RADLEY

Entrance Scholarships

English

March 2015

Time allowed: 2 hours

There are two extracts and four questions. You should spend roughly the same amount of time on each question. You should leave between 5 and 10 minutes at the end for checking your work carefully.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the paper are worth 20 marks.

You are expected to be able to write accurate, grammatical, well-punctuated prose throughout this paper.

Extract 1

The following is an extract from 'Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?' by Jeanette Winterson.

Read the extract, and answer the question that follows.

To the south of Manchester is the Cheshire plain. Human settlements in Cheshire are among the earliest to be found in the British Isles. There were villages here, and strange yet direct routes to what became Liverpool on the vast and deep River Mersey.

To the north and east of Manchester are the Pennines – the wild rough low mountain range that runs through the north of England, where early settlements were scattered and few, and where men and women lived solitary, often fugitive lives. The smooth Cheshire plain, civilised and settled, and the rough tussocky Lancashire Pennines, the brooding place, the escaping place.

Until the boundary changes, Manchester was partly in Lancashire and partly in Cheshire – making it a double city rooted in restless energy and contradictions.

The textile boom of the early nineteenth century sucked all the surrounding villages and satellite settlements into one vast moneymaking machine. Until the First World War, 65 per cent of the world's cotton was processed in Manchester. Its nickname was Cottonopolis.

Imagine it – the vast steam-powered gaslit factories and the back-to-back tenements thrown up in between. The filth, the smoke, the stink of dye and ammonia, sulphur and coal. The cash, the ceaseless activity day and night, the deafening noise of looms, of trains, of trams, of waggons on cobbles, of teeming relentless human life, a Niebelheim hell, and a triumphant work of labour and determination.

Everyone who visited Manchester both admired it and felt appalled. Charles Dickens used it as the basis for his novel *Hard Times*; the best of times and the worst of times were here – everything the machine could achieve, and the terrible human cost.

Men and women, ill-clad, exhausted, drunken and sickly, worked twelve hour shifts six days a week, went deaf, clogged their lungs, saw no daylight, took their children to crawl under the terrifying clatter of the working looms, picking up fluff, sweeping, losing hands, arms, legs, small children, weak children, uneducated and often unwanted, the women working as hard as the men, and they also bore the burden of the house.

QUESTION:

1. Write an Encyclopaedia entry about Manchester, based on this extract. Use all the relevant facts, and only the relevant facts. [20]

Extract 2

This extract is taken from 'Walking Home' by Simon Armitage.

The scenery, once we'd climbed to the top of Cotherstone Moor, hurdling the ditches, bogs and sikes running laterally across the track, is something to behold. Not because of any dramatic features or breathtaking panoramic vista, but simply because after days and days and miles and miles of trudging across mountain, hill and moor, I'd expected some

kind of easing of the terrain, a falling away towards lowlands and dales and eventually the big populations of the north. But up ahead there is only more of what there was behind. More moor, more hill, more empty upland, layer after layer, row after row, horizon after horizon. I try to count the summits and the valley systems, but there are too many, all blurring and blending, some hazy in the morning sun, others darkened by cloud-shadow and rain, others hung with low cloud, just an unending sequence of elongated whalebacks and high ground for as far as the eye can see, for as far as I need to walk and probably further still.

It's three-thirty by the time I come splattering and spluttering onto the A57, the legendary Snake Pass so beloved by motorbike enthusiasts, day-trippers and couriers of illegal substances. Near its lower reaches sits Ladybower and other reservoirs of the Upper Derwent, home to several pairs of goshawks, the testing site for the bouncing bomb and setting for the film *The Dam Busters*. At the top, where I am, lies some of the most exposed and windswept moorland in the country, and it doesn't take much more than a few flurries of snow for the red warning lights down in the towns to start pulsing on and off, indicating that the road is closed. I enjoy the feel of tarmac on the soles of my boots for a few strides, then set off across Featherbed Moss, and miss the path again by trying a little short cut, hoping to make up lost time, then find it, then lose it once more, then slosh towards a stake in the ground, then on to the next stake and the next, until I reach what I take to be the 'flint factory' of Mill Hill, where the route turns ninety degrees from the south-west to the south-east, and where the stakes end. I'm not just wet now, I'm saturated, from top to bottom and from inside to out. Waterlogged. And chilly, and shivery. I can feel my body heat leaching away through the damp, clingy fabric of my clothes and being spirited off across the landscape by the nagging wind. And through the weather there's just enough visibility to see how the path ascends to the final summit of Kinder Scout, not just into grey, drifting mist, but into real black-hearted clouds, malignant, intimidating, a nightmare to enter.

2 By referring closely to the language and syntax, compare the way Winterson describes life in Manchester with the way Armitage describes walking on the moors. [20]

3 Apart from what you have just discussed in answering question 2, what do you find interesting about Winterson and Armitage, and their attitudes to what they describe? [20]

4. Write a fictional descriptive piece about life in a Manchester cotton mill in the 19th century. You may use ideas from extract 1, but you must use your own language. [20]

You should spend between 5 and 10 minutes checking your work for accuracy at the end.

Marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the paper [20]

END OF PAPER

BLANK PAGE