

The Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School
Elstree, Herts

11+ Entrance Examination 2015



ENGLISH

Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Please follow these instructions

Candidate Name

Candidate Number

- Write your name and candidate number in the spaces at the top of this page.
- Answer all questions in this booklet.
- Pay special attention to the instructions at the start of each section.
- If you run out of space on any question, please use the space provided at the end of the booklet, making sure you number the additional work carefully.

You have 1 hour and 10 minutes to complete this paper.

Comprehension

This is an edited extract from Kidnapped by Robert Louis Stevenson. David Balfour is visiting Ebenezer at his home, called 'the House of Shaws'.

5 For a day that was begun so ill, the day passed fairly well. We had the porridge cold again at noon, and hot porridge at night; porridge and small beer was my uncle's diet. He spoke but little, and that in the same way as before, shooting a question at me after a long silence. In a room next door to the kitchen, I found a great number of books, both Latin and English, in which I took great pleasure all the afternoon. Indeed, the time passed so lightly in this good company, that I began to be almost reconciled to my residence at
10 Shaws; and nothing but the sight of my uncle, and his eyes playing hide and seek with mine, revived the force of my distrust.

When he had cleared the platter, he got out a single pipeful of tobacco, just as in the morning, turned round a stool into the chimney corner, and sat awhile smoking, with his back to me. "David," he said, at length, "I've been thinking;" then he paused, and said it
15 again. "There's a wee bit of silver that I half promised ye before ye were born," he continued; "promised it to your father. O, nothing legal, ye understand; just gentlemen chatting at their wine. Well, I kept that bit of money separate—it was a great expense, but a promise is a promise—and it has grown by now to be a matter of just precisely forty pounds!" This last he rapped out with a sidelong glance over his shoulder; and the next
20 moment added, almost with a scream, "Scots pounds!"

The pound Scots being the same thing as an English shilling, the difference made by this second thought was considerable; I could see, besides, that the whole story was a lie, invented with some end which puzzled me; and I made no attempt to conceal the tone of voice in which I answered— "O, think again, sir! Pounds sterling, I believe!"

25 "That's what I said," returned my uncle: "pounds sterling! And if you'll step out to the door a minute, just to see what kind of a night it is, I'll get it out for ye and call ye in again."

I did his will, smiling to myself in my contempt that he should think I was so easily to be deceived. It was a dark night, with a few stars low down; and as I stood just outside the door, I heard a hollow moaning of wind far off among the hills. I said to myself there was
30 something thundery and changeful in the weather, and little knew of what a vast importance that should prove to me before the evening passed.

When I was called in again, my uncle counted out into my hand seven and thirty golden guinea pieces; the rest was in his hand, in small gold and silver; but his heart failed him there, and he crammed the change into his pocket. "There," said he, "that'll show you! I'm
35 a queer man, and strange wi' strangers; but my word is my bond, and there's the proof of it." Now, my uncle seemed so miserly that I was struck dumb by this sudden generosity, and could find no words in which to thank him.

"Not a word!" said he. "No thanks; I want no thanks. I do my duty. I'm not saying that everybody would have done it; but for my part it's a pleasure to me to do the right by my
40 brother's son; and it's a pleasure to me to think that now we'll agree as such near friends should."

I spoke him in return as handsomely as I was able; but all the while I was wondering what would come next, and why he had parted with his precious guineas; for as to the reason he had given, a baby would have refused it. Presently he looked towards me sideways.

45 "And see here," says he, "tit for tat." I told him I was ready to prove my gratitude in any way, and then waited, looking for some monstrous demand. And yet, when at last he plucked up courage to speak, it was only to tell me that he was growing old and a little broken, and that he would expect me to help him with the house and the garden.

50 "Well," he said, "let's begin." He pulled out of his pocket a rusty key. "There," says he, "there's the key of the stair-tower at the far end of the house. Ye can only get into it from the outside, for that part of the house is not finished. Go in there, and up the stairs, and bring me down the chest that's at the top."

"Can I have a light, sir?" said I.

"No," said he, very cunningly. "No lights in my house."

55 "Very well, sir," said I. "Are the stairs good?"

"They're grand," said he; and then, as I was going, "Keep to the wall," he added; "there's no bannisters. But the stairs are grand underfoot."

60 It was so dark inside, it seemed a body could scarce breathe; but I pushed out with foot and hand, and presently struck the wall with the one, and the lowermost round of the stair with the other. The wall, by the touch, was of fine hewn stone; the steps too, though somewhat steep and narrow, were of polished masonwork, and regular and solid underfoot. Minding my uncle's word about the bannisters, I kept close to the tower side, and felt my way in the pitch darkness with a beating heart.

65 The house of Shaws stood some five full storeys high. Well, as I advanced, it seemed to me the stair grew airier. I was wondering what might be the cause of this change, when a second blink of the summer lightning came and went. If I did not cry out, it was because fear had me by the throat; and if I did not fall, it was more by Heaven's mercy than my own strength. It was not only that the flash shone in on every side through breaches in the wall, but the same passing brightness showed me the steps were of unequal length, and
70 that one of my feet rested that moment within two inches of the edge.

75 The tower, I should have said, was square; and in every corner the step was made of a great stone of a different shape. Well, I had come close to one of these turns, when, feeling forward as usual, my hand slipped upon an edge and found nothing but emptiness beyond it. The stair had been carried no higher; to set a stranger mounting it in the darkness was to send him straight to his death; and (although, thanks to the lightning and my own precautions, I was safe enough) the mere thought of the peril in which I might have stood, and the dreadful height I might have fallen from, brought out the sweat upon my body and relaxed my joints.

Answer all questions in the space provided. You do not need to answer questions 1-5 in full sentences.

1. What items of food and drink are consumed by David in the first paragraph?
_____ [2]

2. What is the family relationship between the two characters?
_____ [1]

3. From the first paragraph, what is the meaning of the following words:

- i) Ill _____
- ii) Shooting _____
- iii) Reconciled _____
- iv) Revived _____
- v) Lightly _____ [5]

4. If a Scottish pound is worth 5 pence, how much does Ebenezer offer David in English money?
_____ [2]

5. Why do you think Ebenezer asks David to leave the room in line 25?

_____ [2]

6. What does the phrase "tit for tat" (line 45) mean?

_____ [2]

7. In your own words, explain why David's journey up the tower is dangerous.

_____ [4]

8. In your own words, explain Ebenezer's plan. Why does he give David money and ask him to climb the stairs of the tower?

[4]

9. Using evidence from the text to help you, what do you think will happen next?

[4]

10. What do you learn about the characters of Ebenezer and David? Support each point with a quotation from the extract.

Character	What we learn	Quotation
Ebenezer		
David		

[4]

