



# TONBRIDGE SCHOOL

**Test for Entrance into Year 9 or 10 in September 2014**

**English**

**Paper I**

**Time allowed : 90 minutes**

**Total marks : 50**

**Answer ALL the questions on the lined paper provided**

Dictionaries may **NOT** be used.

**You are advised to spend 45 minutes on each section.**

## Section A: Poetry

*The poem below was written by R.S.Thomas. It tries to reproduce in words the experience of encountering something almost too majestic and beautiful to come from our world. Read the poem carefully and then answer all the questions which follow.*

### The White Tiger

It was beautiful as God  
must be beautiful; glacial  
eyes that had looked on  
violence and come to terms

with it; a body too huge  
and majestic for the cage in which  
it had been put; up  
and down in the shadow

of its own bulk it went,  
lifting, as it turned,  
the crumpled flower of its face  
to look into my own

face without seeing me. It  
was the colour of the moonlight  
on snow and as quiet  
as moonlight, but breathing

as you can imagine that  
God breathes within the confines  
of our definition of him, agonising  
over immensities that will not return.

1. There are **four** quotations underlined; explain how in each one the poet creates a powerful effect through the specific language used. [8]
2. Choose **four** more phrases or images from this poem and explain why each one is effective in suggesting the power and majesty of the tiger. [8]
3. This poem is as much a reflection on God as it is on a tiger. How does the poem use language to build up a picture of God and how His mind works, through a comparison of the tiger with Him?

Give examples from the poem's language and phrasing to explain your ideas. You may refer to quotations you have already discussed in previous answers. [9]

[Total 25 marks]

## Section B – Prose

*Read the opening to the novel 'The Mayor of Casterbridge' by Thomas Hardy and answer the questions that follow. The passage describes a husband and wife walking along a road. The meaning of some words is given for you at the end.*

One evening of late summer, before the nineteenth century had reached one-third of its span, a young man and woman, the latter carrying a child, were approaching the large village of Weydon-Priors, in Upper Wessex, on foot. They were plainly but not ill clad, though the thick hoar of dust which had accumulated on their shoes and garments from an obviously long journey lent a disadvantageous shabbiness to their appearance just now.

The man was of a fine figure, swarthy and stern in aspect; and he showed in profile a facial angle so slightly inclined as to be almost perpendicular. He wore a short jacket of corduroy, newer than the remainder of his suit, which was a fustian waistcoat with white horn buttons, breeches of the same, tanned leggings, and a straw hat overlaid with black glazed canvas. At his back he carried by a looped strap a rush basket, from which protruded at one end the crutch of a hay-knife, a wimble for hay-bonds being also visible in the aperture. His measured, springless walk was the walk of the skilled countryman as distinct from the desultory shambling of the general labourer; while in the turn and plant of each foot there was, further, a dogged and cynical indifference personal to himself, showing its presence even in the regularly interchanging fustian folds, now in the left leg, now in the right, as he paced along.

What was really peculiar, however, in this couple's progress, and would have attracted the attention of any casual observer otherwise disposed to overlook them, was the perfect silence they preserved. They walked side by side in such a way as to suggest afar off the low, easy, confidential chat of people full of reciprocity; but on closer view it could be discerned that the man was reading, or pretending to read, a ballad sheet which he kept before his eyes with some difficulty by the hand that was passed through the basket strap. Whether this apparent cause were the real cause, or whether it were an assumed one to escape an intercourse that would have been irksome to him, nobody but himself could have said precisely; but his taciturnity was unbroken, and the woman enjoyed no society whatever from his presence. Virtually she walked the highway alone, save for the child she bore. Sometimes the man's bent elbow almost touched her shoulder, for she kept as close to his side as was possible without actual contact, but she seemed to have no idea of taking his arm, nor he of offering it; and far from exhibiting surprise at his ignoring silence she appeared to receive it as a natural thing. If any word at all were uttered by the little group, it was an occasional whisper of the woman to the child--a tiny girl in short clothes and blue boots of knitted yarn--and the murmured babble of the child in reply.

The chief--almost the only--attraction of the young woman's face was its mobility. When she looked down sideways to the girl she became pretty, and even handsome, particularly that in the action her features caught slantwise the rays of the strongly coloured sun, which made transparencies of her eyelids and nostrils and set fire on her lips. When she plodded on in the shade of the hedge, silently thinking, she had the hard, half-apatetic expression of one who deems anything possible at the hands of Time and Chance except, perhaps, fair play. The first phase was the work of Nature, the second probably of civilization.

That the man and woman were husband and wife, and the parents of the girl in arms there could be little doubt. No other than such relationship would have accounted for the atmosphere of stale familiarity which the trio carried along with them like a nimbus as they moved down the road.

*hoar* – frost

*fustian* – a heard-wearing fabric

*wimble* – a hand-tool

*nimbus* – thin cloud

1. What impression do you get of the man from the **second paragraph**? Choose **three quotations** and discuss them. [6]
2. How does Thomas Hardy convey his attitude to the relationship between the husband and wife in the **third paragraph**? Choose **four quotations** and discuss them, making any relevant comments about the language used. [12]
3. What impression do you get of the girl from the fourth paragraph? You should choose several quotations and focus on the language and imagery in your answer. [7]

[Total 25 marks]

**END OF PAPER**