Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVEL 2

PAPER 1: READING

Monday 24 January 2011

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 2** 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 2

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Read the passage on the insert entitled* My Father Always Wore A Suit *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. What is Bennett's father's job? (1)

2. The phrases 'my suit' and 'my other suit' are repeated several times in the passage.
   Explain the effect of the author's use of repetition. (4)

3. (a) Describe in detail Bennett's reaction to seeing his father in 1970. (4)

   (b) Why is this experiment short-lived? (4)

4. In the final paragraph, the author refers to a process called 'branching out'.
   With detailed reference to the text, explain what you think he means by this phrase. (6)

5. How do you think Alan Bennett regards his parents?
   What is the nature of his relationship with them?
   Support your comments with evidence from the passage. (6)

The passage is from *Untold Stories* by Alan Bennett, published by Faber and Faber.

LEVEL 2

SECTION B: POETRY

Read the poem on the insert entitled* It Ain't What You Do, It's What It Does To You *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. What sort of person is being described in the opening three lines? (2)

2. How does the poet use sounds and imagery to describe being at:

   (a) The Taj Mahal? (4)

   (b) Black Moss Reservoir? (4)

3. Discuss what happens to the speaker in the fourth stanza. (4)

4. What is the significance of the title of this poem? (4)

5. (a) Write down your interpretation of what the final stanza means. (4)

   (b) Do you think this stanza is a fitting end to the poem?
   Give your reasons. (3)

(Total marks: 50)

The poem by Simon Armitage is published by Faber and Faber.

LEVEL 2

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

My Father Always Wore a Suit

The writer Alan Bennett describes his father's clothes.

My father wore a suit every day of his life. He had two, 'my suit' and 'my other suit', 'my suit' being the one he wore every day, 'my other suit' his best. On the rare occasions when he invested in a new suit, the suits moved up a place, 'my other suit' becoming 'my suit', the new suit becoming 'my other suit', with the old one just used for painting in or working in the shop. They were three-piece suits, generally navy, and he always wore black shoes and a collar and tie. This makes him seem formal or dressed like an accountant but he didn't give that impression because he never managed to be smart, his waistcoat ('weskit' as he pronounced it) generously unbuttoned and showing his braces, his sleeves rolled up, and when he was still butchering, the suit would smell of meat, with the trousers and particularly the turn-ups greasy from the floor. He never had an overcoat, just a series of fawn or dark green gabardine raincoats, and he always wore a dark green trilby hat.

About clothes Dad must have always been conservative. There are photographs of him as a young man, sitting on the sands in a deck-chair in the 1920s, and he is in his three-piece suit, with dicky-bow and fly-collar and even a bowler hat, his only concession to the holiday spirit, bare feet. Retirement, which often sanctions some sartorial indulgence, didn't alter this state of affairs, the regime of suit and other suit maintained as before. Or almost.

After he had learned to drive, my parents would sometimes collect me off the train at Lancaster. Meeting them there one day in 1970, I came across the bridge to see my mother waiting at the barrier with a stranger, someone got up in a grey check sports coat, two-tone cardigan, brown trousers and what I suppose would be called loafers. I was deeply shocked. It was Dad in leisurewear, the only relic of the man he had always been his green trilby hat.

'What do you think of your Dad's new get-up?' Mam enquired as we were driving home. Not much was the truth of it but I didn't let on, and as Dad didn't say much either I took it to have been Mam's idea, confirmed when the experiment turned out to be short-lived; the sports coat and brown trousers soon demoted to the status of gardening clothes, and we were back on the regime of 'my suit' and 'my other suit'.

Dad's brief excursion into leisurewear wasn't an isolated occurrence but part of a process (Mam would have liked it to have been a programme) called 'branching out'. The aim of 'branching out' was to be more like other people, or like what Mam imagined other people to be, an idea she derived in the first instance from women's magazines and latterly from television. The world of coffee mornings, flower arrangements, fork lunches and having people round for drinks was never one my parents had been part of. Now that Mam was well again and Dad could drive, Mam's modest social ambitions, long dormant, started to revive and she began to entertain the possibility of 'being a bit more like other folks'. The possibility was all it was, though, and much to Dad's relief, all that it remained.

LEVEL 2

SECTION B: POETRY

It Ain't What You Do, It's What It Does To You

I have not bummed across America
with only a dollar to spare, one pair
of busted Levi's and a bowie knife.
I have lived with thieves in Manchester.

I have not padded through the Taj Mahal,
barefoot, listening to the space between
each footfall picking up and putting down
its print against the marble floor. But I

skimmed flat stones across Black Moss on a day
so still I could hear each set of ripples
as they crossed. I felt each stone's inertia
spend itself against the water, then sink.

I have not toyed with a parachute cord
while perched on the lip of a light-aircraft;
but I held the wobbly head of a boy
at the day centre, and stroked his fat hands.

And I guess that the tightness in the throat
and the tiny cascading sensation
somewhere inside us are both a part of that
sense of something else. That feeling, I mean.

Simon Armitage