

THE ENGLISH SCHOOL, NICOSIA
ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS 2004

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Native/Near-Native Speakers

YEAR 2

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. FILL IN YOUR NAME AND NUMBER ON THE SLIP ATTACHED.**
- 2. ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS IN THE SPACES PROVIDED AND THE ESSAY ON THE LINED PAPER IN THIS BOOKLET.**
- 3. YOU MAY USE THE BLANK BACK OF EACH PAGE TO MAKE ROUGH NOTES IF YOU SO WISH. IF YOU DO, JUST CROSS THEM OUT WHEN YOU FINISH. THE EXAMINER WILL NOT LOOK AT THESE ROUGH NOTES.**
- 4. MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.**
- 5. WRITE NEATLY. WRITE GOOD ENGLISH .**

This paper is 12 pages

SECTION II (30 MARKS)

Read this passage. Answer the questions that follow in the spaces provided.

10 It was on the afternoon of the day of Christmas Eve, and I was in Mrs Prothero's garden, waiting for cats, with her son Jim. It was snowing. It was always snowing at Christmas; December, in my memory, is white as Lapland, though there were no reindeers. But there were cats. Patient, cold, and callous, our hands wrapped in socks, we waited to snowball the cats. Sleek and long as jaguars and terrible-whiskered, spitting and snarling they would slink and sidle over the white back-garden walls, and the lynx-eyed hunters, Jim and I, fur-capped and moccasined trappers from Hudson's Bay off Eversley Road, would hurl our deadly snowballs at the green of their eyes. The wise cats never appeared. We were so still, Eskimo-footed arctic marksmen in the muffling silence of the eternal snows – eternal, ever since Wednesday – that we never heard Mrs Prothero's first cry from her igloo at the bottom of the garden. Or, if we heard it at all, it was, to us, like the far-off challenge of our enemy and prey, the neighbour's Polar Cat. But soon the voice grew louder. 'Fire!' cried Mrs Prothero, and she beat the dinner-gong. And we ran down the garden, 20 with the snowballs in our arms, towards the house, and smoke, indeed, was pouring out of the dining-room, and the gong was bombilating, and Mrs Prothero was announcing ruin like a town-crier in Pompeii. This was better than all the cats in Wales standing on the wall in a row. We bounded into the house, laden with snowballs, and stopped at the open door of the smoke-filled room. Something was burning all right; perhaps it was Mr Prothero, who always slept there after midday dinner with a newspaper over his face; but he was standing in the middle of the room, saying 'A fine Christmas!' and smacking at the smoke with a slipper. 30

'Call the fire-brigade,' cried Mrs Prothero as she beat the gong.

'They won't be there,' said Mr Prothero, 'it's Christmas.'

There was no fire to be seen, only clouds of smoke and Mr Prothero standing in the middle of them, waving his slipper as though he were conducting.

'Do something,' he said.

40 And we threw all our snowballs into the smoke – I think we missed Mr Prothero – and ran out of the house to the telephone-box.

'Let's call the police as well,' Jim said.

'And the ambulance.'

'And Ernie Jenkins, he likes fires.'

50 But we only called the fire-brigade, and soon the fire-engine came and three tall men in helmets brought a hose into the house and Mr Prothero got out just in time before they turned it on. Nobody could have had a noisier Christmas Eve. And when the firemen turned off the hose and were standing in the wet and smoky room, Jim's aunt, Miss Prothero, came downstairs and peered in at them. Jim and I waited, very quietly, to hear what she would say to them. She said the right thing,

always. She looked at the three tall firemen in their shining helmets, standing among the smoke and cinders and dissolving snowballs, and she said: 'Would you like something to read?'

60 Now out of that bright white snowball of Christmas gone comes the stocking, the stocking of stockings, that hung at the foot of the bed with the arm of a golliwog dangling over the top and small bells ringing in the toes. There was a company, gallant and scarlet but never nice to taste though I always tried
70 when very young, of belted and busbied and musketed lead soldiers so soon to lose their heads and legs in the wars on the kitchen table after the tea-things, the mince-pies, and the cakes that I helped to make by stoning the raisins and eating them, had been cleared away; and a bag of moist and many-coloured jelly-babies and a folded flag and a false nose and a tram-conductor's cap and a machine that punched tickets and rang a bell; never a catapult; once, by a mistake that no one could explain, a little hatchet; and a rubber buffalo, or it may
70 have been a horse, with a yellow head and haphazard legs; and a celluloid duck that made, when you pressed it, a most unducklike noise, a mewling moo that an ambitious cat might make who wishes to be a cow; and a painting-book in which I could make the grass, the trees, the sea, and the animals any colour I pleased: and still the dazzling sky-blue sheep are grazing in the red field under a flight of rainbow-beaked and pea-green birds.

80 And I remember that on the afternoon of Christmas Day, when the others sat around the fire and told each other that this was nothing, no, nothing, to the great snowbound and turkey-proud yule-log-crackling holly-berry-bedizined and kissing-under-the-mistletoe Christmas when *they* were children, I would go out, school-capped and gloved and muffled, with my bright new boots squeaking, into the white world on to the seaward hill, to call on Jim and Dan and Jack and to walk with them through the silent snowscape of our town.

We went padding through the streets, leaving huge deep footprints in the snow, on the hidden pavements.

90 And we were snowblind travellers lost on the north hills, and the great dewlapped dogs, with brandy-flasks round their necks, ambled and shambled up to us, baying 'Excelsior'.

We returned home through the desolate poor sea-facing streets where only a few children fumbled with bare red fingers in the thick wheel-rutted snow and catcalled after us, their voices fading away, as we trudged uphill, into the cries of the dock-birds and the hooters of ships out in the white and whirling bay.

100 Bring out the tall tales now that we told by the fire as we roasted chestnuts and the gaslight bubbled low. Ghosts with their heads under their arms trailed their chains and said 'whooo' like owls in the long nights when I dared not look over my shoulder; wild beasts lurked in the cubby-hole under the stairs where the gas-meter ticked. 'Once upon a time,' Jim said, 'there were three boys, just like us, who got lost in the

dark in the snow, near Bethesda Chapel, and this is what happened to them. . . .' It was the most dreadful happening I had ever heard.

110 And I remember that we went singing carols once, a night or two before Christmas Eve, when there wasn't the shaving of a moon to light the secret, white-flying streets. At the end of a long road was a drive that led to a large house, and we stumbled up the darkness of the drive that night, each one of us afraid, each one holding a stone in his hand in case, and all of us too brave to say a word. The wind made through the drive-trees noises as of old and unpleasant and maybe web-footed men wheezing in caves. We reached the black bulk of the house.

Now answer the following questions:

1. What are the cats and Jim and the narrator compared to? [2 marks]

2. Where does the narrator imagine that he and his friend are when waiting for the cats? [2 marks]

3. Who, in fact, is the “far off challenge of our enemy and prey” (l. 17)? [1 mark]

4. Did the boys manage to attack any cats? Give a reason for your answer. [2 marks]

5. Explain in a word or short phrase the meaning of the following *as they are used in the passage*:

- i. sleek (l. 7) _____
- ii. laden (l. 25) _____
- iii. bounded (l. 24) _____
- iv. desolate (l. 92) _____
- v. trudged (l. 95) _____
- vi. wheezing (l. 116) _____

[6 marks]

6. From the evidence of the passage, *briefly* describe the characters of Mr and Mrs Prothero and Miss Prothero [6 marks]

7. What are the “tall tales” (l. 98)?

[2 marks]

8. Explain what the “shaving of a moon” is. (l. 109-10)

[2 mark]

9. Why do you think they would need to carry a stone when carol singing? [1 mark]

10. What does “this” in line 23 refer to? [1 mark]

11. What does “company” in line 59 refer to? [2 marks]

12. Who do you think the “others” are in line 79? [1 mark]

13. What does “this” in line 80 refer to? [2 marks]

SECTION III (40 MARKS)

Exercise A (20 marks)

For each of the following sentences, write a new one using the word given. The second sentence must be as close as possible in meaning to the first. Do not change the form of the word given in bold.

Example: This place makes me think of the village where I grew up. **reminds**

Answer: *This place reminds me of the town where I grew up.*

1. I used to remember things a lot better. **memory**

2. I'm sorry, but I've forgotten your name. **slipped**

3. That makes me think of something that happened to me. **brings**

4. The total came to just over 6000 pounds. **worked**

5. I haven't really realized yet what passing this exam means. **sunk**

6. In the end we had to walk to the party. **up**

7. I didn't expect to see you here! **last**

8. Whoever did the washing up didn't do it very well. **job**

9. James broke the CD player and smashed a window, too! **only**

10. There's nothing better to do, so go home. **may**

Exercise B (10 marks)

Underline the most suitable word *in italics* in each sentence.

Example: When they met it was love at/*with* first sight.

1. Dianne showed a complete disregard *for*/*with* her own safety.
2. They wouldn't let me in because I was *below*/*under* age.
3. Unfortunately, my *plan*/*suggestion* didn't quite come off.
4. We have come up against a rather tricky *idea*/*problem*.
5. John was *muttering*/*whispering*/*swallowing* something under his breath, but I didn't catch a word of what he said.
6. I *checked*/*glanced*/*faced* at my watch. It was well past my bedtime!
7. Would you like to *regard*/*view*/*observe* the new house this afternoon?
8. Some people *truthfully*/*absolutely*/*actually* believe that aliens visited Earth in ancient times!
9. In some *respects*/*aspects*/*methods* it was a very clever plan.
10. The boy did not *pronounce*/*emit*/*utter* a word as the head teacher told him his punishment.

Exercise C (10 marks)

Each of the following sentences contains a mistake. Correct them.

Example: Strange as it may seem, but I enjoy hard work.

Answer: Strange as it may seem, I enjoy hard work.

1. Hardly I sat down, when there was a knock at the door.
-

2. Under any circumstances, are you allowed into the staff room!
-

3. All his plans for the business fell in.
-

4. Trespassers will be persecuted.
-

5. Paul's parents wouldn't let to him buy a motorbike.
-

6. I am not going to allow anything at all to effect my concentration during the entire examination.
-

7. If you want some stationary, try the local newsagents down the street.
-

8. Christine is a very conscious worker, so I'm sure you will be able to rely on her at all times.
-

9. It is very dangerous to take over a heavy lorry on a bend and going up a hill!
-

10. At first, I didn't like living in the big city, but as time past I found it far more interesting.
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End of Exam

You should now check your work very carefully