

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Man and Boy Question Paper (Year 9)

TEST PAPER

1 hour 45 minutes



INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Use black ink or black ball-point pen.

Answer all questions in Section A.

Select one title to use for your writing in Section B.

Write your answers on a separate sheet.

You are advised to spend your time as follows:

- Section A
 - about 10 minutes reading
 - about 50 minutes answering the questions
- Section B
 - about 10 minutes planning
 - about 35 minutes writing

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.

Harry, the father in this passage, has recently separated from his wife. He is bringing up his young son, Pat, on his own. Here, he is taking Pat to school for the first time.

Pat started school. The uniform he had to wear should have made him look grown up. The grey V-necked sweater, the white shirt and yellow tie should have made him look like a little man. But they didn't. The formality of his school clothes only underlined how small he was. Approaching his fifth birthday, he wasn't even young yet.

- 5 As we drove closer to the school I was seized by a moment of panic. There were children everywhere, swarms of them all in exactly the same clothes as Pat, all heading in the same direction as us. I could lose him in here. I could lose him forever.

- 10 We pulled up some way from the school gates. There were cars double-parked and treble-parked everywhere. Tiny girls with Leonardo DiCaprio lunch boxes scrambled out of off-road vehicles the size of tanks. Bigger boys with Arsenal and Manchester United kitbags climbed out of old bangers. The noise from this three-foot-high tribe was unbelievable.

- 15 I took Pat's clammy hand and we joined the throng. I could see a collection of small, bewildered new kids and their nervous parents milling about in the playground. A lot of the children starting school had both parents with them. But I wasn't the only lone parent. I wasn't even the only man. There was only one other father on his own. He was maybe ten years older than me, a worn-out business type accompanying a confident little girl with a rucksack bearing the grinning mugs of some boy band I had never heard of. We exchanged a quick look and then he avoided my eyes, as if what I had might be catching. I suppose his wife could have been at work. I suppose she could have been anywhere.

- 20 The kindly headmistress came and led us into the assembly hall. She gave us a brief, breezy pep talk and then the children were all assigned to their individual classrooms.

Pat got Miss Waterhouse, and with a handful of other parents and new kids we were marched off to her class by one of the trusted older children who were acting as guides. Our guide was a boy of around eight years old. Pat stared up at him, dumbstruck with admiration.

- 25 In Miss Waterhouse's class a flock of five-year-olds were sitting cross-legged on the floor, patiently waiting for a story from their teacher, a young woman with the hysterical good humour of a game-show host.

'Welcome, everyone!' Miss Waterhouse said. 'You're just in time for our morning story. But first it's time for everyone to say goodbye to their mummy.' She beamed at me. 'And daddy.'

- 30 It was time to leave him. Although there had been a few emotional goodbyes when he was at nursery school, this time felt a bit different. This time it felt as though I were being left.

My baby was joining the world.

Miss Waterhouse asked for volunteers to look after the new boys and girls. A forest of hands shot up, and the teacher chose the chaperones. Suddenly a pretty little girl was standing next to us.

"I'm Peggy," she told Pat. "And I'm going to take care of you."

- 35 The little girl took his hand and led him into the classroom. He didn't even notice me leaving.

As the children came swarming out of the gates at 3.30, I saw that there was never a possibility of losing him in the crowd. Even among hundreds of children dressed more or less the same, you can still spot your own child a mile off.

40 He was with Peggy, the little girl who was going to take care of him.

"Did you enjoy it?" I asked him as we turned to leave, afraid that he was going to threaten to hold his breath if he ever had to go back.

"Guess what?" Pat said. "The teachers have all got the same first name. They're all called Miss."

45 There was dirt on his hands, paint on his face and a piece of what looked like egg sandwich by his mouth. But he was fine. School was going to be okay.

Pat wouldn't eat his dinner. Maybe it was because of the events of the day but I don't think so. I think it was my lousy cooking.

50 I had started to worry about his diet. Just how much nutrition was there in the takeaway pizzas and microwave meals I fed him on? Not much. The only time he was getting anything that remotely resembled healthy food was when we went to my parents or ate out. So I'd tried boiling up a few vegetables and slipping them into his microwaved pasta.

"Yuk," he said, examining an orange blob on the end of his spoon. "What's *that*?"

55 "That's called a carrot, Pat. You must remember carrots. They're good for you. Come on. Eat it all up." He pushed his plate away with a look of disgust.

"Not hungry," he said, making to get down from the kitchen table.

"Hold it," I said. "You're not going anywhere until you've eaten your dinner."

"I don't *want* any dinner." He looked at the orange blob swimming in bubbling gruel. "This tastes *yuk*."

"Eat your dinner."

60 "No."

"Please eat your dinner."

"No."

Are you going to eat your dinner or not?"

"No."

65 "Then go to bed."

"But it's early!"

"That's right – it's dinner time. And if you don't want any dinner then you can go to bed."

"That's not fair!"

"Life's not fair! Go to bed!"

70 "I hate you, Daddy!"

"You don't hate me! You hate my cooking! Go and put your pyjamas on!"

When he had flounced out of the kitchen I snatched up his plate of microwaved pasta with added overboiled vegetables and tossed it all in the bin. Then I held the plate under the hot tap until the water burned my hands. I didn't really blame him for not eating it. It probably wasn't edible.

75 When I went into Pat's bedroom he was lying on his bed, fully clothed, quietly sobbing. I sat him up, dried his eyes and helped him into his pyjamas. He was fading fast – eyes half-closed, mouth all puffy, head nodding like a little dashboard dog – so an early night wouldn't do him any harm. But I didn't want him to fall asleep hating my guts.

"I know I'm not a very good cook, Pat. Not like Granny or Mummy. But I'm going to try harder, okay?"

80 "Daddies can't cook."

"That's not true at all."

"You can't cook."

85 "Well, that's true. This daddy can't cook. But there are lots of men who are great cooks – famous chefs in fancy restaurants. And ordinary men, too. Men who live alone. Daddies with little boys and girls. I'm going to try to be like them, okay? I'm going to try to cook you good things that you enjoy. Okay, darling?"

He turned his head away, sniffing with disbelief at something so outrageously unlikely. I knew how he felt. I couldn't believe it either. I suspected we were both going to have to develop a profound love for sandwiches.

(Adapted from *Man and Boy* by Tony Parsons (Harper, 2008))

Read lines 1-18

A1. Harry feels uncomfortable as he arrives at school. List five details from the text that make this clear. [5]

Read lines 19-28

A2. What impressions does the writer create about the people in the school, in these lines? [5]

Read lines 29-52

A3. What are Harry's feelings, in these lines? How does the writer show this? [10]

Read lines 53-74

A4. How does the writer make this argument seem realistic? [10]

You should write about:

- what happens between the father and son
- the writer's use of language and structure
- how the argument affects the reader

90 **Read lines 75 to the end.**

A5. In this passage, Harry comes across as a someone who does not feel confident about being a parent, but who is trying his best. [10]

Using your knowledge of the whole passage, explain whether you agree with this view.

You should write about:

- your impressions of Harry as he is presented in these lines and the passage as a whole;
- how the writer has created these impressions.

You must refer to the text to support your answer

Section B: 40 marks

In this section you will be assessed for the quality of your story writing skills. 24 marks are awarded for the way in which you put together and develop your story; 16 marks are awarded for your use of vocabulary and the accuracy of your writing.

Try to choose a title that appeals to you and that you think you can write about.

Spend a few minutes planning your work – you may wish to think about how your story will begin and end and which characters will be involved.

When you have finished writing your story try to leave time to check your work and correct any errors.

Choose one of the following titles for your writing:

[40]

Either

(a) Write about an occasion when you have had an argument with a family member.

Or

**(b) Write a story which begins:
Surely this couldn't be happening again...**

Or

(c) The storm.