RADLEY COLLEGE
Entrance Scholarships

ENGLISH

March 2006

Time allowed – 2 hours

You should spend at least 15 minutes reading, thinking and making notes before writing.

Spend 1 hour on Section A. Spend 45 minutes on Section B.
The paper consists of two questions each worth 40 marks.

You will be rewarded for the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar up to a maximum of 20 marks. Remember to illustrate your answers with quotations taken from the text.

Concise, clear well-written answers will gain the highest marks.

Section A: Read the following texts and answer the questions below.

Poem A

On Turning Ten by Billy Collins

The whole idea of it makes me feel
like I'm coming down with something,
something worse than any stomach ache
or the headaches I get from reading in bad light--
a kind of measles of the spirit,
a mumps of the psyche,
a disfiguring chicken pox of the soul.

You tell me it is too early to be looking back,
but that is because you have forgotten
the perfect simplicity of being one
and the beautiful complexity introduced by two.
But I can lie on my bed and remember every digit.
At four I was an Arabian wizard.
I could make myself invisible
by drinking a glass of milk a certain way.
At seven I was a soldier, at nine a prince.

But now I am mostly at the window
watching the late afternoon light.
Back then it never fell so solemnly
against the side of my tree house,
and my bicycle never leaned against the garage
as it does today,
all the dark blue speed drained out of it. **(line 23)**

This is the beginning of sadness, I say to myself,
as I walk through the universe in my sneakers. **(25)**
It is time to say good-bye to my imaginary friends,
time to turn the first big number.

It seems only yesterday I used to believe
there was nothing under my skin but light.
If you cut me I could shine.
But now when I fall upon the sidewalks of life,
I skin my knees. I bleed.

Poem B

Warning by Jenny Joseph

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick flowers in other people's gardens
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beermats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

1. Read the opening stanza of Poem A.

   How does the poet convey his feelings in this stanza? (4 marks)

2. What do you understand by the following phrases and what contribution do they make to the poem?

a) all the dark blue speed drained out of it (l.23) (4 marks)
b) as I walk through the universe in my sneakers (l.25) (4 marks)

3. Read the last stanza of Poem A.
   How has the poet's world changed and how does his language reflect this change? (4 marks)

4. Read Poem B. What is the tone of this poem? (2 marks)

5. What impression do you get of the poet from the first stanza? Explain how Joseph creates this impression. (4 marks)

6. Comment on the use in Poem B of

a) pronouns (2 marks)
b) conjunctions (2 marks)
c) verb tense (2 marks)

7. Now compare the two poems.
   What differences are there in the ways each poet thinks and writes about getting older? (6 marks)

8. In a paragraph explain which of the poems you prefer. Make detailed reference to the texts in your answer. (6 marks)

Section B

Creative Writing.

Use ONE of the pictures below as the starting point for a story or a piece of descriptive writing. (40 marks)



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