

# **EXETER SCHOOL**

**Entrance Examination 2007**

**13+ ENGLISH**

**1¼ hours**

## COMPREHENSION (50 MARKS)

*Read the passage, then answer the questions which follow the passage.*

This was a large camp. It slept, close to the earth in its hollow, under the moonless star-touched night of the high plains of the heartland of North America. And out across the rolling plains, scattered in small herds across the endless plains, the buffalo too were bedded down for the night in their own vast slow migration north-westward into the late spring winds bringing their subtle sensed message of the renewing grasses.

The first faint glow of dawn crept up the eastern sky. Across from it, in the western arc of the camp circle where stood the lodges of the Hev-a-tan-iu, the Rope Men who used ropes of twisted hair instead of the usual rawhide, the ageing warrior Strong Left Hand stirred on his couch. He turned his head. The door flap of the lodge had been swung wide, letting in the rising light. In the centre of the lodge by the hollowed-out fireplace his wife, Straight Willow, knelt by a small pile of twigs with her fire sticks in her hands. There was a woman. A true Cheyenne woman. The mother of tall grown sons, with work-gnarled hands and deepening lines in her face, yet still strong and supple and independent, firm mistress of the lodge and its place in the camp. Always he woke with the first light of dawn and always she was awake before him, tending to her woman's duty, her woman's privilege, of lighting the lodge fire. It was no longer crowded in the lodge now that the three sons, the two real sons and the foster son, were married and living with their wives' clans as was proper, because descent and clan always passed to children through the mothers. But it was never lonely, would never be lonely, in a lodge shared with Straight Willow.

He spoke to her, using one of the silly names out of their long-ago early years together, and without looking up she called him a lazy lie-abled as she always did. He chuckled, filling the lodge with good feeling, and rose with the couch robe held about him and stepped past her and out into the morning air. Ah, it was good, fresh and clean the air, and rich colour was climbing the eastern sky. Already smoke was coming from the other lodges too. Men and boys were emerging from them and heading for the river for the morning plunge that all the male Cheyennes took when near water, the hardest all through the year, even when thick ice had to be broken.

Behind him Straight Willow put larger twigs on the fire and picked up her two buckets of bullhide. She brushed past him and joined other women on their way upstream, above the swimmers, where they could dip fresh water. No Cheyenne when she could avoid it, used dead water, water that stood all night.

From 'The Coup of Long Lance' by Jack Schaefer.

- a) What time of the day is it and what time of the year? (3 MARKS)
- b) What do we discover in this passage about Strong Left Hand's children? (4 MARKS)
- c) Why does Straight Willow always get up before her husband does? (2 MARKS)
- d) If you to read this passage aloud, how would you say the line 'There was a woman' And why? (4 MARKS)
- e) What do the following words mean as used in the passage? i) 'work-gnarled'; b) 'hardest'. (4 MARKS)
- f) Look again at the first paragraph. What words and phrases does the author use to make the camp and the night seem rather mysterious? How is this achieved? (7 MARKS)

- g) Why does Straight Willow call her husband a lazy lie-abed? And why does he respond with a chuckle? (8 MARKS)
- h) What impression do you form of the Cheyenne community? Does it seem happy, well-balanced, settled, poor? (8 MARKS)

*(Of the 50 marks available for these eight questions, 10 will be awarded for accuracy, fluency and presentation.)*

## 2. COMPOSITION (50 MARKS)

*Write on ONE of the following. Aim to produce at least 250-300 words.*

- a) Describe an occasion, real or imagined, called 'The Camping Expedition'.
- b) What do you think of the traditional but outdated view of women as housewives, staying at home to do work like Straight Willow does?
- c) Describe a dawn or a sunset in any way that you think is effective.