CATERHAM SCHOOL

11+ SAMPLE PAPER

Section A: Comprehension

Reading Passage

(50 minutes)

Instructions to Candidates:

1. Read this passage carefully before you look at the answer booklet.

2. You should spend about 50 minutes in total on this comprehension section of the English exam.

Section A : Comprehension

Read the passage below, which is taken from the opening of 'Watership Down' by Richard Adams and then answer the questions which follow.

The primroses were over. Toward the edge of the wood, where the ground became open and sloped down to an old fence and a brambly ditch beyond, only a few fading patches of pale yellow still showed among the dog's mercury and oaktree roots. On the other side of the fence, the upper part of the field was full of rabbit holes. In places the grass was gone altogether and everywhere there were **clusters** of dry droppings, through which nothing but the ragwort would grow. A hundred yards away, at the bottom of the slope, ran the brook, no more than three feet wide, half choked with kingcups, watercress and blue brooklime. The cart track crossed by a brick culvert and climbed the opposite slope to a fivebarred gate in the thorn hedge. The gate led into the lane.

The May sunset was red in clouds, and there was still half an hour to twilight. The dry slope was dotted with rabbits -- some nibbling at the thin grass near their holes, others pushing further down to look for dandelions or perhaps a cowslip that the rest had missed. Here and there one sat upright on an ant heap and looked about, with ears erect and nose in the wind. But a blackbird, singing undisturbed on the outskirts of the wood, showed that there was nothing alarming there, and in the other direction, along the brook, all was plain to be seen, empty and quiet. The warren was at peace.

At the top of the bank, close to the wild cherry where the blackbird sang, was a little group of holes almost hidden by brambles. In the green half-light, at the mouth of one of these holes, two rabbits were sitting together side by side. At length, the larger of the two came out, slipped along the bank under cover of the brambles and so down into the ditch and up into the field. A few moments later the other followed.

The first rabbit stopped in a sunny patch and scratched his ear with rapid movements of his hind leg. Although he was a yearling and still below full weight, he had not the **harassed** look of most "outskirters" -- that is, the rank and file of ordinary rabbits in their first year who, lacking either aristocratic parentage or unusual size and strength, get sat on by their elders and live as best they can -- often in the open -- on the edge of their warren. He looked as though he knew how to take care of himself. There was a **shrewd**, buoyant air about him as he sat up, looked around and rubbed both front paws over his nose. As soon as he was satisfied that all was well, he laid back his ears and set to work on the grass.

His companion seemed less at ease. He was small, with wide, staring eyes and a way of raising and turning his head which suggested not so much caution as a kind of ceaseless, nervous tension. His nose moved continually, and when a bumblebee flew humming to a thistle bloom behind him, he jumped and spun round with a start that sent two nearby rabbits

scurrying for holes before the nearest, a buck with black-tipped ears, recognized him and returned to feeding.

"Oh, it's only Fiver," said the black-tipped rabbit, "jumping at bluebottles again. Come on, Buckthorn, what were you telling me?"

"Fiver?" said the other rabbit. "Why's he called that?"

"Five in the litter, you know: he was the last -- and the smallest. You'd wonder nothing had got him by now. I always say a man couldn't see him and a fox wouldn't want him. Still, I admit he seems to be able to keep out of harm's way."

"Let's go a bit further, Hazel," he said. "You know, there's something queer about the warren this evening, although I can't tell exactly what it is. Shall we go down to the brook?"

"All right," answered Hazel, "and you can find me a cowslip. If you can't find one, no one can."

He led the way down the slope, his shadow stretching behind him on the grass. They reached the brook and began nibbling and searching close beside the wheel ruts of the track.

It was not long before Fiver found what they were looking for. Cowslips are a **delicacy** among rabbits, and as a rule there are very few left by late May in the neighbourhood of even a small warren. This one had not bloomed and its flat spread of leaves was almost hidden under the long grass. They were just starting on it when two larger rabbits came running across from the other side of the nearby cattle wade.

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Section A: Comprehension

Answer Booklet

(50 minutes)

1. Good writing and spelling are most important.

2. You should spend about 50 minutes on this comprehension section of the English paper.

Questions

1. Explain what these words mean as they are used in the passage:

a) clusters

_____

b) harassed

_____

c) shrewd

_____

d) delicacy

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4 marks

2. In lines 7, when describing the brook, the writer uses the metaphor 'half choked'. Explain why you think the writer has used this metaphor and what image it presents to the reader.

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2 marks

3. Re-read the first two paragraphs. How does the writer create a sense of peacefulness in this section? You should make direct reference to the language/imagery within by using quotations.

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4 marks

4. Below are three adjectives which describe the first rabbit; find one quotation to support each word between lines 22-29:

   i) Streetwise

   _____

   ii) Wise

   _____

   iii) Cautious

   _____

3 marks

5. Based on information from the passage, using your own words, describe the second rabbit (lines 30-35).

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3 marks

6. Explain why the second rabbit is given the name ‘Fiver’:

_____

_____

1 mark

7. When Hazel says to Fiver, in lines 44-45, “If you can't find one, no one can", what does this tell us about Fiver?

_____

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2 mark

8. Looking at the passage as a whole, how does the writer present elements of nature and what impression of the setting do you think he is trying to get across to the reader? You should support your argument with quotations and try to comment on the writer’s use of language, paying particular attention to any language features you recognise.

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6 marks

Total: 25 Marks

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Section B: Writing Task

(30 minutes)

1. Good writing and spelling are most important.

2. You should spend **about 30 minutes** on this Writing Task section of the English exam.

Section B : Writing

Think about a place that means something to you in either a positive or a negative way; it may be a holiday location or somewhere closer to home. Write a descriptive piece aiming to create a clear sense of place in the reader's mind.

- This description can be a short story, or you may wish to imagine that it is part of a longer story.
- You can use the comprehension passage as inspiration, but do not steal the ideas or lift lines from the passage.
- Make sure that you describe the experience in lots of detail, choosing your words carefully and creating vivid images for the reader. If you want to include a character then think about how the character fits in with the place you have chosen. Beware of introducing too many characters or including too much action or dialogue which might detract from the description.
- Aim to write about between one and two sides, depending on the size of your handwriting.
- You will be awarded up to **20 marks** for the content and ideas and **5 marks** for the quality of your writing.