NORTH LONDON INDEPENDENT GIRLS' SCHOOLS' CONSORTIUM

SAMPLE ENGLISH QUESTIONS

FIRST YEAR ENTRANCE

ENGLISH

Time: I hour 15 minutes

Please answer both parts of the paper

PART A (READING) spend 45 minutes on this part.

PART B (WRITING) spend 30 minutes on this part.

You may write in either ink or pencil

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer both parts of the paper.

PART A and PART B are worth equal marks.

PART A: READING (45 minutes)

- Spend 5 minutes reading the passage and the questions which follow.
- You will be told when the 5 minutes are over.
- You can mark the story by underlining words and phrases.
- Do not write anything in the booklet during this time.
- Spend 40 minutes writing your answers in the answer booklet provided.

PART: WRITING (30 minutes)

- Use ONE of the ideas for your writing.
- Spend 30 minutes writing on the piece of paper provided.
- Make sure that you put your name on the top of the paper.
- Put the number of the idea you have chosen to write about in the margin.

You may write in either ink or pencil.

The writer, Joan, attends a ballet class which is preparing for a performance when Joan's teacher, Miss Flegg, tells her that she is going to be a mothball instead of a butterfly in the dance.

A mothball is white and shaped like a ball. It is put in wardrobes to protect clothes from moths, which do not like its smell.

The Butterfly Frolic

Miss Flegg put her face down close to mine so I could see the wrinkles around her eyes up close and smell the sour toothpaste smell of her mouth, and said slowly and distinctly, 'You'll do as I say or you won't be in the dance at all. Do you understand?'

Being left out altogether was too much for me. I capitulated, but I paid for it. I had to stand in the mothball costume with Miss Flegg's hand on my shoulder while she explained to the other Teenies, in their wispy skirts and shining wings, about the change in plans and my new, starring role. They looked at me, scorn on their painted lips; they were not taken in.

I went home. I went into the bathroom and locked the door. Then I wept uncontrollably, lying on the floor with my face against the fluffy pink bath mat. Afterwards I pulled the laundry hamper over so I could stand on it and look into the bathroom mirror. My made-up face had run, there were black streaks down my cheeks like sooty tears and my purple mouth was smudged and swollen. What was the matter with me? It wasn't that I couldn't dance. My mother pleaded briefly with me through the locked bathroom door. I came out, but wouldn't eat any dinner: someone besides me would have to suffer. My mother wiped the makeup off my face, scolding me because it would have to be done again, and we set out once more.

I had to stand enviously off stage, red-faced and steaming in the hated costume, listening to the coughs and the scraping of folding chairs, then watching while the butterflies tinkled through the movements I myself had memorised, I was sure, better than any of them. The worst thing was that I still didn't understand quite why this was being done to me, this humiliation disguised as a privilege.

At the right moment Miss Flegg gave me a shove and I lurched onto the stage, trying to look as she had instructed me, as much like a mothball as possible. Then I danced. There were no steps to my dance, as I hadn't been taught any, so I made it up as I went along. I swung my arms, I bumped into the butterflies, I spun in circles, and stamped my feet as hard as I could on the boards of the flimsy stage, until it shook. I threw myself into the part, it was a dance of rage and destruction, tears rolled down my cheeks behind the fur, the butterflies would die; my feet hurt for days afterwards. This isn't me,' I kept saying to myself, 'they're making me do it'; yet even though I was concealed in the heavy white costume which flopped about me and made me sweat, I felt ridiculous as if this dance was the truth about me and everyone could see it.

The butterflies scampered away on cue and much to my surprise I was left in the centre of the stage, facing an audience that was not only laughing but applauding vigorously. Even when the beauties, the tiny thin ones, trooped back for their curtsey, the laughter and clapping went on, and several people, who must have been fathers rather than mothers, shouted 'Bravo mothball'. It puzzled me that some of them seemed to like my ugly, bulky costume better than the pretty ones of the others.

After the recital Miss Flegg was congratulated on her priceless touch with the mothball. My mother appeared pleased. 'You did fine,' she said, but I still cried that night over my thwarted wings. I would never get a chance to use them now, since I had decided already that much as I loved dancing school I was not going back to it in the autumn. It's true I had received more individual attention than the others, but I wasn't sure it was a kind I liked.

Margaret Atwood

PART A: READING

Spend 35 minutes on answering these questions.
Except where indicated, you should use your own words as far as possible.

Questions on *The Butterfly Frolic*

1) What do you think is unpleasant about the way Miss Flegg tells Joan that she must be a mothball? (Paragraph 1)
Give **two** ways.

1) ……. 1 mark

2) ……. 1 mark

2) In your own words give **two** reasons why Joan gives in to Miss Flegg and agrees to be a mothball

1) ……. 2 marks

……

2) ……..

…… 2 marks

3) Joan is in a mothball costume which is described as "**heavy**" and "**white**".

a) Find the words in line 6 which **describe** the other giris' costumes.

…… 2 marks

b) How do you think Joan feels about the other girls' costumes?

…… 2 marks

4} Re-read paragraph 3. We know that Joan feels upset because it says that she cries. Give **one** other feeling that she has and say, in your own words, how you know this from the description of her.

Feeling:

…… 1 mark

How do you know this?

……

…… 2 marks

5) "The butterflies tinkled through the movements." (line 20) What does the word "tinkled" suggest about their movements?

…… 2 marks

6) Joan is told to dance the part of a mothball and in line 28 she says, "I threw myself into the part". In your own words describe how she does this.

……

……

…… 4 marks

……

7) In line 37 Joan "is puzzled" that some of the audience seems to like her better than the butterflies. Why do you think that some of the audience prefer her performance? Explain fully.

……

……

…… 4 marks

……

……

8) Explain in your own words what Joan means by the following:

1. "This humiliation disguised as a privilege". (line 22)

……

……

……

3 marks

2 "My thwarted wings". (line 41)

……

……

……

3 marks

9) Joan decides not to go back to dancing school in the autumn. From what you have read in the passage do you think it is the right decision for her? Give reasons.

……

……

……

3 marks

……

Total

PART B: WRITING

Spend 30 minutes on your writing.

Remember to leave time to check your work carefully.