Trinity School Croydon

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

13+

SYLLABUS and SAMPLE QUESTIONS

ENGLISH

(for candidates over 13 and under 14 on 1st September of the year of entry)

The assessment in English at 13+ takes the form of one 1-hour examination paper. The purpose of the paper is to assess candidates' ability to understand the written word and to express their ideas effectively in writing.

Part 1 – Reading (30 minutes)
The test will take the form of a passage of prose or poetry, with a series of questions and/or directions appended. The questions are designed to assess candidates' ability to respond to the passage with understanding, to extract meaning beyond the literal, to express and support opinions by textual reference and to summarise and re-work material for a given purpose. There will be no questions on "formal grammar".

Part 2 – Writing (30 minutes)
A choice of titles is set, and candidates write on one of them. Topics may invite personal, imaginative, argumentative and discursive responses. Candidates will be assessed on their ability to communicate meaning, to control tone and to adopt style as appropriate for their purposes and audience. They will be expected to be able to organise and structure sentences grammatically and the whole text coherently.

In the paper candidates will be expected to punctuate and spell accurately and to present work neatly and legibly.

Part 1 - Reading (You should spend **30 minutes** on this section.)

Read the passage below carefully and answer ALL the questions which follow **fully**, **in sentences**, and as far as possible **in your own words**. Good presentation, writing and spelling are important.

Scarcely had we settled into the Strawberry-pink Villa before Mother decided that I was running wild and that it was necessary for me to have some sort of education. But where to find this on a remote Greek island? As usual when a problem arose, the entire family flung itself with enthusiasm into the task of solving it. Each member had his or her own idea of what was best for me, and each argued with such fervour that any discussion about my future generally resulted in an uproar.

"Plenty of time for him to learn," said Leslie; "after all, he can read, can't he? I can teach him to shoot, and if we bought a boat I could teach him to sail."

"But, dear, that wouldn't *really* be much use to him later on," Mother pointed out, adding vaguely, "unless he was going into the Merchant Navy or something."

"I think it's essential that he learns to dance," said Margo, "or else he'll grow up into one of these awful tongue-tied hobbledehoys."

"Yes, dear; but that sort of thing can come *later.* He should be getting some sort of grounding in things like mathematics and French ... and his spelling's appalling."

"Literature," said Larry, with conviction, "that's what he wants, a good solid grounding in literature. The rest will follow naturally. I've been encouraging him to read some good stuff."

"But don't you think Rabelais is a little *old* for him?" asked Mother doubtfully.

"Good, clean fun," said Larry airily; "it's important that he gets sex in its right perspective now."

"You've got a mania about sex," said Margo primly; "it doesn't matter what we're discussing, you always have to drag it in."

"What he wants is a healthy, outdoor life; if he learnt to shoot and sail…" began Leslie.

"Oh, stop talking like a bishop … you'll be advocating cold baths next."

"The trouble with you is you get in one of these damned supercilious moods where you think you know best, and you won't even listen to anyone else's point of view."

"With a point of view as limited as yours, you can hardly expect me to listen to it."

"Now, now, there's no sense in fighting," said Mother.

"Well, Larry's so bloody unreasonable."

"I like that!" said Larry indignantly. "I'm far and away the most reasonable member of the family."

"Yes, dear, but fighting doesn't solve the problem. What we want is someone who can teach Gerry and who'll encourage him in his interests."

"He appears to have only one interest," said Larry bitterly, "and that's this awful urge to fill things with animal life. I don't think he ought to be encouraged in *that*. Life is fraught with danger as it is … I went to light a cigarette only this morning and a damn' great bumble-bee flew out of the box."

"It was a grasshopper with me," said Leslie gloomily.

"Yes, I think that sort of thing ought to be stopped," said Margo. "I found the *most revolting* jar of wriggling things on the dressing-table, of all places."

"He doesn't mean any harm, poor little chap," said Mother pacifically; "he's so interested in all these things."

"I wouldn't mind being attacked by bumble-bees, if it *led* anywhere," Larry pointed out. "But it's just a phase … he'll grow out of it by the time he's fourteen."

"He's been in this phase from the age of two," said Mother, "and he's showing no signs of growing out of it."

"Well if you insist on stuffing him full of useless information, I suppose George would have a shot at teaching him," said Larry.

"That's a brain-wave," said Mother delightedly. "Will you go over and see him? I think the sooner he starts the better."

Sitting under the open window in the twilight, with my arm round Roger's shaggy neck, I had listened with interest, not unmixed with indignation, to the family discussion on my fate. Now it was settled, I wondered vaguely who George was, and why it was so necessary for me to have lessons. But the dusk was thick with flower-scents, and the olive-groves were dark, mysterious and fascinating. I forgot about the imminent danger of being educated, and went off with Roger to hunt for glow-worms in the sprawling brambles.

[adapted from *My Family and Other Animals* by G.Durrell]

Now answer the following questions

Write in sentences and as far as possible in your own words

1. According to the first paragraph, what was the problem that Mother identified and why was it a difficult one to solve? (2)

2. Did the family tend easily to reach agreement about problems? Quote a phrase to support your answer. (2)

3. Reread lines 21-25. What kind of writing do you think *Rabelais* produced? (2)

4. Basing your response on lines 8-37 write a paragraph discussing the characters of the narrator's brothers (Leslie and Larry) and sister (Margo). Be sure to explain what each is like and how you can tell. (6)

5. Examine the part Mother played in events and write an assessment of her character. Explain your answer fully. (4)

6. Basing your answer on lines 40-51 explain what the narrator's main interest was **and** how it had affected his family. (4)

7. What does the last paragraph reveal about the narrator's attitude to his family's discussion of him **and** to education? (2)

8. How would you describe the overall tone of this extract? For example, is it tense, shocking, humorous, thoughtful?
By referring to the text explain your answer fully. (3)

25 marks

Part 2 - Writing **(**You should spend **30 minutes** on this section.**)**

Write **ONE** essay only.

EITHER

1. Write about an interest or hobby of your own. Be sure to communicate your enthusiasm for it and your reasons for feeling as you do.

OR

2. Write a story (it can be fictional or based on fact) in which the main character has to adjust to life in surroundings which are unusual or different from those he/she is used to.
You should focus on **one** main incident.

25 marks