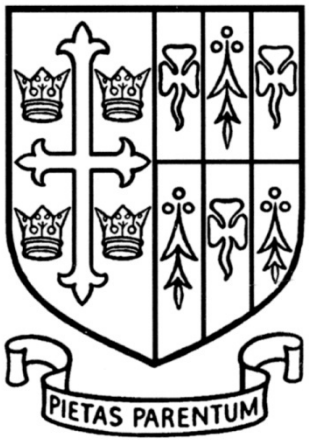
ST EDWARD'S OXFORD



13+ ENTRANCE EXAMINATION
For entry in 2017

ENGLISH

Time: 1 hour

Candidate's name: . . . . . .

Answers should be written on lined paper.

The first **10 minutes** should be spent reading the texts in Section A and Section B.

- Section A asks you to analyse a prose passage.
- Section B is a creative writing task.

You are advised to spend just under **25 minutes** on each section. Use the last few minutes to read over what you have written and correct any mistakes. The quality of your writing will be assessed in both sections.

SECTION A: READING

The following passage is taken from *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens. In this extract, Oliver wakes up to find himself in the house of an old man called Fagin. Fagin does not know, however, that Oliver is awake and is watching him.

It was late next morning when Oliver awoke, from a sound, long sleep. There was no other person in the room but the tall, bent old man, who was boiling some coffee in a saucepan for breakfast, and whistling softly to himself as he stirred it round and round, with an iron spoon. He would stop every now and then to listen when there was the least noise below: and when he had satisfied himself, he would go on, whistling and stirring again, as before.

Although Oliver had roused himself from sleep, he was not thoroughly awake. There is a drowsy state, between sleeping and waking, when you dream more in five minutes with your eyes half open, and yourself half conscious of everything that is passing around you, than you would in five nights with your eyes fast closed, and your senses encased in perfect unconsciousness.

Oliver was precisely in this condition. He saw the man with his half-closed eyes; heard his low whistling; and recognized the sound of the spoon grating against the saucepan's sides; and yet at the same time his senses were also engaged in the dream he was having.

When the coffee was done, the old man drew the saucepan to the hob. Standing, then, in a suspicious and nervous way for a few minutes, as if he did not know what to do with himself, he turned round and looked at Oliver, and called him by his name. Although he was awake, Oliver did not answer, and seemed, to the man, to be asleep. After satisfying himself that Oliver was indeed asleep, the man stepped gently to the door: which he fastened. He then moved forward and Oliver watched him take out, from some trap in the floor a small box, which he placed carefully on the table. His eyes glistened as he raised the lid, and looked in. Dragging an old chair to the table, he sat down; and took from it a magnificent gold watch, sparkling with jewels.

"Aha!" said the old man, shrugging up his shoulders, and distorting every feature with a hideous grin. "Clever boys! Clever boys! Loyal to the last! Never told the old parson where they were. Never told on old Fagin! No, no, no! Fine fellows! Fine fellows!"

With these, and other muttered reflections of this kind, the old man once more deposited the watch in its place of safety. At least half a dozen more were severally drawn forth from the same box, and surveyed with equal pleasure; besides rings, brooches, bracelets, and other articles of jewellery, of such magnificent materials, and costly workmanship, that Oliver had no idea, even of their names.

Having replaced these trinkets, the old man took out another: so small that it lay in the palm of his hand. There seemed to be some very minute inscription on it; for the old man laid it flat upon the table, and, shading it with his hand, pored over it, long and earnestly. At length he put it down and, leaning back in his chair, muttered to himself: As the old man uttered these words, his bright dark eyes, which had been staring vacantly before him, fell on Oliver's face; the boy's eyes were fixed on his in mute curiosity; and

although the recognition was only for an instant- for the briefest space of time that can possibly be conceived- it was enough to show the old man that he had been observed. He closed the lid of the box with a loud crash; and, laying his hand on a bread knife which was on the table, started furiously up. He trembled very much though; for, even in his terror Oliver could see that the knife quivered in the air.

"What's that?" said the Jew. "What do you watch me for? Why are you awake? What have you seen? Speak out, boy! Quick- quick! for your life!"

Answer the following questions in full sentences written in clear, precise English. Spend approximately **25 minutes** altogether on this section.

1. Using your own words as far as possible, describe the sensation of sleep that Oliver experiences in the first three paragraphs. [5]

2. What impression does Dickens give of the old man? Pay close attention to the way that the character's actions are described and use examples from the whole passage to support your ideas. [10]

3. How does Dickens build intrigue and suspense over the course of this passage? You might like to consider the imagery, diction (the words Dickens has chosen to use), the use of dialogue, different lengths of sentences and other features. [10]

[Total for Section A: 25 marks]

SECTION B: WRITING

Choose ONE of the following tasks.

Marks will be awarded for originality, clarity and vocabulary as well as spelling and punctuation. Take a few minutes to plan before you begin writing.

EITHER

1. Beginning with the sentence 'As I opened my eyes...' describe your perfect day from the moment of waking up in the morning to the point of going to sleep at night.

OR

1. "Great wealth and beautiful jewels are not the key to happiness." Do you agree? Use examples to illustrate your views, either from your own life and experience or from the lives of others.

Spend about **25 minutes** on this task.

[Total for Section B: 25 marks]