

MID PROGRAMME ENTRIES 2016

Year 2

ENGLISH

Time allowed 1 hour and 15 minutes

Instructions

- Answer all the questions on the exam paper.
- Write your answers in the space provided.
- Read the instructions carefully.
- Answer each question as clearly and as neatly as possible.
- Total marks: 50



Comprehension (30 marks)

Read the following extract from *My Family and other Animals* by Gerald Durrell who, as a young boy, went to live on the Greek island of Corfu with his family.

July had been blown out like a candle by a **biting** wind that brought in a leaden August sky. A sharp, stinging drizzle fell, billowing into opaque grey sheets when the wind caught it. Along the Bournemouth sea-front the beach-huts turned blank wooden faces towards a grey sea that leapt eagerly at the cement bulwark of the shore. The gulls had been pushed inland over the town, and they now drifted above the house-tops whining peevishly. It was the sort of weather calculated to try anyone's **endurance**.

Considered as a group my family was not a very encouraging sight that afternoon, for the weather had brought with it the usual selection of illnesses to which we were prone. For me, lying on the floor, labelling my collection of shells, it had brought catarrh, pouring it into my skull like cement, so that I was forced to breathe loudly through my open mouth. For my brother Leslie, hunched dark and glowering by the fire, it had **inflamed** his ears so that they bled. To my sister Margo it had delivered a fresh set of acne spots to a face that was already blotched like a red veil. For my mother there was a rich, bubbling cold, and a bit of rheumatism. Only my eldest brother, Larry, was untouched.

It was Larry, of course, who started it. The rest of us felt too **apathetic** to think of anything except our own illnesses, but Larry went through life like a small blond firework, exploding ideas in other people's minds, and then curling up like a cat and refusing to take the blame for it.



He had become increasingly **irritable** as the afternoon progressed. At length, looking unhappily around the room, he decided to attack Mother, as the obvious cause of the trouble.

“Why do we stand this terrible climate?” he asked suddenly, making a gesture towards the rain-splattered window. “Look at it! And, if it comes to that, look at us...Margo swollen up like a plate of scarlet porridge...Leslie wandering around with bits of cotton wool in each ear...Gerry sounds like a foghorn...And look at you: you're looking more like an **old hag** every day!”

Mother peered over the top of the book she was reading “I am not,” she said indignantly.

“You are,” Larry insisted: “...and your family looks like a series of illustrations from a medical encyclopaedia.”

Mother could think of no really crushing reply to this, so she contented herself with a **glare** before retreating once more behind her book.

“What we need is sunshine,” Larry continued: “don’t you agree, Les? *Les...Les!*”

Leslie took a large quantity of cotton-wool from one ear.

“What did you say?” he asked.

“There you are!” said Larry triumphantly to Mother, “it’s become a major operation to hold a conversation with him. I ask you, what a position to be in! One brother can’t hear what you say, and the other one can’t be understood. Really, it’s time something was done! What we all need is sunshine...a country where we can *grow*.”

“Yes, dear that would be nice,” agreed Mother, not really listening.

“I had a letter from George this morning-he says Corfu’s wonderful. Why don’t we pack up and go to Greece?”

“Very well, dear, if you like,” said Mother unguardedly.

Where Larry was concerned she was generally very careful not to commit herself.

“When?” asked Larry, rather surprised at this **cooperation**.

“We cannot go just like that. I have to arrange something about this house.”

“Arrange? Arrange what, for heaven’s sake? Sell it.”

“I can’t do that, dear,” said Mother, shocked.

“Why not?”

“But I’ve only just bought it.”

“Sell it while it’s still untarnished, then.”

“Don’t be ridiculous, dear,” said Mother firmly; “that’s quite out of the question. It would be madness.”

So we sold the house and fled from the gloom of the English summer, like a flock of migrating swallows.

Glossary:

- Leaden: heavy, dark
- Billowing: windy, blowing
- Bulwark: protection
- Prone: likely to do something
- Untarnished: in excellent condition



Answer the following questions in **full sentences**, unless you are asked to do otherwise.

1. Why do you think Gerald Durrell begins the extract with a description of the weather?

(3 marks)

2. Write one sentence, in your own words, about Mother and Larry, based on the information you are given in the text:

- Mother _____

- Larry _____

(4 marks)

3. Why does Larry want to leave Bournemouth? Find one quote from the text to explain your answer:

(2 marks)

4. What is his plan?

(2 marks)

5. How does Mother react?

(2 marks)

6. Find an example of a simile in the 1st paragraph and explain its effect:

Simile _____

Effect _____

(2 marks)

7. Find an example of a simile in the 2nd paragraph and explain its effect:

Simile _____

Effect _____

(2 marks)

8. What, according to the narrator, is to blame for his family's illnesses?

(1 mark)

9. Explain the meaning of the following words as they are used in the passage. The words have been highlighted for you.

• Biting _____

• Endurance _____

• Inflamed _____

• Apathetic _____

• Irritable _____

• Old hag _____

• Glare _____

• Cooperation _____

(8 marks)

10. How does Gerald Durrell make this extract amusing? Find two examples from the text:

Quote: _____

Effect: _____

Quote: _____

Effect: _____

(4 marks)

Creative Writing (20 marks)

Choose **one** of the following questions and write about 200-250 words. Check your work for errors in vocabulary, expression and overall accuracy.

Narrative

1. Write a story ending with these words: “So that is what was making all that noise”, I exclaimed.

- Use narrative techniques to develop the story
- Use imagination to develop an original story
- Use a wide range of vocabulary and sentence types
- Develop your narrative towards a suitable ending.

Descriptive

2. Describe the feeling of being underwater.

- Use a wide range of descriptive language-adjectives, adverbs, imagery
- Refer to the senses for detail (e.g. sounds/sights/smells, etc.)
