



Year 9 Academic Scholarship- Sample

English

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

Instructions:

Answer all questions on this paper.

Section A: 20 marks

Section B: 25 marks (including 10 marks for the quality and accuracy of writing)

Total for paper: 45 marks

Section A: Poetry

You should spend around 35 minutes on this section

November by Ted Hughes

The month of the drowned dog. After long rain the land
Was sodden as the bed of an ancient lake.
Treed with iron and was birdless. In the sunk lane
The ditch – a seep silent all summer –

Made brown foam with a big voice: that, and my boots
On the lanes scrubbed stones, in the gulleyed leaves
Against the hill's hanging silence;
Mist silvering the droplets on the bare thorns

Slower than the change of daylight.
In a let of the ditch a tramp was bundled asleep.
Face tucked down into beard, drawn in
Under his hair like a hedgehog's. I took him for dead,

But his stillness separated from the death
From the rotting grass and the ground. The wind chilled,
And a fresh comfort tightened through him,
Each hand stuffed deeper into the other sleeve.

His ankles, bound with sacking and hairy hand,
Rubbed each other, resettling. The wind hardened;
A puff shook a glittering from the thorns,
And again the rains' dragging grey columns

Smudged the farms. In a moment
The fields were jumping and smoking; the thorns
Quivered, riddled with the glassy verticals.
I stayed on under the welding cold

Watching the tramp's face glisten and the drops on his coat
Slash and darken. I thought what strong trust
Slept in him- as the trickling furrows slept,
And the thorn roots in their grip on darkness;

And the buried stones taking the weight of winter;

The hill where the hare crouched with clenched teeth.
Rain plastered the land till it was shining
Like hammered lead, and I ran, and in the rushing wood

Shuttered by a black oak leaned.
The Keeper's gibbet had owls and hawks
By the neck, weasels, a gang of cats, crows:
Some stiff, weightless, twirled like dry bark bits

In the drilling rain. Some still had their shape,
Had their pride with it; hung, chins on chests,
Patient to outwait these worst days that beat
Their crowns bare and dripped from their feet.

Glossary:

gabbet (stanza 9) : a place of hanging

1. The weather is central to this poem. What atmosphere is created through the description of the weather? (4 marks)
2. The narrator tells us that as they watch the tramp 'I thought what strong trust slept in him'. Explain how you interpret this line. (3 marks)
3. In stanza 8 we know that the narrator runs away and is met with a shocking scene. Describe what he see in stanzas 9 and 10 (3 marks)
4. Similes and metaphors are often used by poets to create vivid images for the reader. Using any two examples of your choice, explain their effect on you. (6 marks)
5. There are moments of movement and stillness in the poem. Find any two examples of your choice and explain how they contribute to the atmosphere of the poem. (4 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Section B: Composition
You should spend around 35 minutes on this section

Please show your planning
Remember to proof-read your work carefully

Answer **one** of the following questions:

1. Write a story or poem that includes strong imagery of the wind.
2. Write a story or poem entitled 'July sun'.
3. Imagine you are the sleeping tramp in the poem. Tell your story.

(25 marks)

There are 15 marks available for the content and structure of your writing.
There are 10 marks available for the style and accuracy of your writing.