

Mid Programme Entries 2015

Year 3

ENGLISH

Time allowed: 1 hour and 30 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



Good luck!

Comprehension (25 marks)

This extract is taken from *Ribblestrop* by Andy Mulligan.

Sam Arthur Tack knew that he was on the **threshold** of an adventure: the biggest adventure of his life. In fact it was his first adventure, being as he was only 12 years old. He wasn't to know just how dark and dangerous his adventure would be, but he was still close to tears.

"Be brave, son", said his father.

His mother had tears rolling down both cheeks. "You make sure you write", she said. "As soon as you get there."

"I can't, though, I-"

"As best you can, love. Draw a picture".

"I will". Sam's voice was a cracked whisper and his lips were **wobbling**.

"It's an opportunity," said his mother. Her voice was swerving and shaking too: she tried hard to steady it. "If anything goes wrong, I want you to promise me-"

"Nothing will go wrong," said his father. "He's only off to school. Now, where's that pound that I gave you?"

"In my pocket".

"You buy a sandwich when you get to Exeter. We're going to miss you, son." He shook his son's hand. "Good luck. Goodbye."

The train should have left then, to avoid further **embarrassment**. But trains never leave conveniently and this one was already six minutes late due to a mix up over staff in the buffet car. The sad farewell had a little while yet to run. Sam rested his chin on the window of the carriage door and let his hands disappear into two long blazer sleeves. He was wearing brand new clothes: jacket, cap, shorts, and shoes, all of them too big. The only thing that fitted him was the black-and-gold striped tie, which **roped in** an oversized grey shirt collar. He pushed the window a little lower, and everyone tried to think of something to say.

It was luck for them that just at this moment an overweight boy, in the same unmistakable school colour-the black and gold of a bee-should cross the platform **lugging** a well-stocked briefcase, plus various parcels.

“Darling, look!” said Mrs. Tack. “A Ribblestrop blazer!”

It was true. The boy was wearing the very same garment as her son: the same vivid stripes that caused the eye to jar slightly as if a mild **hallucination** was taking place.”

“Hello. Are you Ribblestrop?” said Mr. Tack.

The overweight boy looked up. He was breathing heavily. “Yes I am,” he said. ‘Jacob Ruskin, I’m a second year-I thought I’d missed this train!’ He had a cheery voice and was full of beaming confidence. “Can I get in here? Is this your boy? I say a new student!”

“This is Sam.”

“I thought I’d missed this train. I’ll just-“

“Watch out!” cried Mr. Tack.

The boy **yanked** open the door and Sam immediately fell on top of him. His parents watched as their son’s two bare knees smacked into the concrete platform and the new school cap, grabbed at and scrambled for, rolled between platform and train.

There was a moment of silence.

“I’m sorry,” said the boy. “I didn’t realize he was leaning-I thought he was...oh...is he alright?”

“Blast it” said Mr. Tack. Mr. Tack was lowering himself painfully and was staring into the dark space under the train.

“Nobody wears those caps”, said the overweight boy. “I wore mine once for the school photo: I couldn’t tell you where it is now. I say, your son’s very brave....Do you need a handkerchief? Look...

The boy climbed up into the carriage and offered Sam, who had staggered to his feet, hand. Sam was more worried about the fact that his left eye had hit the boy’s head when he fell, and he now felt as dizzy as if he had been punched. There was a **throbbing** in his skull and the station was swimming.

“I’ll get your cap, Sam”, said his father. “I’m worried this blasted train will set off and-

“Excuse me”, said a voice. “Excuse me”, said the voice again. It was pitched high, but had a strange **grating** sound under the shrillness. It was an elderly woman; severe, tall and thin.

