WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

THE CHALLENGE 2017

ENGLISH

Wednesday 26 April 2017

You have TWO HOURS for this paper.

- *Answer ALL THREE sections: A, B and C*
- *Spend 50 minutes on Sections A & B*
- *Spend 20 minutes on Section C*
- *Answer in full sentences. The quality of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will contribute to your marks.*

- **Please write in black or blue ink.**

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SECTION A

1. ***Explain how and why the following sentences are confusing:***
   a) *'Max had to spend some six or eight weeks away from his belongings which he did not like.'* **[2]**
   b) *When they finally met their guests they were extremely nervous.'* **[2]**
   c) *'Once again, a fantastic property is up for sale, and we can say with confidence that it will not last, so seize your opportunity.'* **[2]**

2. **Give as many different meanings for the following words as you can. You may give definitions, or you may illustrate the various meanings by using the words in sentences:**
   a) temper b) form c) character **[9]**

3. **Decide whether you think the following statements are:**
   True; False; True under certain conditions; A Matter of Opinion
   Then, explain your answer fully.
   a) A little learning is a dangerous thing; **[5]**
   b) One son gives more trouble than two daughters. **[5]**
   c) Absence makes the heart grow fonder. **[5]**

4. **Read the following paragraph carefully written by a C20th essayist carefully. Then answer the questions:**

   One main factor in the upward trend of animal life has been the power of wandering. Perhaps this is why the armour-plated monsters fared badly. They could not wander. Animals wander into new conditions. They have to adapt themselves or die. Mankind has wandered from the trees to the plains, from the plains to the sea coast, from climate to climate, from continent to continent, and from habit of life to habit of life. When man ceases to wander, he will cease to ascend in the scale of being. Physical wandering is still important, but greater still is the power of man's adventures of thought, adventures of passionate feeling, adventures of aesthetic experience. A diversification among human communities is essential for the provision of the incentive and material for our personal Odysseys. Other nations of different habits are not enemies: they are god-sends.

   a) Why does the writer think that diversification in our communities is important? Summarise his argument in your own words. **[2]**

   b) To what extent do you agree with him and why? Draw on your own experiences in your answer. **[8]**

SECTION B

In the passage below, a young soldier runs away from the battle-field, hoping to hide in the woods. Read the passage carefully and then answer the questions.

He went from the fields into a thick wood, as if resolved to bury himself. He wished to get out of hearing of the crackling shots which were to him like voices. When he looked loweringly up, quivering at each sound, his eyes had the expression of those of a great criminal who thinks his guilt and his punishment great, and knows that he can find no words.

The ground was cluttered with vines and bushes. The creepers, catching against his legs, cried out harshly as their sprays were torn from the barks of the trees. The swishing saplings tried to make known his presence to the world. When he separated embraces of trees and vines, the disturbed foliages waved their arms and turned their face leaves toward him. He dreaded lest these noisy motions and cries should bring men to look at him.

After a time, the sound of musketry grew faint and the cannon boomed in the distance. The sun, suddenly apparent, blazed among the trees. It seemed now that Nature had no ears. This landscape gave him assurance. A fair field holding life. He threw a pine cone at a jovial squirrel, and he ran with chattering fear. High in a treetop he stopped, and, poking his head cautiously from behind a branch, looked down with an air of trepidation.

The youth felt triumphant at this exhibition. Nature had given him a sign. The squirrel, immediately upon recognizing danger, had taken to his legs without ado. He did not stand stolidly baring his furry belly to the missile, and die with an upward glance at the sympathetic heavens. On the contrary, he had fled as fast as his legs could carry him; and he was but an ordinary squirrel, no philosopher of his race.

The youth went again into the deep thickets. At length, he reached a place where the high, arching boughs made a chapel. He softly pushed the green doors aside and entered. Pine needles were a gentle brown carpet. There was a religious half-light.

Near the threshold he stopped, horror-stricken at the sight of a thing.

He was being looked at by a dead man who was seated with his back against a column-like tree. The corpse was dressed in a uniform that once had been blue, but was now faded to a melancholy shade of green. The eyes, staring at the youth, had changed to the dull hue to be seen on the side of a dead fish. The mouth was open. Its red had changed to an appalling yellow. Over the gray skin of the face ran little ants. One was trundling some sort of bundle along the upper lip.

The youth gave a shriek as he confronted the thing. He was for moments turned to stone before it. He remained staring into the liquid-looking eyes. The dead man and

the living man exchanged a long look. Then the youth cautiously put one hand behind him and brought it against a tree. Leaning upon this he retreated, step by step, with his face still toward the thing. He feared that if he turned his back the body might spring up and stealthily pursue him.

The branches, pushing against him, threatened to throw him over upon it. His unguided feet, too, caught aggravatingly in the brambles; and with it all he received a subtle suggestion to touch the corpse. As he thought of his hand upon it he shuddered profoundly.

At last he burst the bonds which had fixed him to the spot and fled, unheeding the underbrush. He was pursued by the sight of black ants swarming greedily upon the gray face and venturing horribly near to the eyes.

1. **Explore how the following phrases in lines 1-5 describe the young man's feelings when he runs away from the battle:**
   Use your own words.
   a) 'as if resolved to bury himself' **[2]**

   b) 'the crackling shots… were to him like voices' **[2]**

   c) 'he looked loweringly up' **[2]**

   d) 'a great criminal who thinks his guilt and his punishment great, and knows that he can find no words.' **[2]**

2. **Explain how the writer describes the wood in paragraph 2 to convey the young man's thoughts and feelings. Use short quotations to support your ideas.** **[8]**

3. **Re-read lines 12-22. Explain in your own words why the squirrel makes him feel better.**
   [4]

4. **Re-read lines 23 to the end.**
   Explain in detail why the description of the young man's discovery is interesting to read. You might consider the following in your answer:

   - The description of the clearing
   - The description of the man he finds
   - The description of the young man's retreat. **[20]**

SECTION C

In about 300 words, write a short story OR an account of an imaginary experience, which would illustrate the meaning of ONE of these proverbs:

a) 'Necessity is the mother of invention.'
b) 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.'
c) 'The apparel oft proclaims the man.'

[20]