

# Owl Tutors 11 + Entrance Examination

## English Paper 3 A (Comprehension)

Total marks: 25

Time allowed:  
5 minutes reading, then 40 mins writing

Information for parents:

**This sample paper has been created for children who are embarking on the 11+ exam. The questions within the paper follow Level 4-5 of the National Curriculum and cover the majority of the KS2 curriculum.**

There is a big variation in the level of difficulty amongst different schools' 11+ papers and this paper is designed to reflect the standard level of entry at 11+.

The twilight journey to Hampton Court had been necessary though supremely uncomfortable. Two oarsmen as opposed to one had pulled their blades through the still water of the Thames; the timing of their journey was totally reliant on the tides. The rising tide meant their journey was much faster than usual.

The Thames carried with it swift currents, flowing west, and therefore a journey to Hampton could, with the right tide and the right crew, sometimes, take only an hour and a half. An hour and a half of abject misery for all on board; the rowers had frozen extremities and their ceaseless endeavour was uncomfortably strenuous; the cocoon created for Cecil was just not warm enough.

His very inactivity encouraged the chill to crawl around the hides he hid under and slip through chinks in his covers. The cold chilled his very bones. Despite layers of sheepskin over his legs and around his body, two layers of gloves, one pair of thin pigskin and one pair of thick leather, the chill wind seemed to be able to find every gap and pierce every material.

The rowers were swathed in scarves and mufflers made of cotton and wool. Watching the oarsmen sweat; the steam rising off their bodies; vapour trailing from their open mouths; finding gaps in their swaddling like stew simmering in a covered pot; he marvelled at their industry. They moved like a pendulum, back and forth, their arms worked, rhythmically, they pulled the oars through the water in a reassuringly perfect synchronicity with hardly a splash

The oarsmen's hose were covered in horse-blankets and their doublets covered with a leather jerkin, which made him almost envious. The boatmen's eyes stared at the bank behind him. Every so often, they would turn their heads to check their progress.

If only state and crown could work so closely or so effectively together, if only the bishops and lords could row so uniformly, he mused. If only the factions at court could make such swift progress together, admittedly, they all rowed together but it tended to be in different directions.

From Remember the Fifth of November <https://www.michealfitzalanbooks.com>

# Questions:

- 1) What do the following words mean? Blades, chinks and swaddling. (3 marks)
- 2) Where are the rowers and where are they heading? (2 marks)
- 3) How are the rowers helped and hindered? (3 marks)
- 4) What imagery is used to show how Cecil is protected from the elements? (2 marks)
- 5) Find an example of personification and say why it is effective? (2 marks)
- 6) Find an example of a simile, alliteration and onomatopoeia. (3 marks)
- 7) Taking the passage as a whole what two adjectives might describe this journey? (2 marks)
- 8) What do you think factions mean? (2 marks)
- 9) What is meant by the last sentence? (2 marks)
- 10) Continue the story, trying to use as much imagery or figurative language as you can. (4 marks)

# Answers:

- 1) The words have the following meanings: blades – oars, chinks – gaps, swaddling, clothes or covering.
- 2) The rowers are on the Thames heading for Hampton Court.
- 3) The rowers are helped by the direction of the tide; they are hindered by the weather, which affects their extremities or words to that effect.
- 4) The imagery to show how Cecil is protected uses the metaphor of a cocoon; he is like a pupa wrapped up. (Words to that effect that mention a caterpillar's life cycle: larva, pupation, cocoon).
- 5) 'The chill wind seemed to be able to find every gap and pierce every material is effective because it shows the power of the wind to make its way through layers of clothing.
- 6) An example of a simile is: 'like a stew simmering' (any other comparison with like or as...as); an example of an alliteration is 'cocoon created' (or any other repetition of a sound one after another); and an example of onomatopoeia is 'splash'.
- 7) The journey is cold, uncomfortable, necessary, important, and the rowers are determined. (Any combination of two of these ideas would be awarded two marks).
- 8) Factions are interest groups or groups of people with differing views or objectives. (Any answer that suggests difference or contrast).
- 9) The last sentence suggests that courtiers or interest groups do not work together or are pulling in a different direction to the one Cecil would like. (Accept any answer that has a focus on the idea of pulling in opposite directions or going different ways).
- 10) Award marks for inventiveness, imagination and the use of similes, alliteration, metaphor, senses, onomatopoeia and personification.