BENENDEN

Lower School Scholarship 2018

ENGLISH

13+

1 Hour

Full Name: _____

Current school: _____

Date: _____

Instructions to Candidates:

- Write your answers in the space provided in this booklet.
- The total mark for the paper is 100
- The first two questions are based on a fiction passage; the final question is to demonstrate your own writing skills.

Read the following extract from Robert Cormier's novel 'Heroes' and answer the questions beneath. In this extract the narrator describes a table tennis tournament at school.

Two hours later, I had survived more games than I could count, time passing in a blur as the ball zoomed back and forth across the table. Serve and return. Spin and chop. The kill shot and the soft shot. My opponents went down in rapid succession. Finally, Joey LeBlanc, who was having a bad day with his serves, lost by a wide margin, 21 to 12, and went off muttering to himself.

Never before had I known such a sense of destiny. I felt invincible, impossible to defeat, the ball always under my control. The spectators often cheered, gasped at a spectacular shot, either by me or by an opponent, and fell silent when the outcome of a contest seemed in doubt. But I knew no doubt. Between games, my eyes sought Nicole and often spotted her smiling encouragement. The centre seemed vacant when I looked and did not see her.

Louis Arabelle also had been winning contest after contest at the other table, drawing his own cheers and applause. We glanced at each other between games and exchanged grins. It seemed inevitable that we would meet in the final contest of the day. Each time I head a burst of applause for the next table, I knew that Louis had scored another spectacular point.

Finally, Louis and me. Standing across the table from each other. Both of us undefeated. Louis tall and rangy with long arms and legs, ready to play his deceptive game, never tense, never hurrying. I prepared myself for his soft strokes and dizzy spins and chops.

Louis took five quick points with his first round of serves, catching me off balance with the casual way he raised his paddle and the ferocity of the ball as it arrowed over the net towards me. A hush fell on the crowd.

I didn't panic, told myself to relax: this was a day in which I could not lose. My own five serves sent the game into a tie and after that I simply planted myself six feet from the table and concentrated on the return. Louis lost three points in a row and for the first time I saw him flushed with frustration, trying harder, frowning and, finally, making mistakes.

I reached 21 points to his 18 simply playing the game Larry LaSalle had taught me, being patient, remaining cool and composed while Louis pressed harder. As he missed his last remaining shot which gave me the victory, a shout when up from the crowd followed by cheers and whistles and the stomping of feet.

I turned, flushed with triumph, my heart beating furiously, blood pumping joyously in my veins. I saw Larry LaSalle coming through the crowd holding the trophy high above his head, saw Nicole beside him, her eyes on me, shining for me.

Question 1

How does the writer show the narrator's changing emotions during the table tennis tournament? (20 marks)

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Please turn over for Question 2

Question 2

The writer attempts to make the table tennis tournament seem exciting and tense for the reader. Explain and describe the methods that the writer uses in order to create tension and excitement in this passage.

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(30 marks)

Question 3 – Writing task:

Write about a sporting experience in a way that makes the reader feel engaged and excited. This could be an account of something that has really happened to you or something that you have made up. Your writing will be marked for its creativity and imagination as well as your written accuracy.

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