Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVEL 1

PAPER 1: READING

Monday 11 June 2012

Please read this information before the examination starts.

- You have 1 hour 10 minutes which includes reading and note-making time.
- The paper is divided into two sections.
- Answer **all** the questions.
- Remember to write **Level 1** at the top of your answer paper.
- Vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation and presentation are important and will be taken into account.

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LEVEL 1

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Read the passage on the insert entitled* Wapiti School Christmas Pageant *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.

   Which three events are held each year at Wapiti School? (3)

2. Look carefully at paragraph 2.

   In 'past years', the Christmas Pageant has always been the same. Name three things the children usually have to perform. (3)

3. Write down a short quotation which suggests that the narrator does not normally look forward to the pageant. (1)

   Explain your choice. (2)

4. 'The whole valley attended.' Why do you think the pageant is so popular? (2)

5. Look carefully at paragraph 3.

   Write down a short quotation which suggests that the pageant which takes place when the narrator is in seventh grade is different from the rest. (1)

6. Explain what is different about it. (2)

7. Why are the children pleased about this change? (2)

8. Look carefully at paragraph 4.

   Write down three short quotations which show that the boys admire Bill Waller, the man who coaches them for this pageant. (3)

   Explain your choices. (6)

(Total marks for Section A: 25)

LEVEL 1

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Wapiti School Christmas Pageant

This extract is from Where Rivers Change Direction *by Mark Spragg. The narrator describes Wapiti School in America, where he went as a child, and remembers one particular Christmas Pageant which was rather unusual.*

Some schools blunt their students with events: assemblies, guest speakers, a stray magician. We did not suffer from glut. Wapiti School had the Christmas Pageant, the spring auction, and the rural school track meet held just before summer vacation.

Between Thanksgiving and our release for the Christmas holiday we practised for the pageant. In past years there had been carolling, poetry reading, a play that begged to have something to do with Christendom, and yards of gauzy material going into the manufacture of a dozen angels' wings. I now think of the Christmas Pageant as a sort of baptism: if it could be survived, so could the numbing cold and darkness of the next three months. The whole valley attended. Everyone's parents, relatives, childless couples and old bachelor cowboys. Television reception was rare. We were a people starved of even the most meagre of entertainments.

The Christmas I was in seventh grade, our pageant had a twist. It had Bill Waller. Bill briefly owned Nameit Creek Lodge and had an interest in Native American ritual. He had also been a coach. He coached us in the intricacies of the Snake Dance. It did not bother us that he wove several Indian traditions into one spectacle; at the time none of us knew the difference. We were all just white kids who were bored spitless at the prospect of singing 'Silent Night' and playing elves, or wise men, or a troop of sweaty messengers of God.

Bill Waller established himself as nearly supernatural immediately by grouping all ten boys together and walking back and forth in front of us on his hands while he introduced himself. He was an old man. He was in his fifties. We were impressed. It was like joining a circus without having to run away from home. We would have followed Bill Waller anywhere.

The extract is from *Where Rivers Change Direction* by Mark Spragg. Copyright © 1999 Mark Spragg. All rights reserved.
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LEVEL 1

SECTION B: POETRY

The Call

From our low seat beside the fire
  Where we have dozed and dreamed and watched the glow
Or raked the ashes, stopping so
We scarcely saw the sun or rain
  Above, or looked much higher
Than this same quiet red or burned-out fire,
    To-night we heard a call,
    A rattle on the window-pane,
    A voice on the sharp air,
And felt a breath stirring our hair,
  A flame within us: Something swift and tall
  Swept in and out and that was all.
Was it a bright or a dark angel? Who can know?
    It left no mark upon the snow,
      But suddenly it snapped the chain,
      Unbarred, flung wide the door
      Which will not shut again;
And so we cannot sit here any more.
      We must arise and go:
      The world is cold without
      And dark and hedged about
      With mystery and enmity and doubt.
      But we must go
      Though yet we do not know
Who called, or what marks we shall leave upon the snow.

Charlotte Mew

The poem by Charlotte Mew is from *Collected Poems and Selected Prose*, edited by Val Warner and pubished by Carcanet Press Ltd.

LEVEL 1

SECTION B: POETRY

Read the poem on the insert entitled* The Call *and 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. From the first two lines of the poem, explain in your own words where the people are and what they are doing. (2)

2. In lines 4–6, the poet tells us the people '*scarcely saw the sun or rain . . . or looked much higher/Than this same quiet red or burned-out fire.*'

   What do these words tell you about the life they lead and the sort of people they are? (4)

3. In lines 7–12, a mysterious Something 'visits' the people.

   In these lines the poet brings this strange 'visit' alive through sound and movement.

   Using short quotations, find and write down one example of:

   (a) a sound heard by the people (2)

   (b) a movement (2)

   (c) What name is given to words which re-create the sound which is being described? (2)

4. '*A flame within us . . .* ' (line 11)

   '*. . . it snapped the chain . . . flung wide the door/Which will not shut again*' (lines 15–17)

   These two quotations describe the effect the visit has on the people and their lives.

   In your own words, explain what you think the changes are. (4)

5. Look at line 13. The questions are not answered for the reader.

   What effect does this have on the atmosphere/mood of the poem? (3)

6. After the visit, what do the people decide to do?

   Use a short quotation to support your answer. (3)

7. In your opinion, has the visit been good or bad for the people in this poem?

   In your answer, explain why you think this. (3)

(Total marks for Section B: 25)

(Total marks: 50)