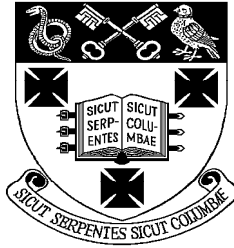


RADLEY COLLEGE
Entrance Scholarships



ENGLISH I

Thursday 13th February 2003

Time allowed: 90 minutes

The paper consists of two questions (worth 60 marks and 40 marks).

*You should spend at least **15 minutes** reading, thinking and making notes before writing.*

*Concise, clear **well-written** answers will gain the highest marks.*

Read the two passages written by famous prisoners describing their experiences in prison and then answer both questions.

a) from *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* by Oscar Wilde

He did not wear his scarlet coat,
For blood and wine are red,
And blood and wine were on his hands
When they found him with the dead,
The poor dead woman whom he loved,
And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men
In a suit of shabby gray;
A cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay;
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every drifting cloud that went
With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
Within another ring,
And was wondering if the man had done
A great or little thing,
When a voice behind me whispered low,
"That fellow's got to swing."

Dear Christ! the very prison walls

Suddenly seemed to reel,
And the sky above my head became
Like a casque of scorching steel;
And, though I was a soul in pain,
My pain I could not feel.

I only knew what haunted thought
Quickened his step, and why
He looked upon the garish day
With such a wistful eye;
The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

Some kill their love when they are young,
And some when they are old;
Some strangle with the hands of Lust,
Some with the hands of Gold:
The kindest use a knife, because
The dead so soon grow cold.

Some love too little, some too long,
Some sell, and others buy;
Some do the deed with many tears,
And some without a sigh:
For each man kills the thing he loves,
Yet each man does not die.

**b) from *A Prison Diary* by Jeffrey Archer,
Daily Mail, Monday October 7, 2002**

I finally turn off the fluorescent light above the bed, place my head on the pillow and, despite the agonising cries of the patients from the cells on either side of me, I eventually sleep.

An hour later I'm woken when the light is switched back on, the grille in the door opens and two eyes peer in at me. This is repeated every hour, on the hour – suicide watch.

At 8am, I am woken officially when the steel grille is opened. I'm greeted by a warm West Indian grin from one of the prisoners who works on the hospital wing.

His smile turns to a look of surprise when he sees me sitting at the table writing. 'You'll be able to have a shower in a few minutes,' he announces. I've already worked out that in prison a few minutes can be anything up to an hour, so I go on writing.

'Anything you need?' he asks.

Would it be possible to have some more writing paper?' I reply.

'Not something I'm often asked for,' he admits, 'but I'll see what I can do.'

He returns half an hour later and slips an A4 pad through to me. In return he asks me for six autographs, one to be personalised for his daughter.

He doesn't offer any explanation for why he needs the other five, all to be penned on separate sheets of paper, but I later discover that they will be used for bartering with other prisoners.

I can't imagine what five Jeffrey Archer signatures are worth (a packet of cigarettes, perhaps?) but I am grateful for this trade. I have a feeling that, in this hellhole, writing may turn out to be my salvation. It will keep me sane. I am still writing when the door swings open and I am handed a thin green towel, a prison toothbrush and a tube of prison toothpaste. I clean my teeth, and my gums bleed for the first time in years. It must be a physical reaction to the stress of the past 24 hours.

I worry a little about this, because I have promised myself that I must remain physically and mentally fit. According to the prison handbook left in every cell, this is nothing less than what the management requires.

I sit on my bed wondering what to expect next when I hear someone shouting from the other side of the block. 'Mornin', Jeff, bet you didn't expect to find yourself in 'ere.' I look through my tiny window and across the yard to see a face staring at me from behind his own bars. 'I'm Gordon,' he shouts. 'See you in the exercise yard,'

At 9am I am let out of my cell and escorted to the shower room. The shower at my apartment on London's Embankment is something I am particularly proud of – when I step out of it each morning I feel a new man. Belmarsh does not compare.

The large stone-floored room has three press-button showers that issue a trickle of lukewarm water. The flow lasts for 30 seconds before you have to push the button again.

This means a shower takes twice as long as usual but, as I am becoming aware, here time is one commodity in abundance.

Afterwards I go back to my cell, clinging on to my small soaking towel. I am told not to lose sight of it. A towel has to last for seven days.

I am lying on my bed, staring up at the ceiling, when a woman prison office comes in and explains that I am allowed to spend £12.50 a week on goods from the prison canteen – if I can afford it. She leaves me a form to fill in.

At 11am, a bell rings, as if announcing the end of class in school. I can join the other inmates for 45 minutes in the exercise yard. Before going down to the yard, we are all searched.

Once outside, I pace around the furlong square. Gordon, the voice from the other side of the block, finds me. Without prompting, he tells me that he has served 11 years of a life sentence for murder.

He is due out in three years' time. Although dyslexic, he has taken an Open University degree in English and is studying for a law degree. He never stops talking, which I later discover is a common trait among lifers.

'Don't talk to me about the Press,' he screeches like a tape recorder you can't switch off. 'They always get it wrong. They said I shot my lover's boyfriend when I found them in bed together. But I didn't. I stabbed him 17 times.'

I shudder at this matter-of-fact revelation, delivered with neither remorse nor irony. I wonder just how long it will be before I'm not sickened by such confessions. How long before it becomes commonplace?

As we continue our circumnavigation of the yard, he points out the Train Robber Ronnie Biggs. I glance across to see a sick old man with a tube coming out of his nose, a man who doesn't look as if he has long to live. He's sitting on a bench in the far corner surrounded by geraniums. 'They've

just planted those, Jeff,' says Gordon. 'They must have known you were comin'.'

Another circuit and I ask Gordon about a young West Indian who has his face turned to the wall and hasn't moved an inch.

He killed his wife and young daughter – he doesn't talk to no one,' says Gordon.

As we overtake another man who looks totally lost, Gordon whispers:

'That's Barry George, who's just been done for killing Jill Dando.'

I don't tell him that Jill was an old friend – we both hail from Weston-super-Mare. For the first time in my life. I keep my counsel.

As the bell rings, indicating that our 45 minutes of 'freedom' is up. We are all searched before leaving the yard, which puzzles me. If we did not have anything on us when we came in, how could we have acquired anything while we were walking around?

As we climb back up the steps, Gordon tells me: 'It's the regulations.' We go our separate ways and we never meet again.

Three days later I read in *The Sun* that Ronald Biggs and I shook hands after Gordon had introduced us.

Answer both questions. Do not spend more than one hour on Question 1 (including the reading time).

Remember, you will be rewarded for the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as for the quality of your ideas.

Question One

Compare and contrast these two extracts. You should consider the style in which the extracts are written, their use of language and their content.

(60 marks)

Question Two

Write a prose passage in which you imagine life in prison and its personal consequences. You should use vivid description as much as possible to depict life inside the prison.

(40 marks)