



EXAMPLE

# CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL

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## 11+ English Entrance Exam

### Reading & Writing

#### Instructions

- You have one hour to complete the paper
- You should spend 30 minutes on each section
- Both sections are worth equal marks
- Section A assesses reading and is multiple choice: each question has only one correct answer
- Section B assesses creative writing: read the instructions and then continue the story in the lined space provided

## PASSAGE A

It was the last day of July. The long hot summer was drawing to a close; and we, the weary pilgrims of the London pavement, were beginning to think of the cloud-shadows on the corn-fields, and the autumn breezes on the sea-shore.

For my own poor part, the fading summer left me out of health, out of spirits, and, if the truth must be told, out of money as well. During the past year I had not managed my professional resources as carefully as usual; and my extravagance now limited me to the prospect of spending the autumn economically between my mother's cottage at Hampstead and my own chambers in town.

The evening, I remember, was still and cloudy; the London air was at its heaviest; the distant hum of the street-traffic was at its faintest; the small pulse of the life within me, and the great heart of the city around me, seemed to be sinking in unison, languidly and more languidly, with the sinking sun. I roused myself from the book which I was dreaming over rather than reading, and left my chambers to meet the cool night air in the suburbs. It was one of the two evenings in every week which I was accustomed to spend with my mother and my sister. So I turned my steps northward in the direction of Hampstead.

Events which I have yet to relate make it necessary to mention in this place that my father had been dead some years at the period of which I am now writing; and that my sister Sarah and I were the sole survivors of a family of five children. My father was a drawing-master before me. His exertions had made him highly successful in his profession; and his affectionate anxiety to provide for the future of those who were dependent on his labours had impelled him, from the time of his marriage, to devote to the insuring of his life a much larger portion of his income than most men consider it necessary to set aside for that purpose. Thanks to his admirable prudence and self-denial my mother and sister were left, after his death, as independent of the world as they had been during his lifetime. I succeeded to his connection, and had every reason to feel grateful for the prospect that awaited me at my starting in life.

The quiet twilight was still trembling on the topmost ridges of the heath; and the view of London below me had sunk into a black gulf in the shadow of the cloudy night, when I stood before the gate of my mother's cottage. I had hardly rung the bell before the house door was opened violently; my worthy Italian friend, Professor Pesca, appeared in the servant's place; and darted out joyously to receive me, with a shrill foreign parody on an English cheer.

On his own account, and, I must be allowed to add, on mine also, the Professor merits the honour of a formal introduction. Accident has made him the starting-point of the strange family story which it is the purpose of these pages to unfold.

I had first become acquainted with my Italian friend by meeting him at certain great houses where he taught his own language and I taught drawing. All I then knew of the history of his life was, that he had once held a situation in the University of Padua; that he had left Italy for political reasons (the nature of which he uniformly declined to mention to any one); and that he had been for many years respectably established in London as a teacher of languages.

Without being actually a dwarf - for he was perfectly well proportioned from head to foot - Pesca was, I think, the smallest human being I ever saw out of a show-room. Remarkable anywhere, by his personal appearance, he was still further distinguished among the rank and file of mankind by the harmless eccentricity of his character. The ruling idea of his life appeared to be, that he was bound to show his gratitude to the country which had afforded him an asylum and a means of subsistence

by doing his utmost to turn himself into an Englishman. Not content with paying the nation in general the compliment of invariably carrying an umbrella, and invariably wearing gaiters and a white hat, the Professor further aspired to become an Englishman in his habits and amusements, as well as in his personal appearance. Finding us distinguished, as a nation, by our love of athletic exercises, the little man, in the innocence of his heart, devoted himself impromptu to all our English sports and pastimes whenever he had the opportunity of joining them; firmly persuaded that he could adopt our national amusements of the field by an effort of will precisely as he had adopted our national gaiters and our national white hat.

## **PASSAGE B**

*In this passage, which is set during World War 2 during the Blitz, Chas finds an aircraft that has been shot down and cautiously approaches it...*

Chas reached up and tugged at the gun barrel. One leg of the swivel had snapped with the impact. He wrenched at the other, but the aluminium of the aircraft body just bent without breaking. Besides, a belt of shining cartridges went from the gun back into the aircraft. It supported the gun like a sling against Chas' downward pulls. Perhaps if he loosened the cartridge-belt...

He grabbed the round barrel, put his plimsolls against the curving sides of the plane and went up like a monkey. He peered over the edge of the cockpit.

The gunner was sitting there, watching him. One hand, in a soft fur mitt, was stretched up as if to retrieve the gun; the other lay in his overalled lap. He wore the black leather flying-helmet of the Luftwaffe, and goggles. His right eye, pale grey, watched through the goggle-glass tolerantly and a little sadly. He looked a nice man, young.

The glass of the other goggle was gone. Its rim was thick with stick red, and inside a seething mass of flies, which rose and buzzed angrily at Chas' arrival, then sank back into the goggle again.

For a terrible moment, Chas thought the Nazi was alive, that the mitted hand would reach out and grab him. Then, even worse, he knew he was dead. It was like that moment in a fight when you think you're winning, and then suddenly you're lying on the ground with your mouth full of salty blood and you know you're going to lose, so you start shaking all over. Only this was ten times worse.

He wanted to let go of the fuselage, drop off and run home. But something in his mind wouldn't let him; something found the dead man fascinating. Something made him reach out and touch the gloved hand. Inside the sheepskin the fingers were hard as iron. The arm and whole body was stiff. The gunner moved, but only as a statue or a toy soldier would move, all in one piece. The flies rose and buzzed. Inside the goggle was a deep red hole full of what looked like... Chas dropped and was violently sick against a little door marked *Nicht Anfassen*.

He thought his mother would be angry at him for having wasted a good breakfast when food was hard to get. Then he heard the nine o'clock hooter. Everyone set their watches by the factory hooters. They went at seven and eight and twelve and five. But this one, a little silly warbly one, went at nine. Chas knew it well, because it told him if he was late for school.

School! School was half-past ten, and he had to get home and change into his uniform. He must hurry. He scurried off through the brambles without a backward look.

## SECTION A: READING

### Instructions

- After reading *Passage A*, complete the multiple choice questions below
- Each question has only one correct answer: write A, B, C or D in the space provided
- You should spend no more than 30 minutes on this section

1. How do Londoners feel about the past summer, in paragraph 1?

- A They are enjoying the hot and pleasant weather.
- B They are looking forward to the change in seasons and cooler weather.
- C They would like to live by the seaside.
- D They prefer it when it rains.

Your answer to Question 1: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you think the word 'pilgrims' means in this context?

- A Religious people.
- B Tourists visiting London churches.
- C Travellers or wanderers.
- D Weary residents of London.

Your answer to Question 2: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why is the narrator worried about money?

- A His mother's cottage is unaffordable.
- B His chambers in town are too expensive.
- C He has spent too much in the past year.
- D He cannot afford both his mother's cottage and his chambers in town.

Your answer to Question 3: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Where is he going to spend the autumn?

- A In town.
- B In Hampstead.
- C At his mother's cottage.
- D Both in Hampstead and in town.

Your answer to Question 4: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Why do you think the author describes the London air as being 'at its heaviest'?

- A Because the city is very polluted.
- B Because it is about to rain heavily.
- C Because the atmosphere is oppressive and wearying.
- D Because the night air is hot and humid.

Your answer to Question 5: \_\_\_\_\_

6. How does the narrator travel to his mother's house?

- A He takes a taxi.
- B He walks.
- C He rides a horse.
- D His mother collects him in a horse and cart.

Your answer to Question 6: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Which is the most accurate statement regarding the narrator at the end of paragraph 3?

- A He is delighted to be going to see his mother and sister.
- B He is recovering from an illness and still feels ill.
- C He feels weary but motivates himself for an evening walk to his family.
- D He feels energetic and motivated by the prospect of an evening out.

Your answer to Question 7: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What does 'spending the autumn economically' mean?

- A Learning about economics.
- B Working in the City.
- C Finding a new job.
- D Spending very little money.

Your answer to Question 8: \_\_\_\_\_

9. What do you think the word 'languidly' means, in paragraph 3?

- A Sluggishly.
- B Quickly.
- C Chaotically.
- D Descending.

Your answer to Question 9: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Which phrase best describes the purpose of the first three paragraphs?

- A To make London seem a place you wouldn't want to visit.
- B To make the reader appreciate the writer's talent with words.
- C To set the scene and introduce a character in need of adventure.
- D To make the next scene seem exciting by comparison.

Your answer to Question 10: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Which of the following phrases is a metaphor?

- A The autumn breezes on the sea shore.
- B The distant hum of the street traffic.
- C The cool night air.
- D The great heart of the city.

Your answer to Question 11: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Which word in the fourth paragraph means caution and care?

- A Anxiety.
- B Prudence.
- C Insuring.
- D Exertions.

Your answer to Question 12: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Which one of these statements most accurately describes the narrator's family situation?

- A He and his sister are the only children still alive.
- B Of the family of five children, he and his sister are the closest.
- C His father died leaving a family of five.
- D His father recently died, leaving only the narrator and his sister.

Your answer to Question 13: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Why was his father so successful at his job?

- A He worked hard at it.
- B He had natural talent.
- C He always left the office late.
- D His family helped him.

Your answer to Question 14: \_\_\_\_\_

15. What is the narrator's profession?

- A He is unemployed.
- B He is an English teacher.
- C A drawing master.
- D The passage doesn't say.

Your answer to Question 15: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Why do you think the narrator feels so grateful to his father?

- A Because he was always faithful to his mother.
- B Because he always thought carefully about how to provide for his family.
- C Because they shared a lot of the same interests.
- D Because he was proud of what he achieved professionally.

Your answer to Question 16: \_\_\_\_\_

17. What type of phrase is 'the quiet twilight was still trembling'?

- A Simile.
- B Metaphor.
- C Personification.
- D Pun.

Your answer to Question 17: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Which of the following words taken from the passage best communicates Pesca's happiness at his friend's sudden entrance? Choose one answer.

- A Receive.
- B Parody.
- C Darted.
- D Joyously.

Your answer to Question 18: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Why does the narrator say he wants to introduce Professor Pesca to us?

- A He tells stories about his family.
- B The narrator's story begins with him.
- C He had an accident.
- D He is very small.

Your answer to Question 19: \_\_\_\_\_

20. What does the narrator know about Professor Pesca's life in Italy?

- A He was involved in an incident at the University of Padua.
- B He lived in Padua for many years.
- C He had taught drawing in Italy.
- D He had taught at the University of Padua.

Your answer to Question 20: \_\_\_\_\_

21. How did the narrator first meet Professor Pesca?

- A Through their work at great houses.
- B Because his family knew the Professor.
- C He met him in Italy.
- D They met playing sport.

Your answer to Question 21: \_\_\_\_\_

22. What do you understand by the phrase 'harmless eccentricity'?

- A Innocent.
- B Unusual and only slightly threatening.
- C Strange and unusual.
- D Peculiar but unlikely to annoy or worry people.

Your answer to Question 22: \_\_\_\_\_

23. How does his friend demonstrate his aspiration to become an Englishman in his appearance?

- A By earning his living in the country.
- B By carrying an umbrella, wearing gaiters and a white hat.
- C By playing as much rugby as possible.
- D By visiting the narrator unexpectedly whenever possible.

Your answer to Question 23: \_\_\_\_\_

24. Why does the professor feel so much gratitude towards England as a country?

- A His close friends live there and he values them greatly.
- B He was given refuge when he left Italy.
- C He didn't like the weather in Italy and prefers the mild summer.
- D He loves cricket and the quirks of English culture.

Your answer to Question 24: \_\_\_\_\_



25. Why do you think the professor 'declines to mention to anyone' the political reasons that caused him to leave Italy?

- A He cannot remember; he is old and has lost some of his long-term memory.
- B He considers it rude; he does not like talking about himself in social situations.
- C He wants it kept secret; perhaps there are things that happened he is not proud of.
- D He was prime minister and wants to keep a low profile now he has left.

Your answer to Question 25: \_\_\_\_\_

**Now turn over for SECTION B.**

## SECTION B: CREATIVE WRITING

After reading *Passage B*, continue the story.

### Instructions

- You should spend no more than 30 minutes on this section
- You do not have to finish the story
- You are being assessed on your ability to:
  - Write using accurate sentences, including subordination
  - Spell properly, and write with accurate punctuation and grammar
  - Develop a realistic narrative
  - Write engagingly to interest the reader, using metaphor, simile and personification where appropriate
- Spend 5 minutes planning your writing in the box below





