OUNDLE
School

2018 Non-Common Entrance Examination
Third Form Entry

English

Time allowed: 60 minutes

Instructions

- **Dictionaries are not allowed.**
- Answer on lined paper. Clearly mark your name at the top of each sheet of paper you use.
- Answer ALL the questions in Section A. Answer ONE question from Section B. **You should divide your time equally between both sections.**
- You are expected to write clearly and accurately in your answers. Write in full sentences. You should leave some time towards the end of the examination to check your work carefully.
- The maximum number of marks for this paper is 50.

Section A: Comprehension

Spend about 30 minutes on this section

Mallory and Irvine were mountaineers who died whilst climbing Mount Everest. For a long time their bodies were never found and what had happened to them remained a mystery for many years. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

On 6 June 1924, George Mallory and Andrew Irvine attempted to make history by setting out to reach the summit of Everest and be the first men ever to stand on the peak of the world's highest mountain. When last seen they seemed to be within 800 feet of the summit. They were never seen again. Their story is one of the great romantic tragedies of Everest. But what really happened in the cold, thin air at 28,000 feet?

For three quarters of a century, this is all that has been known with any certainty.

Just after dawn on the morning of 6 June 1924, Mallory and Irvine crawled out of their simple canvas tent on a wind-ravaged saddle of snow, ice and rock and took the first steps in what would become a climb into history.

The men said little to each other. There was little need. They knew the situation was critical. They were running out of supplies and support. In a matter of days, perhaps even hours, the monsoon would sweep up from the south and bury the mountain under wave upon wave of snow.

Now, on this promising June morning, Mallory and Irvine struggled into their primitive, unreliable and brutally heavy oxygen equipment. Irvine, a strapping young man only twenty-two years old, stands calmly with his hands in his pockets, his head twisted slightly as he watches Mallory fuss with his oxygen mask. Mallory, while certainly the finest mountaineer of his day, is, at the age of thirty-eight, getting 'a bit long in the tooth' for these expeditions. Yet he is driven, almost to the point of obsession, by this mountain and is determined to conquer it. If he fusses with the oxygen device, it is understandable: everything must be perfect. They have run out of chances. If they are to become the first human beings to reach the highest point on earth, they must succeed in this attempt. It is do or die.

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Seventy-five years later the Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition set off to retrace the steps of the 1924 expedition. On 1 May 1999, to the astonishment of the world, they made a dramatic discovery when they came across the remains of George Mallory.

This is what seems to have happened. The two mountaineers were in the final stretch of a historic day. Whether they actually reached the summit or not, they had climbed higher on Mount Everest than had anyone before them, much higher. Now, exhausted, dehydrated and oxygenless, they groped down in the dark, with neither moonlight nor their own lanterns or torches to light the way.

Suddenly a misstep: Mallory loses his footing and, in seconds, is plummeting down the rock face past Irvine's position. Or perhaps Irvine slips and pulls Mallory down after him. The extra coils of rope in Mallory's hand unravel and then, after what seems like an eternity but it is only a matter of seconds, there is a sharp jerk. The rope catches on an outcropping, Mallory smashes into the cliff with his right side, and the jolt breaks his ribs. For a millisecond, Mallory thinks he is saved. But the moment ends in a heartbeat as the shock-loaded rope snaps and he continues to fall. Almost immediately, he lands on one foot on a section of steep slope. His right leg snaps just above the top of his boot.

But he does not stop. The slope is too steep, his momentum already too great. He is sliding into the darkness, plummeting towards the final drop-off to the glacier thousands of feet below. He is in agony, but he is not dead and he has not given up. He digs his fingers into the frozen ground and scrabbles at each passing rock. But he is sliding so fast and the ground is so rough that it rips off his gloves. It is as if he is being dragged behind a runaway locomotive and he is trying to brake the speeding engine by the sheer strength of his arms and fingers. Just at the point at which he thinks he may be slowing, however, he hits a tilted slap, flies up, and hits the slope hard, his forehead smashing into a viciously sharp shard of rock. Slowing now, he slides off another ledge and finally stops.

His fingers still claw the slope. He is face down in the rock. His head injury is severe. He is losing consciousness. In his last act – it may not even be conscious – he crosses the good leg over the broken one protectively. Then almost immediately his agony, and his life, end.

He can no longer hear Irvine, who, also injured but alive, is calling to him in the darkness. After a while, Irvine stops calling and begins, instinctively, to drag himself toward camp, which is some 400 yards away. He doesn't make it. At some point exhaustion, his injuries, or some combination of the two, stop him thirty minutes from his camp. He sits down and, in the desperate cold at 27,000 feet, Andrew Irvine, twenty-two years old, yields to the mountain, closes his eyes and slips into a darkness for which there will be no dawn.

1. Give two words to describe the oxygen equipment that the men used.

(1 mark)

2. Look again at lines 8-14. How, and with what effects, does the writer describe the natural environment here, including the weather?

(4 marks)

TURN OVER

3. Pick any two words or phrases that you have not written about already that you feel are particularly effective in this passage. Why do you think the writer chose them? What do they add to your understanding of the contents of the passage?

(4 marks)

4. Look again at lines 35-57. How does the writer create a vivid picture of Mallory's fall?

(8 marks)

5. Looking at the passage as a whole, what do we learn about the characters of Irvine and Mallory? You should use brief quotations to support your answer.

(8 marks)

(Total: 25 marks)

Section B: Composition

Spend about 30 minutes on this section

Answer ONE of the following questions. You are reminded of the importance of clear and accurate written English and of careful presentation in your answers. All questions carry equal marks.

1. Describe an occasion in your life when you did something adventurous. Write in a way that creates a clear picture of what you did in the reader's mind.

(25 marks)

2. 'The men said little to each other. There was little need.' Write a story that begins with these words.

(25 marks)

3. 'Danger!' Use this title as EITHER:

   a) the headline for an article for a teenage magazine

   OR

   b) a speech to present to your school assembly.

(25 marks)