



The Manchester
Grammar School

Entrance Examination 2018

English Section B - Comprehension

Comprehension Passage

Printed in this booklet you will find the passage on which the comprehension paper is based. The questions are printed in the blue booklet and you should write your answers in the spaces provided on those pages.

You have a minimum of 5 minutes to read through the passage carefully, making any notes that you need alongside the text. You should not begin answering questions until the 5 minute period has finished.

Do not open this booklet until told to do so.

Read through the passage very carefully. We recommend that you spend at least five minutes reading and re-reading the following material before you begin to answer the questions.

It is war-time and Carrie and her brother Nick have been sent away from their home in London to live in the safety of a village in Wales with Mr Evans and his sister. Here, after their first night, they meet Mr Evans.

He wasn't an Ogre¹, of course. Just a tall, thin, cross man with a loud voice, pale, staring, pop-eyes, and tufts of spiky hair sticking out from each nostril.

Councillor Samuel Isaac Evans was a bully. He bullied his sister. He even bullied the women who came into his shop, selling them things they didn't really want to buy and refusing to stock things that they did. "Take it or leave it," he'd say. "Don't you know there's a war on?" 5

He would have bullied the children if he had thought they were frightened of him. But although Carrie was a little frightened, she didn't show it, and Nick wasn't frightened at all. He was frightened of Ogres and spiders and crabs and cold water and the dentist and dark nights, but he wasn't often frightened of people. Perhaps this was only because he had never had reason to be until he met Mr Evans, but he wasn't afraid of him, even after that first, dreadful night, because Mr Evans had false teeth that clicked when he talked. "You can't really be scared of someone whose teeth might fall out," he told Carrie. 10

The possibility fascinated him from the beginning, from the moment Mr Evans walked into the kitchen while they were having breakfast their first morning and bared those loose teeth in what he probably thought was a smile. It looked to the children more like the kind of grin a tiger might give before it pounced on its prey. They put down their porridge spoons and stood up, politely and meekly. 15

It seemed to please him. He said, "You've got a few manners, I see. That's something! That's a bit of sugar on the pill!"²

They didn't know what to say to this so they said nothing and he stood there, grinning and rubbing his hands together. At last he said, "Sit down, then, finish your breakfast, what are you waiting for? It's wicked to let good food get cold. You've fallen on your feet, let me tell you, you'll get good food in this house. So no fussiness, mind! No whining round my sister for titbits when my back's turned. Particularly the boy. I know what boys are! Walking stomachs! I told her, you fetch two girls now, there's just the one room, but she got round me, she said, the boy's only a baby!" He looked sharply at Nick. "Not too much of a baby, I hope. No wet beds. That I won't stand!" 20 25

Nick's gaze was fixed on Mr Evans' mouth. "That's a rude thing to mention," he said in a clear, icy voice that made Carrie tremble. But Mr Evans didn't fly into the rage she'd expected. He simply looked startled - as if a worm had just lifted its head and answered him back, Carrie thought. 30

He sucked his teeth for a minute. Then said, surprisingly mildly, "All right. All right, then. You mind your P's and Q's, see, and I won't complain. As long as you toe the chalk line! Rules are made to be kept in this house, no shouting, or running upstairs, and no Language." Nick looked at him and he went on - quickly, as if he knew what was coming, "No Bad Language, that is. I'll have no foul mouths here. I don't know how you've been brought up but this house is run in the Fear of the Lord." 35

Nick said, "We don't swear. Even my father doesn't swear. And he's a Naval Officer."

What an odd thing to say, Carrie thought. But Mr Evans was looking at Nick with a certain, grudging respect.

40

"Oh, an Officer, is he? Well, well."

"A Captain," Nick said. "Captain Peter Willow."

"Indeed?" Mr Evans' teeth clicked - to attention, perhaps. He said, grinning again, "Then let's hope he taught you how to behave. It'll save me the trouble," and turned on his heel and went back to the shop.

45

Silence fell. Miss Evans moved from the sink where she'd been all this time, standing quite still, and started to clear the plates from the table.

Nick said, "You don't mind Language, do you? I mean, I don't know the deaf and dumb alphabet."

"Don't be smart," Carrie said, but Miss Evans laughed. Hand to her mouth, bright squirrel eyes watching the door as if she were scared he'd come back and catch her.

50

She said softly, "Oh, his bark's worse than his bite. Though he won't stand to be crossed, so don't be too cheeky and mind what he says! I've always minded him - he's so much older, you see. When our Mam died - our Dad had been killed down the pit long before - he took me in and brought me up. His wife was alive then, poor, dear soul, and his son's not much younger than I am. That's Frederick, he's away in the Army. Mr Evans brought us up together, made no difference between us. Never made me feel my place. When we were naughty, he'd give Fred the strap but he'd sit me on the mantelpiece to make me mind my manners. I've sat there many a time, scared to death of the fire and my feet pins and needles."

55

She looked at the mantelpiece above the range fire and the children looked at it too. It was a horribly long way from the ground. Miss Evans said, "You might say he's been more like a father to me than a brother."

60

"Our father never sat anyone on a mantelpiece," Nick said. "Or frightened anyone."

END OF PASSAGE

¹ Ogre - a frightening giant (lines 1 and 8)

² sugar on the pill - medicines were traditionally coated in sugar to hide their bitter taste and allow them to be easily swallowed (line 19)

Surname Candidate number

First name

Current school



Entrance Examination 2018

English Section B - Comprehension

Comprehension Answer Booklet

45 minutes + 5 minutes reading time

Do not open this booklet until told to do so

Write your names, school and candidate number in the spaces provided at the top of this page.

You will find the comprehension questions in this booklet. The comprehension passage is on a separate green sheet.

Read through both the passage and all the questions before you write anything at all. You should spend at least five minutes reading and thinking.

Write your answers in the spaces provided after each question. If you run out of space for an answer use the space provided at the end of this booklet, numbering your answer carefully. Your answers should be based on the passage alone.

You have 45 minutes plus 5 minutes reading time for this Comprehension which is worth 50 marks.

Write your answers in the spaces provided after each question. If you run out of space for an answer use the space provided at the end of this booklet, numbering your answer carefully.

1. In the first line, the author states: "He wasn't an Ogre, of course."

a) Find **two** aspects of Mr Evans' **physical appearance** which might make him seem like an Ogre even though he is a human. [2 marks]

b) Find **one** of his **personality traits** that might make him seem like an Ogre to the children. [1 mark]

2. The author gives Mr Evans' full name and title, Councillor Samuel Isaac Evans, in line 3. Explain, **in your own words**, what impression of Mr Evans this gives you. [1 mark]

3. We are told in lines 11-12 that the clicking of Mr Evans' false teeth stops Nick from feeling scared of him. Give a reason why Nick might feel less afraid, explaining your answer carefully. [3 marks]

4. In lines 15-16, Mr Evans is described as giving ‘the kind of grin a tiger might give before it pounced on its prey.’ Explain fully, **in your own words**, why his grin is compared with a tiger’s. [3 marks]

5. In line 19, Mr Evans uses the phrase “That’s a bit of sugar on the pill!” Through this, what do you think he feels about Carrie and Nick coming to stay in his home? [2 marks]

6. Look at paragraphs 4-6 (lines 13-27). The children are clearly uneasy. Find **two** pieces of evidence that show this. Then explain carefully how each example reveals the children’s uncertainty and discomfort. [5 marks]

7. In paragraphs 6-8 (lines 20-37), find **three** examples of how Mr Evans expects children to behave. [3 marks]

8. In paragraphs 7-10, (lines 28-40) Mr Evans changes his attitude towards Nick, even though he had called him a “baby”.

- a) Mr Evans is startled by Nick’s comment on line 28, and reacts ‘as if a worm had just lifted its head and answered him back’. Why do you think Nick, is compared to a worm? Explain your reasoning fully. [2 marks]

- b) Mr Evans ‘sucked his teeth for a minute’ in line 32. Why does he do this? [1 mark]

- c) Mr Evans looks at Nick with a ‘grudging respect’ in lines 39-40. Find **three** reasons why you think he feels this respect. [3 marks]

9. We are told that Mr Evans' teeth click 'to attention perhaps' in line 43. Explain, **in your own words**, why you think his teeth are described as clicking in this way. [2 marks]

10. We are told that Miss Evans 'moved from the sink where she'd been all this time, standing quite still' (lines 46-47). Explain why you think she had been standing still. [2 marks]

11. Miss Evans has 'bright, squirrel eyes' in lines 50-51. Explain why the author chooses to associate her with a squirrel. [2 marks]

12. The writer makes you feel sympathy for Miss Evans. Find **two** reasons why you might feel sorry for her and fully explain them. [5 marks]

13. Mr Evans is 'grinning' through much of the passage.

a) Explain fully, **in your own words**, why the children see this as negative [2 marks]

b) Explain fully, **in your own words**, why this could be seen as positive [2 marks]

14. In the last line of the passage, Nick is clearly critical of Mr Evans' manner towards himself and towards Miss Evans.

a) Identify an example of what Mr Evans does that Nick dislikes, and explain, **in your own words**, what Nick finds unpleasant about this behaviour [2 marks]

b) Nick feels very differently about his own father. Find a piece of evidence from the passage that reveals this, and explain fully what feeling he has for his father. [3 marks]

15. Carrie is the older sister of Nick.

a) What does Carrie think about the way Nick speaks to Mr Evans? Explain your answer fully. [2 marks]

b) How is Carrie's own behaviour towards Mr Evans different from Nick's? Explain your answer fully. [2 marks]

This is the end of the Examination

**Use any remaining time to check your work
or try any questions you have not answered.**

