

11+ English
Entrance Examination
2025



Time Allowed: 1 hour

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Your answers to this examination should be **written on lined paper**.

Make sure that **your name** is on ***all*** the pieces of paper you use.

This examination consists of:

- **Section A:** A reading passage with comprehension questions;
- **Section B:** A creative writing section.

You must complete **both** Section A and Section B

Section A: Comprehension (20 marks).

The following passage is taken from Robert Louis Stevenson's novel, 'Treasure Island', in which young Jim Hawkins (our narrator) recalls the moment when he first met a mysterious old seaman called Billy Bones.

Read the following passage carefully then answer the questions.

1 I remember him as if it were yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest following behind him in a hand-barrow - a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man, his tarry pigtail falling over the shoulder of his soiled blue coat, his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails, and the sabre cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white. I remember him looking round the cover and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sang so often afterwards:

6 "Fifteen men on the dead man's chest - Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"

In the high, old tottering voice that seemed to have been tuned and broken at the capstan¹ bars. Then he rapped on the door with a bit of stick like a handspike² that he carried, and when my father appeared, called roughly for a glass of rum. This, when it was brought to him, he drank slowly, like a connoisseur, lingering on the taste and still looking about him at the cliffs and up at our signboard.

11 "This is a handy cove," says he at length; "and a pleasant sittytated grog³-shop. Much company, mate?"

My father told him no, very little company, the more was the pity.

"Well, then," said he, "this is the berth for me. Here you, matey," he cried to the man who trundled the barrow; "bring up alongside and help up my chest. I'll stay here a bit," he continued. "I'm a plain man; rum and bacon and eggs is what I want, and that head up there for to watch ships off. What you mought call me? You mought call me captain. Oh, I see what you're at - there"; and he threw down three or four gold pieces on the threshold. "You can tell me when I've worked through that," says he, looking as fierce as a commander.

20 And indeed bad as his clothes were and coarsely as he spoke, he had none of the appearance of a man who sailed before the mast, but seemed like a mate or skipper accustomed to be obeyed or to strike. The man who came with the barrow told us the mail⁴ had set him down the morning before at the Royal George, that he had inquired what inns there were along the coast, and hearing ours well spoken of, I suppose, and described as lonely, had chosen it from the others for his place of residence. And that was all we could learn of our guest.

26 He was a very silent man by custom. All day he hung round the cove or upon the cliffs with a brass telescope; all evening he sat in a corner of the parlour next the fire and drank rum and water very strong. Mostly he would not speak when spoken to, only look up sudden and fierce and blow through his nose like a fog-horn; and we and the people who came about our house soon learned to let him be. Every day when he came back from his stroll he would ask if any seafaring men had gone by along the road. At first we thought it was the want of company of his own kind that made him ask this question, but at last we began to see he was desirous to avoid them. When a seaman did put up at the Admiral Benbow (as now

¹ A mechanical device turned by bars, used for winding in heavy ropes or cables on a ship.

² A metal bar used as a lever.

³ Alcohol.

⁴ The postal service. At this time, post was taken from place to place by a horse drawn carriage.

and then some did, making by the coast road for Bristol) he would look in at him through the curtained door before he entered the parlour; and he was always sure to be as silent as a mouse when any such was present. For me, at least, there was no secret about the matter, for I was, in a way, a sharer in his alarms. He had taken me aside one day and promised me a silver fourpenny on the first of every month if I would only keep my "weather-eye⁵ open for a seafaring man with one leg" and let him know the moment he appeared.

39

Section A: Comprehension Questions (Total: 20 marks)

1. Re-read **lines 1-5**, find three words or phrases that tell us something about the seaman's appearance? **3 marks**

2. In **lines 26-38**, explain how the author makes the seaman sound very **mysterious**. **5 marks**

3. Using the **whole passage**, and brief quotations in your answer, *explore* how the writer creates anticipation.

You may want to consider:

1. Key vocabulary used by the author
2. Paragraph and sentence length or punctuation used by the author

12 marks

Section B: Creative Writing Task (Total: 30 marks)

Marks will be awarded for thoughtful, imaginative pieces, which have accurate and varied paragraphs and sentence structures, as well as accurate spelling and punctuation.

1. Write a description of a trip to the coast (real or imaginary).

You may choose to begin it: 'As the path snaked its way closer towards the rocks, I could hear ...'

⁵ An eye watchful for developments.

