TONBRIDGE SCHOOL

Year 7 Entrance Examination
SPECIMEN

Writing

May of Year 7

Time allowed: 1 hour

Total marks : 60

All three sections of the paper should be answered. You are advised to spend 20 minutes on each section.

All sections carry equal marks.

Begin each section on a separate sheet of paper with your name at the top.

Section A

*Argue against **one** of the following statements:*

a) ‘Aliens do not exist.’

b) ‘Friends are more important than family.’

c) ‘Some triangles can have four sides.’

d) ‘Humans and animals are equal.’

e) ‘Stealing is always wrong.’

[Total for section A: 20 marks]

Section B

*Write a short story on **one** of the following topics:*

a) The other side of the mirror

b) My great grandmother

c) The walk along the motorway

Concentrate more on description and characterisation than fitting in a complicated plot. It’s fine if only one thing happens, as long as you describe it, and how it makes your character feel, in an interesting way!

[Total for section B: 20 marks]

Section C

Read this extract from Simon Schama's A History of Britain.

In your own words summarise Schama's argument.

Historians like a quiet life, and usually they get it. For the most part, history moves at a deliberate pace, working its changes subtly and incrementally. Nations and their institutions harden into shape or crumble away like sediment carried by the flow of a sluggish river. But there are moments when history is unsubtle; when changes arrive in a violent rush, decisive, bloody, traumatic; as a truck-load of trouble, wiping out everything that gives a culture its bearings – custom, language, law and loyalty. 1066 was one of those moments.

It is certainly true that, for the majority of the population of Anglo-Saxon England (let alone the rest of Britain), 1066 was mostly a matter of exchanging lords. The slaves at the bottom of Anglo-Saxon society who could be bought and sold could hardly have cared less what language their masters spoke. Peasants ploughed their fields, fed swill to their pigs, prayed to avoid poverty and pestilence and watched the seasons roll around.

It is true that every spring, the grass came up green again. But in 1066 there were bones under the buttercups and the entire governing class of Anglo-Saxon England, some 4000 to 5000 lords, had been made to vanish and power, wealth, men and beasts had been given to foreigners. You could survive and still be English. You could even speak the language. But politically you were now a member of an inferior race. You lived in England, but it was no longer your country.

[Total for section C: 20 marks]

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