



**GCSE**

150/01

**ENGLISH  
FOUNDATION TIER  
PAPER 1**

A.M. TUESDAY, 8 June 2010

2 hours

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

A 12 page answer book.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Answer **all** questions in Section A and **two** questions in Section B.

Write your answers in the separate answer book provided.

You are advised to spend your time as follows:

Section A – about 55 minutes

Section B

Q. B1 – about 25 minutes

Q. B2 – about 40 minutes

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

Section A (Reading): 40 marks.

Section B (Writing): 40 marks.

The number of marks is given in brackets at the end of each question or part-question.

## SECTION A: 40 marks

*Read carefully the passage below. Then answer all the questions which follow it.*

### Fun with a Stranger

All that summer the children who were due to start junior school in Miss Snell's class had been warned about her. "Boy, you're gonna get it," the older children would say. "You're really gonna get it. Mrs Cleary's all right," (Mrs Cleary taught the other, luckier class of new pupils) "she's fine, but boy, that Snell – you better watch out." So it happened that the anxiety level of Miss Snell's class was high even before school began in September, and she did little in the first few weeks to improve it.

She was probably sixty, a woman with a man's face and clothes that seemed to smell of pencil shavings and chalk dust. She was strict and humourless, determined to stop the things she thought intolerable: mumbling, daydreaming, frequent trips to the toilets, and, the worst of all, "coming to school without proper supplies." Her small eyes were sharp, and when somebody sent out a stealthy alarm of whispers and nudges to try to borrow a pencil from somebody else, it almost never worked. "What's the trouble back there?" she would snap. "I mean you, John Gerhardt." And John Gerhardt, or Howard White, or whoever it happened to be, could only turn red and say, "Nothing."

"Don't mumble. Is it a pencil? Have you come to school without a pencil again? Stand up when you're spoken to." There would follow a long lecture on Proper Supplies that ended only after the offender had come forward to receive a pencil from the small hoard on her desk and to promise that he wouldn't chew it or break its point.

She seemed to have no favourites; once she even picked on Alice Johnson, who did nearly everything right. Alice was mumbling while reading aloud, and Miss Snell went over and took her book away and lectured her for several minutes running. Alice looked stunned at first, then burst into tears.

Still, they could not hate Miss Snell because she was sometimes nice in an awkward way of her own. "Do you know," she said, "when school began this year you were all strangers to me, but I wanted very much to learn your names and remember your faces, and so I made the effort. It was confusing at first, but before long I'd made friends with all of you. Because you can't very well have fun with a stranger, can you?" She gave them a homely, shy smile. When she said something like that it was more embarrassing than anything else, but it did leave the children with a certain vague sense of responsibility towards her, and often prompted them into defending her when children from other classes demanded to know how bad she really was. "Well, not too bad," they would say uncomfortably, and try to change the subject.

John Gerhardt and Howard White usually walked home from school together, and often they were joined by two of the children from Mrs. Cleary's class who lived on their street – Freddy Taylor and his twin sister Grace.

"Guess what we're gonna do next week," Freddy said in his chirping voice one afternoon. "Our whole class, I mean. Guess. Come on, guess."

But Freddy didn't wait long for an answer. "Mrs. Cleary says we're gonna take a field trip for our class project on transport," Freddy said. "Later on, we're gonna go to the Museum of Natural History and a whole lotta other places. Too bad you're not in Mrs Cleary's class."

"Doesn't bother me," John Gerhardt said. "I can go to those places any day, if I feel like it, and I don't need any Mrs Cleary to take me." Then he came up with a direct quotation from his father that seemed appropriate: "Anyway. I don't go to school to fool around. I go to school to work. Come on, Howard."

Towards the end of autumn, the long preparations for Christmas began. Every day the halls and classrooms became more thickly decorated with Christmas trimmings, but Miss Snell's class felt anxious because her room was unchanged. They noticed there was no decoration except for the grubby red letters spelling "Merry Christmas" over the blackboard.

Finally, it was the last week before the Christmas holiday and still there was no sign of a party.

"You gonna have a party in your class?" Freddy Taylor inquired one day.

"Sure, prob'ly," John Gerhardt said, though in fact he wasn't sure at all. Miss Snell had said or hinted nothing whatever about a Christmas party.

“Miss Snell tell ya you’re gonna have one, or what?” Grace asked.

55 “Well, she didn’t exactly *tell* us,” John Gerhardt said nervously. Howard White walked along without a word, looking at the ground and scuffing his shoes in embarrassment.

“Mrs. Cleary didn’t tell us either,” Grace said, “because it’s supposed to be a surprise, but we know we’re gonna have one. Some of the kids who had her last year said so. They said she always has this big party on the last day, with a tree and things to eat. You gonna have all that?”

60 “Oh, I don’t know,” John Gerhardt said, trying to sound convincing. “Sure, prob’ly.” But later, when the twins were gone, he got a little worried. “Hey, Howard,” he said, “you think she is gonna have a party, or what?”

“Search me,” Howard White said, with a careful shrug. But he was uneasy about it too, and so was the rest of the class. As the end of term drew nearer, it seemed less and less likely to them that Miss Snell was planning a party of any kind.

65 It rained on the last day of school. The morning went by like any other morning, and after lunch, like any other rainy day, the corridors were packed with chattering children in raincoats, milling around and waiting for the afternoon classes to begin.

Miss Snell’s class pressed self-consciously against the corridor wall, mostly silent, hands in their pockets. A second later, Miss Snell’s door opened, and the first thing they saw was that on her desk lay a neat little pile of red-and-white-wrapped packages. The gifts were all wrapped alike, in white tissue paper with red ribbon, and the few whose individual shapes John Gerhardt could make out looked like they might be toy soldiers. Maybe it would be toy soldiers for the boys, he thought, and little miniature dolls for the girls. But that would be good enough – something to prove that she was human after all, to pull out of a pocket and casually display to the Taylor twins, saying, “She gave us all these little presents. Look.” The little pile of gifts made everything all right. The children had only to look at them to know that there was nothing to be embarrassed about, after all. Miss Snell had turned out all right in the end.

(from “*Fun with a Stranger*” from *THE COLLECTED STORIES* by Richard Yates.  
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**Look again at lines 1-22.**

**A1.** What are your first impressions of Miss Snell? [10]

You must use the text to support your answer.

**Look again at lines 23-43.**

**A2.** What are the thoughts and feelings of the children in Miss Snell’s class about the way she behaves with them? [10]

**Look again at lines 44-64.**

**A3.** How does the writer show that the children in Miss Snell’s class are worried about the Christmas party?

You should refer to:

- what they think;
- what they say;
- the way they behave.

[10]

**To answer this question you will need to concentrate on lines 65-77, but you may wish to refer to earlier parts of the story.**

**A4.** Imagine you are John Gerhardt. Write your diary entry for the last day of term.

You should write about:

- what you expected the last day to be like;
- how it turned out;
- what you now think and feel about Miss Snell.

[10]

## SECTION B: 40 marks

*Answer Question B1 and Question B2.*

*In this section you will be assessed for your writing skills, including the presentation of your work.*

*Take special care with handwriting, spelling and punctuation.*

*A guide to the amount you should write is given for each question.*

**B1.** Describe the scene at a children's birthday party. [20]

*You should write about a page in your answer book.*

*Remember that this is a test of your ability to write descriptively. You should not write a story.*

**B2.** Choose **one** of the following titles for your writing. [20]

*The quality of your writing is more important than its length. You should write about two pages in your answer book.*

**Either,** (a) The Wedding.

**Or,** (b) Write about a time when you won something.

**Or,** (c) Continue the following:

Some days can only get better.

**Or,** (d) The Time of My Life.

**Or,** (e) Write a story which ends with the following:

... and he knew he had made it.