



OUNDLÉ

School

Non Common Entrance Examination 2014

Third and Fourth Form Entry

English

Time Allowed : 1 hour

- Please answer on lined paper
- Clearly mark your name at the top of each sheet of paper used
- Dictionaries are not allowed

Section A You should spend 30 minutes on this Section

Read the passage below and answer the questions which follow. Please note the last question carries the most marks.

The passage is narrated by a girl called Esther. She visits the house with two friends, Mr Guppy and Ada.

We all three laughed and chatted about our inexperience and the strangeness of London until we turned up under an archway to our destination—a narrow street of high houses like an oblong cistern to hold the fog. There was a confused little crowd of people, principally children, gathered about the house at which we stopped, which had a tarnished brass plate on the door
5 with the inscription JELLYBY.

"Don't be frightened!" said Mr. Guppy, looking in at the coach-window. "One of the young Jellybys been and got his head through the area railings!"

"Oh, poor child," said I; "let me out, if you please!"

"Pray be careful of yourself, miss. The young Jellybys are always up to something," said
10 Mr. Guppy.

I made my way to the poor child, who was one of the dirtiest little unfortunates I ever saw, and found him very hot and frightened and crying loudly, fixed by the neck between two iron railings, while a milkman and a beadle¹, with the kindest intentions possible, were endeavouring to drag him back by the legs, under a general impression that his skull was
15 compressible by those means. As I found (after pacifying him) that he was a little boy with a naturally large head, I thought that perhaps where his head could go, his body could follow, and mentioned that the best mode of extrication might be to push him forward. This was so favourably received by the milkman and beadle that he would immediately have been pushed into the area if I had not held his pinafore while Richard and Mr. Guppy ran down through the
20 kitchen to catch him when he should be released. At last he was happily got down without any accident, and then he began to beat Mr. Guppy with a hoop-stick in quite a frantic manner.

Nobody had appeared belonging to the house except a servant girl, who had been poking at the child from below with a broom; I don't know with what object, and I don't think she did. I therefore supposed that Mrs. Jellyby was not at home, and was quite surprised when the girl
25 appeared in the passage, and going up to the back room on the first floor before Ada and me, announced us as, "Them two young ladies, Missis Jellyby!" We passed several more children on the way up, whom it was difficult to avoid treading on in the dark; and as we came into Mrs. Jellyby's presence, one of the poor little things fell downstairs—down a whole flight (as it sounded to me), with a great noise.

¹ A beadle – an early version of a community police officer.

30 Mrs. Jellyby, whose face reflected none of the uneasiness which we could not help showing in our own faces as the dear child's head recorded its passage with a bump on every stair—Richard afterwards said he counted seven, besides one for the landing—received us with perfect equanimity. She was a pretty, very diminutive, plump woman of from forty to fifty, with handsome eyes, though they had a curious habit of seeming to look a long way off.

35 We said hello and sat down behind the door, where there was a lame invalid of a sofa. Mrs. Jellyby had very good hair but was too much occupied with her paperwork to brush it. The shawl in which she had been loosely muffled dropped onto her chair when she advanced to us; and as she turned to resume her seat, we could not help noticing that her dress didn't nearly meet up the back and that the open space was railed across with a lattice-work of stay-lace—
40 like a summer-house.

The room, which was strewn with papers and nearly filled by a great writing-table covered with similar litter, was, I must say, not only very untidy but very dirty. We were obliged to take notice of that with our sense of sight, even while, with our sense of hearing, we followed the poor child who had tumbled downstairs: I think into the back kitchen, where somebody seemed
45 to stifle him.

Bleak House Charles Dickens

1. What was the weather like that morning? (1 mark)
2. Why does Mr Guppy warn Esther (the narrator) to be careful? (2 marks)
3. How does Esther help the boy who is stuck? (1 mark)
4. Explain the phrase “This was so favourably received” (Lines 17- 18) in your own words. (2 marks)
5. How does Mrs Jellyby react to the child falling down the stairs? (2 marks)
6. Explain what the following words mean. If you do not know, make an intelligent guess from how they are used in the passage.
 - Tarnished line 4 (1 mark)
 - Extrication Line 17 (1 mark)
 - Equanimity Line 33 (1 mark)

PLEASE TURN OVER FOR THE NEXT QUESTION

7. What impression does the writer create of the Jellyby household? You may wish to comment on

- Mrs Jellyby's conduct as a mother
- The behaviour of the children in the house
- The description of the house.

(10 marks)

Section B You should spend 30 minutes on this section.

Write an imaginative or informative piece on the "Joys of Family Life."

(20 marks)

Please check your work carefully.