ALDENHAM SCHOOL

13 + Entrance Paper

SAMPLE PAPER

ENGLISH

Length of examination – One hour

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

This examination consists of two parts:

Answer **all** questions in Section A

Answer **one** question in Section B

Start each section on a new piece of paper

Remember to write your full name and school on each piece of paper you use.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Section A is worth 20 marks

Section B is worth 20 marks

ENGLISH COMPREHENSION

Read the following passage taken from Thomas Hardy's The Return of The Native and then answer the questions in Section A. Then move on to Section B.

Questions 1 to 4 should be answered in full sentences. Try to include as many details as you can.

Hardy set his novels around the market town of Dorchester, near his boyhood home at Bockhampton, on the edge of some wild and spectacular Heathland. The opening of this novel starts with a description of this magnificent and spectacular landscape.

A Face on Which Time Makes but Little Impression

A Saturday afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.

The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance of an instalment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come: darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distinct in the sky. Looking upwards, a furze[1]-cutter would have been inclined to continue work; looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot[2] and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking and dread.

In fact, precisely at this transitional point of its nightly roll into darkness the great and particular glory of the Egdon waste began, and nobody could be said to understand the heath who had not been there at such a time.

The place became full of a watchful intentness now; for when other things sank blooding to sleep the heath appeared slowly to awake and listen. Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis—the final overthrow.

It was a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity. Smiling champaigns of flowers and fruit hardly do this, for they are permanently harmonious only with an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present. Twilight combined with the scenery of Egdon Heath to evolve a thing majestic without severity, impressive without showiness, emphatic in its admonitions, grand in its simplicity. The qualifications which frequently invest the facade of a prison with far more dignity than is found in the facade of a palace double its size lent to this heath a sublimity in which spots renowned for beauty of the accepted kind are utterly wanting. Fair prospects wed happily with fair times; but alas, if times be not fair! Men have oftener suffered from, the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings oversadly tinged. Haggard Egdon appealed to a subtler and scarcer instinct, to a more recently learnt emotion, than that which responds to the sort of beauty called charming and fair.

[1] Furze - Gorse – a type of yellow flowering shrub

[2] A small bundle of sticks bound together to be used as fuel

It was at present a place perfectly accordant with man's nature—neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly; neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame; but, like man, slighted and enduring; and withal singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony. As with some persons who have long lived apart, solitude seemed to look out of its countenance. It had a lonely face, suggesting tragical possibilities.

Section A ***Spend 30 minutes on this section.***

Comprehension questions

1) **What day, month and time is established in the first paragraph?**

   (3 marks)

2) **What mood, tone and atmosphere are set up within the first three paragraphs of the passage? Support your answer with evidence from the text.**

   (5 marks)

3) **What effects do the following phrases have in the passage?**

- The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening
- nobody could be said to understand the heath
- The place became full of a watchful intentness now
- Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis—the final overthrow.
- It was at present a place perfectly accordant with man's nature—neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly; neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame;

   (8 marks)

4) Based on your reading of the passage write **two** paragraphs which would describe your impressions at arriving on Egdon Heath.

   (4 marks)

Section B ***Spend 30 minutes on this section***

ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Choose one of the following ideas to write about.

Spend 5 minutes writing a plan for your work.

Underline after the plan before you begin your composition.

Check that you have:

- Punctuated correctly
- Used different and interesting verbs, adverbs and adjectives
- Included a variety of sentence structures
- Varied the length of your sentences
- Organised your writing into paragraphs
- Checked spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Used descriptive techniques such as similes and metaphors

1) **Write a descriptive piece in which you convey an experience you had in an unusual or remarkable environment. (20 marks)**
2) **Write a story entitled 'A place to be afraid of' (20 marks)**