SEVENOAKS SCHOOL

YEAR 9 (13+) ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

SAMPLE PAPER

ENGLISH

Your Name: ……..

Your School: …….

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

Equipment needed: Pen, pencil, lined paper, eraser.

Information for candidates:

1. Write your name and school on this page.
2. Write your answers on the **separate paper** provided. Please put your name on all the sheets of paper you use.
3. There are 5 questions in this paper. You should attempt all of them.
4. The paper will be marked out of 50. The marks for each question or part question are indicated in square brackets [ ].
5. There are two passages overleaf. Read them both and answer the questions on the final page.

From 'The Tunnel' by Eric Williams

The tunnellers were dressed in woollen undervests and long pants, patched like harlequins, bright yellow from the puddled clay. On their heads they wore woollen caps or handkerchiefs knotted at the corners and, dancer-like, they wore no shoes.

Tyson, already in his tunnelling clothes, was waiting for them. 'Hurry up, chaps,' he said.

Peter and John quickly took off their outer clothing and joined the new shift, who were waiting to go below. It was cold and they shivered as Tyson slid under the boiler and, after much grunting and straining, disappeared from view. Peter, following, found a hole in the floor about two feet square. There was a rough ladder fixed to the side of the shaft, at the bottom of which the flickering rays of a lamp showed Tyson's legs as he crawled out of sight. Presently his face appeared where his legs had been. 'Go easy down the ladder,' he said.

At the bottom of the shaft was a square chamber about six feet by four in which a man crouched, working a crude concertina-like air pump made from a canvas kit-bag. By his side the goon lamp cast its lurid glow across his sweating face as he as he swung to the rhythm of the creaking pump. The walls and ceiling of the chamber and the mouth of the tunnel which opened from it were of solid wood, bed-boards jammed together side by side; but the floor was liquid clay.

Tyson was crouching half in and half out of the tunnel. In his hands he had two smoking lamps, one of which he passed to Peter. 'Follow me!' He spoke in a whisper, as though he could be heard through twelve feet of solid earth.

The tunnel, once they had left the chamber, was no longer lined with wood. The walls and ceiling dripped with water which gathered in long puddles on the floor and, as he wriggled after Tyson into the blackness, Peter felt this water soak through his woollen vest and cold grip him with its icy fingers.

From 'Birdsong' by Sebastian Faulks

Jack Firebrace lay forty-five feet underground with several hundred thousand tons of France above his face. He could hear the wooden wheezing of the feed that pumped air through the tunnel. Most of it was exhausted by the time it reached him. His back was supported by a wooden cross, his feet against the clay, facing towards the enemy. With an adapted spade, he loosened quantities of soil into a bag which he passed back to Evans, his mate, who then crawled away in the darkness. Jack could hear the hammering of timbers being used to shore up the tunnel further back, through where he worked, at the face, there was no guarantee that the clay would hold.

The sweat ran down into his eyes and stung them, making him shake his head from side to side. At this point the tunnel was about four feet across and five feet high. Jack kept sticking the spade into the earth ahead of him, hacking it out as though he hated it. He had lost track of how long he had been underground. He found it easier not to think when he might be relieved, but to keep digging. The harder he worked, the easier it seemed. It must have been six hours or more since he had seen daylight, and even then not much of it, but a thin green haze across the lowlands of the French-Belgian border, lit by the spasmodic explosion of shells.

His unit had not been able to return to its billet in the local village. So intense was the activity in this part of the line that the surface troops would not stay in their trenches without the protection of the men underground. The miners had to sleep, for the time being, in chambers at the top of their shafts or in the trenches with the infantry.

Jack felt a hand clutch his elbow. 'Jack. We need you. Turner's heard something about 20 yards back. Come on.'

Evans pulled him off the cross, and Jack turned stiffly, easing the sweat-soaked vest off his shoulders, and following Evans's crawling buttocks until he could stand. Even the murk of the timbered tunnel was bright to him after the clay face. He blinked in the gloom.

Answer all of the following questions.

1. How does the author describe the men in "*The Tunnel*" and their relationship with each other?

[5 marks]

2. How does the author convey a sense of mystery and tension in the passage *"The Tunnel"*? You should look at the language and imagery in the passage.

[5 marks]

3. How does the author describe the potential dangers and difficulties Jack faces in *"Birdsong"* and how does he deal with them?

[5 marks]

4. Both passages are concerned with working underground.

What similarities can you see between the character's experiences? What are the differences?

Which would you find easier to withstand and why?

[10 marks]

5. Have you ever been in a physically challenging situation? Write an account of the event (real or imaginary) explaining what was difficult about the experience. You should convey the mood of the event as well as giving detailed of what happened. You should aim to write about 200 words.

[25 marks]

END OF PAPER