



LOGSE: Junio 2004
MATERIA: INGLÉS

Coetzee wins Nobel Prize

The 2003 Nobel Prize for Literature was won by the South Africa novelist J. M. Coetzee. This is wonderful news. Coetzee, 63, is unquestionably among the greatest living writers in English.

The Nobel has often been misapplied. It evaded Tolstoy, Chekhov, Joyce, Kafka and Nabokov. It was won, on the other hand, by Bjornstjerne Bjornson, José Echegaray, Rudolf Eucken and others now wholly forgotten. In many cases, the judges seem to have been influenced by political, rather than literary, factors. But in choosing Coetzee, the judges have got it right and ignored the fact that Coetzee has many things to say that do not sit comfortably with liberal political assumptions.

His books deal with difficult, painful matters – betrayal, the abuse of power, the nature of evil, our cruel treatment of animal – and ultimately they express deep scepticism over whether or not any of us are capable of true empathy with others. Coetzee presents these unwelcome truths with a rigour and purity that cannot be ignored.

Coetzee was born in Cape Town in 1940 and trained as a computer scientist, coming to London in the Sixties to work for IBM, a period recollected in a superb autobiographical novel. He then became a professor of literature in the United States, initially using his computing skills for verbal analysis of writers, before returning to Cape Town in the early Seventies, where he has continued to teach and publish literary criticism. His first fiction, *Dusklands* was published 10 1974, followed by *In The Heart Of The Country and Waiting For Barbarians*, which swiftly won him international recognition.

1. Are the following sentences TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.

- Many years ago Tolstoy was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.
- Coetzee has not yet written any book based on his life.

2. In your own words and based on the ideas from the text answer these questions.

- Why has the Noble Prize been sometimes wrongly awarded?
- What did Coetzee do professionally before he wrote his first novel?

3. Find a synonym in the text for the following words or phrases.

- without doubt (paragraph 1)
- completely (paragraph 2)
- ideas (paragraph 2)
- quickly (paragraph 4)

4. Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given:

- Coetzee _____ was born in South Africa in 1940, won the Nobel Prize _____ year.
- Before _____ (win) the Nobel Prize, Coetzee _____ (receive) international recognition.



- c) James Joyce, _____ works are still universally known _____ (not choose) for the Nobel Prize during his lifetime.
- d) The German Rudolf Eucken, a Nobel Prize winner, wrote _____ ethics and religion. But _____ works are almost forgotten today.

5. Write about 100 to 150 words on ONE of the following topics.

- a) What is the last book you have read? Give reasons why did or you didn't like it.
- b) How can winning a prize affect people's live?

