Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVEL 1

PAPER 2: 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: POETRY

Blessing

The skin cracks like a pod.
There is never enough water.

Imagine the drip of it,
the small splash, echo
in a tin mug,
the voice of a kindly god.

Sometimes, the sudden rush
of fortune. The municipal pipe bursts,
silver crashes to the ground
and the flow has found
a roar of tongues. From the huts,
A congregation: every man woman
child for streets around
butts in, with pots,
brass, copper, aluminium,
plastic buckets,
frantic hands,

and naked children
screaming in the liquid sun,
their highlights polished to perfection,
flashing light,
as the blessing sings
over their small bones.

Imtiaz Dharker

The poem by Imtiaz Dharker is from *Postcards from God*, published by Bloodaxe Books, 1997.

Read the poem* Blessing *printed opposite and answer 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 at stanza 1.

   How can you tell this poem is set in a hot, dry place? (2)

2. Look at stanza 3.

   In your own words, explain what happens when the "municipal pipe bursts". (3)

3. Write down two short quotations from stanza 3 which tell you that the people have been longing for water. (2)

   Explain your choices. (4)

4. Look at stanza 4.

   How can you tell that the children are enjoying themselves? (2)

5. The sentence which begins on line 11 is very long.

   Why do you think the poet uses such a long sentence? (2)

6. Throughout this poem there are many examples of different sounds.

   Write down three short 'sound' quotations and explain how they bring the poem alive for you. (3 + 3)

7. Having read the poem, how has it made you feel about these people and their lives?

   Explain your views. (4)

[25]

PLEASE TURN OVER FOR SECTION B

Turn over

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. ‘You surprised me.’
   ‘I surprised myself.’

   Write a story which includes these two lines of dialogue.

2. Write a story or description using one of the following titles:

   (a) Junk Food
   (b) The Picnic by the Lake
   (c) A Gift

3. ‘Great things come from small beginnings.’

   Write about this in any imaginative way you wish.

4. Crossing the Line

(Total marks: 50)