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Eton College 13+ English 2024

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Eton College King's Scholarship Examination 2024

ENGLISH A

80 minutes

Remember to write your candidate number on every sheet of answer paper used.

You must answer all questions.

Do not turn over until told to do so.

PART ONE

Read the poem slowly and carefully and then answer **ALL** the questions that follow.

When You Are Old

William Butler Yeats

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace, 5
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars, 10
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

1. What type of person is the speaker of the poem? Use evidence from the poem to support your answer. [10]
2. Who do you think Yeats' speaker is addressing when he wrote this poem? Use evidence from the poem to support your answer. [10]
3. Give one or two explanations for why you think Yeats wrote this poem. Support your explanation with evidence from the text. [15]
4. Pick out two images from this poem that you think are particularly powerful. Explain why you chose these images and how they illustrate the poem's meaning. [15]

PART TWO: General

IMPORTANT: Begin this question on a new sheet of paper.

‘The most profound pleasure of rereading derives from the thrill of rediscovering a past self, a self that we may have thought lost.’

Of the books you have read, which do you think your future self would get the greatest thrill from rereading and why?

[50]

END OF PAPER

Paper Notes: 13+ English Question Paper (13+ English Past Paper (2024))

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you get the most from this paper.

Overview

This is the **Eton College King's Scholarship Examination 2024 English A paper**, a prestigious and challenging assessment for candidates sitting the **13+ entrance exam** at one of Britain's most selective independent schools. The paper has a time limit of **80 minutes** and all questions must be answered, testing both close reading and personal literary reflection.

The paper is divided into two parts. **Part One** requires detailed analysis of **W. B. Yeats's poem 'When You Are Old'**, with four questions worth a total of 50 marks probing character, purpose, imagery and interpretation. **Part Two** is an extended essay question worth 50 marks, asking candidates to reflect on a book they have read and how their future self might experience rereading it.

This paper suits academically able candidates preparing for entry to Eton or similar highly selective independent schools at 13+. It demands maturity in literary analysis, the ability to write persuasively about personal reading, and comfort with poetry that explores complex emotional and philosophical themes. The format assumes a high level of prior reading and confidence in textual interpretation.

How this paper is organised

The paper opens with a clear instruction to write candidate numbers on every answer sheet and a reminder that all questions must be answered. Part One presents the full text of **Yeats's twelve-line lyric poem**, followed by four questions that build in complexity and mark value: 10 marks for characterising the speaker, 10 for identifying the addressee, 15 for explaining Yeats's purpose, and 15 for analysing two powerful images.

Part Two begins on a fresh sheet and carries the remaining **50 marks**, equal to the entire poetry section. Candidates respond to a quotation about the pleasure of rereading and must choose one book from their own reading that they believe their future self would most enjoy revisiting. The question invites personal reflection but demands intellectual rigour and clear argumentation.

The **80-minute time limit** is tight for the volume and depth of work required. Candidates must balance close textual analysis in Part One with sustained discursive writing in Part Two, managing their time carefully to do justice to both sections.

Topics covered

- Close reading and analysis of early 20th-century Irish poetry, specifically Yeats's lyric 'When You Are Old'
- Character analysis: identifying the speaker's voice, tone and perspective from internal textual evidence
- Audience and purpose: inferring the intended addressee of a poem and the poet's motives for writing
- Poetic imagery: selecting and explaining powerful images, and relating them to overall theme and meaning
- Literary devices in Romantic and post-Romantic poetry, including personification (Love as a figure), metaphor and symbolism
- Personal essay writing on reading experience, with reference to memory, identity and the passage of time
- Constructing a sustained argument about the value and significance of a chosen literary text
- Reflecting on the relationship between reader, text and self across time, drawing on philosophical or critical concepts
- Integration of quotation and textual evidence to support interpretive claims
- Writing under timed conditions, balancing analytical precision with personal voice

How to use this paper for revision

- Practise reading and annotating poetry quickly. Underline key words, circle repeated images, and note shifts in tone or perspective to help structure your answers efficiently under time pressure.
- Revise the basics of poetic form and devices (metaphor, personification, symbolism, alliteration) so you can name techniques confidently and link them to meaning without hesitation.
- Prepare a mental list of five or six books you know well and could write about in depth. For each, jot down key themes, moments and your personal response, so you are not searching for ideas in the exam.
- When answering 'why did the poet write this?' questions, think beyond surface meaning. Consider emotional motivation, historical context, the poet's relationship to the subject, and universal themes.
- In Part Two, avoid simple plot summary. Focus on why the book matters to you, what it reveals about your past self, and how your future perspective might change or deepen that reading.
- Time yourself answering similar poetry questions at home. Aim to spend roughly 35 to 40 minutes on Part One (including reading time) and reserve the rest for Part Two.
- Read a wide range of poetry, especially Romantic and early modern, to familiarise yourself with elevated language, archaic syntax and complex imagery that appear in texts like Yeats.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Spending too long on Part One and leaving insufficient time for the 50-mark essay in Part Two, which carries half the total marks and requires sustained development.
- Describing what happens in the poem rather than analysing how language and imagery create meaning. Examiners want interpretation, not paraphrase.
- Choosing images in question 4 that are easy to describe but not central to the poem's meaning, rather than selecting moments that reveal deeper emotional or thematic significance.
- Writing a book summary for Part Two instead of exploring personal response and the idea of rereading. The question asks why your future self would find rereading thrilling, not what the book is about.
- Failing to use quotations from the poem to support answers. Every claim about character, purpose or imagery needs direct textual evidence embedded in the argument.
- Ignoring the reflective, philosophical tone of the Part Two quotation. Candidates who treat it as 'write about your favourite book' miss the opportunity to engage with ideas about memory and identity.

Exam technique

Begin by reading the Yeats poem twice: once for overall sense, once to annotate details like repeated words (love, face, shadows), shifts in address, and striking images. Jot brief notes in the margin before tackling the questions. For questions 1 to 4, allocate marks roughly to time (10 marks equals about 8 to 10 minutes), write in clear paragraphs, and quote directly from the text to back every point you make.

Part Two demands a different approach. Spend three to four minutes planning: choose your book, list three or four reasons why rereading it would be significant, and think about how your past self engaged with it. Write an introduction that names the book and briefly responds to the quotation, then develop each reason in its own paragraph with specific textual detail and personal reflection. Aim for five or six substantial paragraphs, including a conclusion that circles back to the idea of rediscovering a past self.

Watch the clock throughout. If you have 80 minutes total, aim to finish Part One by minute 35 at the latest, giving you 40 to 45 minutes for the essay. If time runs short, prioritise completing Part Two over perfecting Part One, because the essay carries equal weight and incomplete answers lose marks rapidly. Write legibly, check spelling

of authors' names, and proofread your final sentence in each answer to ensure it lands clearly.

What to revise alongside this paper

Broaden your knowledge of **W. B. Yeats** by reading other poems from his early and middle periods, especially those addressed to Maud Gonne ('The Arrow', 'No Second Troy'). Understanding the biographical context (his unrequited love, Irish politics, mystical interests) will deepen your ability to discuss purpose and emotion in his work. Explore other Romantic and post-Romantic poets (Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Christina Rossetti) to develop familiarity with elevated diction, classical allusion and the themes of love, time and mortality.

For the essay component, read widely in fiction, memoir and philosophy that explores **memory, identity and change over time**. Texts like Dickens's 'Great Expectations', Salinger's 'The Catcher in the Rye', or Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go' lend themselves to reflection on past and future selves. Practise writing about your own reading experiences in a thoughtful, reflective register, drawing on critical ideas about how literature shapes us.

Finally, revise **essay structure and argumentation** for timed discursive writing. Study how to construct a thesis, develop paragraphs with evidence and analysis, and conclude persuasively. Look at sample scholarship-level essays to see what depth and maturity of expression examiners expect at this highly competitive tier.

Key terms

Lyric poetry, Speaker (poetic voice), Addressee, Imagery, Symbolism, Personification, Metaphor, Tone, Theme, Close reading, Textual evidence, Personal response, Rereading and memory, Literary analysis, Discursive essay

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Eton College King's Scholarship Examination 2024

ENGLISH B

(80 minutes)

Remember to write your candidate number on every sheet of answer paper used.

You must answer all questions.

Do not turn over until told to do so.

PART ONE

Michelangelo's 'The Fall of Man and Expulsion from The Garden of Eden' uses Genesis 3 as its source. Adam and Eve appear both on the left and right. Look at the image and the extract carefully.



6: And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7: And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8: And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9: And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10: And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11: And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12: And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13: And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

[...]

23: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

24: So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims*, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

**Cherubims: winged angelic beings*

ENGLISH B

1. Choose one of the figures represented in the image and consider how the artist has chosen to depict them. Do you find his representation effective?

[5 marks]

2. Compare and contrast the story as it is presented in the image with the narrative excerpt from *Genesis 3*.

[15 marks]

3. 'A painting of a written story may offer both more and less than the original text.' Discuss this idea with reference to the image and extract above, alongside any other appropriate examples.

[30 marks]

PART TWO

Retell the story of the fall of Adam and Eve from the perspective of the tree.

[50 marks]

End of paper

Paper Notes: 13+ English Question Paper (13+ English Past Paper (2024))

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you get the most from this paper.

Overview

This is the **Eton College King's Scholarship Examination 2024**, specifically **English B**, designed for candidates applying for King's Scholarships at **Eton College**. The paper tests advanced literary analysis, visual interpretation, and creative writing skills at the **13+ level**, aimed at students entering Year 9. The examination lasts **80 minutes** and is worth **100 marks** in total, requiring all questions to be answered.

The paper is divided into two distinct parts: the first focuses on **comparative textual and visual analysis** using Michelangelo's fresco 'The Fall of Man and Expulsion from The Garden of Eden' alongside an extract from **Genesis 3**. Candidates must engage with Renaissance art, biblical narrative, and the relationship between visual and written storytelling. The second part demands **imaginative retelling** from an unusual perspective, testing creative originality and narrative voice.

This paper is suitable for academically gifted students seeking scholarships at one of Britain's most prestigious independent schools. It requires maturity in literary interpretation, confident essay writing, and the ability to synthesise ideas from different artistic media. The weighting heavily favours extended written responses, with the creative task alone accounting for half the total marks.

How this paper is organised

The paper is organised into **two parts**, each testing different but complementary skills. **Part One** allocates **50 marks** across three questions of increasing complexity: a 5-mark analysis of a single figure from Michelangelo's fresco, a 15-mark comparison between the visual and textual narratives, and a 30-mark discursive essay exploring the proposition that paintings offer 'both more and less' than written texts. This progression from focused observation to broad critical argument is typical of scholarship-level English papers.

Part Two is a single creative writing task worth **50 marks**, equal in weight to the entire analytical section. Candidates must retell the Fall from the perspective of the Tree of Knowledge, requiring imaginative empathy, narrative control, and theological or symbolic awareness. The mark allocation signals that originality and sustained creative writing are valued as highly as critical analysis.

The rubric states that **all questions must be answered** within the **80-minute time limit**, placing considerable pressure on time management. Candidates must write their candidate number on every sheet, suggesting that multi-page responses are expected for both the extended essay and the creative piece.

Topics covered

- Visual analysis of Renaissance art, focusing on composition, gesture, and symbolic representation in Michelangelo's fresco
- Close reading and interpretation of biblical narrative from Genesis 3, including archaic English syntax and theological themes
- Comparative analysis between visual and textual narratives, examining what each medium conveys and omits
- Essay writing on the proposition that visual art offers both more and less than written texts, requiring supporting examples from wider reading or viewing
- Creative narrative writing from an inanimate or non-human perspective, demanding imaginative voice and narrative control
- Understanding of the Fall of Man story, including themes of temptation, knowledge, innocence, and expulsion
- Synthesis of ideas across different artistic media, linking visual symbolism to textual meaning
- Evaluative judgement of artistic effectiveness, requiring personal response supported by close observation

How to use this paper for revision

- Practise analysing works of art by describing specific visual details such as body language, composition, and symbolic objects before making interpretative claims.
- Familiarise yourself with the full text of Genesis chapters 2 and 3 to understand the complete narrative context of the Fall, including God's commands and the punishments.
- Read examples of first-person narratives written from unusual perspectives, such as dramatic monologues or novels told from non-human viewpoints, to develop your creative voice.
- Time yourself writing 500 to 700-word essays under exam conditions so you can gauge how much detail to include in the 30-mark discursive question.
- Study other examples of paintings based on literary or biblical sources to build a bank of comparative examples for question 3.
- Practise writing in sustained paragraphs with clear topic sentences, as the longer responses will require structured argument and narrative coherence.
- Revise key literary and rhetorical terms such as symbolism, juxtaposition, perspective, voice, and narrative tone to use confidently in your analytical writing.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Spending too long on the lower-mark questions in Part One and running out of time for the 50-mark creative task in Part Two.
- Describing what is in the painting or text without analysing how the artist or writer creates meaning through technique and choice.
- Writing a retelling in Part Two that merely repeats the biblical story with 'I' instead of 'Eve' rather than adopting a genuinely tree-like perspective with original insight.
- Failing to support the claim in question 3 with specific examples from the Michelangelo and Genesis material, or not bringing in any wider examples at all.
- Using vague evaluative language such as 'effective' or 'interesting' without explaining exactly what effect the representation achieves and how.
- Treating the painting and text as entirely separate rather than exploring how they relate, complement, or challenge each other in questions 2 and 3.

Exam technique

Start by reading **all questions carefully** and noting the mark allocations. With 80 minutes and 100 marks, you have roughly 48 seconds per mark, meaning the 30-mark

essay deserves about 24 minutes and the 50-mark creative piece around 40 minutes. Allow at least 5 minutes at the end for checking spelling, punctuation, and completeness. Consider tackling Part Two first if creative writing is your strength, ensuring you secure the full 50 marks there before the analytical tasks.

For the visual analysis questions, **annotate the image mentally or on rough paper** before writing, noting specific details such as facial expressions, the serpent's position, or the contrast between the left and right halves. Ground every claim in observable evidence. For the discursive essay in question 3, plan a clear three-part structure: introduce the proposition, explore how paintings offer more (immediacy, visual symbolism, simultaneous storytelling), then consider what they offer less (detail, interiority, narrative flexibility), and conclude with a balanced judgement.

In Part Two, **spend 5 minutes planning your creative narrative** before you begin writing. Decide on the tree's character: is it innocent, complicit, regretful, indifferent, or wise? Establish a consistent voice and ensure your retelling includes the key events while adding original imaginative detail. Show examiners you can sustain a creative perspective across several paragraphs without lapsing into straightforward third-person narration.

What to revise alongside this paper

Alongside this paper, revise the full **Genesis creation and Fall narrative**, including chapters 1 to 4, so you understand the theological context of innocence, sin, and consequences. Explore other **Renaissance depictions** of biblical stories, such as works by Caravaggio, Titian, or Raphael, to develop your understanding of how visual artists interpret scriptural themes. Reading **Paradise Lost** by John Milton, even in excerpts, will deepen your grasp of the Fall story and offer rich examples of literary retelling.

Practise writing from unusual perspectives by reading or attempting **dramatic monologues**, such as those by Robert Browning or Carol Ann Duffy's 'The World's Wife' collection, which retells myths from marginalised viewpoints. Strengthen your essay-writing technique by studying **comparative literature** tasks and learning to structure arguments that weigh competing claims. Finally, familiarise yourself with **art history terminology** so you can write confidently about fresco technique, chiaroscuro, figural composition, and symbolic motifs.

Key terms

Visual analysis, Composition, Symbolism, Comparative analysis, Narrative perspective, Renaissance art, Biblical allusion, First-person narration, Imaginative empathy, Discursive essay, Juxtaposition, Iconography, Archaic English, Creative voice, Textual fidelity

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