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ENGLISH SAMPLE

PAPER

11+ ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

BANCROFT'S SCHOOL
11+ ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS
GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PARENTS

ENGLISH

Candidates will take an English test in two sections. There is no separate Scholarship paper.

Section A: Reading and Understanding (45 Minutes)

The children will be asked to read two or more passages in a reading booklet and then answer questions on what they have read in a separate answer book. There are a few questions, which call for longer answers. There will also be a few multiple-choice questions. The design of the answer book indicates the type of answer required.

Questions will test a variety of comprehension skills, such as the understanding of the vocabulary, sentence structure and inferred meaning.

Section B: Writing (5 Minutes planning + 15 Minutes writing)

The children will be given an essay title asking them to take some of the ideas from the extract or poem in the Reading Booklet and develop them into their own story or description.

Marks are earned by writing relevantly and showing originality and accuracy; punctuation, spelling and grammar are all important here. They are also awarded for how well the essay is organised and how interesting it is in content.

Preparation:

Children who are familiar with the format of the Key Stage Two tests should not need any preparation other than working through the two sample papers.



Bancroft's School

Entrance Examination – English

2016

Reading Booklet

This booklet contains two pieces of writing:

On pages 1 -3 there is a passage called **A Visit to the Circus**.

Read this passage and then answer the questions in **Part 1** of your answer book.

On pages 4-5 you will find a poem called **A Worry**.

Read the poem and then answer the questions in **Part 2** of your answer book.

A Visit to the Circus

The narrator, Dominic, visits a travelling circus with his friend, Holly Stroud.

It only stayed a day or two. We walked to it on a breezy day, a little bunch of kids of all ages from the estate. Other kids, other families walked across the great green spaces from the other estates and from streets of terraced houses to gather at the red tent. Inside, the tent was like the night – tiny holes in the fabric letting in light like a million scattered stars. It must have been a sad and run-down thing but it seemed a thing of power, transporting us into an astonishing night while an ordinary afternoon passed by in our ordinary town outside.

The tightrope walker came on last. His rope was strung between two poles. He danced into the ring. He had a sky-blue cloak on his back. He roamed the ring to show himself to everyone.

He called out to us in an accent none of us suspected could exist in our world.

'I am Gabrielli. I dare to do what no other dares to do. I dare to walk with nothing beneath, just empty space and then the hard and deadly earth.' He pointed up to the rope. 'Do you believe I can do this thing, that I can walk from this point to this point and not fall?'

'Yes,' Holly whispered. 'Of course you can!' She grinned. 'I bet he pretends he can't. I bet he seems about to fall. I bet he makes it to the end.'

'Yes,' I whispered too, but with less belief. I stared up at the narrow cord across the emptiness. How could a man do such a thing?

'Can I?' Gabrielli called again. 'I can't hear you!'

'Yes! Yes!' the young ones yelled.

'Yes!' called Holly. 'Yes, you can!'

Gabrielli calmed down.

'That is good,' he told us. 'For if you truly believe in me, children, then I will not fall.'

He threw his cloak into the gathering silence. He climbed up to his rope. A spotlight shone upon him and cast his silhouette on to the cloth above. An assistant stretched up to hand him a long balancing pole. He took the pole, weighed it between his hands, slipped them across it so that it was balanced, held it horizontally across himself, breathed deeply and stepped out.

And so he walked, and yes, there was a moment when he swayed, when the rope seemed to lurch beneath him, when he leaned right over, when he truly seemed to be right on the point of tottering, but he corrected himself, and he didn't fall.

We cheered so loudly. He grinned in joy and triumph and relief. He posed for us with his chest held out.

'Thank you, children!' he called. 'You kept me safe. Now keep me safe again. Keep me on my tightrope.'

And off he set again, and then again, and then again. The tent was small. It seemed we could almost reach out to touch him, that we could almost guide him with our hands across the spaces above us. But we held him there with our breath, with our hope, with our faith. He walked, he teetered, he smiled. He didn't fall.

And he came to earth at last, leaping the final inches to the circus ring. He gathered up his cloak of sky.

'Thank you,' he said again.

He waved. And I was certain that he looked directly at Holly Stroud and me as he gave us thanks again.

'Without you, children,' he said, 'I am as nothing.' Then he went from sight into the darkness beyond the circus curtains.

We went out into the shining day. Our eyes stung as they adjusted to the light.

'We could do that, Dominic,' Holly told me as we headed back towards the estate. 'We could be brilliant tightrope walkers.'

She stepped across the earth as if it were nothing but a half-inch of rope across the emptiness. She teetered, laughed, straightened again.

'Couldn't we?' she said. 'We're light, we're strong, we're young.'

I thought it was a joke, but the next morning she was at our door with a rolled up washing line in her hands.

A Worry

It's come to live in my room – a worry.
I asked when was it planning to leave?
It said it was in no particular hurry.
It's not slimy and it's not furry.
It's not clammy and it's not hairy.
I can't describe it.
When I whip round to stare it straight
In the eye, it's not there.
But believe me,
If there's one thing I know for certain, for sure,
I know the worry's there.

It *hunkers down. It squats. **crouches*
Its breathing swaps the colour of my room
From cheerful to gloom. The curtains look drawn.
The bed is a wreck.
My face in the mirror looks like a vampire's had a takeaway
From the neck.
It's there at dawn – the worry.
I've told it I'm too young to marry!
I want to be free!
No no no no no, it said,
I belong to it forever and it belongs to me.

Help! *Au secours! Mayday! **French for 'help'*
What can I do?
Will anyone credit the size the worry has grown to?

A rat. A mongrel. A puma. An ape. A creature from Mars.
Can anyone hear the sound of the worry's voice?
A wasp. Slow handclaps. A dentist's drill. The squealing brakes
Of skidding cars.
And what about other girls?
What about boys?
Do they have worry growing like funghi
Over their books and toys?

Now life is hell.
Life is a horrid trick.
I'm worried sick.



Bancroft's School

Entrance Examination – English

2016

Reading and Understanding – Section A

Answer Book

My first name is:
My last name is:
My date of birth is:
The school I go to is:

Mark

Section A : Reading & Understanding

You have a total of 45 minutes for this test.

In this answer book there are different types of questions.

The space for your answer shows you how you need to answer each question:

- For some questions you must write only one word or phrase.
- Other questions need longer answers in one or more sentences.
- A few questions ask you to write at greater length.
- The number of marks available will also tell you how many points you need to make.

Work through the booklet until you are told to stop.

Try to answer all the questions.

Write neatly.

If you finish within the allocated time, go back and check your answers.

A new answer booklet will be issued for Section B.

Part 1

These questions refer to the passage called ***A Visit to the Circus*** which is on pages 1-3 of your reading booklet. The narrator, Dominic, is the boy who is telling the story. In the passage, he visits a travelling circus with his friend, Holly Stroud. You will probably need about 30 minutes for this section.

1. How do the local children and families get to the circus tent?

_____ (1)

2. Look at lines 4-8. What impression do we get of the circus tent? Use your own words.

_____

_____

_____

_____ (2)

3. Look at lines 12-14. What is strange about the way Gabrielli speaks? Use your own words.

_____

_____

_____

_____ (2)

4. Look at lines 13-26. What is the relationship between the children and the tightrope walker?

_____

_____

_____

_____ (2)

5. Give one word or phrase of your own for "lurch" as used in line 33.

_____ (1)

6. Which of the following phrases is closest in meaning to "we held him there with our breath, with our hope, with our faith" (lines 42-43)? Tick one.

The children focused their whole minds on wishing that he would not fall _____

The children gave him encouragement to carry out his act by believing in him _____

The children went up to support him on the rope _____

The children reached up and held the rope to prevent him from falling _____

(1)

7. What is meant by "he gathered up his cloak of sky" in lines 45-46?

(2)

8. How does Gabrielli feel about his own tightrope walking abilities? Look at most of the passage up to line 51 and give your reasons.

(4)

9. Why do you think the narrator describes the day as "shining" in line 52?

(1)

10. Looking at the whole passage, how does Holly Stroud feel about the tightrope walker? Give reasons for your answer.

(4)

11. Think about what you have learnt about Holly and Dominic in the passage. Do you think that Dominic will join Holly in trying to walk the tightrope? Give reasons for your answer.

(4)

Part 2

These questions are about the poem ***A Worry*** on pages 4-5 of your reading booklet. You will probably need to spend about 15 minutes on this section.

12. Look at the first two lines of the poem. What do we find out about the girl's problem? Use your own words.

_____

_____

_____ (2)

13. Look at lines 4-8. Why do you think the girl can't describe her worry?

_____

_____

_____

_____ (2)

14. What do you think the poet means by "its breathing swaps the colour of my room from cheerful to gloom" in lines 13-14?

_____

_____

_____

_____ (2)

15. Give one word or phrase of your own which means the same as "wreck" as used in line 15.

_____ (1)

16. Look at lines 25-29. Why does the girl find the worry particularly unpleasant? Use your own words.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ (4)

17. Looking back at the poem as a whole, how do you think the worry is affecting the girl's life? Use your own words, and try not to repeat anything you have written before.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ (4)

If you have finished, go back and check your answers until instructed to begin Section B, the Writing Test



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Entrance Examination – English

2016

Writing – Section B

Answer Book

My first name is:
My last name is:
My date of birth is:
The school I go to is:

Mark

Section B : Writing

Do NOT start to write your essay until you are told to do so.

You have 20 minutes for this test

You should use about 5 minutes for planning and 15 minutes for writing

You will be awarded marks for organising your writing well and making the essay interesting.

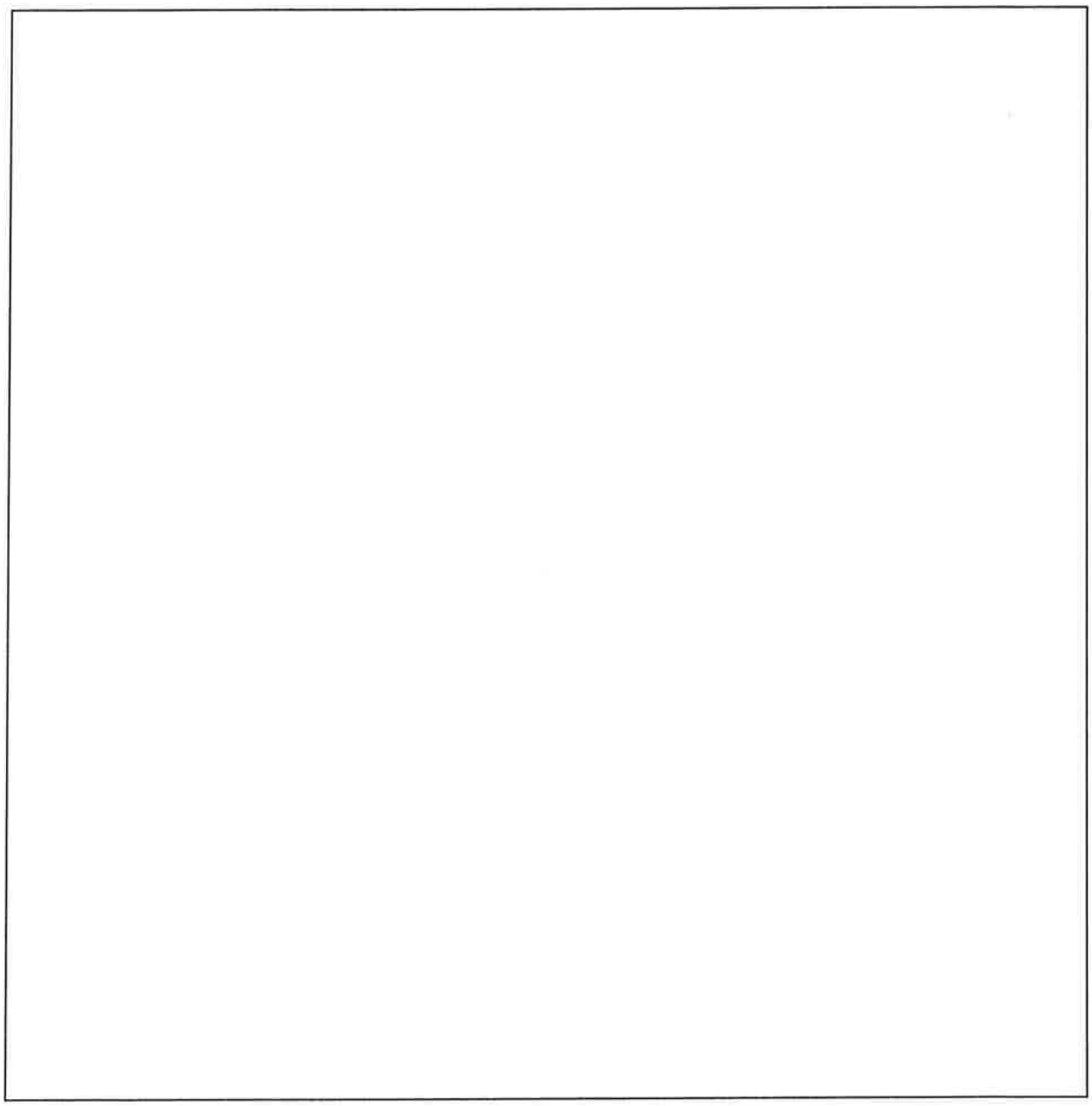
Be careful with spelling, punctuation and paragraphing: you will earn more marks if your writing is accurate.

Use all of the time allowed.

Imagine that, at the end of his act, Gabrielli asks for child volunteers to try out the tightrope and he chooses Dominic or Holly. Write about what happens when he takes him/her up to the tightrope in front of the circus audience. You can write from the child's point of view, or you can use a third person narrator.

(20 marks)

Use the box below to plan your essay



Writing