BENENDEN

Lower School Entrance Exam for 2018

ENGLISH

14+

1 Hour

Name: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

Instructions to Candidates:

- Answer **both** questions, writing your answers in this booklet
- Each is worth 50 marks
- Try to spend roughly the same amount of time on each

Total marks for this paper = 100

Question 1

Read the following poem and answer the question that follows.

Nettles

My son aged three fell in the nettle bed.
'Bed' seemed a curious name for those green spears,
That regiment of spite behind the shed:
It was no place for rest. With sobs and tears
The boy came seeking comfort and I saw
White blisters beaded on his tender skin.
We soothed him till his pain was not so raw.
At last he offered us a watery grin,
And then I took my billhook*, honed the blade
And went outside and slashed in fury with it
Till not a nettle in that fierce parade
Stood upright any more. And then I lit
A funeral pyre to burn the fallen dead,
But in two weeks the busy sun and rain
Had called up tall recruits behind the shed:
My son would often feel sharp wounds again.

By Vernon Scannell

*billhook – a sharp bladed tool used for cutting down vegetation

How does Vernon Scannell describe the nettles?

You might consider:

- What the nettles show about the relationship between father and son
- The choice of language, including imagery (metaphors and similes)
- Your personal response to the poem. How effective do you think the poem is?

Use quotations from the poem to support your ideas.

(50 marks)

Question 2

This is a creative writing assignment.

Tell the story of a childhood experience

This can be a real experience or it could be entirely imaginary. The essential aim is to describe the experience in as much detail as possible so that your reader can picture it vividly and understand its importance.

The quality of your written communication will be assessed in Question 2 so remember to focus on things such as paragraphing, spelling and written accuracy in your description of your object.

(50 marks)

Answer booklet

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