EPSOM

COLLEGE

ENGLISH

SPECIMEN PAPER

FOR CANDIDATES APPLYING TO YEAR 9 OR YEAR 10

TOTAL TIME ALLOWED: ONE HOUR

The examination comprises two parts:

- Section A: Reading (30 minutes)
- Section B: Writing (30 minutes)

SECTION A – READING TASKS

Spend 30 minutes on this section

Read the passage of text below and answer the questions which follow it. You are advised to read the passage two or three times before you attempt the questions. It is war-time and Carrie and her brother Nick have been sent away from their home in London, as evacuees[1], to live in the safety of a village in Wales with Mr Evans and his sister. Here, after their first night, they meet Mr Evans.

He wasn't an Ogre[2], of course. Just a tall, thin, cross man with a loud voice, pale, staring, pop-eyes, and tufts of spiky hair sticking out from each nostril. Councillor Samuel Isaac Evans was a bully. He bullied his sister. He even bullied the women who came into his shop, selling them things they didn't really want to buy and refusing to stock things that they did. 'Take it or leave it,' he'd say. 'Don't you know there's a war on?"

He would have bullied the children if he had thought they were frightened of him. But although Carrie was a little frightened, she didn't show it, and Nick wasn't frightened at all. He was frightened of Ogres and spiders and crabs and cold water and the dentist and dark nights, but he wasn't often frightened of people. Perhaps this was only because he had never had reason to be until he met Mr Evans, but he wasn't afraid of him, even after that first, dreadful night, because Mr Evans had false teeth that clicked when he talked. 'You can't really be scared of someone whose teeth might fall out,' he told Carrie.

The possibility that Mr Evans' teeth might fall out fascinated Nick from the beginning, from the moment Mr Evans walked into the kitchen while they were having breakfast their first morning and bared those loose teeth in what he probably thought was a smile. It looked to the children more like the kind of grin a tiger might give before it pounced on its prey. They put down their porridge spoons and stood up, politely and meekly.

It seemed to please him. He said, 'You've got a few manners, I see. That's something! That's a bit of sugar on the pill[3]!'

They didn't know what to say to this so they said nothing and he stood there grinning and rubbing his hands together. At last he said, 'Sit down, then, finish your breakfast, what are you waiting for? It's a wicked Sin to let good food get cold. You've fallen on your feet, let me tell you, you'll get good food in this house. So no faddiness[4], mind! No whining round my sister for titbits when my back's turned. Particularly the boy. I know what boys are! Walking stomachs! I told her, you fetch two girls now, there's just the one room, but she got round me, she said, the boy's only a babby!' He looked sharply at Nick. 'Not too much of a babby, I hope. No wet beds. That I won't stand!'

Nick's gaze was fixed on Mr Evans' mouth. 'That's a rude thing to mention,' he said in a clear, icy voice that made Carrie tremble. But Mr Evans didn't fly into the rage she'd expected. He simply looked startled - as if a worm had just lifted its head and answered him back, Carrie thought.

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[1] evacuees – children who were moved out of the major towns and cities and sent to live in the countryside to avoid air-raids during the war.
[2] Ogre – a frightening giant.
[3] sugar on the pill – medicines were traditionally coated in sugar to hide their bitter taste and allow them to be easily swallowed.
[4] faddiness – fussiness/choosiness

He sucked his teeth for a minute. Then said, surprisingly mildly, 'All right. All right, then. You mind your P's and Q's, see, and I won't complain. As long as you toe the chalk line! Rules are made to be kept in this house, no shouting, or running upstairs, and no Language.' Nick looked at him and he went on - quickly, as if he knew what was coming, 'No Bad Language, that is. I'll have no foul mouths here. I don't know how you've been brought up but this house is run in the Fear of the Lord.'

Nick said, 'We don't swear. Even my father doesn't swear. And he's a Naval Officer.'

What an odd thing to say, Carrie thought. But Mr Evans was looking at Nick with a certain, grudging respect. 'Oh, an Officer, is he? Well, well.'

'A Captain,' Nick said. 'Captain Peter Willow.'

'Indeed?' Mr Evans' teeth clicked – to attention, perhaps. He said, grinning again, 'Then let's hope he taught you how to behave. It'll save me the trouble,' and turned on his heel and went back to the shop.

Silence fell. Miss Evans moved from the sink where she'd been all this time, standing quite still, and started to clear the plates from the table.

Nick said, 'You don't mind Language, do you? I mean, I don't know the deaf and dumb alphabet.'

'Don't be smart,' Carrie said, but Miss Evans laughed. Hand to her mouth, bright squirrel eyes watching the door as if she were scared he'd come back and catch her.

Questions:

1. What is Mr Evans' occupation? (1)

   _____

2. Which word from the list below best describes Carrie and Nick's feelings towards Mr Evans in paragraph 2? (1)
   a. Frightened
   b. Curious
   c. Indifferent
   d. Uncertain

3. Select a detail from lines 6-12 and explain in a sentence why it supports your answer to Question 2. (2)

   Detail: _____

   Explanation: _____

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4. Re-read lines 1-5, explain **in your own words** the character of Mr Evans. Include three separate points. (3)

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5. In line 28, why doesn't Mr Evans 'fly into a rage'? Explain in your own words. (2)

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6. Using quotations from lines 6-29, explain how the writer makes Mr Evans such a vivid and interesting character. Use quotations from the text to support your answer. (4)

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7. Find three quotations from the text that give us an insight into Nick's character in this extract. Write out the quotations below, explaining what each one suggests about Nick's character. (6)

Detail 1: _____

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Detail 2: _____

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Detail 3: _____

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8. Why does the writer use the metaphor of 'bright squirrel eyes' to describe Miss Evans in line 45? Explain your answer, referring to other details from the text to support your ideas. (6)

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SECTION B –WRITING TASK
Spend 30 minutes on this section

Continue the story from Miss Evans' point of view. Starting with the phrase: ***At last my brother is asleep ...***

You should include:

- a description of Miss Evans' reflections on Nick and Carrie's first night in Wales
- her thoughts and feelings about the war and life with her brother.

(25 marks)