Independent Schools Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVELS 1 AND 2

PAPER 1: READING

Monday 7 June 2010

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 levels:
  Level 1 (pages 2–3)
  Level 2 (pages 4–5)
- You should attempt the level which you have been advised to select. Remember to write the level you have chosen at the top of your answer paper.
- Answer **all** the questions.
- Vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation and presentation are all important and will be taken into account.

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LEVEL 1

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Read the passage on the insert entitled* Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – An African Childhood (Level 1, page 1) *and then answer all the questions, 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 lines 1–12.

   (a) Write down two short quotations which suggest that the writer feels bored as she sits at the breakfast table. (2)

   (b) Write down two short quotations which suggest that there is a war going on. (2)

2. The writer is remembering an incident from her childhood in Africa.

   (a) Why is it unusual that she chooses to write her story in the present tense? (2)

   (b) Why do you think she does this? (2)

3. Look carefully at lines 21–32.

   Write down two short quotations which show how dangerous the snake is. (2)

   Explain your choices. (4)

4. Look at lines 27–40.

   (a) Do you think Mum has used a gun before? (1)

   (b) Give two reasons for your answer. (4)

5. Do you think Mum is a good mother, or not?

   Explain your ideas fully. (6)

LEVEL 1

SECTION B: POETRY

Read the poem* For Forest *on the insert (Level 1, page 2) and then 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. Write down two pieces of evidence from lines 3–8 which show how 'Forest could keep secrets'. (4)

2. The poet describes the forest floor as 'teeming creeping' (line 6).
   What is happening? (2)

3. (a) Name the two different poetic techniques shown below:
   'fast-eye sun' (line 9)
   'darkness wrap her like a gown' (line 11) (4)

   (b) Explain what the phrase 'fast-eye sun' tells you about the sun's movements and behaviour. (2)

4. The forest is spoken about as if it were a real woman.
   In your own words, explain what each of the following quotations suggests about her character or personality.

   (a) 'Forest is a bad dream woman' (line 12)

   (b) 'Forest don't broadcast her business' (line 7)

   (c) 'when howler monkey wake her . . . Forest just stretch and stir' (lines 17–19) (6)

5. Which technique does the poet use to attract the reader's attention to the importance of the forest? (2)

6. What message is the poet sending out to all of us in the last line? (2)

7. Born in the Caribbean, the poet Grace Nichols has written 'For Forest' using a Caribbean style of English. Using this information and thinking about the content of her poem, suggest reasons why she has done this. (3)

(Total marks: 50)

LEVEL 2

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Read the passage on the insert entitled* Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – An African Childhood (Level 2, page 3) *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 are the writer's feelings in the first two paragraphs of the passage, as she sits at the breakfast table? (3)

2. The writer is recording past events, but she uses the present tense in the passage. Can you explain why? (2)

3. Look at lines 19–37. How does the writer create a vivid picture of the snake episode? In your answer you should discuss the techniques used by the writer. (6)

4. How does the writer influence our feelings for the family in the last two paragraphs (lines 39–48)? (4)

5. What different impressions do you get of:

   (a) the writer's mother? (6)

   (b) the family's way of life? (4)

   You should refer closely to the passage and explain your ideas in detail.

LEVEL 2

SECTION B: POETRY

Read the poem* For Forest *on the insert (Level 2, page 4) 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. We are told, 'Forest could keep secrets'.

   (a) Explain how the forest does this. (2)

   (b) Why do you think this line is repeated four times in the poem? (2)

2. Verse three creates vivid pictures of both sun and darkness. Identify and explain the ways in which the poet achieves this. You should refer to the techniques used. (4)

3. In the poem, the forest is treated as if it were a woman. What sort of woman does she seem to be? Use brief quotations to support your ideas. (6)

4. What do the following add to the poem's effects?

   - the lack of punctuation
   - the use of non-standard English (6)

5. What is the speaker's attitude to the forest? Justify your ideas by referring to the poem in detail. (5)

(Total marks: 50)

LEVEL 1

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – An African Childhood

We are sitting at the breakfast table eating oat porridge. Mum is ignoring my string of questions. She is reading a book and the radio is on. Sally Donaldson hosts *Forces Requests* and plays songs sent in by loved ones for the boys in the bush.

'Yesterday all my troubles seemed so far away,' I sing along. Mum says, irritably, 'Shhh,' and turns the radio down. If I peer around the huge stone-wall flower bed Mum has erected to stop bombs and bullets from coming in the dining-room window, I can see that Flywell has brought the horses up for our morning ride. I look at Mum. She is absorbed in her book. We won't get out for a ride until it's too hot and then we'll ride until the afternoon, riding through lunch, past the time when my stomach turns and knots with hunger and my throat is burning with thirst and the sun will burn the back of our necks. I will complain of thirst and Mum will say, 'You should have had more tea at breakfast.'

I kick the legs of my chair. Mum says, without looking up, 'Don't.' And then, 'Eat up.' But I have already eaten up. 'Can I have some more?'

'Ask July.'

But before I can get out to the kitchen to ask July if there's more porridge, there is a scramble of dogs from under the dining-room table, claws scrabbling on the cement floor before they find purchase and race yapping into the pantry, which is between the kitchen and dining room. Mum looks up from her book. 'What have you got?' she asks the dogs.

Three of the dogs retreat sheepishly from the pantry and suddenly Mum says, 'Oh hell,' because she can see from their faces and the sound of their voices that they're barking at a snake. And then the maid starts to shout 'Madam! Madam!' from the kitchen door and pointing. She has her hand over her mouth. 'Madam! Nyuka!'

Mum and I stand at the entrance to the pantry and stare in at the snake. Its neck is caped, as wide as a fan, and it's swaying and tall.

Mum shouts, 'Stand behind the table.' She calls the dogs. Shea and Jacko, Best Beloved Among Dogs, are still barking at the snake. 'Come!' shouts Mum. She's loading the magazine. I hear the bullets go in, click-click. 'Come here!' Suddenly the snake rears back and snaps forward and sets out into the air a thin mist of poisonous spray and the dogs come reeling back out of the pantry, yelping and blind, staggering from the pain. Mum lifts the gun to her shoulder. She squeezes her eyes shut and eases back on the trigger. There's an explosion of glasses and bottles and tins and a wild chattering of bullets. Mum has the Uzi on automatic. She empties an entire magazine towards the snake and there is dust, the splintering of still-falling glass, the whimpering dogs. Violet, July and I cautiously creep up behind Mum. The snake is splattered in a red mosaic on the back wall of the pantry along with sprayed beer, and the lumpy contents of tinned beef, tomato sauce, peas. Flour has exploded and has settled peacefully onto the chaos in a fine lacy shroud.

'Madam,' says July admiringly, 'but you got him one time!'

LEVEL 1

SECTION B: POETRY

For Forest

Forest could keep secrets
Forest could keep secrets

Forest tune in everyday
to watersound and birdsound
Forest letting her hair down
to the teeming creeping of her forest-ground

But Forest don't broadcast her business
no Forest cover her business down
from sky and fast-eye sun
and when the night come
and darkness wrap her like a gown
Forest is a bad dream woman

Forest dreaming about mountain
and when earth was young
Forest dreaming of the caress of gold
Forest rootsing with mysterious eldorado*

and when howler monkey
wake her up with howl
Forest just stretch and stir
to a new day of sound

but coming back to secrets
Forest could keep secrets
Forest could keep secrets
And we must keep Forest

Grace Nichols

**a legendary city with riches beyond an explorer's wildest dreams*

LEVEL 2

SECTION A: NON-FICTION

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – An African Childhood

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'Madam,' says July admiringly, 'but you got him one time!'

By now Shea's and Jacko's eyes have swollen up like tennis balls. Mum screams for milk and July brings the jug from the paraffin fridge in the kitchen. She pours the milk into the dogs' eyes and they yelp in pain. Mum says, 'We have to take them in to Uncle Bill.'

We are not supposed to leave the valley without an armed escort because there are land mines in the road on the way to Umtali and terrorist ambushes and Dad is on patrol, so we are women-without-men which is supposed to be a weakened state of affairs. But, this is an emergency. We put the dogs in the car and drive as fast as we can out of the valley, up the escarpment to the dusty wasteland of the Tribal Trust Land and round the snake-body road which clings to the mountain and spits us out at the paper factory (which smells pungent and rotten and warm).

LEVEL 2

SECTION B: POETRY

For Forest

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Grace Nichols

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The passage from *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – An African Childhood* by Alexandra Fuller is published by Pan Macmillan, London © Alexandra Fuller 2002.

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