St Mary's School
CAMBRIDGE

Year 10 English

Sample Entrance Examination

Time allowed: 60 minutes

Name: _____

Total : 60 marks

INSTRUCTIONS :

- **Answer all questions**
- **Dictionaries or reference material**

Year 10 English

Section A

Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow. You should spend about 40 minutes on this section.

The following is adapted from Thomas Hardy's short story, The Three Strangers. The extract describes the arrival of each of the strangers on a rainy night at a remote cottage where the owner, a shepherd, is celebrating the christening of his child with a number of friends.

The guests had arrived before the rain began to fall. A glance into the house at eight o'clock on this eventful evening would have resulted in the opinion that it was as cosy and comfortable a nook as could be wished for in boisterous weather. Nineteen persons were gathered here to celebrate the birth and christening of the shepherd's child. All were preparing to dance when there was a knock at the door.

"Walk in!" said the shepherd, promptly.

The latch clicked upward, and out of the night a stranger appeared upon the door-mat. His hat, which for a moment he did not remove, hung low over his eyes, without concealing that they were large, open, and determined, moving with a flash rather than a glance round the room. He seemed pleased with his survey and, baring his shaggy head, said, in a rich, deep voice: "The rain is so heavy, friends that I ask leave to come in and rest awhile."

"To be sure, stranger," said the shepherd. "And faith, you've been lucky in choosing your time, for we are having a bit of a celebration." The stranger came in and sat in the chimney corner by the fire, drying himself.

A short time later there was another knock at the door. At sound of it the man in the chimney-corner 15 took up the poker and began stirring the fire as if doing it thoroughly were the one aim of his existence; and a second time the shepherd said, "Walk in!" In a moment another man stood upon the straw-woven door-mat. He too was a stranger.

This individual was one of a type radically different from the first. He appeared jovial and relaxed. He was several years older than the first arrival, his hair being slightly frosted, his eyebrows bristly, and 20 his whiskers cut back from his cheeks. His face was rather full and flabby, and yet it was not altogether a face without power. He flung back his long drab greatcoat, revealing that beneath it he wore a suit of cinder-grey shade throughout. Shaking the water-drops from his hat, he said, "I must ask for a few minutes' shelter, comrades, or I shall be wetted to my skin before I get to Casterbridge."

"Make yourself at home, master," said the shepherd.

Some time later, when conversation and dance were in full flow, again a knock was heard and the shepherd uttered for the third time the welcoming words, "Walk in!"

The door was gently opened, and another man stood upon the mat. He, like those who had preceded him, was a stranger. This time it was a short, small personage, of fair complexion, and dressed in a decent suit of dark clothes.

"Can you tell me the way to--?" he began: when, gazing round the room to observe the nature of the company among whom he had fallen, his eyes lighted on the stranger in cinder-grey, who was at that moment singing, and then on the stranger in the chimney-corner who was waving his cup of mead in time to the song so heartily that it splashed over on the hearth.

All this time the third stranger had been standing in the doorway. Finding now that he did not come forward or go on speaking, the guests particularly regarded him. They noticed to their surprise that he stood before them the picture of abject terror--his knees trembling, his hand shaking so violently that the door-latch by which he supported himself rattled audibly: he quivered like a leaf. A moment more and he had turned, closed the door, and fled.

1 (a) In your own words explain what is meant when the first stranger is described as looking round the room with his eyes 'moving with a flash rather than a glance round the room' (line 9).

(2 marks)

(b) What impression do you get of the character and state of mind of the first stranger, based on the description in lines 7-11? Provide short quotation to support your points.

(3 marks)

2. In what ways does the second stranger contrast with the first? Use your own words as far as possible.

(4 marks)

3. Reread the description of the third stranger in lines 28-39.
(a) What impression do you get of the man's character and state of mind? (2 marks)
(b) How does Hardy create this impression? Comment closely on his particular choice of words and images and on how these help us to imagine the man. Remember to support your points with brief quotation.

(5 marks)

4. One of the strangers turns out to be the new county hangman, whose job the following morning is to hang a man convicted of stealing a sheep to feed his starving family. Which stranger do you think it is and why? (We are more interested in your reasoning than in whether you choose the 'correct' stranger.)

(3 marks)

5. Give the meaning and part of speech of the following
boisterous (line 3) radically (line 19)

(4 marks)

6. Copy out one example of a simile and one example of onomatopoeia.

(2 marks)

7. Imagine that it is just after the third stranger has fled and the shepherd and his wife are in a place where they cannot be overheard. Write the conversation they have about the situation, including their thoughts about the strangers and their arrival. Try to set this out as if it is dialogue in a novel, rather than as a play script.

(5 marks)

[30 marks]

Section B

Spend about 20 minutes on this section. It is worth 20 marks.

Answer one of the following.
Either

(a) Continue the story of the three strangers, imagining what happens next, developing the scene and characters of those involved.

Or

(b) Write a story or a description with The Stranger as your title.

Or

(c) 'Risk-taking is an important part of growing up.'
What is your view? Write an essay giving your views on this statement.