KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM

Admission Paper in English

Section A: Reading and answering questions.

Reading Time: 10 minutes
Writing Time: 30 minutes

(This paper will be collected at the end your time, and you will be given a second paper.)

This leaflet contains an excerpt from a story, which you are asked to read carefully.

When you have read each one, please answer the questions. Write complete sentences, not short phrases, unless the question simply asks you to list words. So, if the question asks "Where was Humpty Dumpty sitting before his fall?",

- **don't** write "a wall" or "on a wall"
- **do** write "He was sitting on a wall."

It is worth being careful about this: you will score better in the examination if you write in sentences.

Good Luck!

Candidate's Name .....

Candidate's Number .....

At Christmas in 1914, soon after the start of the First World War, British and German soldiers abandoned shooting at each other and played football instead. Here is an excerpt from a story about those events…

Tom used his left foot to trap the football as it bounced across the frozen mud, flicked it up with his right and headed it towards Tocky, who dived, caught the ball in both hands and threw it to a group of Germans.

In a flash a fast and furious football match had begun. Goals were marked by caps: Tocky, naturally, was in one goal and a huge German in the other. Apart from that, it was wonderfully disorganised: part football, part ice-skating, with unknown numbers on each team. There was no referee and no one recorded the score.

How good it was to be no longer an army of moles, but up and running on top of the ground that had threatened to entomb them for so long. And this time Tom could really hear a big crowd: and he was playing for England.

Tom played his usual centre forward position, with Titch to his left and little Billy on the wing. As the game surged back and forth across No Man's Land the players warmed to their sport, and the goalposts grew into piles of discarded greatcoats and tunics. Steam rose from the men, and their faces were wreathed in smiles and clouds of breath in the clear frosty air.

Some British officers took a dim view of the sport, and when the game ended in exhaustion the men were encouraged back to their trenches for a carol service and supper.

"Good night, Tommies. See you tomorrow."

"'Night, Fritz. We'll have another game."

But Boxing Day passed without a game: the officers were alarmed at what had happened. If such friendly relations continued, how would they persuade the men to fight again? How could the war go on? So the men were not allowed to leave their trenches. There were a few secret meetings here and there along the Front, and gifts and souvenirs were exchanged when officers were not watching.

Two days later, a message was thrown over from the German side. An important general was due to visit their section that afternoon, and would expect to see some action. The Germans therefore would start firing at 3 p.m. and all Tommies should please keep their heads down. At three o'clock a few warning shots were fired over the British trenches and then heavy fire lasted for an hour. All Tommies kept their heads down.

At dawn a few days later, the Germans mounted a full-scale attack. The friendly Germans from Saxony had been withdrawn and been replaced by fresh, warlike troops from Prussia.

Withering British fire drove them back and the order was given to counter-attack, to take the German trenches before they could reorganise themselves. Tom and his comrades scrambled over the parapet. Tocky, who still had the football, dropkicked it far into the mist of No Man's Land.

"That'll give somebody a surprise," he said.

"Why are goalies always daft?" thought Tom.

They were on the attack now, running in a line: Tom in a centre forward position, Titch to his left and young Billy on the wing.

From the corner of his eye Tom saw Tocky dive full-length, then curl up as if clutching a ball in the best goalkeeping tradition.

"Daft as a brush," Tom thought.

Suddenly they were all tackled at once: the whole line went down. Tom found himself in a shell crater, staring at the sky. Everything went black for a few seconds, then he could see the hazy sky again. He couldn't move his legs. And there was someone else in the crater.

Tom dimly recognised the gleam of a fixed bayonet, the outline of a German.

"*Wasser, Wasser*," the German said.

It was almost the only German word Tom knew. He fumbled for his water bottle and passed it across. The German drank thirstily, but was too weak to return the bottle.

"*Kinder*?" he asked. Tom shook his head. The German held up three fingers; when Tom tried to shake his head again, to show that he did not understand, everything went black again.

Later he saw a pale ball of gold in the misty sky. "There's a ball in heaven," he thought. "Thank God. We'll all have a game when this nightmare's over."

Questions

1. Find and write out **four** words or phrases from the passage which show that the day of the football match was a very cold day.

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2. Find and write out **three** pieces of evidence from the passage that Tocky is a goalkeeper.

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3. How were the goals marked at the beginning of the match?

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4. How did the goalposts *change* as the match went on, and why did this happen?

HOW……

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WHY……

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5. List **three** ways in which this football match is *unlike* a normal one.

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6. Why was the match "part ice-skating" (line 6), do you think?

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7. List **two** ways in which this football match is making Tom's dreams come true.

ONE……

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TWO……

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8. Why did the soldiers feel "entombed" (line 9) much of the time? Try to think of **two** reasons.

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9. Explain briefly why the British officers disapproved of the football match.

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10. The passage describes *two* separate attacks by the German troops. How were these two attacks different, and why?

HOW……

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WHY……

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11. The writer makes the British counter-attack (beginning at line 31) sound like another football match. List **five** details which make the two things sound surprisingly similar.

ONE……

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TWO……

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THREE……

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FOUR……

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FIVE……..

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12. Can you suggest why the writer might have *wanted* to compare the two things?

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13. This passage shows us that soldiers fighting on both sides in World War I sometimes felt great sympathy and friendliness towards the enemy. Please list **five** examples of such sympathy or friendliness from the passage.

ONE……

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TWO……

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THREE……

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FOUR……

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FIVE……

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14. Can you suggest a plausible reason *why* they might have felt this way?

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15. The German whom Tom meets in the shell crater sounds dangerous or menacing when we first hear of him. How does the writer make him sound this way?

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16. What does *Wasser* (line 46) mean in German?

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17. *Kinder* (line 49) is the German word for "children". Why do you think the German said this to Tom?

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This is the end of this paper. If you have any time spare, use it to check your answers. You will be given the second English paper soon.