Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 11+

ENGLISH

PAPER 1

Monday 14 January 2008

Please read this information before the examination starts.

- You have 5 minutes' reading and planning 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.
- Use your best handwriting and take care with spelling and punctuation.

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Read the passage below and answer the questions which follow it.

A teenage girl called Ione is putting up posters in her village to advertise a jumble sale she has planned.

Ione walked across the road to the primary school. She had hoped it would be locked up still, for the holidays, and that she could just put her poster up on the gate without asking Miss Casterpool's permission. Ione had never cared for Miss Casterpool, and Miss Casterpool had never cared for her. But the tell-tale bottle-green mini was parked on the kerb just outside, and the narrow side door was open. The summer holidays had clearly ended for the primary children. If Miss Casterpool was back today, they would be back tomorrow, and Ione herself would be next. Sighing, she walked across the tarmac playground and through the side door.

The sick feeling hit her at once, as she had known it would. For every time she returned, for one reason or another, to these corridors and washrooms, classrooms and cloakrooms, she would hear noises and smell smells and see scratches in the woodwork that in all the six years she had spent at the school she had never even noticed, but which now she had left made her gasp with a sudden aching sense of renewed familiarity and of loss.

Ione now walked through the corridors, raising herself on her toes to peep through all the small square glass panes set high in the doors, until she found Miss Casterpool in the infants' classroom, sorting flash cards. Ione remembered flash cards vividly. A rush of revulsion swept her other more delicate feelings away, and she shuddered slightly as she came through the door.

Miss Casterpool did not look up from the flash cards.

'Can I put this poster up on the playground gate?' Ione asked her politely.

'May I,' corrected Miss Casterpool, still not looking up.

Ione sighed. She found May-I grown-ups trying. It was, she recalled, one of the reasons she had never cared for Miss Casterpool.

'May I, then?' she asked.

'No,' said Miss Casterpool, beginning a new pile for short vowel sounds, 'you may not. The playground gates were not designed for posters.'

'It's a very worthy cause,' said Ione. 'It's to buy bullocks to pull ploughs to till the soil to plant seeds to grow food for hungry people. A very worthy cause,' she repeated.

'It would set a dangerous precedent,' warned Miss Casterpool, laying all the flash cards with words ending in silent 'e' on one side.

'Dangerous?'

'All manner of people, seeing your poster on the playground gates, might come to me seeking permission to put up their own posters as well.'

'So?' said Ione.

Miss Casterpool looked up from the flash cards for the very first time. She studied Ione's face closely.

'Are you being insolent, Ione?' she asked. Not being sure whether she was or not, was, Miss Casterpool recalled, one of the reasons she had never cared for Ione.

'No, Miss Casterpool,' said Ione, falling back promptly on the dumb bland tone of voice she knew from experience was the only one Miss Casterpool could take. 'I'm not, really.'

'The gate is not a notice-board,' said Miss Casterpool frostily. 'I consider the subject closed. And, Ione, please carry that other box of flash cards to the office for me on your way out.'

Ione stood perfectly still for a moment. She was willing every single part of her not to feel five years old again, or act that way. And as soon as she was sure she was quite ready, she said calmly:

'No. No, I won't. It might set a dangerous precedent. All manner of people, seeing me carrying your flash card box to the office, might want to carry it too.'

She walked out. With immense self-control she pulled the door to behind her, as quietly as she could. Even if the Brownies put on *Frankenstein*, with real lightning, next year, they would never get her inside the primary school again.

1. Why did Ione hope that the school would still be on holiday? (1)

2. Does the school strike you as old-fashioned? Give examples from the passage to support your view. (2)

3. What makes Ione sigh (line 7)? (2)

4. The flash cards play an important part in this passage.

   (a) What do these flash cards reveal about Miss Casterpool? (3)

   (b) How does Ione use the flash cards to get her own back on Miss Casterpool? (3)

5. The phrase 'had never cared for' is used several times (lines 3, 4, 23, 38). Why do you think the author repeats it? (4)

6. What do lines 27–28 reveal about Ione's character? (4)

7. This extract is told from Ione's viewpoint. Now write Miss Casterpool's version of this meeting in her diary entry that night. (6)

(Total marks: 25)

The passage is from *The Other Darker Ned* by Anne Fine, published by Teens Mandarin.

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