



**ST PAUL'S SCHOOL
JUNIOR SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION**

MAY 2016

ENGLISH

2 hours

Answer one question from each section. Begin each question on a separate sheet.

30 marks are available for each answer. A further 10 marks are available for accuracy and ambition in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Section A

Read carefully the extract below and then answer the following question:

How does the author convey his excitement about Tokyo’s culture and its cuisine in this passage? In your answer, pay close attention to the writer's choice of language, imagery and sentence structure, and anything else you consider important.

For me, Tokyo is like one long film trailer – one of those quick-cut, fast-moving highlight teasers for a noisy action film with only the best parts shown, in molar-shaking, heart-pounding surround sound, the pace getting quicker and quicker, the action more frenzied, leading up to sudden blackness and the promise of more excitement to come.

No place I've ever been, or even heard about, is as guaranteed to cause stimulation in the deepest pleasure centres of a cook’s brain. No cuisine, broadly speaking, makes as much sense: the simplest, cleanest, freshest elements of gustatory pleasure, stripped down and refined to their most essential. Unlike Tokyo’s streets – and much of its popular culture – the traditional sectors of food and relaxation are austere, uncompromising, devoid of all distraction and repetition, beautiful in the manner of a single long-stemmed calla lily: unknowable, serene. The Japanese, hardworking, hyper-regimented, obsessively well-scrubbed, and painfully repressed, live lives of powerful – even lurid – imagination and fantasy. Over the centuries, they have given a lot of serious thought to what, exactly, is needed and desirable in the taking of pleasure. The unnecessary, the extraneous, the redundant, the less than perfect – these are discarded. What is left is often an empty room, a futon, a single perfect flower. When it comes time to sit at a table, no one on earth has things figured out so well or so thoroughly as the Japanese.

It’s all about fish, fish, fish. You like fish? You’ll love Japan. They’ve scoured the world’s oceans looking for good stuff to eat. And they’ll pay anything – anything – for the good stuff. I missed a lot last time I was in Japan. I wasted a lot of time working and wandering blindly about. This time, I was determined, at the very least, to miss less. My quest for ‘the perfect meal’ would be put on hold. This was Japan. I knew I’d be getting a lot of perfect meals here. That’s what they do.

From *A Cook’s Tour* (Anthony Bourdain)

molar] a back tooth

lurid] glaringly bright and sensational

gustatory] to do with taste

extraneous] irrelevant

Section B

Read carefully the poem below and then answer the following question:

How does the speaker of the poem feel about the other children, and how does the poet convey this? In your answer you should pay close attention to the writer's choice of language, imagery and form, as well as anything else that you consider important.

My parents kept me from children who were rough
 Who threw words like stones and who wore torn clothes.
 Their thighs showed through rags. They ran in the street
 And climbed cliffs and stripped by the country streams.

I feared more than tigers their muscles like iron
 Their jerking hands and their knees tight on my arms.
 I feared the salt coarse pointing of those boys
 Who copied my lisp behind me on the road.

5

They were lithe, they sprang out behind hedges
 Like dogs to bark at my world. They threw mud
 While I looked the other way, pretending to smile.
 I longed to forgive them, but they never smiled.

10

(Stephen Spender)

lisp (8)] speech impediment (such as pronouncing 's' as 'th')

lithe (9)] supple, physically flexible

TURN OVER

Section C

The extract opposite is the opening of a short story. Read it carefully and complete one of the following tasks:

EITHER (a) Write an analysis of the extract exploring how the writer makes us feel sympathy for Vincent.

OR (b) Retell the story from Vincent's point of view.

All Miss Price had been told about the new boy was that he'd spent most of his life in some kind of orphanage, and that the grey-haired 'aunt and uncle' with whom he now lived were really foster parents, paid by the Welfare Department of the city of New York. A less dedicated or less imaginative teacher might have pressed for more details, but Miss Price was content with the rough outline. It was enough, in fact, to fill her with a sense of mission that shone from her eyes, as plain as love, from the first morning he joined the fourth grade.

He arrived early and sat in the back row—his spine very straight, his ankles crossed precisely under the desk and his hands folded on the very centre of its top, as if symmetry might make him less conspicuous—and while the other children were filing in and settling down, he received a long, expressionless stare from each of them.

'We have a new classmate this morning,' Miss Price said, labouring the obvious in a way that made everybody want to giggle. 'His name is Vincent Sabella and he comes from New York City. I know we'll all do our best to make him feel at home.'

This time they all swung around to stare at once, which caused him to duck his head slightly and shift his weight from one buttock to the other. Ordinarily, the fact of someone's coming from New York might have held a certain prestige, for to most of the children the city was an awesome, adult place that swallowed up their fathers every day, and which they themselves were permitted to visit only rarely, in their best clothes, as a treat. But anyone could see at a glance that Vincent Sabella had nothing whatever to do with skyscrapers. Even if you could ignore his tangled black hair and grey skin, his clothes would have given him away: absurdly new corduroys, absurdly old sneakers and a yellow sweatshirt, much too small, with the shredded remains of a Mickey Mouse design stamped on its chest. Clearly, he was from the part of New York that you had to pass through on the train to Grand Central—the part where people hung bedding over their windowsills and leaned out on it all day in a trance of boredom, and where you got vistas of straight, deep streets, one after another, all alike in the clutter of their sidewalks and all swarming with grey boys at play in some desperate kind of ball game.

The girls decided that he wasn't very nice and turned away, but the boys lingered in their scrutiny, looking him up and down with faint smiles. This was the kind of kid they were accustomed to thinking of as 'tough,' the kind whose stares had made all of them uncomfortable at one time or another in unfamiliar neighbourhoods; here was a unique chance for retaliation.

'What would you like us to call you, Vincent?' Miss Price inquired. 'I mean, do you prefer Vincent, or Vince, or—or what?' (It was purely an academic question; even Miss Price knew that the boys would call him 'Sabella' and that the girls wouldn't call him anything at all.)

'Vinny's okay,' he said in a strange, croaking voice that had evidently yelled itself hoarse down the ugly streets of his home.

'I'm afraid I didn't hear you,' she said, craning her pretty head forward and to one side so that a heavy lock of hair swung free of one shoulder. 'Did you say "Vince"?'

'Vinny, I said,' he said again, squirming.

'Vincent, is it? All right, then, Vincent.' A few of the class giggled, but nobody bothered to correct her; it would be more fun to let the mistake continue.

From 'Doctor Jack-o'-Lantern' (Richard Yates)

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