Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVEL 1

PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING

Specimen Paper

(for first examination in Autumn 2013)

Please read this information before the examination starts.

- You have 1 hour 15 minutes which includes reading and note-making time.
- The paper is divided into two sections.
- Answer **all** the questions in Section A and **one** question from Section B.
- Remember to write **Level 1** at the top of your answer page.
- Vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation and presentation are important and will be taken in to account.

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LEVEL 1

SECTION A: LITERARY PROSE

Simon

A large group of boys has been stranded on a desert island. Some of the boys have become wild and violent and have killed a rather gentle and thoughtful boy called Simon. After the attack, Simon's body is left alone on the beach.

Towards midnight the rain ceased and the clouds drifted away, so that the sky was scattered once more with the incredible lamps of stars. Then the breeze died too and there was no noise save the drip and trickle of water that ran out of the clefts and spilled down, leaf by leaf, to the brown earth of the island. The air was cool, moist, and clear; and presently even the sound of the water was still. Simon's body lay huddled on the pale beach and the stains spread, inch by inch.

The edge of the lagoon became a streak of phosphorescence which advanced minutely, as the great wave of the tide flowed. The clear water mirrored the clear sky and the angular bright constellations. The line of phosphorescence bulged about the sand grains and little pebbles; it held them each in a dimple of tension, then suddenly accepted them with an inaudible syllable and moved on.

Along the shoreward edge of the shallows the advancing clearness was full of strange, moonbeam-bodied creatures with fiery eyes. Here and there a larger pebble clung to its own air and was covered with a coat of pearls. The tide swelled in over the rain-pitted sand and smoothed everything with a layer of silver. Now it touched the first of the stains that seeped from the broken body and the creatures made a moving patch of light as they gathered at the edge. The water rose further and dressed Simon's coarse hair with brightness. The line of his cheek silvered and the turn of his shoulder became sculptured marble. The strange, attendant creatures, with their fiery eyes and trailing vapours, busied themselves round his head. The body lifted a fraction of an inch from the sand and a bubble of air escaped from the mouth with a wet plop. Then it turned gently in the water.

The great wave of the tide moved further along the island and the water lifted. Softly, surrounded by a fringe of inquisitive bright creatures, itself a silver shape beneath the steadfast constellations, Simon's dead body moved out towards the open sea.

The passage is from *Lord of the Flies* by William Goulding, 1954, © Faber and Faber Ltd.

Read the passage opposite entitled* Simon *and then answer all the questions below, using complete sentences.

The marks at the end of each question are a guide as to how much you should write in your answers.

1. Look carefully at paragraph 1.

   What weather event has just passed? (1)

2. Quote three words or phrases from paragraph 1 which show that the mood is calm and quiet. (3)

   Explain your choices. (3)

3. How does the writer make us feel sorry for Simon in paragraph 1? (2)

4. Look carefully at paragraph 3.

   Write down two quotations which describe the small creatures at the edge of the water. (2)

   Explain what your quotations suggest about these creatures? (4)

5. Write down two quotations from paragraph 3 which suggest that the water has made Simon's dead body more beautiful. (2)

   Explain your choices. (4)

6. Simon's death was very violent and shocking. How do you think the reader feels about it by the end of this passage? Have the reader's feelings changed?

   Explain your views. (4)

[25]

PLEASE TURN OVER FOR SECTION B

SECTION B: WRITING TASK

Write on any ONE of the following topics.

Each one is worth 25 marks.

Credit will be given for good spelling, punctuation and presentation as well as for imaginative and exciting use of vocabulary.

1. Doing the right thing

   Was there a time when you did what you knew to be right, even though you didn't want to? Or you did not do what you knew to be right, but wish that you had?

   Write about it, in the form of a letter to a friend.

2. Caution and risk

   Think about the advantages of being cautious and the advantages of taking risks.

   Write a speech in which you argue the importance of one rather than the other.

   You may wish to include:

   - the advantages and disadvantages of each
   - who might be affected, other than yourself
   - examples to illustrate your view

3. Think about a time when either you or a member of your family suffered an embarrassing moment in public.

   Describe this event in an entertaining and humorous way.

4. **EITHER**

   (a) 'A good book should make you walk into lampposts.' (Nick Hornby)

   You have probably never done this, but have you ever read a book which gripped you so much that you became unaware of your surroundings?

   Explain why this book had such an impact on you.

   OR

   (b) 'It doesn't matter how unbelievable a story is, as long as the characters are realistic.'

   By referring to your own reading, to what extent do you agree with this statement?

(Total marks: 50)