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PAMPHLET CONTAINING THE

QUESTION PAPERS

OF THE

Open Competition

HELD IN

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FOR APPOINTMENT AS

Assistant Preventive Officer

IN THE

Waterguard Service of the Customs and Excise  
Department



LONDON: HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

1954

SIXPENCE NET

## English. Paper 1

Time allowed, 1 hour

*Write on ONE of the following subjects, and give its number on your answer form.*

1. How would you account for the popularity of entertainments of the "quiz" and "parlourgame" type? What special skill do those who take part in such entertainments seem to you to require?
2. Do you agree that "you can tell a man by the company he keeps"?
3. Is propaganda ever justified?
4. Describe and discuss the work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution or of Trinity House.

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## English. Paper 2

Time allowed, 1 1/4 hours

*Answer both questions*

### QUESTION 1

*Read the following passage which is adapted from "Cutting the Cackle", an article in "The Times" (November 28, 1953), and then answer the questions which follow.*

From publishers' offices the flow of books is always in spate: in bookshops neat piles of books are always being assembled; but what, in fact, are the books which actually get read nowadays?

Quantitatively the answer is not likely to be encouraging. The very large majority of books are sold not to individuals but to libraries, and libraries in general exist to please an unexacting taste. The ordinary user wants one of two things: amusement or instruction. If he is not to be taught in plain language, he needs to be amused without effort. And so a huge mass of handbooks on every conceivable subject has come into being, as well as a very large amount of light romantic fiction. These books are not without a certain fascination. They proliferate like mushrooms, and like mushrooms disappear. Their authors know their place very exactly. Once a mark has been made it has only to be perpetuated. Thus, having discovered a formula whereby, let us say, a nurse marries a doctor, a novelist specialising in this branch of literature will have to go on marrying fresh nurses to fresh doctors twice a year. He cannot risk dismaying a hungry public by a change of theme, for books of this kind, if they do not make a fortune outright, constitute a cosy property for both author and publisher. They provide the mental equivalent of a warm drink at bedtime, and it may be suspected that they give a good deal of secret pleasure even in those aspiring homes which flaunt the Book of the Month on the hall table.

Below this level, still in terms of quantitative reading, comes a more bizarre stratum of fiction, bound in paper and sold at a rate determined by carefully calculated multiples of a penny. The romance here burns with a hotter, if not a brighter, flame; and science, too, plays its part. A race of giant spiders in the cellar of a country house is only prevented from destroying the world by the timely discovery of a death-ray at the eleventh hour—such occurrences are quite usual. They appeal to a constant public, rather as do the comic strips. They are written by a tribe of writers, each operating under several names, and all compelled by economic pressure to unceasing hard work in the confection of harmless rubbish.

So much reading is at this unambitious pitch that it comes as a shock of surprise—and pleasure—to learn that the classics have a popularity nearly as great. The giant spiders are forgotten for the sake of Odysseus, and the loves of nurse and doctor laid aside while Romeo speaks to Juliet. That is under the stimulus of cheap reprints ; and it is at this point that popular reading can most easily be identified with literature.

The pattern of contemporary reading habits is therefore a fairly simple one. Most of the books which are read change hands as domestic commodities. Just as a family becomes accustomed to drinking a particular tea or smoking a particular cigarette, so it takes to a particular writer or type of writer and, from then on, all it asks is that the normal standard should be maintained with as little deviation as possible. The ideal is a steady flow of interchangeable volumes, all written in precisely the same style. At the same time a more ambitious state of mind is gradually being created by means of cheap reprints. Here an entry can be found into the world where books are treated as serious objects of discussion.

That world is, however, a small one still. It is generally supposed—and not only among writers—that what people read and talk about, classics apart, are the books reviewed in the Press. Except within a restricted circle this is not true, and even inside the circle the popularity of books is to some extent adversely affected by the present system of reviewing. What occurs in practice is that books are treated as news, and thus any book likely to be in the public eye is reviewed throughout the Press simultaneously. Owing to the fact that circulating libraries rather than individuals promote circulation, the effect of this is to concentrate attention on a single book at a time, but for a very limited period. After that the book, especially if it is a novel, falls dead, while its successor sweeps up the suffrages for a week or two in its turn.

Under this system good books may easily pass unseen, while wide popularity is accorded to a handful of established writers. It is significant that when a new name is added to that handful it is seldom the name of a novelist. At the moment it would seem from the facts and figures that readers are reacting against the kind of book which became fashionable during the war. They are turning away from poetry, from the more reflective kind of imaginative writing, from experiment in any form. They like theology ; they like the literature of travel because travel is limited ; they like vicarious adventure because life is less adventurous than it used to be ; they like reading about the fabulous aspects of science—about space-travel and under-water exploration. It is no wonder that to so marked a predilection for fact and opinion the serious novel makes less and less appeal.

- (a) Write a summary of the above passage, which contains about 900 words. Your summary should give the substance of the passage clearly and accurately, and should be about 250 words in length ; a longer summary will lose marks.
- (b) Explain clearly the meaning of each of the five underlined words and phrases as it is used in the passage.

#### QUESTION 2

- (a) *Re-write each of the following sentences in correct English. (Do not make any unnecessary alterations).*
  - (i) Mr. Hodge, in spite of him being a member of the same political party, depreciated not only the chairman's intervention in the management of the childrens' homes but also reprimanded the treasurer for his participation in the scheme.
  - (ii) In a brilliant oration, whose general topic was about military affairs, the speaker argued that, due to the unsettled position abroad, he would neither consent or agree to any reduction in the armed forces.
- (b) *The passage below is expressed in indirect speech. Re-write it in direct speech.*

Mr. Dodge said that, were it possible for him to declare beforehand the exact price of the articles in which the Customs were interested, he would be more than glad to do

so, even though he was not, and had never been, certain of the legality of the action, but, as no doubt we would appreciate, he could not do it until he had been in touch with his agents overseas, and considered their replies.

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## Arithmetic

Time allowed,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours

*You will lose marks if your working is not clear.*

*You are not restricted to arithmetical methods.*

*Various data are given on the cover of the answer book.*

1. During the years 1950 and 1951 the Government spent the following sums of money on family allowances :—

1950	1951
£66,251,000	£67,629,000

By what percentage did the amount spent in 1951 exceed the amount spent in 1950? Give your answer to two decimal places.

In 1950 the amount spent on family allowances was 1.54 per cent greater than the amount spent in 1949. What was the amount spent in 1949? Give your answer to the nearest £100,000.

2. An open rectangular crate (i.e., a crate with a base and four sides, but no top), 18 inches long, 11 inches wide, and 7 inches high, is made of wire. Each edge of the crate is made of a single thickness of wire and each face of the crate is made of wires running parallel to the edges of the crate so that a wire mesh of squares of side 1 inch is formed.
- How many wires run parallel to the length of the crate? Include the wires forming the long edges.
  - What is the total length of wire used in the construction of the crate?
  - What is the weight of the crate if 100 yards of the wire used weigh 15 lb.? Give your answer to the nearest hundredth of a pound.

[Neglect the thickness of the wire in your calculations.]

3. The Customs Duty on a certain chemical substance, "gog", is 2s 4d an oz., and on another substance, "tang", it is £1 3s 2d a lb. A compound contains, among other ingredients on which there is no duty, 54 per cent by weight of gog and 36 per cent by weight of tang. Calculate the total duty which should be paid on 1 cwt. of the compound.
4. Mr. Brown starts at 10 a.m. from Blackthorne and travels by car at a speed of 35 miles an hour towards Whitstone. At 11.48 a.m. a tyre bursts; Mr. Brown leaves his car and immediately begins to walk towards Whitstone at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles an hour. In the meantime, his friend, Mr. Jones, who has set out from Blackthorne in his own car, is travelling towards Whitstone at 32 miles an hour. Mr. Jones draws level with Mr. Brown at 1.24 p.m. and gives him a lift to Whitstone, where they arrive at 2 p.m. Neglecting the time which Mr. Jones takes to pick up Mr. Brown, and assuming that Mr. Jones continues to drive his car at 32 miles an hour, calculate
- the distance between Blackthorne and Whitstone;
  - the time, to the nearest minute, at which Mr. Jones set out from Blackthorne.

# General Paper 1

Time allowed, 1 1/2 hours

*Answer any THREE questions. Your answers should be concise and to the point.  
All the questions carry equal marks.*

1. Explain the importance of railway transport to this country, and give some account of the problems which face British Railways.
2. For what general purposes are taxes levied? State the chief sources of government revenue in this country.
3. What is a Private Member's Bill? Outline the bill you would like to put forward if you were an M.P., and give the stages your bill would have to go through before it became law.
4. How important are the tropical regions of the British Colonial Empire as sources of food and raw materials?
5. Indicate the similarities and the differences between the attitudes of the United Kingdom and the United States of America towards affairs *either* in Europe *or* in the Far East.
6. To what evidence would you point when giving your opinion on whether Russia's policy at home and abroad had changed since the death of Stalin?
7. What is to be said for and against the prohibition of all forms of commercial advertising?
8. If it were decided to build a large church *or* a Civic Centre in a new satellite town, what style of architecture would you suggest for it, and on what grounds would you prefer that style to possible alternatives?
9. What is electricity, and how is the domestic electric power supply produced? Describe the precautions which should be taken in the home to guard against the possibility of electric shock.
10. "If a film or novel is popular, it is unlikely to be good." Is "popular" taste necessarily bad taste? Refer *either* to modern novels *or* recent films.

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# General Paper 2

Time allowed, 1 hour

*Answer question 1 and ONE other question. Questions 2 and 3 carry equal marks.*

1. Read carefully the following passages, and then give brief answers to the questions about them. Give reasons for your answers.

(a) We at the microphone have to feel for your listening reactions just as much as if you were in front of us in the studio. Every time we choose a gramophone record, even as interval music, we must weigh up in our minds the appeal it is likely to make to you, our audience, and equally whether by our own standards it is good enough. That last point is very important. I think there are only two kinds of music—good and bad—and our object, as I see it, is to give you the good.

- (i) What does the writer state to be his aim as a provider of radio music programmes ?
- (ii) Are his statements consistent ?

(b) Everyone knows the cruelty, irresponsibility and lack of intelligence manifested by a crowd. It follows that cruelty, irresponsibility and lack of intelligence are, inevitably, faults of democratic government, because democracy is government by the crowd. If you argue that only part of the crowd governs, I can set against the democratic election of Members of Parliament the fact that children are not regarded as capable of choosing their own teachers.

- (i) What criticisms does the writer make of democratic government and elections ?
- (ii) What weaknesses, if any, are there in his reasoning ?

(c) Most people would say that children ought not to be starving. As a scientist, I cannot agree with them. Nature effects all improvements in the race by a process of elimination of the unfit by natural selection. By natural selection the horse has become strong, and the greyhound swift. Starvation is one of nature's weapons for the elimination of the unfit. The attempt of sentimental philanthropy to interfere with nature can only lead to degeneration of the human race. The provision of free milk for children is a biological crime.

- (i) What does the writer mean by saying that the provision of free milk for children is a biological crime ?
- (ii) Indicate how far you find his arguments sound.

2. The following statements are part of a discussion on the nature of the English attitude to intelligence.

(a) Say in what respects the three speakers (i) agree, and (ii) disagree.

(b) Indicate which contribution to the discussion you think most useful, with your reasons.

A. It has often been observed that while in France intelligence is an object of admiration and delight, in England it is apt to be suspected and dispraised. The attitude of the French is said to be shown by their pleasure in discussion, their insistence on precision and clarity of expression, and their extreme sensitiveness to the adjectives "stupid" and "ridicule". Our different attitude is revealed by our emphasis on character and conduct, our preference for the clean heart to the clear head, our preoccupation with the useful and the moral, and our depreciatory use of the words "clever", "intellectual", and "highbrow". Clearly, we do not value intelligence for its own sake; we regard "mere" thinking as a distraction from practical activity, and even as a danger to our cherished convictions. "The Englishman," says Madariaga, who knows us, "mistrusts thought."

B. Nowhere is our emphasis on doing rather than thinking more evident than in the public pronouncements of some of our distinguished countrymen. Three years ago a large number of eminent business men were invited to express their views on the qualities that make for success in commerce. With only one or two exceptions, they all tended to disparage special training, to make only a casual reference to the need for ability, and to bring into special prominence qualities of character. Mr. F. L. Lucas believes that "the English instinct to rely on instinct" comes out clearly in our attitude to all education. And certainly the utterances of some of our elder statesmen and headmasters, especially on speech-days, seem to support his view, for in them the value of the intellect is often minimised, and the value of character, and of the activities that are held to form it, is given first importance. There are signs, however, that our belittling of intelligence is decreasing. Some people are asking uneasily whether the lives of both individuals and communities would not be improved by a greater reliance on controlled and directed thought. No doubt we have not yet come to regard intelligence as something delightful in itself; the frank passion for the intellect which is said to be characteristic of the Frenchman and the Scot does not flourish among us; our prevailing attitude is still one of distrust. But we are at any rate beginning

to realize that intelligence is a useful means of getting work done—a necessary and serviceable instrument for furthering our practical desires. Employers and teachers are paying more attention to intelligence than they did, and if we may judge from the publicity that modern intelligence tests have acquired, there is little indifference on the subject.

C. Intelligence is one of these topics that many English people regard with some degree of fear and consequent prejudice. Even those who depreciate the intellect usually want to be—or at least to be thought to be—more intelligent than they really are. They do not welcome the suggestion that intelligence can be defined, and that their own intellectual capacity can be assessed and compared with that of other people. They therefore tend to place intelligence under a taboo, and to discourage its systematic study. They seek to preserve their complacency by condemning what they think may undermine it. The same holds good for character. It seems that, at all costs, people must retain their self-esteem. If, for example, any one invented, and offered for sale, a cheap appliance, which could infallibly detect deceitfulness and other unamiable traits, he would probably be the victim first of ridicule and then of angry abuse; and vigorous attempts to prevent the use of his apparatus would undoubtedly be made.

3. A short essay on “What I would do with a present of £50” was set to young factory workers and to boys and girls (aged 15–17 years) attending a grammar school. The following tables show items mentioned in order of frequency. Study them carefully and then answer the questions below:—

A.—(Factory workers)

Boys (230)		Times Mentioned	Girls (150)		Times Mentioned
Share with Family	.. ..	102	Share with Family	.. ..	121
Bank (part or whole)	.. ..	87	Clothes	.. ..	61
Clothes	.. ..	78	Holidays	.. ..	57
Bicycles	.. ..	64	Bank (part or whole)	.. ..	48
Holidays	.. ..	30	Share with friends	.. ..	13
Motor Cycles	.. ..	25	Equipment, e.g., hobbies, sport	.. ..	4
Equipment, e.g., hobbies, sport	.. ..	22	Bicycles	.. ..	3
Work, Tools, etc.	.. ..	13	Jewellery	.. ..	3
Entertainment	.. ..	10	Furniture	.. ..	3
Books	.. ..	3	Books	.. ..	3
Furniture	.. ..	3	Cosmetics	.. ..	2
Motor Car	.. ..	2	Charity	.. ..	1

B.—(Grammar School pupils)

Boys (40)		Girls (42)	
Bank (part or whole)	.. .. 26	Holidays	.. .. 21
Equipment for sports or hobbies	.. .. 26	Bank (part or whole)	.. .. 15
Holidays	.. .. 11	Share with Family	.. .. 14
Share with Family	.. .. 8	Clothes	.. .. 8
Bicycles	.. .. 7	Charity	.. .. 4
Cars (secondhand)	.. .. 4	Bicycles	.. .. 4
Books	.. .. 3	Share with friends	.. .. 4
Share with friends	.. .. 2	Cameras	.. .. 3
Entertainment	.. .. 2	Records and music	.. .. 2
Records and music	.. .. 2	Future careers	.. .. 2
Clothes	.. .. 2	Books	.. .. 2
Charity	.. .. 2	Cosmetics	.. .. 1

(a) What similarities and what differences emerge between groups A and B?

(b) Is there support from this study for the view that modern young people are irresponsible and selfish? Indicate on what evidence you base your reply.

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