Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 11+

ENGLISH

PAPER I

Monday 16 January 2006

Please read this information before the examination starts.

- You have 5 minutes' reading time.
- After that you may start writing your answers when you are ready to do so. You have 40 minutes for writing.
- Answer in full sentences and use your own words whenever possible.
- Use your best handwriting and take care with spelling and punctuation.

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Read the passage and answer the questions which follow it.

This story is set in London 200 years ago. The boy who tells the story, Joey, works as a coster, selling fruit and vegetables. Daisy is a donkey.

I started shouting the wares as soon as we were back in Whitechapel. I had a voice like a canary, being only ten, and my sandy-coloured hair helped too. Poll said it made me look honest, but that's a load of rubbish. Some of the worst twisters I know have got fair hair and a straight pair of blue eyes – but whatever it was, I always did well at selling. 'Fresh red apples!' I'd sing out. 'Sweet oranges, two a penny!' And if the customers smiled at me, I always smiled back. They like that.

By mid-afternoon we'd sold the whole barrow-load except for a couple of cabbages and a few leeks, and when we got home Curly nodded at them and said, 'You can have those.' If there was a lot left, he'd keep it to sell the next day, but when there wasn't much he let me sell it myself and keep what I made on it. All the coster boys worked that way, for 'bunts' as we called it. So I unharnessed Daisy and rubbed her down and fed her, then went off out again with the leeks and cabbages in a shallow basket (we always called them 'shallows'), the leather strap round my neck.

This was the best time of the day. I felt like a proper person when I was out on my own, with nobody telling me what to do. I walked up to the street market. The daylight was fading and most of the stalls were packing up, but the butcher's shop was still open in a blaze of red and white under its row of gas lamps, and I could smell chestnuts roasting, and a meaty whiff from the pie stall. A barefoot girl a bit younger than me was trying to sell the last of her violets, but she wasn't having much luck. She looked at me as I passed and shrugged, and I gave her a smile, trying to remember her name. Rose, that was it. Red Rose, on account of her mop of hair, bright as new carrots.

'Good leeks and cabbages!' I sang out. 'All fresh and lovely!' I got no takers for a bit, then a woman stopped and looked. 'Last ones left, lady,' I said. 'Beautiful leeks, white as milk they are.'

'How much d'you want for them?' she asked.

I could see she was the bargaining sort – her thin mouth told me that – so I asked her a halfpenny more than I wanted, and settled on twopence for the lot, which was good money. 'You drive a hard bargain, lady,' I told her while she pushed the stuff into her basket, and she gave a little nod, pleased with herself.

Rose had caught up with me, and I gave her a quick wink and said to the woman, 'She's my sister. Twopence halfpenny the violets, clear 'em up? Smell how sweet they are – fresh picked this morning.'

'Ought to be threepence,' said Rose.

'Absolute nonsense,' the woman said. 'I'll give you twopence, and that's more than they're worth.'

'Done,' said Rose quickly.

Neither of us laughed until the woman had gone.

1. What does ‘shouting the wares’ mean in line 1? (1)

2. Does Joey like Curly? Give evidence from the passage to justify your opinion. (3)

3. Joey uses comparisons to describe Rose’s hair (lines 22–23) and the leeks (lines 25–26). Quote these two comparisons and explain what they tell you about Joey. (3)

4. The writer changes the tense of the last verb in line 6. Why do you think she does this? (2)

5. In line 25 Joey talks about the ‘woman’, but when he speaks to her he calls her ‘lady’ (line 30). Why? (3)

6. Carefully explain how the two children take advantage of the woman in lines 28–38 and manage to sell her the violets. (4)

7. What evidence is there in the passage that this story is set 200 years ago? (3)

8. Would you like Joey as a friend? Explain carefully, giving examples from the passage to illustrate your ideas. (6)

(Total marks: 25)

The passage is from *Oranges and Murder* by Alison Prince, published by OUP.

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ENGLISH

PAPER 2

Tuesday 17 January 2006

Please read this information before the examination starts.

- You have 5 minutes' reading and planning time.
- After that you may start writing when you are ready to do so. You have 40 minutes for writing.
- Use your best handwriting and take care with spelling and punctuation.

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Choose ONE of the following titles to write about. Each one is worth 25 marks.

1. The Bargain

2. Write a story using **one** of the following titles:

   (a) The Tree House

   (b) It's My Secret

   (c) Have You Got the Time?

3. Childhood – is it a time which adults have invented, or does childhood truly exist for children?

4. 'Anyone who enjoys camping or walking is longing for a simpler way of life.' Are there advantages to be found in the outdoor life?

5. Adventure . . . excitement . . . animals . . . fear . . . funny stories . . . What are the necessary ingredients in the books you enjoy? Choose one book which is a good example of your favourite type. Discuss character and plot to explain what makes the story enjoyable.

6. Write about the picture opposite in any way you wish.



(Total marks: 35, including a mark out of 10 for spelling/syntax/punctuation)

The picture is *The key to the countryside*, by René Magritte, 1936.