

THE ENGLISH SCHOOL  
ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS 2017



ENGLISH

Year 1 (native speakers) Time allowed: 1 hour and 15 minutes

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS IN THE SPACES PROVIDED ON THE QUESTION PAPER.
2. MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.
3. WRITE NEATLY.
4. WRITE IN CORRECT ENGLISH.

This paper is 15 pages

**GOOD LUCK!**



## SECTION A:

### Evaluating writing skills through Creative Writing (35 marks)

*You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this section. Choose ONE of the following questions and write about 220- 250 words. Keep in mind the importance of*

- *Vocabulary and expression*
- *accuracy*
- *planning*
- *content*

*Write an interesting beginning and a good closing paragraph. Give vivid descriptions of place, characters, feelings and thoughts.*

#### EITHER

1. You were about 6 years old. It was a cold winter evening when a stranger knocked on your door. Your sister, who was 12 at the time, opened the door.

*Write about the stranger at your door; describe what you and your sister did, how you felt and what happened until your parents returned home.*

#### OR

2. 'The tale started, as many tales have started, in Wall. The town of Wall stands today as it has stood for six hundred years, on a high jut of granite amidst a small forest woodland...'

*Write a narrative that starts with these words.*

#### OR

3. You volunteer a few hours per week, after school and at the weekend, for a charity organization that helps families in need.

Write your diary entry after you have completed the project:

- Describe the project: what you did, why you did it and who it will benefit.
- Talk about your feelings and thoughts after it has been completed.









## Section B:

### Comprehension, Usage and Directed writing (65 marks)



Read the adapted extract from *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs and answer the questions that follow in your own words, unless otherwise instructed.

“I had just come to accept that my life would be ordinary when **extraordinary** things began to happen. The first of these came as a terrible shock and, like anything that changes you forever, split my life into halves: Before and After. Like many of the extraordinary things to come, it involved my grandfather, Abraham Portman.



Growing up, Grandpa Portman was the most fascinating person I knew. He had lived in an orphanage, fought in wars, crossed oceans by steamship and deserts on horseback, performed in circuses, knew everything about guns and self-defense and surviving in the wilderness, and spoke at least three languages that weren't English.

It all seemed unfathomably exotic to a child who had never left Florida, and I begged him to regale me with stories whenever I saw him. He always obliged, telling them like secrets that could be **entrusted** only to me.



When I was six, I decided that my only chance of having a life half as exciting as Grandpa Portman's was to become an explorer. He encouraged me by spending afternoons at my side hunched over maps of the world, plotting imaginary expeditions with trails of red pushpins and telling me about the fantastic places I would discover one day. At home I made my ambitions known by parading around with a cardboard tube held to my eye, shouting, "Land ho!" and "Prepare a landing party!" until my parents shooed me outside. I think they worried that my grandfather would infect me with some **incurable dreaminess** from which I'd never recover - that these fantasies were somehow inoculating me against more practical ambitions—so one day my mother sat me down and explained that I could not become an explorer because everything in the world had already been discovered. I had been born in the wrong century, and I felt cheated.



I felt even more cheated when I realized that most of Grandpa Portman's best stories could not possibly be true. The tallest tales were always about his childhood, like how he was born in Poland but at twelve had been shipped off to a children's home in Wales. When I would ask why he would have to leave his parents, his answer was always the same: because the monsters were after him. Poland was simply rotten with them, he said.



"What kind of monsters?" I would ask, wide-eyed. It became a sort of routine. "Awful hunched-over ones with rotting skin and black eyes," he would say. "And they walked like this!" And he would **shamble** after me like an old-time movie monster until I ran away laughing.



Every time he described the he would toss in some lurid new detail: they stank like **putrefying** trash; they were invisible except for their shadows; a pack of squirming tentacles **lurked** inside their mouths and could whip out in an instant and pull you into their powerful jaws. It was not long before I had trouble falling asleep, my **hyperactive imagination** transforming the hiss of tires on wet pavement into labored breathing just outside my window or shadows under the door into twisting grey-black **tentacles**. I feared the monsters but was thrilled to imagine my grandfather battling them and surviving to tell the tale.



More fantastic still were his stories about life in the Welsh children's home. It was an enchanted place, he said, designed to keep children safe from the monsters, on an island where the sun shone every day and nobody ever got sick or died. Everyone lived together in a big house that was protected by a wise old bird - or so the story went. As I got older though, I began to have doubts.

"What kind of bird?" I asked him one afternoon at age seven, eyeing him **skeptically** across the card table where he was letting me win at Monopoly.

"A big hawk who smoked a pipe," he said.

"You must think I am pretty dumb, Grandpa."

"Fine, you don't have to take my word for it," he said. "I have pictures!"

It was hard to tell if he was being serious. Then again, my grandfather was not known as a teller of jokes.

### Glossary:

- *Regale: delight or amuse*
- *Unfathomably: beyond understanding*
- *Inoculating: vaccinate someone against a disease*
- *Pushpins: thumb tacks*
- *Lurid: gruesome*



1. Do you think the narrator was happy with his 'ordinary life'? Why or why not? **(2 marks)**

---

---

---

---

2. How did the narrator's 'ordinary life' change? **(2 marks)**

---

---

---

---

---

3. Give an example of listing and its effect in paragraph 2. Quote from the text. **(2 marks)**

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

Effect: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Find an example of a simile in paragraph 3 and explain its effect. Quote from the text. **( 2 marks)**

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

Effect: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Give four examples of what Grandpa Portman did to be such a fascinating character for the narrator. **(4 marks)** Use your own words as far as possible.

---

---

---

---

---

6. What did the narrator want to do when he was six? Why? **(2 marks)**

---

---

---

---

7. How did Grandpa Portman encourage this? Give three examples **(3 marks)**.

---

---

---

---

---

8. How did the narrator behave when he went home? **(1 mark)**

---

---

---

9. How did his parents react? Why? **(2 marks)**

---

---

---

---

10. Explain how the narrator felt after his mother spoke to him. **(2 marks)**

---

---

---

---

11. Grandpa Portman told the narrator that he had to leave Poland because of the monsters. Describe in your own words what he told him that the monsters were like based on your reading of the passage. **(5 marks)**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

12. How did these stories affect the narrator? **(2 marks)**

---

---

---

---

---



**13.** Based on your reading of the passage describe the narrator's relationship with his grandfather. **(4 marks)**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**14.** Why did the narrator stop believing Grandpa Portman's stories? **(3 marks)**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**15.** Vocabulary: explain the meaning of the following words as they are used in the passage. Use one word/short phrase for each **(10 marks)**

- Extraordinary \_\_\_\_\_
- Unfathomably exotic \_\_\_\_\_
- Entrusted \_\_\_\_\_





**Directed Writing: (15 marks)**

Imagine that you are Grandpa Portman, you are 12 years old and you have been sent away from your home in Poland to the Children's Home in Wales. You have just arrived, write your diary entry.

- Describe your thoughts and feelings
- What your trip was like
- Your first impressions of the Children's Home
- Remember that you are writing as Grandpa Portman when he was a 12-year-old boy.

*Dear Diary,*





*This is the end of the examination. Make sure you check your work for careless errors.*

