



ALDENHAM SCHOOL

13 + Entrance Paper – English

Length of examination – One hour

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

This examination consists of two parts:

Answer **all** questions in Section A

Answer **one** question in Section B

Start each section on a new piece of paper

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

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Section A is worth 20 marks

Section B is worth 20 marks

Read carefully the following extract taken from *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens. *Oliver is an orphan with no one else to look after him, the first section of the chapter outlines the conditions he is brought up in. The actual running of workhouses was not necessarily undertaken by the parish itself. It could instead be contracted out to a third party who would undertake to feed and house the poor, charging the parish a weekly rate for each inmate. The contractor would also provide the inmates with work and could keep any income generated. This system was known as 'farming' the poor. The contract was usually awarded to the bidder offering the best price for the job which might take a variety of forms, for example maintaining all the paupers in a parish, or just managing the workhouse, or just a particular group of paupers such as infants and children, or lunatics, or providing medical relief.*

For the next eight or ten months, Oliver was the victim of a systematic course of treachery and deception. He was brought up by hand. The hungry and destitute situation of the infant orphan was duly reported by the workhouse authorities to the parish authorities. The parish authorities inquired with dignity of the workhouse authorities, whether there was no female then domiciled in 'the house' who was in a situation to impart to Oliver Twist, the consolation and nourishment of which he stood in need. The workhouse authorities replied with humility, that there was not. Upon this, the parish authorities magnanimously and humanely resolved, that Oliver should be 'farmed,' or, in other words, that he should be dispatched to a branch-workhouse some three miles off, where twenty or thirty other juvenile offenders against the poor-laws, rolled about the floor all day, without the inconvenience of too much food or too much clothing, under the parental superintendence of an elderly female, who received the culprits at and for the consideration of sevenpence-halfpenny per small head per week. Sevenpence-halfpenny's worth per week is a good round diet for a child; a great deal may be got for sevenpence-halfpenny, quite enough to overload its stomach, and make it uncomfortable. The elderly female was a woman of wisdom and experience; she knew what was good for children; and she had a very accurate perception of what was good for herself. So, she appropriated the greater part of the weekly stipend to her own use, and consigned the rising parochial generation to even a shorter allowance than was originally provided for them. Thereby finding in the lowest depth a deeper still; and proving herself a very great experimental philosopher.

Everybody knows the story of another experimental philosopher who had a great theory about a horse being able to live without eating, and who demonstrated it so well, that he had got his own horse down to a straw a day, and would unquestionably have rendered him a very spirited and high-spirited animal on nothing at all, if he had not died, four-and-twenty hours before he was to have had his first comfortable bait of air. Unfortunately for, the experimental philosophy of the female to whose protecting care Oliver Twist was delivered over, a similar result usually attended the operation of *her* system; for at the very moment when the child had contrived to exist upon the smallest possible portion of the weakest possible food, it did perversely happen in eight and a half cases out of ten, either that it sickened from want and cold, or fell into the fire from neglect, or got half-smothered by accident; in any one of which cases, the miserable little being was usually summoned into another world, and there gathered to the fathers it had never known in this.

Occasionally, when there was some more than usually interesting inquest upon a parish child who had been overlooked in turning up a bedstead, or inadvertently scalded to death when there happened to be a washing—though the latter accident was very scarce, anything approaching to a washing being of rare occurrence in the farm—the jury would take it into their heads to ask troublesome questions, or the parishioners would rebelliously affix their signatures to a remonstrance. But these impertinences were speedily checked by the evidence of the surgeon, and the testimony of the beadle; the former of whom had always opened the body and found nothing inside (which was very probable indeed), and the latter of whom invariably swore whatever the parish wanted; which was very self-devotional. Besides, the board made periodical pilgrimages to the farm, and always sent the beadle the day before, to say they were going. The children were neat and clean to behold, when *they* went; and what more would the people have!

It cannot be expected that this system of farming would produce any very extraordinary or luxuriant crop. Oliver Twist's ninth birthday found him a pale thin child, somewhat diminutive in stature, and decidedly small in circumference. But nature or inheritance had implanted a good sturdy spirit in Oliver's breast. It had had plenty of room to expand, thanks to the spare diet of the establishment; and perhaps to this circumstance may be attributed his having any ninth birth-day at all. Be this as it may, however, it was his ninth birthday; and he was keeping it in the coal-cellar with a select party of two other young gentlemen, who, after participating with him in a sound thrashing, had been locked up for atrociously presuming to be hungry, when Mrs. Mann, the good lady of the house, was unexpectedly startled by the apparition of Mr. Bumble, the beadle, striving to undo the wicket of the garden-gate.

Reading and Comprehension (20 Marks)

- 1) Using evidence from the passage outline how is Oliver treated in his first eight to ten months in the workhouse? (5 marks)
- 2) Re-read paragraph 1. Select words and phrases from the description of the workhouse and explain how the writer has created a sense of the appalling conditions by using this language (5 marks)
- 3) Using evidence from the passage outline the diet and quantity of food given to the children (5 marks)
- 4) Re-read the last paragraph carefully. Select words and phrases from the description which give a picture of the effects that being in the workhouse has had on Oliver. Explain how the writer creates a sense of these effects and explain what has happened to him and a 'select party' of boys? (5 marks)

Section B – English Composition (20 marks)

Choose one of the following ideas to write about.

Spend 5 minutes writing a plan for your work.

Underline after the plan before you begin your composition.

Check that you have:

- Punctuated correctly
- Used different and interesting verbs, adverbs and adjectives
- Included a variety of sentence structures
- Varied the length of your sentences
- Organised your writing into paragraphs
- Checked spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Used descriptive techniques such as similes and metaphors

- 1) Imagine you are a child who is imprisoned or working in a factory today. Describe a typical day in your life (20 marks)
- 2) Write a story entitled 'Hunger' (20 marks)