



OUNDLE

School

2021 Non-Common Entrance Examination

Fourth Form Entry

English

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions

- **Dictionaries are not allowed.**
- Answer on lined paper. Clearly mark your name at the top of each sheet of paper you use.
- Answer ALL the questions in Section A. Answer ONE question from Section B. **You should divide your time equally between both sections.**
- You are expected to write clearly and accurately in your answers. Write in full sentences. You should leave some time towards the end of the examination to check your work carefully.
- The maximum number of marks for this paper is 50.

Section A: Comprehension

Spend about 30 minutes on this section

Read James Kirkup's poem 'Rugby League Game' and then answer the questions that follow. Leave yourself enough time to answer the last question in full detail.

Rugby League Game

Sport is absurd, and sad.
Those grown men, just look,
In those dreary long blue shorts,
Those ringed stockings, Edwardian,
Balding pates, and huge
Fat knees that ought to be heroes'.

5

Grappling, hooking, gallantly tackling –
Is all this courage really necessary? –
Taking their good clean fun
So solemnly, they run each other down
With earnest keenness, for the honour of
Virility, the cap, the county side.

10

Like great boys they roll each other
In the mud of public Saturdays,
Groping their blind way back
To noble youth, away from the bank,
The wife, the pram, the spin-drier,
Back to the Spartan freedom of the field.

15

Back, back to the days when boys
Were men, still hopeful, and untamed.
That was then: a gay
And golden age ago.
Now, in vain, domesticated,
Men try to be boys again.

20

James Kirkup (1918-2009)

1. The poet's attitude to sport is obvious in his opening line: 'Sport is absurd, and sad'. Show how he presents the absurdity and sadness in stanza one.
(3 marks)
2. How do the players see themselves as suggested by the use of phrases such as 'good clean fun' (line 9) and 'earnest keenness' (line 11)? What else in the poem might support your view here?
(4 marks)
3. Why does the poet speak of the men as 'Groping their blind way back / To noble youth' (lines 15-16)?
(5 marks)
4. What are the players trying to get away from? Explain your answer in full.
(5 marks)
5. What is the overall attitude to sport in this poem? Is the poem really about sport at all? Explain your answer in full.
(8 marks)

(Total: 25 marks)

End of Section A

Section B: Composition

Spend about 30 minutes on this section

Answer ONE of the following questions. You are reminded of the importance of clear and accurate written English and of careful presentation in your answers. All questions carry equal marks.

1. Describe an exciting sporting event, from the perspective of either one of the players or a spectator. Write in such a way that you convey a clear picture of the event in the reader's mind. Do not attempt to write a poem.

(25 marks)

2. 'Is all this courage really necessary?' Write a story in which one of the characters asks this question.

(25 marks)

3. 'Growing up is hard to do.' Use this question as EITHER:

- a) the headline for an article for a teenage magazine

OR

- b) a speech to present to your school assembly.

(25 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS