



ALDENHAM SCHOOL

11 + Entrance Paper

11 January 2010

ENGLISH

Length of examination – One hour

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

This examination consists of two parts:

Answer **all** questions in Section A. When you have finished Section A. continue immediately to Section B

Answer **one** question in Section B

We suggest you spend 30 minutes on each section

Remember to write your full name on each piece of paper you use.

Check your work carefully for correct spelling and punctuation

Read the following extract carefully and then answer ALL the questions in Section A

In this short extract the author writes about the weather, the writer gives a personal view on how the weather conditions have an influence on various people and animals.

There is something odd about the weather. Perhaps there always is, but recently it's been becoming more obvious and affecting the population more noticeably. The birds have been busily tweaking twigs off the trees outside the bedroom window when they should still be recovering from Christmas, huddled up in the barn with their heads under their wings and waiting for their human neighbours to break the ice on the puddles so they can have a drink. At least they don't have to bother about what to wear. When it gets a bit nippy they just need to fluff out their feathers a bit whereas the human neighbours have to apply thought to the problem. I keep seeing ladies in big fur hats and boots they bought to be fashionable in a wintry sort of way and that's what they're damn well going to do. Their little faces, which are meant to look pale and flowerlike under their hats their necks like slender stalks go all red and sweaty in the unseasonal warmth.

Janet gets up early, looks out at the grey sky, piles on a few sweaters and spends the rest of the day peeling them off like an onion. I got up this morning, contemplated the tweeds, thought 'The hell with it' and put on an Indian cotton jumper. It makes me uneasy. It makes me cross too because one cannot plan where to go any more than what to wear. Beryl and I were about to leave for the country to do some work in peace when the weather-man announced that there was ice and snow down there, and conditions were treacherous. Well, they may be; but it's hard to believe, when the shrubs round here are shaking out their spring apparel and I can walk into the backyard in my nightdress to feed the cats. I think the weather-man has lost his nerve after failing to predict the hurricane and is determined to hedge his bets. Janet was listening to him the other day and he forecast just about everything – some sun, some showers, frost, snow, thunderstorms and high winds.

Apart from an earthquake and temperatures in the eighties that's about it. What is a person to do apart from stay indoors with several changes of attire¹ laid to hand? There are few things worse than going out to dine in your heavy velvet with people who haven't noticed that spring is a little early this year and have the central heating going full blast. It is worse than dining with Scots who don't have central heating at all. You can always put your coat on or borrow a scarf, while it is not permissible to strip down to your underwear. These unexpectedly sunny but dreary climatic conditions serve to unsettle us and muddle our view of the universe.

Marks and Spencers don't help. I still have three quarters of a Christmas cake left and they've got hot-cross buns on their shelves, for God's sake. *Lent*² hasn't even started yet. Has it? I'm getting disorientated with the almond blossom tossing about over the road and pictures of Gordon Brown on Telly somewhere up north with snowflakes drifting round him. Now the gales seem to be starting up again and I hear they've had snow in Finchley. I keep opening the window to see if I've gone mad and it's really below freezing out there, but it isn't it gives me the same sort of feeling as going to sleep in the afternoon and waking up not knowing whether it's morning or midnight. I feel sorry for the dormice. It must be perfectly ghastly to wake from hibernation and not know whether it's

¹ **Clothing**

² **Lent**, in Christian tradition, is the period of the year leading up to Easter.

December or May and whether you've missed out on the hot-cross buns. We must all give up on the aerosol deodorants before we melt the ice-cap and find ourselves in real trouble.

Section A Answer ALL the questions.

Marks are awarded for reference to the passage.

- 1) How are the strange weather conditions causing the birds to behave? (2 marks)

- 2) What are the effects of the weather conditions on the human population? (3 marks)

- 3) In the passage the ladies are described as 'pale and flower like' with 'necks like slender stalks' what picture of the ladies is created by these phrases? Explain your answer.

(5 marks)

- 4) The weather-man predicts all types and kinds of weather, what impact does this have upon choosing the right clothing to wear? Make sure you refer to the passage to support your answer

(5 marks)

- 5) At the end of the passage the writer says that she feels 'sorry for the dormice'. Making reference to the passage explain why this is the case?

(5 marks)

Section B Answer ONE of the following tasks

Write a descriptive piece entitled 'The Long Rainy Day' (20 marks)

Write a story entitled 'The Storm' (20 marks)