

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current School: \_\_\_\_\_



11+ Entrance Examination

English

Comprehension and Compositions

Time: 1 Hour 15 Minutes

1. Read the directions in each section carefully.
2. Pay careful attention to spelling and grammar throughout the exam

## Section 1: Reading Comprehension

Read the passage below and answer the questions. You should spend approximately 45 minutes on this section.

Oliver had not been within the walls of the workhouse a quarter of an hour, and had scarcely completed the demolition of a second slice of bread, when Mr. Bumble, who had handed him over to the care of an old woman, returned; and telling him it was a board night, informed him that the board had said he was to appear before it forthwith.

Not having a very clearly defined notion of what a live board was, Oliver was rather astounded by this intelligence, and was not quite certain whether he ought to laugh or cry. He had no time to think about the matter, however; for Mr. Bumble gave him a tap on the head, with his cane, to wake him up: and another on the back to make him lively: and bidding him to follow, conducted him into a large white-washed room, where eight or ten fat gentlemen were sitting at the round table. At the top of the table, seated in an arm-chair rather higher than the rest, was a particularly fat gentleman with a very round, red face.

“Bow to the board,” said Bumble. Oliver brushed away two or three tears that were languishing in his eyes; and seeing no board but the table, fortunately bowed to that.

“What’s your name, boy?” said the gentleman in the high chair.

Oliver was frightened at the sight of so many gentlemen, which made him tremble: and the beadle gave him another tap behind, which made him cry. These two causes made him answer in a very low and hesitating voice; whereupon a gentleman in white said he was a fool. Which was a capital way of raising his spirits and put him quite at ease.

“Boy,” said the gentleman in the high chair, “listen to me. You know you’re an orphan, I suppose?”

“What’s that, sir?” inquired poor Oliver.

“The boy *is* a fool – I thought he was,” said the gentleman in the white waistcoat.

“Hush!” said the gentleman who had spoken first. “You know you’ve got no father or mother and that you were brought up by the parish, don’t you?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Oliver, weeping bitterly.

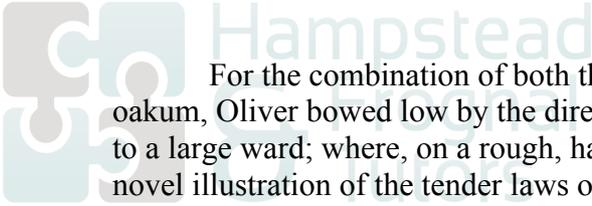
“What are you crying for?” inquired the gentleman in the white waistcoat. And to be sure it was very extraordinary. What *could* the boy be crying for?

“I hope you say your prayers every night,” said another gentleman in a gruff voice, “and pray for the people who feed you, and take care of you—like a Christian.”

“Yes, sir,” stammered the boy. The gentleman who spoke last was unconsciously right. It would have been very like a Christian, and a marvelously good Christian too, if Oliver had prayed for the people who fed and took care of *him*. But he hadn’t, because nobody had taught him.

“Well! You have come here to be educated, and taught a useful trade,” said the red-faced gentleman in the high chair.

“So you’ll begin to pick oakum tomorrow morning at six o’clock,” added the surly one in the white waistcoat.



For the combination of both these blessings in one simple process of picking oakum, Oliver bowed low by the direction of the beadle, and was then hurried away to a large ward; where, on a rough, hard bed, he sobbed himself to sleep. What a novel illustration of the tender laws of England! They let the paupers go to sleep.

...because your child comes first

-from *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens

*oakum*: A tarred fibre used in shipbuilding.

**Answer the following questions using complete sentences.**

1. Where has Oliver been taken by the beadle? (1)
2. Why does the idea of a 'board' confuse Oliver? (2)
3. How does the author's description of the gentleman make them seem intimidating? Refer to the text in your answer. (4)
4. Why does the gentleman think that Oliver is a fool? (2)
5. Why, according the gentlemen, has Oliver come to the workhouse? (2)
6. What impressions do you get of Oliver's life and personality from the passage? Refer closely to the text in your answer. (6)
7. How does the author use the language of his narration to convey how absurd or unfair Oliver's situation is? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. (5)
8. Based on the information in the text, what do you imagine the atmosphere in the workhouse to be like? (4)

## **Section 2: Composition**

*Choose one of the essay titles below and write a composition appropriate to each title. You should spend approximately 45 minutes on this section.*

1. Childhood
2. Describe a person from your childhood who has served as a mentor, inspiration, or role model and explain why you look up to this person.