Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVEL 2

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 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* 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. Which three events are held each year at Wapiti School? (1)

2. What does the speaker suggest about himself and about Wapiti School in paragraph 1? (4)

3. The writer reflects on the school's Christmas Pageant in paragraph 2:

   (a) What are the speaker's feelings about the Christmas Pageant?
   Give reasons for your answer. (4)

   (b) What do we learn about the audience? (2)

4. How does the writer influence our opinion of Bill Waller in lines 15–26? You should use short quotations to explain your answer. (6)

5. Re-read the last 2 paragraphs:

   (a) Why do you think the writer ends the passage with the two-word, ungrammatical sentence 'Not once.'? (2)

   (b) Having read the description of the Christmas Snake Dance, do you think that Candy Dohse was right to appear 'unimpressed' (line 38)?
   Refer closely to the passage and give your reasons. (6)

(Total marks for Section A: 25)

LEVEL 2

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. Describe the setting in the first two lines of the poem. (1)

2. What different things do we learn about the people in the poem from lines 1–6?
   Give reasons for your answer. (4)

3. The writer creates a vivid impression of 'The Call' in lines 7–12.
   Identify and explain three ways in which the poet achieves this. You should refer to the techniques used. (6)

4. Referring to the poem as a whole:

   (a) How does the writer create a sense of mystery?
   Use brief quotations to support your ideas. (6)

   (b) To what extent do you think this poem is optimistic?
   Give your reasons. (4)

5. In line 19 we are told 'We must arise and go'.
   By referring closely to the poem, explain why the speaker has made this decision. (4)

(Total marks for Section B: 25)

(Total marks: 50)

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

LEVEL 2

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Wapiti School Christmas Pageant

The events in the passage take place in an American school.

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. I planned to win Candy over by summer. I planned to showcase myself through the three events.

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, school alumni, childless couples, old bachelor cowboys with trucks that might not make the round-trip to Cody. Television reception was rare. We were a people starved of even the most meagre of entertainments.

The Christmas I was in the seventh grade, our pageant had a twist. It had Bill Waller. Bill had 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.

On the big night, under the eyes of our families and friends, we line-danced onto the homemade stage and hopped and twisted and gyred in a rough circle, stripped naked except for denim or corduroy breechcloths that flapped over our jockey shorts, waving rubber snakes about our heads and hooting. I felt the need for a sustained howl.

Our legs, torsos, and faces were painted with lightning bolts, handprints, geometric designs, stock-horses, and the outlines of pickup trucks. Bill Waller had supplied the snakes and a set of watercolours. I don't know if he was the one who had supplied our black braided wigs, but we had them, and they flew off and we danced on them. Bethlehem it was not. Wapiti it was. I was so enthusiastic that I nearly tipped Pete Krone back into the crèche. We got a standing ovation. Candy Dohse appeared angelic, and unimpressed. I wasn't able to catch her looking at me. Not once.

LEVEL 2

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