



MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL

16+ Entrance Exam: **English**

Time allowed: 45 minutes

Name:

Current school:

Instructions

- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- Answer **one** question: either a or b.
- Answer the question on the paper provided.

Information

- The total mark for this paper is 30.

Advice

- Read each question carefully before you start to answer it.
- Keep an eye on the time.
- Write your answers neatly and in good English.
- Check your answer if you have time at the end.

Total _____ /30 _____ %

Answer **one** question.

Either (a):

Read carefully the poem below. Explore how the writer presents the fly in this poem.

In your answer, you should consider:

- what the poem is about and how it is organised
- the writer's choice of words, phrases and images and the effects they create
- the writer's use of form and structure
- your own response to the poem as a whole

Support your answer with examples from the poem.

FLY

- 1 A fat fly fuddles for an exit
at the window pane.
Bluntly, stubbornly, it inspects it,
like a brain
- 5 nonplussed by a seemingly simple sentence
in a book,
which the glaze of unduly protracted acquaintance
has turned to gobbledy gook.

- A few inches above where the fly fizzes
- 10 a gap of air
waits, but this has
not yet been vouchsafed to the fly.
Only retreat and a loop or swoop of despair
- 14 Will give it the sky.

Christopher Reid

vouchsafe – grant in a gracious or condescending way

Or (b)

Read carefully the extract below, from the beginning of a short story. Explore how the writer makes this an effective opening.

In your answer, you should consider:

- what the story is about and how it is organised
- the writer's choice of words, phrases and images and the effects they create
- the writer's use of form, structure and narrative voice
- your own response to the extract as a whole

Support your answer with examples from the extract.

1 All that day the heat was terrible. The wind blew close to the ground; it rooted among the tussock grass, slithered along the road, so that the white dust swirled in our faces, settled and sifted over us and was like a dry-skin itching for growth on our bodies. The horses stumbled along, coughing and chuffing. The pack horse was sick—with a big,
5 open sore rubbed under the belly. Now and again she stopped short, threw back her head, looked at us as though she were going to cry, and whinnied. Hundreds of larks shrilled; the sky was slate colour, and the sound of the larks reminded me of slate pencils scraping over its surface. There was nothing to be seen but wave after wave of tussock grass, patched with purple orchids and red bushes covered with thick spider webs.

10 Jo rode ahead. He wore a blue denim shirt, corduroy trousers and riding boots. A white handkerchief, spotted with red—it looked as though his nose had been bleeding on it—was knotted round his throat. Wisps of white hair straggled from under his wide felt hat—his moustache and eyebrows were called white—he slouched in the saddle, grunting. Not once that day had he sung

15 'I don't care, for don't you see,
My wife's mother was in front of me!'

It was the first day we had been without it for a month, and now there seemed something uncanny in his silence. Jim rode beside me, white as a clown; his black eyes glittered, and he kept shooting out his tongue and moistening his lips. He was dressed
20 in a woollen vest, and a pair of blue linen trousers, fastened round the waist with a plaited leather belt. We had hardly spoken since dawn. At noon we had lunched off fly biscuits and apricots by the side of a swampy creek.

'My stomach feels like the crop of a hen,' said Jo. 'Now then, Jim, you're the bright boy of the party—where's this 'ere store you kep' on talking about. "Oh, yes," you says,
25 "I know a fine store, with a paddock for the horses and a creek runnin' through, owned by a friend of mine who'll give yer a bottle of whisky before 'e shakes hands with yer." I'd like ter see that place—merely as a matter of curiosity—not that I'd ever doubt yer word—as yer know very well—but ...'

Jim laughed. 'Don't forget there's a woman too, Jo, with blue eyes and yellow hair.'

30 'The heat's making you balmy,' said Jo. But he dug his knees into the horse. We
shambled on. I half fell asleep, and had a sort of uneasy dream that the horses were not
moving forward at all—then that I was on a rocking-horse, and my old mother was
scolding me for raising such a fearful dust from the drawing-room carpet. 'You've
entirely worn off the pattern of the carpet,' I heard her saying, and she gave the reins a
35 tug. I snivelled and woke to find Jim leaning over me, maliciously smiling.

'That was a case of all but,' said he. 'I just caught you. What's up? Been bye-bye?'

'No!' I raised my head. 'Thank the Lord we're arriving somewhere.'

We were on the brow of the hill, and below us there was a hut roofed with corrugated
iron. It stood in a garden, rather far back from the road—a big paddock opposite, and a
creek and a clump of young willow trees. A thin line of blue smoke stood up straight
40 from the chimney of the hut; and as I looked a woman came out, followed by a child and
a sheep dog—the woman carrying what appeared to me a black stick. She made gestures
at us.

From 'The Woman at the Store' by Katherine Mansfield