Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVEL 2

PAPER 1: READING

Monday 5 November 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.

28312124

© Independent Schools Examinations Board

LEVEL 2

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Read the passage on the insert entitled* The Joy Luck Club *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 do we learn about the mother's work in paragraph one? (2)

2. What do we learn from lines 6–13 about the mother's and the daughter's knowledge of the world? (4)

3. (a) In your own words, describe three of the 'harder' tests and the skills they are testing. (3)

   (b) What does the variety of 'harder' tests suggest about the mother's search for a prodigy? (3)

4. Look carefully at lines 20–30.

   (a) How does Amy's attitude towards herself change in these lines? (2)

   (b) How does Amy's language convey this change? (5)

5. Do you sympathise with Amy's reaction to her mother's project?
   Refer to the text in your response. (6)

LEVEL 2

SECTION B: POETRY

Read the poem* Hedgehog *on the insert 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. What does the poet tell us about the hedgehog in lines 1–5? (2)

2. In lines 5–8, the poet takes us to a hedgehog's life in the wild.
   Using three quotations from these lines, describe this life. (6)

3. How does the poet's use of language in stanza three describe the contrasting life in town of 'this' hedgehog? (6)

4. What is the hedgehog's attitude to human beings?
   Refer closely to the poem in your answer. (5)

5. How does the poet use sound, rhyme, rhythm and imagery to create the world of the hedgehog in the poem as a whole?
   Choose three examples and explain how the poet has used them. (6)

(Total marks: 50)

The extract is reproduced from *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan © 1989 and used by permission of G.P. Putnam's Sons, a division of Penguin Group (USA) Inc.

Hedgehog by Anthony Thwaite is reproduced from *Collected Poems* (2007) with kind permission of Enitharmon Press.

LEVEL 2

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

The Joy Luck Club

Amy Tan is a young Chinese-American girl growing up in California. Her mother is a poor immigrant who fled from Communist China and thinks that one way to success in her new country is to promote her child as a prodigy, i.e. one with wonderful and exceptional intelligence or skills.

Every night after dinner, my mother and I would sit at the Formica kitchen table. She would present new tests, taking her examples from stories of amazing children she had read in magazines she kept in a pile in our bathroom. My mother got these magazines from people whose houses she cleaned. And since she cleaned many houses each week, we had a great assortment.

The first night she brought out a story about a three-year-old boy who knew the capitals of all the states and even most of the European countries. A teacher was quoted as saying the little boy could also pronounce the names of the foreign cities correctly.

'What's the capital of Finland?' my mother asked me, looking at the magazine story.

All I knew was the capital of California where we lived, because Sacramento was the name of the street we lived on in Chinatown. 'Nairobi!' I guessed, saying the most foreign word I could think of. She checked to see if that was one possible way to pronounce 'Helsinki' before showing me the answer.

The tests got harder – multiplying numbers in my head, finding the queen of hearts in a deck of cards, trying to stand on my head without using my hands, predicting the daily temperatures in Los Angeles, New York and London.

One night I had to look at a page from the Bible for three minutes and then report everything I could remember. 'Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance and... that's all I remember, Ma,' I said.

And seeing my mother's disappointed face once again, something inside me began to die. I hated the tests, the raised hopes and failed expectations. Before going to bed that night, I looked in the mirror above the bathroom sink and when I saw only my face staring back – and that it would always be this ordinary face – I began to cry. Such a sad, ugly girl. I made high-pitched noises like a crazed animal, trying to scratch out the face in the mirror.

And then I saw what seemed to be another side of me – because I had never seen that face before. I looked at my reflection, blinking so I could see her more clearly. The girl staring back at me was angry, powerful. The girl and I were the same. I had new thoughts, wilful thoughts, or rather thoughts filled with lots of 'won'ts'. I won't let her change me, I promised myself. I won't be what I'm not.

So now on nights when my mother presented her tests, I performed listlessly, my head propped on one arm. I pretended to be bored. And I was. I got so bored I started counting the bellows of the foghorns out on the bay while my mother drilled me in other areas. The sound was comforting and reminded me of cows jumping over the moon. And the next day, I played a game with myself, seeing if my mother would give up on me before eight bellows. After a while I usually counted only one, maybe two bellows at most. At last she was beginning to give up hope.

LEVEL 2

SECTION B: POETRY

Hedgehog

Twitching the leaves just where the drainpipe clogs
In ivy leaves and mud, a purposeful
Creature at night about its business. Dogs
Fear his stiff seriousness. He chews away

At beetles, worms, slugs, frogs. Can kill a hen
With one snap of his jaws, can taunt a snake
To death on muscled spines. Old countrymen
Tell tales of hedgehogs sucking a cow dry.

But this one, cramped by houses, fences, walls,
Must have slept here all winter in that heap
Of compost, or have inched by intervals
Through tidy gardens to this ivy bed.

And here, dim-eyed, but ears so sensitive
A voice within the house can make him freeze,
He scuffs the edge of danger; yet can live
Happily in our nights and absences.

A country creature, wary, quiet and shrewd,
He takes the milk we give him, when we're gone.
At night, our slamming voices must seem crude
To one who sits and waits for silences.

Anthony Thwaite