# Trinity School Croydon

## ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

### 11+

SYLLABUS and SAMPLE QUESTIONS

## ENGLISH

(for candidates over 11 and under 12 on 1st September of the year of entry)

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The assessment in English at 11+ takes the form of one 1-hour examination paper.
The purpose of the paper is to assess candidates' ability to understand the written word and to express their ideas effectively in writing.

**Part 1 – Reading (30 minutes)**
The test will take the form of a passage, usually of prose, with a series of questions, which have to be answered. The questions are designed to assess candidates' ability to respond to the passage with understanding, to draw simple inferences, to express views fluently and accurately and to refer to relevant words or episodes to support opinions. There will be no questions on "formal grammar".

**Part 2 – Writing (30 minutes)**
Two or three titles, usually related to the reading passage, are normally set, and candidates write on one of them. Topics may invite personal, imaginative, narrative or discursive written responses. Candidates will be assessed on their ability to communicate meaning, using a wide-ranging vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and the whole text coherently.

In the paper candidates will be expected to punctuate and spell accurately and to present work neatly and legibly.

## Part 1 - Reading (You should spend **30 minutes** on this section.)

Read the passage below carefully and answer ALL the questions which follow **fully**, **in sentences**, and as far as possible **in your own words**. Good presentation, writing and spelling are important.

We came to Stoneygate because Grandma had died and Grandpa was left alone. We bought the house at Stoneygate's edge, one of a long line that faced the wilderness and the river. Grandpa moved into the room next to mine. He had a single trunk of clothes and souvenirs. He put his old coalminer's helmet and his polished pitman's lamp on the shelf above his bed. He hung a photograph of himself and Grandma on the wall. The photograph was fading and there were hundreds of tiny cracks on its surface. It showed them on their wedding day at St. Thomas' Church. He wore a smart black suit and a white flower in his buttonhole. Grandma held a massive white bouquet before her long white dress. They smiled and smiled. Just beyond them you could see the graves, then Stoneygate, then the hills and the distant misty moors.

At first Grandpa was gloomy, watery-eyed and silent. He hardly seemed to know me. I heard Mum whispering that Grandma's death would mean the death of him as well. At night he used to whisper in his room as I dropped off to sleep next door. I dreamed that Grandma was with him again, just beyond the thin wall beside my bed, and that she had come to comfort him as he died. I heard her voice, soothing him. I dreamed that his sighs were his final breaths. I trembled with fear that I would be the one to hear him die.

But he didn't die. He started to smile again, and tell his tales and sing his ancient pit songs in his hoarse cracked voice:

*When I was young and in me prime,*
*Eh, aye, I could hew coal …*

He took me walking and showed me that the evidence of the pit was everywhere – depressions in the gardens, jagged cracks in the roadways and in the house walls. Lamp posts and telegraph poles were twisted and skewed. Fragments of coal darkened the soil.

"Look at the earth and you think it's solid," he said. "But look deeper and you'll see it's riddled with tunnels. A warren. A labyrinth."

He told me how things had been in his day: the huge black slag heap beside the river, the great wheels and the winding gear, the hundreds of men disappearing every morning and every night into the earth. He showed me where the entrances to the shafts had been, told me about

the dizzying drop in the cage to the tunnels far below. He pointed up to the hills past Stoneygate, told me they were filled with shafts, potholes, ancient drift mines.

As we wandered, I used to keep on asking him: How deep did you go? How dark was it? What was it like to go down there, day after day, week after week, year after year? Why weren't you terrified, Grandpa?

He used to smile.

"It was very deep, Kit. Very dark. And every one of us was scared of it. As a lad I'd wake up trembling, knowing that as a Watson born in Stoneygate I'd soon be following my ancestors into the pit."

He used to draw me close to him, touch my cheek, run his fingers through my hair.

"But there was more than just the fear, Kit. We were also driven to it. We understood our fate. There was the strangest joy in dropping down together into the darkness that we feared. And most of all there was the joy of coming out again together into the lovely world. Bright spring mornings, brilliant sunshine, birdsong, walking together through the lovely hawthorn lanes towards our homes."

*(*adapted from *Kit's Wilderness* by David Almond*)*

*Now answer the following questions*

*Write in sentences and as far as possible in your own words*

**1.** What was the reason for the narrator's family moving to Stoneygate?

(2)

**2.** What, in your opinion, do the objects Grandpa displayed in his room reveal about Grandpa himself?

(3)

**3.** Reread from 'They smiled … moors'. (lines 11-12 )
How do you feel when you read these sentences? Can you suggest a reason why these two sentences might have been placed next to each other?

(2)

**4.** In your own words explain the evidence that the coal mines had greatly influenced the environment of the area. Does the language used suggest this influence was good or bad? (5)

**5.** Do you think Grandpa was the first member of his family to work in the mines? Explain your answer.

(2)

**6.** Explain fully, and in your own words, how Grandpa used to feel about going down into the mine and then returning to the surface.

(4)

**7.** How does the language of the final paragraph help us as readers to understand the miners' feelings? (Refer to specific words and phrases In your answer.) (3)

**8.** Read paragraph 2 again. Imagine that the narrator kept a diary. Write one of the entries he might have made as he listened to Grandpa in the next room. You should write about 40-50 words. Remember to include details of the boy's feelings and thoughts as well as an account of the situation.

(4)

**25 marks**

## Part 2 - Writing (You should spend **30 minutes** on this section.)

**EITHER**

1. Write about an occasion when you learned an important lesson about life as a result of talking to or spending time with an old person.

**OR**

2. Write a detailed description of a city or industrial scene. You might, for example, describe a road junction, a factory, a builder's yard, a station. Try to decide before you start on the mood you want to create. [This should NOT be a story.]

**25 marks**