



Independent Schools
Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+

ENGLISH

LEVEL 2

PAPER 2

Tuesday 23 January 2018

Please read this information before the examination starts.

- You have 1 hour 15 minutes which includes reading and note-making time.
- The paper is divided into two sections.
- Answer **all** the questions in Section A and **one** question from Section B.
- Remember to write **Level 2** at the top of your answer page.
- Vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation and presentation are important and will be taken into account.



SECTION A: POETRY

Read the poem Decomposition printed below and answer the questions opposite, using complete sentences.

The marks at the end of each question are a guide as to how much you should write in your answers.

Decomposition

I have a picture I took in Bombay
of a beggar asleep on the pavement:
grey-haired, wearing shorts and a dirty shirt,
his shadow thrown aside like a blanket.

5 His arms and legs could be cracks in the stone,
routes for the ants' journeys, the flies' descents.
Brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion,
he lies veined into stone, a fossil man.

10 Behind him there is a crowd passingly
bemused by a pavement trickster¹ and quite
indifferent to this very common sight
of an old man asleep on the pavement.

15 I thought it then a good composition²
and glibly called it 'The Man in the Street',
remarking how typical it was of
India that the man in the street lived there.

20 His head in the posture of one weeping
into a pillow chides me now for my
presumption at attempting to compose
art of his hunger and solitude.

Zulfikar Ghose

¹pavement trickster = street entertainer

²composition = photograph

1. Re-read lines 1 and 2.
 - (a) The speaker has taken a photograph. Of whom? (1)
 - (b) Where did he take the photograph? (1)

2. Re-read stanza 2 (lines 5–8).

In your own words, explain what the following descriptions suggest about the beggar:

 - (a) ‘Brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion’ (line 7) (3)
 - (b) ‘he lies veined into stone, a fossil man’ (line 8) (3)

3. Re-read stanza 3 (lines 9–12).

What is the attitude of the crowd towards the beggar?
Support your answer with short quotations. (4)

4. Why does the speaker think this is a ‘good’ photograph (line 13)?
Support your answer with details from the first four stanzas. (6)

5. Re-read the last stanza (lines 17–20).
 - (a) Why does the speaker now feel guilty about taking the photograph? (4)
 - (b) Do you think *Decomposition* is a good title for the poem?
Explain your answer. (3)

TURN OVER FOR SECTION B

(Total marks for this section: 25)

The poem *Decomposition* by Zulfikar Ghose is reproduced with permission of Oxford University Press Pakistan © Oxford University Press.

SECTION B: IMAGINATIVE WRITING

Write on any ONE of the following topics.

Each one is worth 25 marks.

Credit will be given for good spelling, accurate punctuation and appropriate presentation as well as for imaginative and exciting use of vocabulary.

1. Write about a time when you made a huge effort to do something, and either succeeded or failed.
2. Write a story which includes one of the following sentences:
 - I rode off straight away.
 - A single balloon floated in the rain.
 - Then I saw the footprint.
3. Describe a place where you like to go to hide.
What is it like and what does it feel like to be there?
4. Imagine that you find you can fly like a bird for a day.
Tell the story of your experience.

(Total marks: 50)