



Oundle School

Junior Entrance and Scholarship Examination 2008

ENGLISH

Time allowed: **1 ¼ hours**

Instructions:

- *Answer as many questions as you can*
- *Answer in full sentences*
- *Remember to leave yourself enough time to check your work*

Good luck!

SECTION A

Read the following passage carefully then answer the questions below in complete sentences. You should spend about 35 minutes on this section of the paper.

The extract comes from 'The House in Norham Gardens' by Penelope Lively

Belbroughton Road. Linton Road. Bardwell Road. The houses there are quite normal. They are ordinary sizes and have ordinary roofs and gardens with laburnum and flowering cherry. Park Town. As you go south they are growing. Getting higher and odder. By the time you get to Norham Gardens they have tottered over the edge into madness: these are not houses but flights of fancy. They are three storeys high and disguise themselves as churches. They have ecclesiastical porches instead of front doors and round Norman windows or pointed Gothic ones, neatly grouped in threes with flaring brick to set them off. They reek of hymns and the Empire, Mafeking and the Khyber Pass, Mr Gladstone and Our Dear Queen. They have nineteen rooms and half a dozen chimneys and iron fire escapes. A bomb couldn't blow them up, and the privet in their gardens has survived two world wars.

People live in these houses. Clare Mayfield, aged fourteen, raised by aunts in North Oxford. Clare came round the corner out of Banbury Road and the history books and maths things and *Jane Eyre* in her bicycle basket lurched over to one side with the string bag of shopping, and unbalanced her. She got off and straightened them and then pedalled fast, standing up, past the ranks of parked cars and the flurry of students coming out of the language school on the corner. She swung into the half-moon of weedy gravel that was the front drive of number forty Norham Gardens, and put the bike into the shed at the side of the house. Wind, cold January wind, funnelled up the chasm between number forty and the house next door, clutching her bare legs and rattling the dustbin lid. Clare stuffed the books on top of the shopping in the string bag and went up the front steps quickly.

The front door was not locked. Old ladies lose front door keys. Clare went across the hall and through the green baize swing door into the kitchen. The house was silent. Silence reached away up to the top of the house, up the well of the staircase past the first floor and up to the attic rooms, spiced only by the ticking of clocks: the kitchen one, loudly insensitive, the grandfather clock on the stairs, discreetly chiming since before the Boer War, Maureen's Smith Alam-o-matic, marking time by itself up there under the roof. Maureen would not be back for another hour or so. And the aunts – the aunts would be in the library, dozing quietly beside a fire that they would have forgotten to keep stoked. They were always in the library at half past four. They migrated slowly through the house during the day: from their bedrooms to the breakfast-room to the study to the dining room. I am the only person I know, Clare thought, who has a special room for having breakfast in. And a pantry and a flower-room and a silver cupboard and a scullery and three lavatories. She put the kettle on and had a conversation in her head with a person from outer space who was ignorant of these things. A flower-room, she said severely, is for arranging flowers in. A long time ago ladies who hadn't got anything much to do did that in the mornings. My great-grandmother, for instance. My aunts, on the other hand, never arrange flowers. They were a different kind of person. They always had things to do. They wrote articles and translated Anglo-Saxon and sat on committees. They are not ordinary aunts.

- 1) Where is the story set? (2 marks)
- 2) At what time of year do the events take place? (2 marks)
- 3) In your own words, describe the Norham Gardens house. (10 marks)
- 4) What do we learn about Clare's character from this extract? Remember to use proof from the extract to support your ideas. (10 marks)
- 5) What do we learn about the aunts from this extract? (6 marks)
- 6) Did you enjoy reading this extract? Explain your answer in detail. (10 marks)

SECTION B

You should spend about 25 minutes on this section.

Describe in detail a memorable house, explaining why it is important to you. You might want to write about your own home, that of a friend or a house you visit for holidays. The choice is yours!

(40 marks)

SECTION C

The final part of the examination asks you to have some fun whilst using your imagination! Spend about 15 minutes on this section.

Below is an extract from a poem by Nicolas Guillen in which he imagines the wind as a creature or animal. Read it carefully and then write a poem of your own in which you describe the weather in as imaginative way as possible; you might want to write about the wind, or perhaps rain, sunshine or snow. Try to be as original and entertaining as possible! (20 marks)

The Winds

You cannot imagine
how these winds behaved last night.
They were seen,
eyes flashing,
their tails long and rigid.
Nothing (not prayers nor oaths)
could turn them
from a hovel, a lonely ship,
from a farmhouse,
from all the necessary things
that they unwittingly destroy.

Now check your work!