DULWICH COLLEGE
FOUNDED 1619

Year 9 Entrance and Scholarship Examination English

Specimen Paper C

Time allowed for this paper is 90 minutes.

There is 10 minutes' reading time at the start of the examination.

You should spend 50 minutes on Section A and 30 minutes on Section B.

Answer SECTION A and SECTION B

You should spend 10 minutes reading the paper very carefully before you start writing. Spend no more than 50 minutes on Section A.

SECTION A: Prose Comprehension [60 marks]

Read the following passage adapted from *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury, then answer the questions which follow it.

When the alarm sounded in the firehouse the firemen were playing cards. Suddenly there were four empty chairs. The cards fell in a flurry of snow. The brass pole shivered. The men were gone. Montag slid down the pole like a man in a dream. Below, the orange dragon coughed into life.

"Montag, you forgot your helmet!"

He seized it off the wall, ran, leapt and they were off, their siren screaming.

It was a flaking, three-storey house in the ancient part of the city. The engine slammed to a stop. Beatty, Stoneman and Black ran up the steps, suddenly odious and fat in their fireproof boots. Montag followed. They crashed the front door and grabbed at a woman, though she was not running, not trying to escape. She was only standing, her eyes fixed on a nothingness in the wall as if they had struck her a terrible blow upon the head.

"Where are they?" said Beatty.

He slapped her impassive face and repeated the question. Next thing they were swinging silver hatchets at doors that were, after all, unlocked. A fountain of books sprang down on Montag as he climbed the stairs. On previous occasions the police had always arrived first, taped the victim's mouth and bundled him off in their glittering cars, so when you arrived you found an empty house. You weren't hurting anyone, you were hurting only *things*. You were simply cleaning up. But tonight this woman was spoiling the ritual. Montag felt an immense irritation. She shouldn't be here.

The men above were hurling books and magazines into the dusty air. They plummeted like slaughtered birds and the woman stood below, like an ash-hewn plinth among the bodies.

Montag had done nothing. His hand had done it all, his hand, with a brain of its own and a curiosity in each trembling finger, had turned thief. It plunged the book furtively into his tunic and rushed out empty, with a magician's flourish! Innocent!

Look! He gazed, shaken, at that white hand. He held it way out, as if he were far-sighted. He held it close, as if he were blind. The books lay in great mounds. The other men danced and slipped and fell over them.

"Kerosene!" shouted Beatty.

They pumped the cold fluid from tanks strapped to their shoulders, coating each book and filling each room. They hurried downstairs and Montag staggered after them in the debilitating kerosene fumes. The woman knelt among the drenched books, her eyes accusing Montag. She shook her head as the men walked to the door.

"You can't ever have my books," she said.

"You know the law," said Beatty. "Where's your common sense? The people in those books never lived. Come on now! The whole house is going up."

Montag stood near the woman.

"You're not leaving her here?" he protested. "Force her!"

Beatty raised his hand in which was concealed the igniter.

"We're due back at the firehouse," he said. "Besides, these fanatics are all the same. I'm counting to ten."

Beatty began to count. Montag placed his hand on the woman's elbow.

"Please," said Montag, pulling at the woman.

"Seven. Eight."

"You can stop counting," she said. She opened the fingers of one hand to reveal a single, slender object. An ordinary kitchen match. The sight of it rushed the men out of the house. Beatty, keeping his dignity, backed slowly through the front door. The woman's hand twitched on the single match. Montag felt the book he had hidden flicker like a sparrow's heart against his chest.

"Go on," said the woman, and Montag felt himself back away and out of the door. The path of kerosene ran down the steps like the trail of some evil snail.

The woman stood on the porch, motionless. Her eyes weighed them in quiet condemnation. Beatty flicked his fingers to spark the kerosene. He was too late. Montag gasped. The woman on the porch reached out acquiescently with contempt for them all, and struck the kitchen match against the railing.

People ran out of houses all down the street

1. Look again at lines 1–13. Explain, in your own words, how an atmosphere of excitement and tension has been created. Make five separate points. **(10 marks)**

2. Look again at lines 14–39. Explain, in your own words, three unpleasant aspects of the firemen. Make three separate points. **(6 marks)**

3. What is unusual about the work these firemen do? **(2 marks)**

4. Explain fully, in your own words, the image created by the following phrases:

(i) They plummeted like slaughtered birds (line 22)

(ii) … like an ash-hewn plinth among the bodies (line 23)

(iii) … flicker like a sparrow's heart against his chest (line 52)

(9 marks)

5. Explain the meaning of the following words, as they are used in the passage:

(i) flurry (line 2)

(ii) hatchets (line 15)

(iii) furtively (line 27)

(iv) debilitating (line 34)

(v) acquiescently (line 57)

(5 marks)

6. Describe fully the character of Montag as it is presented to us in the passage. You should aim to make at least five separate points. Quote from the passage to provide evidence for your opinions. **(10 marks)**

7. The woman in the passage is presented sympathetically by the author. Write about three of the descriptions which make us pity her. Quote to support your views. **(6 marks)**

8. Discuss the possible meanings behind the woman's final words, "Go on," (line 53). **(2 marks)**

9. Imagine you are the author. Write the next stage of the story leading up to the scene later that night once all the men have returned to the firehouse. The characters in your account should speak and act in ways similar to the characters in the passage.

(10 marks)

SECTION B: Descriptive Writing [40 marks]

You should spend 30 minutes on this section.
What you write may be true, or invented.

Write a description in which you use plenty of vivid vocabulary.
Respond to ONE of the following topics:

(i) Spring Morning by the River

(ii) Up and Down Our Street

(iii) An Airport Departure Lounge

(iv) Night Out at the Theatre

END OF EXAM