The North London Independent Girls' Schools' Consortium

YEAR 7 ENTRANCE

January 2008

ENGLISH

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

The reading passage is printed on a separate piece of paper

First Name	
Last Name	

Total Marks: Part A		Total Marks: Part B		Total Marks: Part A & B	

INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE ANSWER BOTH PARTS OF THE PAPER

Part A: Reading (approx 45 minutes)

- Spend 10 minutes reading the story and the questions which follow.
- You will be told when the 10 minutes are over.
- You can mark the story by underlining words and phrases.
- Do not write anything in your booklet during this time.

Spend about 35 minutes writing your answers in the answer booklet

Part B: Writing (approx 30 minutes)

- Spend about 30 minutes writing on the piece of paper provided.

- Make sure you put your name at the top of the paper.

YOU MAY WRITE IN EITHER INK OR PENCIL

BLANK PAGE

Please turn over for the questions

PART A: READING

Spend 35 minutes on answering these questions.

Questions on the passage.

1) In lines 1-6 find FIVE details which explain why the teacher thinks the boys are badly behaved (5 marks)

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5 marks

2) Choose THREE details from lines 7-16 and explain why they show that the boy is proud of his conkers (6 marks)

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6 marks

3) IN YOUR OWN WORDS explain how the boy reacts when the teacher tries to take away his conkers (lines 18-27)(4 marks)

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4) How does the writer make Mr Eggert seem ridiculous in lines 36-42? (5 marks)

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4 marks

5 marks

5) In lines 43-57 how does the writer increase the sense of chaos in the classroom? (8 marks)

8 marks

6) Looking at lines 58-71, explain in your own words the boy's different feelings about Mr Eggert (6 marks)

6 marks

7) The writer uses effective comparisons in the passage. What do you think the writer means by:

‘the craze for conker-fights had spread like an epidemic’ *(line 12)* (2 marks)

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2 marks

‘thoughts flashed through my mind as my mental camera stopped on the scene’ *(line 29)* *(2 marks)*

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2 marks

‘It was like the collapse of a tug-of-war team’ *(line 36) (2 marks)*

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2 marks

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‘The scene was like an explosion in a marble factory’ (*line 50)*

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2marks

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8) Looking back at the whole passage, describe your impressions of the character of the boy. Give your reasons fully, using evidence from the passage (8 marks)

8 marks

PART B: WRITING

INSTRUCTIONS:

Spend 30 minutes on your writing.

Remember to leave time to check your work carefully.

TASK:

- Imagine you are the boy in the story. Describe another lesson with Mr. Eggert

50 marks

Adapted from 'Horse Chestnuts' by D J Brindley

This story is set in a boys' school some years ago. The boy in the story has been collecting conkers from a horse chestnut tree.

'Every time I come into this room you're making a noise! I've had enough of it. This class is always causing trouble. No, don't start making excuses, I don't want to hear any more. It's about time you learnt to behave decently when a teacher's out of the room. You there! Pay attention! And don't smirk when I talk to you- your impudence has gone beyond a joke. Why were you out of your desk, anyway? And what's that you've got in your hand?' **6**

It was Egghead again- he always caught me doing something odd. I suddenly realised that I'd been standing in the middle of the room and shouting at the top of my voice, swinging my six foot string of horse chestnuts: all carefully pierced and threaded (after having been dipped in vinegar to harden them), ready to battle against any presumptuous rivals from 3A. It was the height of the season, and the craze for conker-fights had spread like an epidemic around the school. I had a marvellous array: large and gleaming brown, meticulously threaded on a long string of black shoelaces. **14**

But old Egghead (his real name was Egget) didn't appreciate either the effort of collecting them or the brilliance of their display. He was furious. And he'd hardly got his breath back from screaming before he'd spotted the string and was flying down the gangway, gown outspread, to seize the end. But this was one prize I wasn't going to give up. With a jerk he succeeded in wrenching the one end away from me, but I held on to the other as fiercely as a rat. **20**

'You can't take these away from me,' I cried, 'I wasn't doing anything with them.'
'How dare you be impertinent to me?' Egghead expostulated.
'Because you're impertinent to me!' I replied.
'I've had my fill of you!' he gasped, his eyes bulging and his eyebrows assuming prominence in his forehead.
'Yes, and I've had my fill of you,' I said, my confidence mounting since he had failed to act violently to my first rude retort. **27**

He started to pull, but I held on fast. He tried to yank the string out of my hand and I only gripped tighter. Thoughts flashed through my mind as my mental camera stopped on the scene. I wondered what he might do; send me to the Headmaster? Threaten me with detention? Or maybe, (I was in a slight frenzy by now) ask me to translate the fight into Latin. I was trying to remember whether the Romans had conker-fights in the arena, and if so, what was the Latin for conker, as we pulled and pulled. I began to imagine myself a Roman, and was determined at all costs that I should win. **35**

Then it happened. The string snapped. It was like the collapse of a tug-of-war team. One minute Egghead was there, the veins throbbing in his huge red face, the next he was gone, catapulting backwards over chairs and desks in a most undignified manner, the broken string waving helplessly in his hands. His foot banged down in front of the desk, then shot right under it. I've never heard such a crack as his head made on that desk. I think the mark's there now if you look carefully. But the conkers . **42**

Six feet of them, beautiful, rounded, polished, picked in the full ripeness of Autumn, went rolling in all directions. Down the gangways, beneath the desks, under the blackboard, and out of the room though the French windows. I started to laugh. Then the whole class laughed. They rolled in the aisles until they were hysterical; they had to pick up conkers to keep sane. And when twenty voices were shrieking aloud, and twenty bodies scrabbling furiously over the floor, the Headmaster walked in. **49**

The scene was like an explosion in a marble factory. Some of the boys were lying full length, reaching out under cupboards and bookshelves; others were finding the scattered conkers and then surreptitiously losing them again to prolong the confusion. In the background I could vaguely see Egghead being helped to his feet by two over-enthusiastic assistants. They supported him beneath each arm, but his spectacles had been lost in the melee, so he only dimly perceived that a new factor had entered the room. He sensed rather than saw the presence of the Headmaster. **57**

Now I had never got on particularly well with old Egghead, but I knew that neither had the Headmaster been too pleased with his total inability to control even a good-natured class like ours. There had been an incident during the previous term when his Latin class had been taught by one of the boys, complete with cane, gown, and a mortar-board* loaned from the Dramatic Society, while he himself had been pleading to be let out of a cupboard. Though he wasn't exactly my best pal, Egghead was a least a fairly decent sort of fellow: after all, he'd played chess for Cambridge, and this impressed me; he had a rather nice wife who sometimes took us home and gave us tea with jam and cream-cakes. One couldn't let this kind of man leave the school without a twinge of conscience, despite the fact that he couldn't teach a word of Latin. (What use was the subject, anyway?) So as awareness of the impending disaster slowly dawned, I started to think very fast. For Egghead it could be a matter of life or death- his Fate was in the balance. **71**

* *mortar-board* a square-topped hat worn by teachers