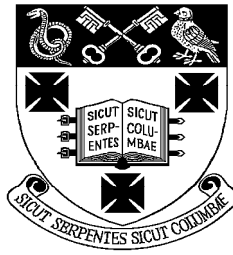


**RADLEY COLLEGE**  
**Entrance Scholarships**



**ENGLISH I**

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2002

Time allowed – 1 1/2 hours

*The two passages printed below are the opening paragraphs of two novels: Polo, by the British author, Jilly Cooper, and Weep not, Child, by the Kenyan author, \*Ngugi Wa Thiong'o.*

*\*Note: it is usual to refer to him as Ngugi.*

*Read both passages carefully, then answer the questions.*

*Remember: you will be rewarded for the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as the quality of your ideas. You should illustrate your argument with quotations taken from these texts.*

*Each section is worth **50 marks**; you are advised not to spend more than 45 minutes on either of them.*

## SECTION A

1. In what ways could these passages be considered to be effective beginnings for a novel?

You might consider, among other things:

The ways in which each novelist establishes the class, situation, relationships and outlook of the characters

The use each novelist makes of different kinds of language

The assumptions the novelists may be making about the reader's attitudes

### **Passage 1, from *Polo*, published by Bantam Press in 1991**

Queen Augusta's Boarding School for Girls has a splendid academic reputation, but on a sweltering afternoon in June one of its pupils was not paying attention to her English exam. While her classmates scribbled away, Perdita Macleod was drawing a polo pony. Outside, the scent of honeysuckle drifted in through the French windows, the cuckoo called from an acid-green poplar copse at the end of the lawn. Perdita, gazing out, thought longingly of the big tournament at Rutshire Polo Club where the semi-finals of the Rutshire Cup were being played. All her heroes were taking part: Ricky France-Lynch, Drew Benedict, Seb and Dommie Carlisle, the mighty Argentines, Miguel and Juan O'Brien, and, to crown it, the Prince of Wales. Fitfully, Perdita glanced at her exam paper which began with a poem by Newbolt:

*'And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,'* she read

*'Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,*

*But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote –*

*Play up! Play up! And play the game!'*

'Are Newbolt's views of team spirit outdated?' asked the first question.

Perdita took a fresh sheet of paper and wrote 'Yes' in her disdainful blue scrawl, 'the schoolboy in the poem must be an utter jerk and a poofter to boot to prefer his captain's hand on his shoulder to a season's fame and a ribboned coat.'

She put down her pen and thought how much she'd like a ribboned coat, one of those powder-blue blazers, braided with jade-green silk. Hamish, her ghastly step-father, never gave her nearly a large enough allowance.

**Passage 2, from *Weep not, Child*, published by Heinemann in 1964**

Nyokabi called him. She was a small, black woman, with a bold but grave face. One could tell by her small eyes full of life and warmth that she had once been beautiful. But time and bad conditions do not favour beauty. All the same, Nyokabi had retained her full smile – a smile that lit up her dark face.

‘Would you like to go to school?’

‘O, mother!’ Njoroge gasped. He half feared that the woman might withdraw her words. There was a little silence till she said,

‘We are poor. You know that.’

‘Yes, mother.’ His heart pounded against his ribs slightly. His voice was shaky.

‘So you won’t be getting a mid-day meal like other children.’

‘I understand.’

‘You won’t bring shame on me by refusing to attend school?’

*O mother, I’ll never bring shame to you. Just let me get there, just let me.*

The vision of his childhood again opened before him. For a time he contemplated the vision. He lived in it alone. It was just there, for himself; a bright future... Aloud he said, ‘I like school.’

He said this quietly. His mother understood him.

‘All right. You’ll begin on Monday. As soon as your father gets his pay we’ll go to the shops. I’ll buy you a shirt and a pair of shorts.’

*O, mother, you are an angel of God, you are, you are.*

**(50 marks)**

**SECTION B**

2. Write a story in which, after many years have gone by, either of these characters pays a visit to their old school.

**(50 marks)**