SEVENOAKS SCHOOL

YEAR 7 (11+) ENTRANCE EXAMINATION
January 2012
for entry in September 2012

ENGLISH

Name: ……

School: ……. .

Time allowed: 10 minutes reading time, then 1 hour 5 minutes

Equipment needed: Pen and lined paper

Information for candidates:

1. Write your name and school on this page.
2. You may make notes on this exam paper during the 10 minutes of reading time (you will be told when this begins), but you must not start writing your answers until you are told to do so.
3. Write your answers on the separate paper provided. Please put your name on all the sheets of paper you use. Answer both Section A and Section B.
4. You should write in full sentences and pay attention to both spelling and punctuation.
5. The marks available for each question are indicated in square brackets [ ] after the question.
6. Dictionaries are NOT allowed.

SECTION A

Read through the following passage from 'The Crow Road' by Iain Banks carefully, and answer all the questions below.

There are 20 marks for Part One.

It was the day my grandmother exploded. I sat in the crematorium, listening to my Uncle Hamish quietly snoring in harmony to Bach's Mass in B Minor, and I reflected that it always seemed to be death that drew me back to Gallanach.

I looked at my father, sitting two rows away in the front line of seats in the cold, echoing chapel. His broad, greying-brown head was massive above his tweed jacket (a black arm-band was his concession to the solemnity of the occasion). His ears were moving in a slow, oscillatory manner, rather in the way John Wayne's shoulders moved when he walked; my father was grinding his teeth. Probably he was annoyed that my grandmother had chosen religious music for her funeral ceremony.

My younger brother, James, sat to my father's left. It was the first time in years I'd seen him without his i-pod, and he looked distinctly uncomfortable, fiddling with his single earring. To my father's right my mother sat, upright and trim, neatly filling a black coat and sporting a dramatic black hat shaped like a flying saucer. The UFO dipped briefly to one side as she whispered something to my father. In that movement and that moment, I felt a sudden pang of loss for my grandmother. How her moles would be itching today if she was somehow suddenly reborn!

Glossary
Gallanach – a small town in Scotland
Oscillatory – moving up and down
John Wayne – American actor who often played cowboys
UFO- an unidentified flying object like a flying saucer

1. What three things do you learn in the first paragraph? [3 marks]

2. Pick out TWO details that describe EACH of the following characters: the writer's father, the writer's brother and the writer's mother. Explain what you think the details show about each of the characters. [6 marks]

Read through the following passage from 'Formica' by Jonathan Steffen carefully, and answer all the questions below.

The table had a formica top to it – a dubious mottled pink punctuated with cigarette burns. A green aluminium ashtray, quietly choking on cigarette ends, an untouched bar of chocolate, a battered copy of Gone With the Wind and a tube of antiseptic cream – half-used – distinguished the table from the ten or so others in the antiseptic room. And the three pairs of elbows. The three pairs of eyes belonging to the three pairs of elbows bored a hole in the expiring ashtray.

'You are still taking your pills though, dear?'

'Yes, Mother.'

'Because you must take them you know.'

'I know, Mother.'

'Your pills.'

'Mother, I am still taking my pills. I am taking my pills with a vengeance. I am putting all the energy, all the youthful vigour of my twenty-one years into taking my pills, Mother.'

'There's no need to talk to your mother like that, Neil,' said his father, evenly.

'There's no need to talk to me like that, Neil,' said his mother.

Silence reasserted itself again, pressing the elbows into the table, the eyes into the ashtray.

Glossary
Formica – plastic covering used on table tops and chairs
Gone With the Wind – romantic novel set in the south of the USA

Questions

3. This is the opening to a story. What atmosphere does the author create in the opening paragraph? You should use examples from the passage to support your ideas and explain what you examples show. [7 marks]

4. The writer uses some vivid images (word pictures). Choose two images or word pictures from the passage and write about the picture each one creates in your mind. [4 marks]

SECTION B

Spend 30 minutes on this part. There are 20 marks for this section. Choose ONE of the titles below.

Either

a) Continue the passage from 'Formica'.

or

b) Write about a character who is stuck in an unfamiliar or uncomfortable situation.

or

c) Write about a person who has been important to you or who you admire.

[20 marks]