



EXAMINATION PAPER
Junior Entrance 2025
English
Time allowed: 1 hour

Name: _____

Instructions

- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.
- Answer on lined paper. Start Section B on a new sheet of paper. Write your name clearly at the top of each sheet of paper that you use.
- Answer All the questions in Section A. Choose ONE question from Section B. You are given advice to help you decide how long to spend on each section.
- You are expected to write clearly and accurately throughout each of your answers. Accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar will be evaluated throughout the paper (and especially in Section B), although there is no actual mark allocation for these elements.
- 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

You should spend about 35 minutes on this section. You should write in full sentences, including as much detail as necessary to explain your point or points clearly. **Please note that this section is worth 30 marks and the final question carries 12 marks.**

Read this extract from a short story called "Sliding." It is wintertime and Bernard and his friends have decided to go and slide across the ice which has formed on a large pond.

After lunch they all went to the pond, protected by layers of clothing against the wind's knives, their woollen hats pulled over their ears. Bernard began to feel very happy. He began to imagine the long quietness of his gliding over the ice. He thought of the thick ice, clear as glass, beneath which the cold fish swam, staring up with their
5 goggle eyes at the sliding boys. He thought of the ice like a dazzling mirror set in the hills, on which they could skim above their own images, each brilliant slider like two perfect boys – one upside down- joined at their feet. In his happiness he bumped and jostled against Danny Kenyon.

But the pond was a disappointment. Winter had taken all life from the hills and the
10 face of the ice was grey and blind – the colour of the flat sky above. Featureless, the ice stretched on, swept by an unhindered wind. The boys bent their heads down against the brutal cold. Their voices were feeble; they felt small and helpless. Only Randall Jenkins was **unaffected**. He ran onto the ice, planting his **laughable feet** one after the other. His legs **rigid**, both arms raised for balance, he slid with **comic dignity**. They
15 all rushed after him, sliding and calling. The afternoon was suddenly warm and vigorous.

Bernard was a good runner, and he hurled himself along so the momentum of his first slide would be memorable. He raced past two of three boys and then stopped, his legs braced wide, head up, arms raised. He was expecting something birdlike, something
20 approaching flight, but nothing happened. **His rubber soles clung wickedly to the surface** of the ice and he slid no more than a few yards. He was inconsolable.

He shuffled cautiously along the margins of the ice, tentative and humble. Far out, in the middle of the pond, he could see the dark figures of his friends, freely sliding, gyrating, crouching, skating on one leg. Their voices came bounding to him high and
25 clear like the calling of seagulls. But he ran along on the edge of the lake, unable to slide. Then unexpectedly, without warning, he found himself free of the binding friction that had held him as the soles of his boots froze. He had begun to glide. He ran jubilantly into the heart of the pond, far out-stripping the loud boys, sliding far and fast, hearing their admiration and surprise. The pond was his.

- 30 Bernard thought he had never seen anything as lovely as the dark ice, hardly lit at all as the light faded and the still figures of his friends dotted about on it, not moving their arms in a variety of postures, their bodies bent or upright. He had never felt so light; he was full of fiery energy. He slid beautifully, and felt at once the speed of his sliding and he knew that no one had ever slid so far.
- 35 *Adapted from "Sliding" by Leslie Norris*

Answer the questions on a sheet of paper. Do not try to write your answers on this question paper. Please note question 6 carries the most marks.

1. Look at the first sentence (lines 1-2). How does the writer help us understand how cold it is? [4 marks]
2. Look at the first paragraph (lines 1-8). Explain in your own words why Bernard was excited about going sliding on the ice. [4 marks]
3. Look at lines 8 to 11. How does the writer help us understand why, initially, Bernard was not excited by the pond? [4 marks]
4. Look at the description of Randall Jenkins as he slides on the ice. Explain what these words and phrases mean.

unaffected (line 13)

laughable feet (line 13)

rigid (line 14)

comic dignity (line 14) [4 marks]

5. Explain what the writer means when he describes that the soles of Bernard's shoes "**clung wickedly to the surface.**" (lines 20,21) [2 marks]
6. **Looking at the passage as a whole**, explain what you think Bernard is like as a person. This question carries the most marks so look to answer it as fully as you can. [12 marks]

SECTION B: CREATIVE WRITING

You should spend around 25 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 answer.

Start your answer on a new sheet of paper and write your name at the top.

EITHER

1. This passage from *Sliding* comes from the middle of the story. Continue the story, focusing on the descriptions of the boys and their actions, and what Bernard thinks and feels. [20 marks]

OR

2. In the passage, a pond is presented in winter. Write a description or story in which a character visits some water (for example, a river, a lake, the sea, a fountain) in the summer time. Your character does not have to be a boy. [20 marks]