DAME ALICE OWEN'S SCHOOL

ENGLISH ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FAMILIARISATION

Time allowed: One hour.

Surname: .....……

First name(s): .....

Registration No: .....

Read these instructions before you start:

1. Read the passage very carefully before you answer any of the questions.

2. It is up to you how long you spend on each section. However, we **suggest** you spend about **forty minutes** on reading the passage and answering the questions in Section A, and about **twenty minutes** on the imaginative writing in **Section B**.

3. A time check will be given 5 minutes before the end of the test.

3. Write clearly and accurately.

4. Dictionaries are NOT allowed.

5. You may use a pen or pencil for this paper.

Mark	Percentage

Passage

From 'Tom's Midnight Garden' by Philippa Pearce

When Tom goes to stay with his aunt and uncle, he hears a clock in the house strike thirteen. But clocks don't normally strike thirteen. And everyone tells him that there is no garden outside either. One night, Tom goes to investigate.

This was a real expedition. Tom put on his bedroom slippers, but decided against his dressing-gown: after all, it was summer. He closed his bedroom door carefully behind him, so that it should not bang in his absence. Outside the front door of the flat he took off one of his slippers; he laid it on the floor against the door jamb and then closed the door on to it, as on to a wedge. That would keep the door open for his return.

The lights on the first floor landing and in the hall were turned out, for the tenants were all in bed and asleep, and Mrs Bartholomew was asleep and dreaming. The only illumination was a sideways shaft of moonlight through the long window part way up the stairs. Tom felt his way downstairs and into the hall.

Here he was checked. He could find the grandfather clock – a tall and ancient figure of black in the lesser blackness – but he was unable to read its face.

Hurry! Hurry! The house seemed to whisper round him. The hour is passing….passing….

Tom turned from the clock to feel for the electric-light switch. Where had it been? His fingers swept the walls in vain: nowhere.

Light – light: that was what he needed! And the only light was the moonbeam that glanced sideways through the stairway window and spent itself at once and uselessly on the wall by the window-sill.

Tom studied the moonbeam, with an idea growing in his mind. From the direction in which the beam came, he saw that the moon must be shining at the back of the house. Very well, then, if he opened the door at the far end of the hall – at the back of the house, that is – he would let that moonlight in. With luck there might be enough light for him to read the clock-face.

He moved down the hall to the door at its far end. It was a door he had never seen opened – the Kitsons used the door to the front. They said that the door at the back was only a less convenient way to the street, through a backyard – a strip of paving where dustbins were kept and where the tenants of the ground floor back flat garaged their car under the tarpaulin.

Never having had occasion to use the door, Tom had no idea how it might be secured at night. If it were locked, and the key kept elsewhere… But it was not locked, he found; only bolted. He drew the bolt and, very slowly, to make no sound, turned the door-knob. Hurry! Whispered the house; and the grandfather clock at the heart of it beat an anxious tick, tick.

Tom opened the door wide and let in the moonlight. It flooded in, as bright as daylight- the white daylight that comes before the full rising of the sun. The illumination was perfect, but Tom did not once turn to see what it showed him of the clock-face. Instead he took a step forward on the doorstep. He was staring, at first in surprise, then with indignation, at what he saw outside. That they should have deceived him – lied to him – like this! They had said, "It's not worth your while going out the back, Tom". So carelessly they had described it: "A sort of backyard, very poky, with rubbish bins. Really there's nothing to see."

Nothing…..Only this: a great lawn where flowerbeds bloomed; a towering fir-tree, and thick, beetle-browed yews that humped their shapes down two sides of the lawn; on the third side, to the right, a greenhouse almost the size of a real house; from each corner of the lawn, a path that twisted away to some other depths of garden with other trees.

Tom had stepped forward instinctively, catching his breath in surprise; now he let his breath out in a deep sigh. He would steal out here tomorrow, by daylight.

The scene tempted him even now; it lay so inviting and clear before him – clear-cut from the stubby leaf-pins of the nearer yew-trees to the curled-back petals of the hyacinths in the crescent-shaped corner beds. Regretfully he turned from the garden, back indoors to read the grandfather clock.

He re-crossed the threshold, still absorbed in the thought of what he had seen outside. For that reason, perhaps, he could not at once make out how the hall had become different: his eyes informed him of some shadowy change; his bare foot was trying to tell him something…..

The grandfather clock was still there, anyway, and must tell him the true time. It must be either twelve or one: there was no hour between. There is no thirteenth hour. Tom never reached the clock with his inquiry, and may be excused for forgetting, on this occasion, to check its truthfulness. His attention was distracted by the opening of a door down the hall – the door of the ground-floor front flat. The maid trotted out.

He did not feel afraid of the maid: as she came nearer, he saw that she was only a girl. She was passing him. Tom was left gaping; and meanwhile, his senses began to insist upon telling him of experiences even stranger than this encounter. His one bare foot was on a cold flagstone, he knew; yet there was a contradictory softness and warmth to this flagstone. He looked down and saw that he was standing on a rug – a tiger-skin rug. There were other rugs down the hall. His eyes now took in the whole of the hall – a hall that was different. No laundry box, no milk bottles, no travel posters on the walls. The walls were decorated with a rich variety of other objects instead: a tall Gothic barometer, a fan of peacock feathers, a huge engraving of a battle (hussars and horses and shot-riddled banners) and many other pictures. There was a big dinner gong, with its wash-leathered gong-stick hanging beside it. There was a large umbrella stand holding umbrellas and walking-sticks and a parasol and an air-gun and what looked like parts of a fishing-rod. Along the wall projected a series of bracket-shelves, each table-high. They were of oak, except for one towards the middle of the hall, by the grandfather clock. That was of white marble, and it was piled high with glass cases of stuffed birds and animals. Enacted in its chilly surface were scenes of hot bloodshed: an owl clutched a mouse in its claws; a ferret looked up from the killing of its rabbit; in a case in the middle a red fox slunk along with a game fowl hanging from its jaws.

In all that crowded hall, the only object that Tom recognised was the grandfather clock. He moved towards it, not to read its face, but simply to touch it – to reassure himself that this at least was as he knew it.

Questions

Section A

You will be assessed on the quality of your reading in this section

1. At what time of the year do the events of the passage take place? (1 mark)

……

2. What prevents Tom from seeing the time on the grandfather clock? (2 marks)

……

……

……

……

3. Explain, in your own words, how Tom felt when he first sees the garden outside the back door. (2 marks)

……

……

……

……

4. Describe the garden he sees, in your own words. (2 marks)

……

……

……

……

……

5. Write down 2 different words that sum up the atmosphere or mood of the passage at <u>different</u> moments in the story. (2 marks)

a)……

b)……

6. The writer makes the garden sound inviting and interesting. Pick out three *separate* examples of this from the passage and comment on the way the writer uses language to make it interesting or vivid. (6 marks)

a)……

……

……

……

b)……

……

……

c)……

……

……

7. What 3 things have disappeared from the hall when he returns to it? (1 mark)

……

……

……

……

8. Describe what Tom finds in the hall, when he returns to it. (lines 58-81)

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

(5 marks)

9. Write down two things from the passage which show that something strange is happening to Tom? (2 marks)

……

……

……

……

10. What do you think of the boy, Tom, in this extract? What 2 different words or phrases would you use to describe him? You should find 2 examples from the passage to illustrate your comments. (2 marks)

……

……

……

……

END OF SECTION A – PLEASE TURN OVER NOW FOR SECTION B

Section B

What do you think has happened to Tom? Continue the story:

Write at least 3 paragraphs You will be assessed on the quality of your writing in this section. Marks will be awarded for:

- **Showing you have understood Tom's character and situation**
- **Interesting vocabulary**
- **A variety of sentences and punctuation**
- **Imaginative use of language**

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

(25 marks)

END OF TEST