

In November 1910 Roger Fry organised an exhibition in London, "Manet and the Post-Impressionists", with paintings by Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Matisse. Many visitors and critics were outraged. Years later Woolf turned the moment into a famous provocation: "on or about December 1910 human character changed" ("Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown", 1924). She did not mean it literally; she meant that relations between people, and so the way novels must describe them, had changed.

In 1917 Leonard and Virginia bought a small hand press and founded the **Hogarth Press** in their house at Richmond. It published Woolf's own novels, Katherine Mansfield, the first British book edition of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1923) and, from 1924, the works of Freud in English.

9.1.3 New maps of the mind

At the end of the nineteenth century psychology became a science of its own, and its discoveries passed quickly into literature. The American philosopher and psychologist William James, brother of the novelist Henry James, argued in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) that the mind is not a chain of separate ideas but a continuous flow: "let us call it the stream of thought, of

consciousness, or of subjective life." The metaphor would give novelists the name of a technique (section 9.2).

Sigmund Freud, in Vienna, published *The Interpretation of Dreams* in November 1899 with the date 1900 on the title page. For Freud, much of what we do is moved by an **unconscious** we cannot observe directly; dreams, slips of the tongue and free association are the ways in which it shows itself. The French philosopher Henri Bergson distinguished the time of clocks, measured in equal units, from **durée** (duration), time as we live it, in which an hour of waiting and an hour of happiness are not the same length and past and present flow into each other. You study all three thinkers in Filosofia this year.

9.1.4 New ideas of time

Ordinary time, meanwhile, was becoming more precise and more public. Greenwich Mean Time had been the legal time of Great Britain since 1880, and from 1924 the BBC broadcast the Greenwich time signal, the "pips", into millions of homes. In physics, the opposite happened. In 1905 Albert Einstein's theory of special relativity showed that time is not the same for every observer: two events that are simultaneous for one may not be for another, and a clock that moves relative to you runs slow. His general theory (1915) described gravity as a curvature of space and time and predicted that light passing close to the Sun is bent. On 29 May 1919, during a total eclipse, expeditions organised by Arthur Eddington and Frank Dyson photographed the stars near the darkened Sun; the result announced in London on 6 November 1919 agreed with Einstein, and made him world-famous overnight.

Few novelists understood the mathematics. But the idea that time is relative, that the clock does not tell the whole truth, was in the air — and *Mrs Dalloway* sets Big Ben's public hours against the private time of its characters' minds.

Politics stayed turbulent. In May 1926 the trade unions called a **General Strike** in support of the coal miners, whose wages were being cut; for nine days (4–12 May) transport and heavy industry stopped, volunteers drove buses, and the government printed its own newspaper, the *British Gazette*. The strike ended without victory for the miners.

9.2 Literature: Modernism and the Inner Life

9.2.1 What was Modernism?

Modernism (*il modernismo letterario*) is the name critics give to the experimental movement in literature and the arts of roughly 1910–1940. Modernist writers felt that the forms they had inherited — the omniscient narrator who knows and judges everything, the plot that runs from beginning to end, regular metre and rhyme — could not describe a world changed by war, cities, machines and the new science of the mind. So they experimented: they broke stories into fragments, told them from inside one or several minds, mixed times and voices, and often built

their works on ancient myths. Modernism was international: Joyce wrote about Dublin in Trieste, Zurich and Paris (chapter 8), the Americans T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound worked in London, Proust in Paris, Kafka in Prague, Svevo in Trieste, Pirandello in Rome.

IN SINTESI

Modernism at a glance

- **When:** c. 1910–1940; 1922 (*Ulysses*, *The Waste Land*, Woolf's *Jacob's Room*) is often called its "marvellous year".
- **Against:** the Victorian and Edwardian novel of plot, social detail and moral commentary.
- **Techniques:** fragmentation; several points of view; stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech; time out of order; open endings; myth as a hidden structure.
- **Themes:** the mind and memory; time; the modern city; the war and its wounds; identity in pieces.
- **Key works in English:** Joyce, *Ulysses* (1922); Eliot, *The Waste Land* (1922); Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927).

The most famous Modernist poem in English is T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), 434 lines in five sections. It has no single speaker and no story: it is a collage of voices — a fortune-teller, a London typist, a pub conversation about a demobilised soldier, a drowned sailor — and of fragments quoted from Dante, Shakespeare, the Bible, Ovid and the Sanskrit Upanishads, set against images of a dry, sterile land and of London after the war. Eliot added notes that sent readers to the myths of the Grail and of fertility rites. His poem is still in copyright, so this book describes it rather than quoting it — but you will meet its Latin and Greek epigraph, which comes from Petronius, in section 9.6.

9.2.2 Virginia Woolf (1882–1941)

Adeline Virginia Stephen was born in London on 25 January 1882, into a family of writers and scholars. She was not sent to school, and while her brothers went to Cambridge she was educated at home — in her father's library, with private lessons and some classes for women at King's College London, among them lessons in Greek. Her mother died in 1895, her father in 1904, and both losses were followed by severe breakdowns; mental illness would return at intervals throughout her life. After her move to Bloomsbury she wrote reviews for *The Times Literary Supplement* and, from 1912, lived with Leonard Woolf in London and in Sussex.

Her first two novels, *The Voyage Out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1919), are still fairly traditional. With *Jacob's Room* (1922) she found her own way: a young man's life seen only through the impressions of the people around him. Then came *Mrs Dalloway* (1925); *To the Lighthouse* (1927), in which ten years and three deaths pass in the short middle section "Time Passes", between

two days in a summer house; the fantastic biography *Orlando* (1928), whose hero lives for more than three centuries and becomes a woman; and *The Waves* (1931), made almost entirely of the soliloquies of six friends. Her essays were collected in *The Common Reader* (1925, 1932). In March 1941, afraid that her illness was returning and that she would not recover, she drowned herself in the River Ouse near her house at Rodmell, in Sussex.

9.2.3 "Look within": Woolf the critic

Woolf explained what she wanted from fiction in two essays. In "Modern Novels" (1919), revised as "Modern Fiction" for *The Common Reader* (1925), she called the most successful Edwardian novelists, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy, "materialists": they described houses, incomes and clothes with great care and missed what she called life itself. The novelist should instead look inside an ordinary mind on an ordinary day (you will read the passage as T2). In "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" (1924) she imagined an old woman in a railway carriage and asked how a novelist could ever capture her: not by listing her rent and her furniture, but by following her character.

A Room of One's Own (1929) grew out of two lectures she gave to the women students of Newnham and Girton, at Cambridge, in October 1928. Its argument is famous: "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction". Woolf asks why there were so few women writers before the nineteenth century, and answers with history and with a story, the life of Shakespeare's imaginary sister (T3).

9.2.4 *Mrs Dalloway* (1925)

The novel follows one Wednesday in the middle of June 1923, from the morning to the end of Clarissa Dalloway's party. Clarissa, the wife of a Conservative Member of Parliament, is in her early fifties and recovering from an illness. As she walks through London (Figura 9.2) she remembers her youth at Bourton, her country home: her friend Sally Seton, and Peter Walsh, whom she refused to marry. Peter, back from India, visits her that morning. In a second plot, Septimus Warren Smith, a young clerk who volunteered in 1914 and came home with his mind broken by the war, spends the day in Regent's Park with his Italian wife, Rezia, and is taken to a fashionable doctor, Sir William Bradshaw. In the evening, as the doctors come to take him away, Septimus throws himself from a window. Clarissa and Septimus never meet; she hears of his death at her party, and in his act she recognises something of her own.

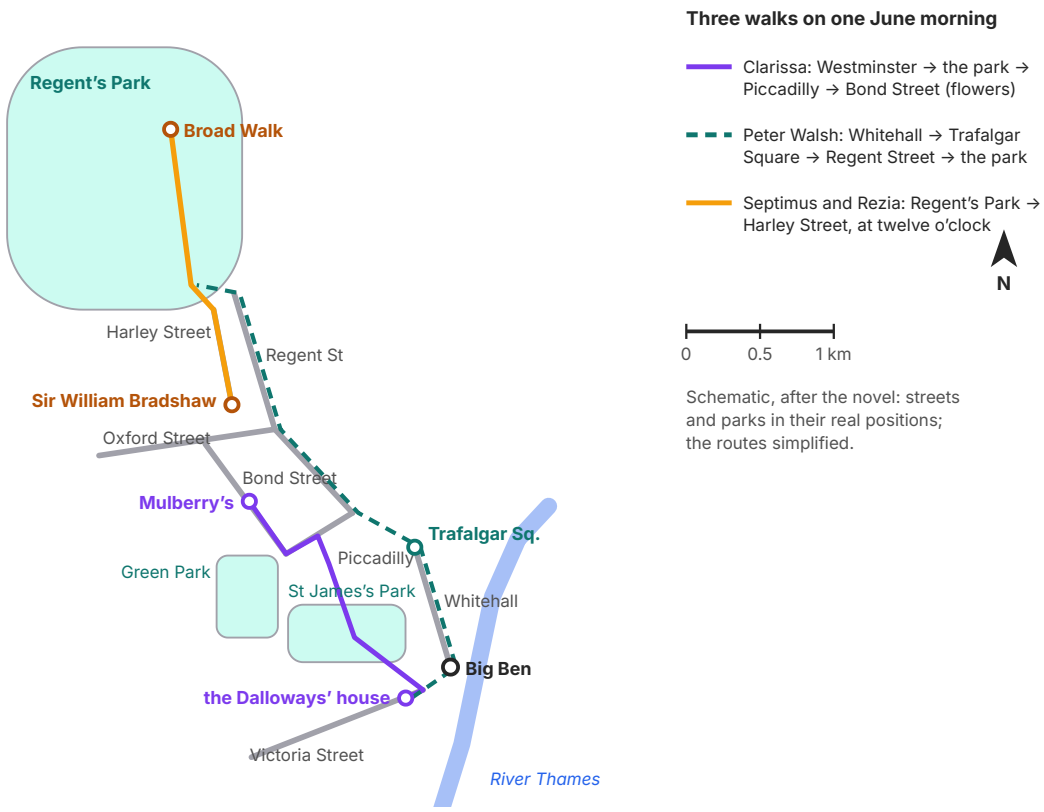


Figura 9.2 The walks of the novel's first morning, schematic, after the novel: Clarissa from Westminster to Bond Street (violet), Peter Walsh from the Dalloways' house to Regent's Park (teal, dashed), Septimus and Rezia from Regent's Park to Harley Street (amber). Parks, streets and the Thames are placed from their real coordinates; the routes are simplified.

There are no chapters. Woolf moves from one mind to another — Clarissa, Peter, Septimus, Rezia, Clarissa's daughter Elizabeth, strangers in the street — often linked by something they all see or hear: a car with a mysterious passenger, an aeroplane writing an advertisement in smoke, and above all the strokes of Big Ben, the great bell in the clock tower at Westminster. The clock gives the novel its public time, hour by hour; inside the characters, time runs freely back thirty years and returns in a sentence (Figura 9.3). Woolf herself said that Septimus was meant as Clarissa's double: he is the sane world's opposite, showing what the hostess's brightness keeps out.

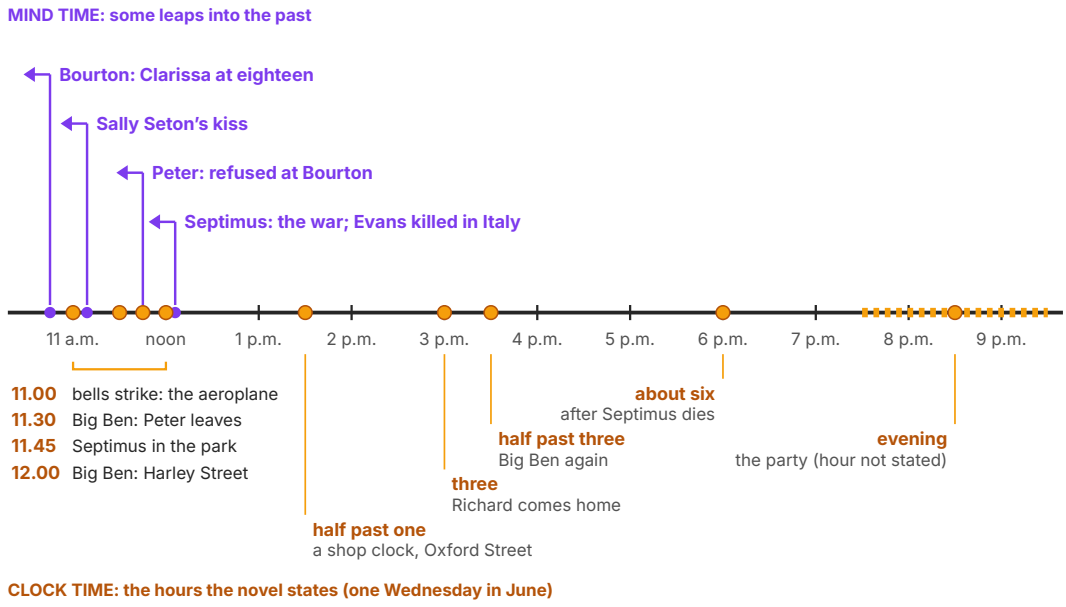


Figura 9.3 Clock time and mind time in *Mrs Dalloway*: hours that the novel states (below the axis) and some of the leaps into the past that interrupt them (above). The positions of the memories are approximate; Septimus dies shortly before the clock that Rezia hears striking six.

APPROFONDIMENTO

"The Hours". While she was writing it, Woolf called the novel *The Hours*; she changed the title only late. In 1998 the American novelist Michael Cunningham borrowed the abandoned title for a novel of his own, *The Hours*, which interweaves one day in the life of Woolf in 1923, one day of a reader of *Mrs Dalloway* in Los Angeles in 1949 and one day of a modern "Mrs Dalloway" in New York at the end of the century. It won the Pulitzer Prize and was filmed in 2002. A retelling of this kind is the subject of chapter 14.

9.2.5 Stream of consciousness and interior monologue

In 1918, reviewing the novels of Dorothy Richardson, the writer May Sinclair borrowed William James's metaphor: Richardson's heroine is a *stream of consciousness*. The term stuck. In literary study **stream of consciousness** (*flusso di coscienza*) is the general name for fiction that tries to reproduce the continuous flow of a character's thoughts, feelings, memories and perceptions as they happen, without the order a narrator would impose. It is a way of writing, not a single grammatical form, and writers achieve it with different tools.

The most radical tool is **interior monologue** (*monologo interiore*): the character's thoughts given directly, in the first person and the present tense, as if we overheard the mind itself, with no narrator introducing them and often with little punctuation or syntax. Joyce admired the

French writer Édouard Dujardin, whose novel *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (1887) is told in this way, and used it in *Ulysses*, above all in Molly Bloom's final monologue (chapter 8). Woolf rarely writes pure interior monologue. Her main tool is free indirect speech (English 4, chapter 14): the narrator keeps the third person and the past tense, but the words, questions and exclamations are the character's. The result is a voice that slides in and out of minds and can pass from one character to the next within a paragraph.

> **ERRORE FREQUENTE**
>
> ✗ «*Stream of consciousness* e monologo interiore sono la stessa cosa.» → ✓ Il **flusso di coscienza** è il fine e il nome generale della tecnica; il **monologo interiore** (prima persona, presente, nessun narratore) è uno dei modi per ottenerlo, come il discorso indiretto libero.
>
> ✗ «*Mrs Dalloway* è scritto tutto in monologo interiore.» → ✓ Woolf usa soprattutto il **discorso indiretto libero**: terza persona e passato, ma con le parole e il ritmo del pensiero del personaggio.

Two other writers of these years belong in the picture. D. H. Lawrence explored the inner and sexual life of a miner's son in *Sons and Lovers* (1913); Katherine Mansfield, born in New Zealand in 1888 and dead in 1923, made the short story a form of the "moment", as in *The Garden Party* (1922). Woolf, who had her own name for the instants in which life is felt most intensely — "moments of being", a phrase from a memoir she wrote in 1939–40 — envied Mansfield's writing, and said so.

9.3 Texts: A Morning, a Mind, a Sister

The three texts show Woolf as novelist, critic and storyteller of history: the first page of *Mrs Dalloway*, the passage of "Modern Fiction" that explains it, and the imaginary life of Judith Shakespeare.

9.3.1 T1 · Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925): the opening

Context. The novel's first page. Clarissa is about to leave her house in Westminster; her maid Lucy is busy, because the doors are to be removed for the party and the caterers, Rumpelmayer's men, are coming. The freshness of the June morning carries her back to the summers of her youth at Bourton.

Tabella 9.1 T1 — *Mrs Dalloway*, opening (Harcourt, Brace, 1925, the first American edition; Project Gutenberg eBook #71865). The words agree with the British text first published by the Hogarth Press; a few commas differ. The third paragraph is cut after the second "was that it?".

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.
For Lucy had her work cut out for her. The doors would be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer's men were coming. And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning—fresh as if issued to children on a beach.
What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her, when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen; looking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, "Musing among the vegetables?"—was that it?—"I prefer men to cauliflowers"—was that it? [...]

Glosses. *had her work cut out for her*: had a lot to do · *hinges*: the metal joints on which a door turns · *lark*: a bit of fun (also a bird that sings at dawn) · *plunge*: a dive into water · *French windows*: glass doors opening onto a garden · *rooks*: large black birds · *musing*: thinking dreamily.

Analysis

From report to mind. The first sentence is indirect speech: a narrator tells us what Mrs Dalloway *said*. By the second paragraph the narrator has almost disappeared. *For Lucy had her work cut out for her* is Clarissa's reasoning, not a fact the narrator needs to explain; *what a morning* is her exclamation, with the reporting clause *thought Clarissa Dalloway* pushed into the middle. From now on we are inside her head, in free indirect speech.

Association, not plot. The third paragraph is driven by sound and sensation: the squeak of the hinges she *could hear now* opens a door in time, and she is at Bourton, aged eighteen. Past tense (*had burst open*) and present deictic (*now*) sit side by side: the memory is lived again at this moment. One sentence holds the air, the waves, the rooks and Peter Walsh's voice, joined by semicolons rather than by logic.

Memory is uncertain. *Musing among the vegetables?—was that it?* Clarissa is not sure of Peter's words; she corrects herself, and the dashes show the mind hesitating. The trivial detail, a joke about cauliflowers, has outlived, as Clarissa reflects a few lines later, "millions of things". The sense that *something awful was about to happen* in the girl at the window foreshadows the death that will enter her party at the end of the day.

- What do we learn about Clarissa's plans and her household from the first two paragraphs? What do we not learn that a Victorian novel would tell us at once?
- Find the reporting clause in the second paragraph. Why is it placed in the middle of the sentence and not at the beginning?

- Which sense — sight, hearing, touch — carries Clarissa from Westminster to Bourton? Quote the words.
- List the images of water and air in the third paragraph. What feeling do they give the memory?
- Why does Woolf write *was that it?* twice? What does it suggest about memory?
- Colloquio link: compare the opening of *Mrs Dalloway* with the opening of a novel you know in Italian (Manzoni, Verga, Svevo). Who speaks first, the narrator or the character?

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Writing a PEE paragraph on T1 (Point, Evidence, Explanation — English 3).

- **Point.** Woolf moves from the narrator's report to the character's mind within three sentences.
- **Evidence.** The novel opens in indirect speech, *Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself*, but soon gives us Clarissa's own exclamation, *what a morning—fresh as if issued to children on a beach*.
- **Explanation.** The reporting clause *thought Clarissa Dalloway* is placed after the exclamation has begun, so the reader hears the thought before being told whose it is; the simile of children on a beach already points to the past and to youth, the memory of Bourton that follows.

Model sentence: *In the space of a page Woolf dissolves the narrator into Clarissa's consciousness, so that a walk to the florist becomes a journey thirty years back in time.* Note the literary present (chapter 1): *Woolf moves, the novel opens*.

9.3.2 T2 · Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction" (1925): "an ordinary mind on an ordinary day"

Context. Woolf has just complained that the materialist novelist is a slave to a tyrant who demands plot, comedy, tragedy and love interest. Now she asks what life is really like when we look inside a mind.

Tabella 9.2 T2 — "Modern Fiction", from *The Common Reader* (Harcourt, Brace, 1925; Project Gutenberg eBook #64457). The essay first appeared as "Modern Novels" in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 10 April 1919.

> Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions—trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old; the moment of importance came not here but there; so that if a writer were a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style, and perhaps not a single button sewn on as the Bond Street tailors would have it. Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end.

Glosses. *a myriad*: countless · *evanescent*: quickly fading · *engraved*: cut into a hard surface · *incessant*: never stopping · *the accent falls differently from of old*: the stress falls in a different place than in the past · *button sewn on*: (here) a detail added to fit the fashion · *gig lamps*: the two lamps on either side of a gig, a light horse-drawn carriage · *luminous halo*: a circle of light.

Analysis

An argument made of images. Woolf does not define life; she shows it. Impressions fall like a *shower of innumerable atoms*, some *trivial*, some *engraved with the sharpness of steel*; the moment that matters comes *not here but there*, where convention would not put it. The essay asks the reader to examine *an ordinary mind on an ordinary day* — exactly what *Mrs Dalloway* will do.

Freedom and slavery. The long central sentence is built on three *if*-clauses (*if a writer were a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose…*) and a list of what would disappear: *no plot, no comedy, no tragedy*. The rhythm itself enacts the escape from rules.

The two images of life. *Gig lamps symmetrically arranged* are two lights placed in a row, at equal distances, like the chapters of a well-made plot; the *luminous halo* and the *semi-transparent envelope* surround us continuously, without edges, *from the beginning of consciousness to the end*. A few lines later Woolf asks writers to "record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall".

- What, according to Woolf, does the mind receive "on an ordinary day"? Find four adjectives that describe it.
- Explain in your own words the difference between "gig lamps symmetrically arranged" and "a luminous halo".
- Which conventions of the novel would disappear if the writer "were a free man and not a slave"?
- Find one place in T1 where Woolf follows the programme of T2.
- Is Woolf's idea of the mind closer to William James's or to Freud's (section 9.1)? Give a reason.

9.3.3 T3 · Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929), ch. 3: Judith Shakespeare

Context. The narrator has been looking for facts about the lives of ordinary women in Elizabethan England and has found almost none. So she invents one: what would have happened if Shakespeare had had a sister as gifted as he was?

Tabella 9.3 T3 — *A Room of One's Own*, ch. 3 (London, Hogarth Press, 1929, first edition, from the scan at the Internet Archive; checked against Project Gutenberg Australia eBook 0200791h). Between the two paragraphs Woolf tells Shakespeare's own career: school, marriage, London, the theatre.

Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say. […]
Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister, let us suppose, remained at home. She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he was. But she was not sent to school. She had no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil. She picked up a book now and then, one of her brother's perhaps, and read a few pages. But then her parents came in and told her to mend the stockings or mind the stew and not moon about with books and papers.

Glosses. *since facts are so hard to come by*: since facts are so difficult to find · *agog*: eager, excited · *let alone*: and certainly not · *mend the stockings*: repair the socks · *mind the stew*: watch the food cooking · *moon about*: wander dreamily, doing nothing useful.

Analysis

A thought experiment. *Let me imagine*, *let us say*, *let us suppose*: Woolf openly invents. Since history has kept no records of women like Judith, fiction is the only way to show what history left out. The method is the same as a scientist's: change one variable — the sex of the child — and keep everything else equal.

Parallel lives. The sentences about Judith repeat, point by point, what her brother had: *as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog… as he was*; *not sent to school*; no *grammar and logic*, no *Horace and Virgil*. The Latin authors are the sign of an education reserved for boys. The tone is light, almost comic (*mind the stew*), and in this passage the parents are not villains: the injustice is custom rather than cruelty (later, when Judith refuses to marry, her father beats her).

The ending. Later in the chapter Judith runs away to London, is laughed at by the theatre managers, and kills herself; she lies buried, Woolf writes, where the buses now stop outside the Elephant and Castle, a busy crossroads in south London. At the end of the book Woolf brings her back: she lives on in the women who write.

- What does Woolf's narrator want to imagine, and why does she need to imagine it?
- Find three things Judith shares with her brother and three things she is denied.
- Why do you think Woolf names Horace and Virgil? What did a classical education mean in the sixteenth century — and what does it mean for you at the liceo classico?

- How does Woolf make the parents sympathetic? Why is this more effective than making them cruel?
- Compare Judith with Jane Eyre (chapter 3): two women who want more than their world offers. How do the texts differ in form?

9.4 Language: Represented Speech and Thought

A novel can present what a character says or thinks in several ways, and the choice decides how close we are to the character's mind. You know direct and indirect (reported) speech from English 1–3 and free indirect speech from English 4, chapter 14. Modernist fiction adds two more forms and moves freely between all five (Figura 9.4).

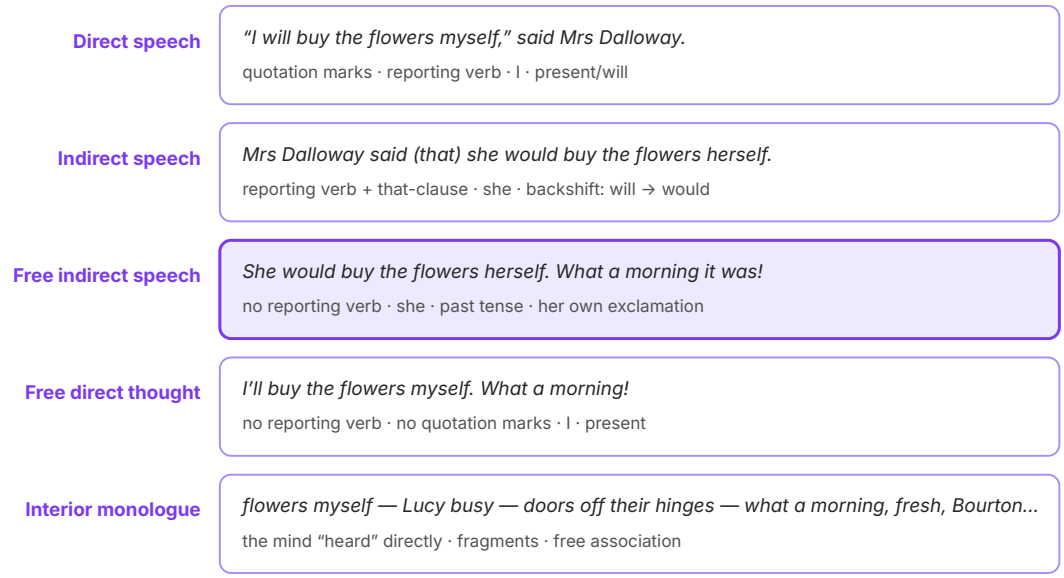


Figura 9.4 Represented speech and thought, from the form most controlled by the narrator (top) to the one closest to the mind (bottom); violet marks free indirect speech, Woolf's main tool. The second example adapts the novel's first sentence; the others are invented on its model.

9.4.1 Five forms

Tabella 9.4 Represented speech and thought: forms and signals

Form	Signals	Example
direct speech / thought	reporting verb (*said, thought*); quotation marks; the speaker's own tense and person	*"I'll go to Bond Street," she thought.*
indirect speech / thought	reporting verb + *that*; backshift of tense; pronouns and deictics adapted to the narrator	*She thought that she would go to Bond Street that morning.*
free indirect speech	no reporting verb (or one in parenthesis); third person and past tense, but the character's questions, exclamations, words and deictics	*She would go to Bond Street. What a morning it was, now!*
free direct thought	no reporting verb and no quotation marks; first person and present tense	*I'll go to Bond Street. What a morning!*
interior monologue	first person and present, but fragmented: free association, little syntax or punctuation	*Bond Street — flowers — Lucy has her work cut out — what a morning, Bourton, eighteen…*

Free direct thought (*pensiero diretto libero*) is direct speech without its frame: the words of the mind, in the first person and present tense, with no quotation marks and no *she thought*. It differs from interior monologue mainly in degree: a free direct sentence is still grammatical and complete, while an interior monologue follows the jumps of association.

9.4.2 What shifts: tense, person and deixis

Words like *now, here, today, tomorrow, this, these* are **deictics** (*deittici*): their meaning depends on the speaker's place and time. In indirect speech they move to the narrator's point of view (*now → then, today → that day, here → there, these → those*) together with the backshift of tense (English 2 and 3). Free indirect speech is the mixed form: it shifts tense and person like indirect speech, but it keeps the character's deictics and exclamations like direct speech. That is why Woolf can write that Clarissa *could hear now* the squeak of a door thirty years old.

Tabella 9.5 One thought in three forms: what shifts and what stays

	Direct	Indirect	Free indirect
tense	*will be*	*would be*	*would be*
person	*I*	*she*	*she*
time deictic	*now, tomorrow*	*then, the next day*	*now, tomorrow*
place deictic	*here*	*there*	*here*
questions, exclamations	kept: *Where is he?*	reported: *she wondered where he was*	kept: *Where was he?*
punctuation	quotation marks	none; a *that*-clause	none; often dashes, ? and !

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

One sentence of *Mrs Dalloway*, four more ways. Woolf writes, in free indirect speech: *He would be back from India one of these days, June or July, she forgot which.*

- **Direct thought:** "*He'll be back from India one of these days, June or July — I forget which,*" *she thought.* (present, *I*, quotation marks)
- **Indirect thought:** *She thought that Peter would be back from India one of those days, in June or July, but she could not remember which.* (*these* → *those*; the name replaces *he* for clarity; the narrator explains)
- **Free direct thought:** *He'll be back from India one of these days. June or July? I forget which.*
- **Interior monologue:** *Peter — India — back one of these days — June — July — which — his letters so dull…*

Lesson: only indirect speech moves the deictic (*these* → *those*) and needs a reporting verb; free indirect speech is Woolf's choice because it keeps Clarissa's *these days* and her vagueness while the narrator keeps the third person.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Discorso diretto, indiretto, indiretto libero, diretto libero, monologo interiore. Il **discorso indiretto libero** ha la persona e il tempo del discorso indiretto (*she would*, "lei sarebbe…") ma conserva le esclamazioni, le domande e i deittici del personaggio (*now, these days*): nessun verbo *said / thought* lo introduce. Il **pensiero diretto libero** è il discorso diretto senza virgolette e senza verbo introduttivo (prima persona, presente); il **monologo interiore** lo spinge fino alla libera associazione, con sintassi spezzata.

Confronto con l'italiano. L'indiretto libero vi è familiare: è la voce del coro paesano in Verga (chapter 1) e la tecnica di molte pagine di Pirandello. Il monologo interiore puro si trova raramente in italiano prima del Novecento; *La coscienza di Zeno* (chapter 8) è invece un'autobiografia in prima persona, con un narratore che ricorda e commenta: non è monologo interiore.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *She thought that what a morning it was.* → ✓ *She thought what a lovely morning it was.* / FIS: *What a morning it was!* L'esclamazione non entra in una *that*-clause.

✗ (indiretto) *She said that she would buy the flowers tomorrow.* se il discorso è riferito più tardi, in un racconto al passato → ✓ *…the next day.* Nell'**indiretto** i deittici si spostano; nell'**indiretto libero** no: *Tomorrow she would buy the flowers.*

✗ (indiretto libero) *She will buy the flowers herself, she thinks.* in un racconto al passato → ✓ *She would buy the flowers herself.* L'indiretto libero segue il tempo della narrazione.

9.5 Skills: Reading for INVALSI, Mediating, Writing a Mind

9.5.1 Vocabulary: time, memory and the mind

Tabella 9.6 Time, memory and the mind: key words

Word	Meaning	Example
consciousness (n.)	the state of being aware of yourself and the world; the mind as it experiences	*Woolf follows the consciousness of several characters.*
memory (n.)	the ability to remember; something remembered	*A squeaking door brings back a memory of Bourton.*
perception (n.)	the way you notice and understand something through the senses	*The novel is built on small perceptions.*
moment (n.)	a very short period of time; an important point in time	*Clarissa loves "this moment of June".*
recollect (v.)	(formal) to remember, often with effort	*She could not recollect his exact words.*
flow (n., v.)	continuous movement, like water	*Thoughts flow from the present to the past.*
fragment (n.)	a small broken piece	*Modernist texts are made of fragments.*
intimate (adj.)	very private and personal; very close	*Interior monologue is the most intimate form of narration.*
inner (adj.)	inside; private, not shown to others	*Septimus's inner world is full of voices.*
fleeting (adj.)	lasting a very short time	*Woolf records fleeting impressions.*

Collocations with *time*

Time forms many fixed expressions. Learn them as units: the verb or preposition cannot be changed.

Tabella 9.7 Collocations and fixed expressions with *time*

Expression	Meaning	Example
kill time	do something unimportant while you wait	*Peter kills time in Regent's Park.*
pass the time	make time go by pleasantly	*Rezia trims hats to pass the time.*
in no time	very quickly	*The morning was over in no time.*
time flies	time passes quickly	*Time flies when you are revising — or so they say.*
at the time	then, at that moment in the past	*At the time, nobody understood shell shock.*
for the time being	for now, temporarily	*For the time being, Giulia is undecided about university.*
take your time	do not hurry	*Take your time with the INVALSI questions.*
on time / in time	punctually / early enough	*The guests arrive on time; Peter arrives just in time to see her.*

9.5.2 Reading: One Day in Turin

Before you read. Prof.ssa Rossi asked the class to write one hour of an ordinary day in the manner of Woolf, for the Link Reading Club, which is reading *Mrs Dalloway* this month. Giulia posted hers with a short note. Read it once for the story, then a second time for the techniques.

Tabella 9.8 Reading text — Giulia's post on the Link Reading Club blog

One Day in Turin (after Virginia Woolf)
A note before you read: everything here happened, more or less, last Thursday between four and five. The rest is Woolf's fault. — G.
A Giulia said she would walk home by the river. Marta had a bus to catch; Marta always had a bus to catch, and always missed it, and always ran, her red glasses sliding down her nose, her folder open, papers escaping like pigeons in Piazza Castello. And then, thought Giulia, what an afternoon — cold and blue, the hill across the river standing at the end of Via Po as if somebody had painted it there that morning for the tourists.
B Four o'clock. A bell somewhere behind the arcades counted the hours, slowly, as if it too were tired of school. Four hours of simulation: the INVALSI reading on a screen, the listening in her headphones, the little clock in the corner of the window that went on counting backwards. Thirty seconds left. Twenty. Had she ticked B or C? B. Surely B. It was over now, anyway; you could not go back and change an answer that the computer had already swallowed.
C The river was high. It always rose after a week of rain, her father said, who had been teaching geography for twenty-five years and could not see water without explaining it. Rain in the hills, every stream full. She stopped on the bridge. Below, a single rower cut a line through the grey water, and the line closed behind him as if he had never been there. That was what memory was like — or was it? A line on the water. She had been eight,

perhaps nine, on this same bridge with Marco, who had dropped his ice cream into the Po and cried, and now Marco had a job in Milan and a flat with a balcony and sent photographs of his coffee machine.

D University. Everyone asked. Elena had decided at fourteen: medicine, Milan, no discussion. Marta would build bridges, or so she said, if she ever found the right bus. And Giulia? Classics, said the part of her that read Homer in the evenings for pleasure, which nobody believed. Languages, said the other part, the one that had made friends in Bristol and Galway and Edinburgh and dreamed in English now, sometimes, which was strange — how strange it was! — to dream in a language you had once learnt from a book with a cartoon dog on the cover.

E Five o'clock. The bell again, or another one. The lights came on along the arcades, one after another, not all at once, as if the city were waking up instead of going to sleep. Somewhere Sam was in a seminar in Manchester, talking about Clarissa's party; somewhere Aoife was counting fish; somewhere Callum was measuring a glacier, probably, or complaining about the rain. And she was here, on a bridge, nineteen, with a bag full of photocopies and no idea what she would be doing in October. It did not matter. Not now. Now there was the river, and the mountains turning pink, and the smell of roasted chestnuts from the stall in Piazza Vittorio; and that, she thought, crossing the road, was enough for one afternoon.

After reading. The INVALSI-style task on this text is in the exercises (Towards the Exam). Before you do it, find in the text: a sentence of indirect speech that becomes free indirect speech; a reporting clause in the middle of a sentence; two clock times; and two leaps into the past.

LEARNING TO LEARN

INVALSI reading: skim, scan, read the distractors, watch the clock. The grade-13 English tests are taken on a computer in the spring and report whether you have reached B1 or B2; the reading part uses formats such as multiple choice, matching and short answers.

- **Skim first (1–2 minutes).** Read the title, the first and last lines of each paragraph: what is the text about, and how is it organised?
- **Read the questions before the text.** Underline the key words; questions usually follow the order of the text.
- **Scan for the answer.** Look for the place, then read that part slowly. The text will almost never repeat the words of the question: look for a *paraphrase*.
- **Read the distractors.** A **distractor** is a wrong option, often true in itself but not what the text says, or what the text says about someone else. Prove your answer with a phrase from the text.
- **Short answers:** answer only what is asked, within the word limit; copying a whole sentence is not an answer.
- **Time:** do not stay on one item; mark it, go on, and come back at the end.

Transfer. It is the method you use with an unseen passage in Latin or Greek: first the general sense (*il senso generale*), then the structure, then the words — and the Italian reading tests work the same way. **Colloquio link:** Woolf's "moments" and Bergson's *durée* (Filosofia); clock time and relativity (Fisica).

9.5.3 Speaking: mediation — summarising a text for someone who has not read it

Mediation means passing on the meaning of a text to someone who cannot read it, in a form that is useful to them: you choose what matters, explain what is difficult and leave out the rest. You mediate in English when you summarise an English text for a friend, and across languages when you explain an Italian text to someone who speaks only English. In the colloquio you do it every time you present a text the commission has not just read.

Tabella 9.9 Useful language — mediating a text

Function	Phrases
introducing the text	*It's a passage from… · It comes from an essay / a novel written in… · Basically, it's about…*
giving the main point	*The key idea is that… · What the writer is really saying is… · In a nutshell…*
simplifying	*In other words… · To put it simply… · What that means is…*
explaining a difficult word or reference	*There's a word, …, which means roughly… · You need to know that… · This refers to…*
selecting	*I'll skip the details about… · The rest is mainly examples. · The important part for you is…*
checking understanding	*Does that make sense? · Is that clear so far? · Do you want me to go over… again?*

- **Task 1 (in pairs, 2 minutes each).** Student A has read T2; Student B has not. A summarises the passage for B in no more than six sentences, explaining "gig lamps"; B asks two questions. Then change roles with T3.
- **Task 2 (from Italian into English).** Callum, who does not read Italian, asks Giulia what Pirandello's novel is about. Using the short Italian text below, explain it to him in English in about one minute. Do not translate word for word: select and explain. «*In* Uno, nessuno e centomila *Vitangelo Moscarda scopre, per un'osservazione della moglie sul suo naso, di non conoscere l'immagine che gli altri hanno di lui. Ogni persona vede un Moscarda diverso: lui è dunque centomila, e per questo nessuno. Il romanzo segue i suoi tentativi sempre più strani di distruggere queste immagini, fino a rinunciare al nome e alle ricchezze.*»

9.5.4 Writing: an interior monologue with a commentary

An interior monologue presents a character's mind from inside: first person, present tense, thoughts in the order in which they come. A good one is not chaos. It has a situation (a place, a moment), a trigger that sets the mind moving, an associative path through memories and wor-

ries, and a return to the present. It is followed, in this task, by a short commentary in which you name the techniques you used — as you would in an exam answer.

Tabella 9.10 Model text — an interior monologue (207 words) and its commentary (78 words), by Elena Conti

The 8.12
Late again. No — the board says four minutes, four, so not late, just slow, the whole city slow this morning, grey as a pencil drawing. Biology first hour. The Krebs cycle. Citrate, isocitrate, then — what comes after isocitrate? Ketoglutarate, alpha. Yes. Mum's kitchen smells of oranges in winter, she squeezes them every morning as if vitamins could pass an exam. Medicine. Six years, then more. Is that what I want or what I said at fourteen and never stopped saying? Too late to ask that now. Or is it?
A child on the platform with a red balloon. Where do you even buy a balloon at eight in the morning? Nonna bought me one at the Gran Balôn, red, and I let it go on purpose to see where it went, and it went over the roofs, smaller, smaller, a dot, nothing, and I cried, not because I lost it but because I chose to. Funny what stays. Not the Krebs cycle, obviously. The useless things stay: the colour, the roofs, Nonna's hand smelling of coffee, her voice saying *pazienza*.
Lights at the corner. The bus, at last. Of course it's full. Marta's not on it — Marta's never on it. Succinate, fumarate, malate. Breathe. Doors closing. In.
Commentary. The monologue uses the first person and present tense throughout, with no narrator. A trigger (the delayed bus) starts a chain of associations: the biology test, the smell of oranges, the choice of university. A second trigger, the balloon, opens a childhood memory, joined by free association rather than logic. Short fragments, questions and dashes imitate the rhythm of thought, and the repeated biology terms, like Big Ben in *Mrs Dalloway*, bring the mind back to the present.

Analysis. The model has a clear frame (waiting for a bus, getting on it), two triggers and a return to the present in the last line. Fragments (*Biology first hour.*), self-corrections (*Late again. No —*), questions and lists imitate thought; one memory is told in a long, breathless sentence that slows down at the end (*a dot, nothing*). The commentary uses the terms of this chapter and the literary present.

Checklist. ✓ a situation and a moment · ✓ first person, present tense, no *she thought* · ✓ at least one trigger and one memory · ✓ fragments, questions, dashes — but readable · ✓ a return to the present · ✓ a commentary of about 80 words naming at least three techniques.

Task. Write an interior monologue (200–250 words) of a character at a precise moment: a student waiting to be called for the colloquio, a soldier writing home in 1917, Rezia alone in Regent's Park, or a character of your choice. Then add a commentary of about 80 words on the techniques you used.

9.6 Connections: Pirandello's Selves, the Sibyl in the Bottle, Einstein's Clocks

9.6.1 Woolf and Pirandello: the self in pieces

Luigi Pirandello (1867–1936; Nobel Prize 1934) was Woolf's contemporary in his questioning of the single, stable self. In *Il fu Mattia Pascal* (1904) a man who is believed drowned takes a new name and a new life, only to discover that without an official identity he cannot really live at all, and returns to become "the late Mattia Pascal". In *Uno, nessuno e centomila* (1926) Vitangelo Moscarda learns from his wife that his nose leans to the right — a detail he had never noticed — and from that trifle draws a terrible conclusion:

> *Se per gli altri non ero quel che finora avevo creduto d'essere per me, chi ero io?*
>
> — Luigi Pirandello, *Uno, nessuno e centomila* (1926), Libro primo, § 4 (text of the Mondadori edition of 1936, as transcribed on Wikisource)

"If for others I was not what I had until now believed I was for myself, who was I?" (translation by the editors). Woolf and Pirandello reach the same crisis by different roads. Woolf divides a self in time: Clarissa at eighteen and at fifty-one, the public hostess and the woman who thinks of death, the self she shows to Peter and the one she keeps for herself. Pirandello divides a self among other people: Moscarda is one for himself, a hundred thousand for others, and therefore no one. Woolf's tone is lyrical, Pirandello's ironic and argumentative; both reject the solid character of the nineteenth-century novel. A further thread links *Mrs Dalloway* to Italy: Rezia comes from Milan, where she married Septimus; his friend Evans was killed in Italy just before the Armistice; and among the books Septimus reads is Dante.

COLLEGAMENTI

Classico: the Sibyl in the bottle — Petronius, *Satyricon* 48.8. At the dinner of Trimalchio, the vulgar and immensely rich freedman of Petronius' novel (Neronian age; Petronius is usually identified with the "arbiter of elegance" of Tacitus, *Annals* XVI.18), the host boasts of his culture and gets his myths hopelessly mixed. Then he says:

Tabella 9.11 Petronius, *Satyricon* 48.8: Latin with Trimalchio's words in Greek. Text of M. Heseltine (1913) in the Perseus Digital Library, checked against the Latin Library. Translation by the editors.

Original	English (translation by the editors)
Nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego ipse oculis meis vidi in ampulla pendere, et cum illi pueri dicerent: «Σίβυλλα, τί θέλεις;» *respondebat illa:* «ἀποθανεῖν θέλω.» (*Sibylla, ti theleis? … apothanein thelō*)	"For I myself saw the Sibyl at Cumae with my own eyes, hanging in a jar, and when the boys asked her, 'Sibyl, what do you want?', she answered, 'I want to die.'"

The Sibyl of Cumae, in the myth Ovid tells in *Metamorphoses* XIV (recalled from your Latin of earlier years), asked Apollo for as many years of life as the grains of dust in her hand, but forgot to ask for youth: she shrank with age until only her voice was left. T. S. Eliot placed exactly this sentence, in Latin and Greek, as the epigraph of *The Waste Land* — a documented use of Petronius: a modern world that has life without renewal, and longs for an end. You may extend the comparison, as an interpretation of your own, to the hours that Big Ben strikes over Clarissa's London.

Woolf herself had learnt Greek, and in "On Not Knowing Greek" (*The Common Reader*, 1925) she asks why readers who can never hear it as the Greeks did still love it: "All the more strange, then, is it that we should wish to know Greek, try to know Greek, feel for ever drawn back to Greek, and be for ever making up some notion of the meaning of Greek, though from what incongruous odds and ends, with what slight resemblance to the real meaning of Greek, who shall say?" A question for every student of the liceo classico.

COLLEGAMENTI

Physics: relativity and the time of clocks. Special relativity (Einstein, 1905) starts from two principles: the laws of physics are the same for all observers moving at constant velocity, and the speed of light in a vacuum, about 300,000 km per second, is the same for all of them. From these two principles it follows that time is not absolute. Two events simultaneous for one observer may not be simultaneous for another; and a clock moving relative to you ticks more slowly than yours (**time dilation**). The effect is tiny at everyday speeds and large only close to the speed of light, but it is real and measured: unstable particles created high in the atmosphere live longer, as seen from the ground, than they do at rest, and the clocks on navigation satellites must be corrected for the effects of both special and general relativity.

General relativity (1915) predicted that the Sun's gravity bends starlight; Eddington's eclipse photographs of 29 May 1919 confirmed it. Big Ben in *Mrs Dalloway* is Newton's absolute, public time, the same for everyone in London; the minds of the characters live in Bergson's *durée*. Physics, in the same years, was showing that even clock time depends on the observer. The novel never mentions relativity, and the comparison is ours — but you can use it in the colloquio as a bridge to Fisica.

SINTESI

- After 1918 Britain was changed by loss and by new rights: women over 30 with a property qualification voted from 1918, all women at 21 from 1928; the General Strike of 1926 lasted nine days.
- The Bloomsbury Group — the Stephen sisters, Leonard Woolf, Strachey, Keynes, Forster, Fry — met from 1905; Fry's Post-Impressionist exhibition (1910) and the Hogarth Press (1917) brought new art and writing to London.
- William James called the mind a "stream" (1890); Freud described the unconscious (1899/1900); Bergson distinguished clock time from lived *durée*; Einstein showed that time depends on the observer (1905, 1915).
- Modernism (c. 1910–1940) rejected the plot-driven, omniscient novel and regular verse in favour of fragments, several minds, myth and broken time; 1922 saw *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*.
- Eliot's *The Waste Land* is a collage of voices and quotations; its epigraph is Petronius' Sibyl.
- Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) wrote *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando* (1928) and *The Waves* (1931), and essays such as "Modern Fiction" and *A Room of One's Own* (1929).
- *Mrs Dalloway* follows one June day of 1923: Clarissa's party and Septimus's suicide, joined by images and by the striking of Big Ben, which marks public time against the private time of memory.
- Stream of consciousness is the general name for fiction that follows the flow of a mind; interior monologue (first person, present, no narrator) is one form of it; Woolf's main tool is free indirect speech.
- In "Modern Fiction" life is "a luminous halo", not "gig lamps symmetrically arranged"; in *A Room of One's Own* Judith Shakespeare shows why women's genius was lost.
- Represented speech and thought runs from direct and indirect speech through free indirect speech to free direct thought and interior monologue; free indirect speech shifts tense and person but keeps the character's deictics and exclamations.
- Pirandello's Moscarda is "one, no one and a hundred thousand": like Woolf, Pirandello breaks the single self.
- For INVALSI reading: skim, read the questions first, scan for paraphrases, eliminate distractors and watch the time.

ESERCIZI

History and Literature

1. ● Who could vote under the Representation of the People Act of 1918?
   A. All men and women over 21.
   B. All men over 21 and women over 30 who met a property qualification or voted as graduates.
   C. Only men who had served in the war.
   D. All women over 30 and men over 25.

2. ● Which of these was NOT a member of the Bloomsbury Group?
   A. Lytton Strachey
   B. John Maynard Keynes
   C. Roger Fry
   D. D. H. Lawrence

3. ● Who first used “stream of consciousness” as a term for a kind of novel, in 1918?
   A. William James
   B. Sigmund Freud
   C. May Sinclair
   D. Virginia Woolf

4. ● Match each work with its author and date: *The Principles of Psychology* · *The Interpretation of Dreams* · *The Waste Land* · *Mrs Dalloway* · *A Room of One’s Own* · *Uno, nessuno e centomila* — Eliot · Freud · Woolf · James · Pirandello · Woolf — 1890 · 1899 (dated 1900) · 1922 · 1925 · 1926 · 1929.

5. ●● True or false? Correct the false statements. a Woolf went to university at Cambridge. b *Mrs Dalloway* is divided into twelve chapters, one for each hour. c Clarissa and Septimus never meet. d Eddington’s eclipse observations of 1919 agreed with Einstein’s general relativity. e The Equal Franchise Act gave women the vote at 21 in 1928. f *The Waste Land* was published by the Hogarth Press in 1922 before anywhere else.

6. ●● Explain each term in one or two sentences, with an example from the chapter: a Modernism · b stream of consciousness · c interior monologue · d free indirect speech · e *durée*.

7. ●●● Short answer (60–80 words): How does *Mrs Dalloway* use Big Ben? Refer to the difference between clock time and the time of the mind.

Text Analysis

8. ● In T1, the sentence “Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself” is an example of
   A. indirect speech.
   B. free indirect speech.
   C. interior monologue.
   D. direct speech.

9. ● T1. Find: a an exclamation of Clarissa’s · b a reporting clause placed in the middle of a sentence · c a past tense used with a present deictic · d a sign that Clarissa is not sure of what she remembers.

10. ●● T1. Paraphrase in plain English: “what a morning—fresh as if issued to children on a beach”. What does the simile suggest about the morning and about Clarissa?

11. ●● T2. Explain the two images of life (“gig lamps symmetrically arranged”, “a luminous halo”) and say which kind of novel each one describes (60–80 words).

12. ●● T3. How does Woolf use repetition and comparison to show the difference between Judith and William? Quote two phrases.

13. ●●● Compare T1 and T2: in what ways is the opening of *Mrs Dalloway* an application of the programme of “Modern Fiction”? Write a PEE paragraph (80–100 words).

14. ●●● Colloquio link (60–80 words). Start from T3 and link it to one other subject: Latin (the education of Roman girls, or the Latin authors Judith never read), history (women’s suffrage, 1918–1928) or Italian (a woman writer of the early twentieth century).

Language

15. ● Identify the form of each sentence (direct speech, indirect speech, free indirect speech, free direct thought, interior monologue). a “I’m late,” she said. b She said that she was late. c She was late. Late again! What would they think? d I’m late. What will they think? e late — again — their faces — the clock —

16. ● Rewrite in indirect speech, making all the necessary changes. a “I will give a party tonight,” said Clarissa. b “I came back from India yesterday,” Peter told her. c “Is this my wife?” Septimus wondered. d “We must go to Harley Street now,” Rezia said.

17. ●● Rewrite in free indirect speech (third person, past tense, no reporting verb). a “How beautiful London is this morning!” she thought. b “Will he ever forgive me?” she wondered. c “I must buy the gloves today,” she thought. d “Why do I feel so old?” he asked himself.

18. ●● Rewrite in free direct thought. a She would never marry him; never! b How strange it was to be back in London after five years! c Was that Big Ben striking already?

19. ●● Error correction. Each sentence contains one mistake. Correct it. a She thought that what a lovely day it was. b He said he will come to the party tomorrow. (reported a week later) c In free indirect speech: She will buy the flowers herself, she thinks. d She asked where was the florist. e He told that he had been in India.

20. ●● Deictics. Complete the indirect version of each sentence with the right deictic. a "I'll be here tomorrow." → He said he would be _____ _____ . b "I saw her this morning." → She said she had seen her _____ morning. c "These letters are dull." → She said _____ letters were dull. d "I am leaving now." → He said he was leaving _____ .

21. ●● Rewrite this sentence in four ways (direct thought, indirect thought, free indirect speech, interior monologue): *"I prefer men to cauliflowers," Peter said.* Use *thought* for the thought forms and begin the indirect one with *Clarissa remembered that…*

22. ●●● Analyse the forms in this invented passage and explain the effect: *Peter shut the door. Clarissa had refused him; she always would. Well, he would walk to Regent's Park. "Damn her," he said aloud. What did it matter now? I'm fifty-two, I'm in love, I'm a fool.*

23. ●●● Translate into English, using free indirect speech for the thoughts. a Giulia si fermò sul ponte. Che fiume grigio, quel giorno! b Avrebbe scelto lettere classiche o lingue? Non lo sapeva ancora. c Pensò che Marta, come sempre, avrebbe perso l'autobus.

Vocabulary

24. ● Complete with a word from the vocabulary list (change the form if necessary). a Woolf records the _____ impressions of a single morning. b Septimus's _____ world is full of voices. c The novel is made of _____ rather than chapters. d She tried to _____ his exact words, but could not. e Interior monologue is the most _____ form of narration.

25. ● Complete with an expression with *time*. a Peter sat in the park to _____ before lunch. b Don't hurry: _____ . c _____ , few people understood what shell shock was. d The holidays went by _____ . e _____ , Giulia has decided not to decide.

26. ●● Word families. Complete the table: conscious → _____ (n.) · perceive → _____ (n.) · memory → _____ (v.) · fragment → _____ (adj.) · intimate → _____ (n.). Then use three of them in sentences about *Mrs Dalloway*.

Writing and Speaking

27. ●● Writing. Write the interior monologue and commentary of the Skills section (200–250 words + about 80 words), following the checklist.

28. ●● Speaking (mediation). Explain to an English-speaking exchange student, in about one minute, what *A Room of One's Own* argues and who Judith Shakespeare is. Use at least three phrases from the "Useful language" table.

29. ●●● Writing (80–100 words). Sam asks on the club forum: “Is Woolf still worth reading, or is she just difficult?” Reply to him, giving your opinion with one example from T1–T3.

Towards the Exam

30. ●● Reading (INVALSI-style multiple choice). Read “One Day in Turin” (Skills). Choose A, B, C or D. a Why does Giulia walk home alone? A She wants to think. B Marta has to catch a bus. C Marta is staying at school. D She has had an argument. b In paragraph B, the clock “went on counting backwards” because A the school clock was broken. B Giulia was looking at the time left in a computer test. C a bell was striking. D the simulation had been cancelled. c Giulia’s father A is a geographer at the university. B taught geography and likes explaining rivers. C rows on the Po. D is worried about the floods. d In paragraph D we learn that Giulia A has decided to study classics. B has decided to study languages. C has not yet decided. D wants to study medicine like Elena. e At the end of the text Giulia feels A anxious about October. B sad about Marco. C content with the present moment. D lonely without her friends abroad.

31. ●● Reading (multiple matching). Match the paragraphs A–E of “One Day in Turin” with the headings 1–6. One heading is not needed. 1 A memory on the bridge · 2 Friends far away, and now · 3 A friend in a hurry · 4 Two voices about the future · 5 The end of the test · 6 An argument with Prof.ssa Rossi.

32. ●● Reading (short answers, maximum 6 words each). a What season is it in the text? b Which city does Marco live in? c What is Callum probably doing, according to Giulia? d What can Giulia smell in Piazza Vittorio?

33. ●●● Key-word transformations. Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using the word in capitals. Use two to five words. a Clarissa said, “I’ll buy the flowers myself.” WOULD — Clarissa said _____ the flowers herself. b Woolf did not go to school because she was a girl. SENT — Woolf _____ school because she was a girl. c It was so long since she had seen Peter. FOR — She _____ a long time. d Judith was as gifted as her brother. LESS — Judith was _____ her brother.

34. ●●● Colloquio prompt. The material: Big Ben’s strokes in *Mrs Dalloway*, “First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air.” Prepare a two-minute talk: a describe and place the quotation; b explain clock time and mind time in the novel; c link it to two other subjects (Filosofia: Bergson; Fisica: relativity; Latino: Petronius’ Sibyl; Italiano: Pirandello).

PER APPROFONDIRE

- [NOR] S. Greenblatt (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. F: the introduction to the twentieth century and the selections from Woolf, Mansfield and Lawrence.
- [BRA] M. Bradbury, *The Modern British Novel*: the chapters on the Modernist novel and on Woolf in the 1920s.
- [CHI] P. Childs, *Modernism*: the chapters on the new ideas of mind and time and on Modernist fiction.
- [SAN] A. Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*: the chapter on Modernism.
- [ABR] M. H. Abrams, G. G. Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*: the entries "stream of consciousness", "Modernism" and "free indirect discourse".
- [SWA] M. Swan, *Practical English Usage*: the entries on indirect speech and on *here, now, this* in reported speech.

Glossario del capitolo

Bloomsbury Group
il gruppo di Bloomsbury — a circle of writers, artists and thinkers who met in the Bloomsbury district of London from 1905, among them Virginia and Leonard Woolf, Vanessa Bell, Strachey, Keynes and Fry.

Consciousness
coscienza, consapevolezza — the state of being aware of oneself and the world; the mind as it experiences.

Deictic
deittico — a word whose meaning depends on the speaker's time and place, such as *now, here, this, tomorrow*.

Distractor
distrattore — in a multiple-choice test, a wrong option designed to look plausible.

Durée
durata — Bergson's term for time as it is lived by consciousness, as opposed to the measured time of clocks.

Equal Franchise Act
legge sul suffragio paritario — the law of 1928 that gave British women the vote at 21, on the same terms as men.

Free direct thought
pensiero diretto libero — a character's thoughts in the first person and present tense, without quotation marks or a reporting verb.

General Strike
sciopero generale — the British strike of 4–12 May 1926, called by the trade unions in support of the coal miners.

Hogarth Press
Hogarth Press — the publishing house founded by Leonard and Virginia Woolf in 1917.

Interior monologue
monologo interiore — a form of stream of consciousness that gives a character's thoughts directly, in the first person and present tense, with no narrator.

Mediation
mediazione — passing on the meaning of a text to someone who cannot read it, selecting and explaining, in the same language or across languages.

Modernism
modernismo (letterario) — the experimental movement in literature and the arts of c. 1910–1940 that broke with traditional plot, narration and verse.

Moments of being
momenti dell'essere — Woolf's phrase for the rare instants in which life is felt with special intensity.

Special relativity
relatività ristretta — Einstein's theory of 1905: the laws of physics and the speed of light are the same for all observers in uniform motion, so time and simultaneity depend on the observer.

Stream of consciousness
flusso di coscienza — fiction that reproduces the continuous flow of a character's thoughts, feelings and perceptions; the term comes from William James.

Time dilation
dilatazione del tempo — the effect, predicted by relativity, by which a clock moving relative to an observer runs slow.

Unconscious
inconscio — in Freud, the part of the mind whose contents we are not aware of, but which shapes what we do and dream.

Soluzioni

1. B — all men over 21 (servicemen from 19) and women over 30 with a property qualification or a university vote.

2. D — Lawrence knew some members but did not belong to the group.

3. C — May Sinclair, reviewing Dorothy Richardson (1918); the metaphor itself is William James's (1890).

4. James, *The Principles of Psychology*, 1890 · Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 1899 (dated 1900) · Eliot, *The Waste Land*, 1922 · Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, 1925 · Pirandello, *Uno, nessuno e centomila*, 1926 · Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, 1929.

5. a F — unlike her brothers, she never went to Cambridge; she was educated at home, with private lessons and some classes for women at King's College London. b F — there are no chapters; scenes are linked by images and the striking of clocks. c T. d T. e T. f F — it first appeared in periodicals and in New York in 1922; the Hogarth Press edition came out in 1923.

6. Model answers: a the experimental movement of c. 1910–1940 that broke with plot, the omniscient narrator and regular verse (Woolf, Joyce, Eliot); b fiction that follows the continuous flow of a character's thoughts and perceptions (*Mrs Dalloway*); c the thoughts given directly, first person and present, with no narrator (Molly Bloom in *Ulysses*); d third person and past tense with the character's words and exclamations (*What a lark! What a plunge!*); e Bergson's lived time, as opposed to the measured time of clocks (Clarissa's memory of Bourton fills a moment of the morning).

7. Traccia: Big Ben strikes the hours and half-hours through the day (eleven, half past eleven, noon, three…), giving the novel a public, objective time shared by everyone in London and linking characters who do not know each other. Against it runs the time of the mind: in a few seconds Clarissa or Peter travel thirty years back. The "leaden circles" dissolving in the air suggest that clock time is heavy and irrevocable, while memory flows freely.

8. A — a reporting verb (*said*) and backshift (*would*): the novel opens in indirect speech and moves into free indirect speech.

9. a *What a lark! What a plunge!* (or *what a morning*) · b *thought Clarissa Dalloway* · c *which she could hear now* · d *was that it?* (twice), with dashes.

10. Traccia: what a fresh, clean, beautiful morning — as fresh as if it had just been given out new to children playing by the sea. The simile makes the morning feel like a gift and suggests youth, innocence and holidays; it already points Clarissa's mind towards her own youth.

11. Traccia: gig lamps are two lights placed at equal distances, in a line: life as a series of separate, symmetrical events, the well-made plot of the "materialist" Edwardian novel. The luminous halo is a continuous, half-transparent light that surrounds us from birth to death: life as consciousness, without edges, the subject of the modern novel Woolf wants. (Readings may stress either the symmetry or the separation of the lamps; both are acceptable.)

12. Traccia: Woolf repeats the structure *as… as… as he was* (*as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he was*) to show that Judith equals William in gifts; then she lists in negative form what he had and she lacks: *she was not sent to school, no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil*. The parallel shows that the difference is opportunity, not talent.

13. Model: *The first page of* Mrs Dalloway *puts into practice the programme of "Modern Fiction". Woolf asks the novelist to examine "an ordinary mind on an ordinary day", and the novel begins with an errand, buying flowers. Instead of plot, the page records impressions as they fall — the squeak of the hinges, the air "like the flap*

of a wave", a half-remembered joke about cauliflowers — and the moment of importance falls where convention would not place it, in a memory from thirty years before.

14. Open answer. Traccia (Latin): Roman girls of good family could be educated at home, but rhetoric and public careers were for boys; Judith is denied Virgil and Horace, the poets Woolf names as the core of a boy's Elizabethan schooling and still read today at the liceo classico. The answer should name the text, the link and one precise detail.

15. a direct speech · b indirect speech · c free indirect speech · d free direct thought · e interior monologue.

16. a Clarissa said (that) she would give a party that night. b Peter told her (that) he had come back from India the day before / the previous day. c Septimus wondered if / whether that was his wife. d Rezia said (that) they had to go to Harley Street then / at once.

17. a How beautiful London was this morning! b Would he ever forgive her? c She must buy the gloves today. (also: She had to buy the gloves today.) d Why did he feel so old?

18. a I'll never marry him; never! b How strange it is to be back in London after five years! c Is that Big Ben striking already?

19. a She thought what a lovely day it was. (or FIS: What a lovely day it was!) b He said he would come to the party the next day / the following day. c She would buy the flowers herself. d She asked where the florist was. e He said that he had been in India / He told her that…

20. a there · the next day / the following day · b that · c those · d then.

21. Direct thought: "I prefer men to cauliflowers," Peter thought. Indirect thought: Clarissa remembered that Peter had said he preferred men to cauliflowers. FIS: He preferred men to cauliflowers — was that what he had said? Interior monologue: men — cauliflowers — Peter — breakfast — was that it — Bourton… (Variants accepted if the signals are correct.)

22. Traccia: *Peter shut the door* — narration. *Clarissa had refused him; she always would. Well, he would walk…* — free indirect speech (third person, past, but Peter's *Well* and his bitterness). "*Damn her," he said aloud* — direct speech. *What did it matter now?* — free indirect speech (question, deictic *now*). *I'm fifty-two, I'm in love, I'm a fool* — free direct thought. The passage moves closer and closer to Peter's mind, ending inside it.

23. a Giulia stopped on the bridge. What a grey river it was that day! b Would she choose classics or languages? She did not know yet. c She thought that Marta, as usual, would miss the bus. (c is indirect thought: *pensò che* requires it.)

24. a fleeting · b inner · c fragments (also accepted: moments) · d recollect · e intimate.

25. a kill / pass the time · b take your time · c At the time · d in no time · e For the time being.

26. consciousness · perception · memorise (memorize) · fragmentary (or fragmented) · intimacy. Sentences: open answer.

27. Open answer, assessed on: situation and trigger; first person and present; associative movement with at least one memory; readability; return to the present; a commentary naming at least three techniques with the correct terms.

28. Model: *Basically, it's a long essay from 1929, based on two lectures Woolf gave to women students at Cambridge. The key idea is that a woman needs money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction. To show why there were so few women writers in the past, Woolf imagines that Shakespeare had a sister, Judith, just as gifted. In other words, she's an invented character. Judith isn't sent to school, she runs away to London and the theatre won't accept her, so her genius is lost. Does that make sense?*

29. Open answer. Traccia: a clear opinion, one reason, one concrete example (e.g. the first page of *Mrs Dalloway*: it is difficult only until you see that you are inside Clarissa's head), an informal but correct register suitable for a forum.

30. a B · b B · c B · d C · e C.

31. A 3 · B 5 · C 1 · D 4 · E 2 (6 is not needed).

32. a winter / February · b Milan · c measuring a glacier (or complaining about the rain) · d roasted chestnuts.

33. a (that) she would buy · b was not sent to · c had not seen Peter for (variant: hadn't seen him for) · d no less gifted than.

34. Model answer (outline): *This sentence comes from* Mrs Dalloway *(1925), when Clarissa hears Big Ben on the first morning; the same words return at other hours and at the end of the day. The bell gives the novel its clock time — public, objective, "irrevocable" — while the characters' minds move freely through memories, as in Bergson's* durée*, which you study in philosophy. At the same time Einstein was showing that even physical time depends on the observer. And the image of time without end reminds me of Petronius' Sibyl, who wanted to die, the epigraph of Eliot's* The Waste Land*. Pirandello, finally, breaks the self as Woolf breaks time.* Assessment: accuracy, links, fluency.