



Rugby School

Sixth Form Entrance Examination

ENGLISH

Specimen Paper 2017

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions to candidates:

This paper consists of 2 sections.

You must answer **2 questions in section A (comprehension) and 1 question in section B (essay)** on lined paper.

Equipment Required: **Pen.**

There are **100 marks** available in total.

Name: _____

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION (30 minutes)

The narrator of this story, Joe Lampton, is a young, working-class man who lives in a northern town called Dufton. He is a Town Hall clerk, which means he has a dull office job. At this point in the story, he is sitting in a café.

Then at the moment the waitress brought tea something happened which changed my whole life.

Parked by a solicitor's office opposite the café was a green Aston Martin tourer, low-slung, with cycle-type mudguards. It had the tough, functional smartness of the good British sports car; it's a quality which is difficult to convey without using the terms of the advertising copywriter – made by craftsmen, thoroughbred, and so on – I can only say that it was a beautiful piece of engineering and leave it at that. Pre-war it would have cost as much as three baby saloons; it wasn't the sort of vehicle for business or for family outings but quite simply a rich man's toy.

As I was admiring it a young man and girl came out of the solicitor's office. The young man was turning the ignition key when the girl said something to him and after a moment's argument he put up the windscreen. The girl smoothed his hair for him; I found the gesture disturbing in an odd way – it was again as if a barrier had been removed, but this time by an act of reason.

The ownership of the Aston-Martin automatically placed the young man in a social class far above mine; but that ownership was simply a question of money. The girl, with her even suntan and her fair hair cut short in a style too simple to be anything else but expensive, was far beyond my reach as the car. But her ownership, too, was simply a question of money, of the price of the diamond ring on her left hand. This seems all too obvious; but it was the kind of truth which until that moment I'd only grasped theoretically.

The Aston-Martin started with a deep, healthy roar. As it passed the café in the direction of St. Clair Road I noticed the young man's olive linen shirt and bright silk neckerchief. The collar of the shirt was tucked inside the jacket; he wore the rather theatrical ensemble with a matter-of-fact nonchalance. Everything about him was easy and loose but not tired or sloppy. He had an undistinguished face with a narrow forehead and mousy hair cut short with no oil on it. It was a rich man's face, smooth with assurance and good living.

He hadn't ever had to work for anything he wanted; it had all been given him. The salary which I'd been so pleased about, an increase from Grade Ten to Grade Nine, would seem a pittance to him. He wouldn't have a *best* suit; all his clothes would be the best.

For a moment I hated him. I saw myself, compared with him, as the Town Hall clerk, the subordinate pen-pusher, halfway to being a zombie, and I tasted the sourness of envy. This didn't abate the fierceness of my longing. I wanted an Aston-Martin, I wanted a three-guinea linen shirt, I wanted a girl with a Riviera suntan – these were my rights, I felt, a signed and sealed legacy.

As I watched the tail-end of the Aston-Martin with its shiny new G.B. plate go out of sight I remembered the second-hand Austin Seven which the Efficient Zombie, Dufton's Chief Treasurer, had just treated himself to. That was the most the local government had to offer me; it wasn't enough.

Room at the Top (1957)

- (1) How does Joe feel about what he sees here - the car, the man, and the man's girlfriend - and how does the writer bring these feelings to life?**

You need to pay close attention to the language used and the effects of particular words. You should not summarize what happens in a generalized way, but, instead, select words and phrases, explaining what they mean and how they allow you to understand Joe's feelings.

(30 marks)

The narrator of this passage is Holden Caulfield, a 17 year—old, who comes from a wealthy background in New York and attends an upper middle class boarding school. Firstly, he criticizes the headmaster of his previous school, and, secondly, he criticizes lawyers.

One of the biggest reasons I left Elkton hills was because I was surrounded by phonies. For instance, they had this headmaster, Mr Haas, that was the phoniest bastard I ever met in my life. On Sundays, for instance, old Haas went around shaking hands with everybody's parents when they drove up to school. He'd be charming as hell and all. Except if some boy had had little old funny-looking parents. You should've seen the way he did with my roommate's parents. I mean if a boy's mother was sort of fat or corny-looking or something, and if somebody's father was one of those guys that wear those suits with very big shoulders and corny black-and-white shoes, then old Haas would just shake hands with them and give them and give them a phony smile and then he'd go talk, for maybe half an hour, with somebody else's parents. I can't stand that stuff. It drives me crazy.

Lawyers are all right, I guess – but it doesn't appeal to me. I mean they're all right if they go around saving innocent guys' lives all the time, and like that, but you don't *do* that kind of stuff if you're a lawyer. All you do is make a lot of dough and play golf and play bridge and buy cars and drink Martinis and look like a hot-shot. And besides. Even if you did go around saving guys' lives and all, how would you know you did it because you really *wanted* to save guys' lives, or because you did it because what you really wanted to do was be a terrific lawyer, with everybody slapping you on the back and congratulating you in court when the goddam trial was over, and the reporters and everybody, the way it is in the dirty movies? How would you know you weren't being a phony? The trouble is you *wouldn't*.

- (1) Explain the nature of Holden's anger in these two passages, and suggest how his feelings might be similar to Joe Lampton's, but also possibly different to Joe's.**

(20 marks)

SECTION B: ESSAY (30 minutes)

Write an essay on ONE of the following titles:

- (1) Write about something which makes you feel angry and frustrated (this can be more than one thing), and explain why you feel this way. This can be serious or comic, or a mixture of both. It can focus on an actual person, a type of person, a type of behaviour: choose examples which you feel most happy to write about.
- (2) Write about an experience in your own life which felt important, possibly because you learned something from it about yourself, or about how the world works around you. You should tell the story as interestingly as you can, and explain why this experience felt significant.
- (3) Imagine you are Joe Lampton and, miraculously, you have suddenly been given a lot of money. You go to the local car-dealer in Dufton, the town where you live, with plans to buy a nice car. Write the account of what happens, including direct speech and description, to bring the scene to life. This does not have to be a complete story (you only have 30 minutes here), but it should convey Joe's feelings vividly as the purchase of this car seems to him to be opening up a new kind of life.

(50 marks)