

## 13+ PAST PAPER PACK

# Eton College 13+ General 2023

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PRACTISE THE REAL THING

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# Eton College King's Scholarship Examination 2023

## GENERAL I

(One hour)

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

***You must answer both questions.***

*Each question is worth the same number of marks.*

*You need not answer the questions in the order set, **but you must start each one on a separate piece of paper.***

*If you have not finished a question after 30 minutes, **you are strongly advised to leave it and go on to the other.** Return to any unfinished question if you have time left at the end of the paper.*

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: NONE**

**Do not turn over until told to do so.**

GENERAL I

**Question 1: START A NEW SHEET OF PAPER NOW.**

*If you have not finished this question after 30 minutes, you are strongly advised to leave it and go on to the other.*

In the two problems below, your powers of logic are being tested. **You must give clear explanation and reasoning in your answers to gain marks.**

Dwarf speak

Ten dwarfs make statements:

- Dwarf 1: At least one of us is lying.  
Dwarf 2: At least two of us are lying.  
Dwarf 3: At least three of us are lying.  
Dwarf 4: At least four of us are lying.  
Dwarf 5: At least five of us are lying.  
Dwarf 6: At least six of us are lying.  
Dwarf 7: At least seven of us are lying.  
Dwarf 8: At least eight of us are lying.  
Dwarf 9: At least nine of us are lying.  
Dwarf 10: At least ten of us are lying.

- (a) Consider dwarf 10. Explain clearly why he is lying. [2]  
(b) Now consider dwarf 9. Is he lying or tell the truth? [2]  
(c) Of the other dwarfs, which are lying and which are telling the truth? [8]

Gaming

Two players, A and B, take it in turns to name dates. Player A starts by naming January 1 (the first day of January, the year is irrelevant.) Any date named subsequently must be later in the year and have either the same month or the same day value as the previous date.

For example, player B, in his first turn, can name any of February 1, March 1, April 1 .....December 1, or January 2, January 3,.....January 31.

The player to call out December 31 wins the game.

Which player can always win the game and what is the correct strategy?

You may assume that February has 28 days (though the correct strategy would not change even if February had 29 days). [13]

[Total mark for Question 1: 25]

**Question 2: START A NEW SHEET OF PAPER NOW.**

*If you have not finished this question after 30 minutes, you are strongly advised to leave it and go on to the other.*

Rifling through the archives, the College Librarian recently discovered a page of sentences translated by a boy into an unknown language.

Correct his work.

Sentences to Translate

- i. ligna belom ta
- ii. lignak yan tralom zu
- iii. grole pozzo belom span
- iv. lignak pozzo belom spiran
- v. grolek yank pozzo tralom koan
- vi. yank ligna tralom zu
- vii. michalak belom tira
- viii. lignak michala pozzo tralom koan
- ix. michalak grolek tralom zitu
- x. yank lignak pozzo tralom kitoan
- xi. michala pozzo belom span
- xii. lignak grolek pozzo tralom kitoan

Hints:

- There is only one mistake.
- The mistake can be corrected by replacing a single word.
- Your answer should indicate (i) the incorrect word (ii) how it should read and (iii) how you tackled the question.
- Marks will be awarded for evidence of a sensible approach even if you fail to reach the correct answer, so be sure to include a brief but clear explanation of your working, which may be in note form.
- No knowledge of the language is needed to complete the question.

[Total mark for Question 2: 25]

**END OF PAPER**

# Paper Notes: 13+ General Question Paper (13+ General Past Paper (2023))

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

## Overview

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This is the **2023 King's Scholarship Examination General I paper** from **Eton College**, designed to assess candidates applying for the prestigious King's Scholarship at 13+ entry. The paper tests **logical reasoning and analytical thinking** rather than subject-specific knowledge, reflecting the scholarship's emphasis on intellectual agility and problem-solving ability.

Candidates face **two equally weighted questions** (25 marks each) to be completed in **one hour**, with a recommended 30 minutes per question. Question 1 contains two logic puzzles: the 'Dwarf speak' problem requiring deductive reasoning about truth-tellers and liars, and the 'Gaming' problem involving combinatorial game theory and winning strategy. Question 2 presents a linguistic pattern-recognition challenge in which candidates must identify a single error in twelve sentences translated into an unknown language.

The paper is distinctive in its format: no calculators, no reference materials, just pure reasoning under timed conditions. It suits candidates who enjoy abstract puzzles and can articulate their logical processes clearly. The emphasis on explanation and working is explicit throughout, with marks awarded for sensible approaches even when the final answer is incorrect.

## How this paper is organised

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The paper comprises **two mandatory questions**, each worth 25 marks, to be answered in a single hour. Candidates are advised to spend approximately 30 minutes on each question and are instructed to start each answer on a separate sheet.

Question 1 is divided into two parts: 'Dwarf speak' (12 marks total, split across three sub-questions) and 'Gaming' (13 marks). The Dwarf speak problem has a scaffolded structure with parts (a) and (b) worth 2 marks each, building up to part (c) worth 8 marks. The Gaming section is a single extended question requiring both identification of the winning player and explanation of the optimal strategy.

Question 2 is presented as a single task worth 25 marks: identifying and correcting one error in twelve sentences of an invented language. The question provides explicit hints to guide the approach, including confirmation that only one mistake exists and that it

involves replacing a single word. The paper explicitly states that marks are awarded for method and reasoning, not just correct answers.

## Topics covered

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- Propositional logic and self-referential statements (analysing statements about truth and falsehood)
- Deductive reasoning with constraints (working through logical implications systematically)
- Combinatorial game theory (identifying winning positions and optimal strategies in two-player games)
- Strategic thinking and backward induction (reasoning from the goal state to determine moves)
- Pattern recognition in structured data (identifying morphological and syntactic patterns)
- Comparative linguistic analysis (finding regularities across sentences in an unknown language)
- Error detection through systematic comparison (isolating inconsistencies in structured information)
- Mathematical proof and justification (articulating clear logical arguments)
- Problem-solving under time pressure (allocating time strategically between questions)
- Communication of reasoning (explaining method and working clearly in written form)

## How to use this paper for revision

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- Practise classic logic puzzles involving truth-tellers and liars, such as the Knights and Knaves problems, to build familiarity with self-referential statements and proof by contradiction.
- For game theory questions, always work backwards from the winning position to determine which moves are forced or favourable at each stage.
- When tackling the linguistic puzzle, create a systematic table or grid to track which word forms appear in which sentences, looking for morphological patterns such as suffixes or prefixes.
- Read the hints provided in Question 2 carefully before starting; they tell you there is exactly one error and it can be fixed with a single substitution, so do not overcomplicate your search.
- Show all working and reasoning explicitly, even for parts where you are uncertain. The mark scheme rewards evidence of sensible approaches, not just correct final answers.
- If stuck on one part of a question after 10-15 minutes, move on and return later. Both questions are worth equal marks, so do not let one dominate your time.
- For the Dwarf problem, start by considering extreme cases (Dwarf 10, then Dwarf 9) as the question structure suggests, rather than trying to solve all ten simultaneously.

## Common mistakes to avoid

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- In the Dwarf problem, failing to recognise that if Dwarf 10's statement were true, he would himself be one of the liars, creating a logical contradiction.
- Assuming the Game question requires trial and error rather than systematic backward reasoning from December 31 to identify the winning strategy.
- In the linguistic puzzle, trying to 'translate' the sentences into English rather than simply comparing patterns across the twelve sentences to spot the anomaly.
- Not writing down intermediate steps or reasoning, then losing marks even when the approach is sound. The examiners cannot credit work they cannot see.
- Spending too long perfecting one question and running out of time for the other, despite the instruction to move on after 30 minutes.
- Panicking when unable to solve part (c) of the Dwarf problem immediately, rather than using the scaffolding provided by parts (a) and (b) to build up the logic step by step.

## Exam technique

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Allocate your time strictly: aim for 30 minutes per question, moving on even if you have not completed the first. Both questions carry equal weight, so leaving one unfinished is wasteful. Start with whichever question you find more appealing, as confidence early on can improve performance throughout.

For Question 1, tackle the scaffolded Dwarf problem in order; parts (a) and (b) are designed to guide you towards part (c). Write out your reasoning in clear sentences, not just algebraic symbols. In the Gaming section, sketch a small diagram or tree showing a few moves to help visualise the strategy. For Question 2, begin by listing the words that appear multiple times and noting variations (e.g. ligna vs lignak), then look for the sentence where a pattern breaks down.

Remember that **showing your working is essential**. The mark scheme explicitly rewards sensible approaches even when the final answer is incorrect. If you are stuck, write down what you have tried and why, or what you would do next if you had more time. Partial credit is substantial on this paper. Finally, check the hints provided in Question 2 before diving in: they save time by narrowing your search.

## What to revise alongside this paper

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Before attempting this paper, ensure you are comfortable with **basic logical reasoning** including the concepts of necessary and sufficient conditions, contrapositive statements, and proof by contradiction. Familiarity with classic puzzles such as Knights and Knaves or the Liar Paradox will build intuition for the Dwarf problem. For the Gaming question, explore **Nim-type games and combinatorial game theory**, particularly the idea of winning and losing positions and how to identify them through backward reasoning.

For Question 2, no prior linguistic knowledge is required, but experience with **code-breaking or cryptogram puzzles** can be helpful, as the skills overlap: both involve spotting patterns and testing hypotheses systematically. More broadly, practise any problems that require you to extract structure from limited data, such as number sequences or visual pattern puzzles.

To progress beyond this paper, explore **formal logic and set theory**, which underpin the reasoning tested here. Books such as Raymond Smullyan's logic puzzle collections or introductory game theory texts (e.g. those covering Nim, Chomp, or Hackenbush) will deepen your understanding and prepare you for more advanced scholarship-level reasoning challenges.

## Key terms

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**Propositional logic, Self-reference, Contradiction, Truth value, Combinatorial game, Winning strategy, Backward induction, Optimal move, Morphology, Syntax, Pattern recognition, Deductive reasoning, Proof by contradiction, Game tree, Linguistic analysis**

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# Eton College King's Scholarship Examination 2023

## GENERAL II

(One and a half hours)

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

***You must answer both questions.***

*Each question is worth the same number of marks.*

*You need not answer the questions in the order set, but you must start each one on a separate piece of paper.*

*Spend about 45 minutes on each question.*

**Do not turn over until told to do so.**

**Question 1: START A NEW SHEET OF PAPER NOW**

*Below is an extract from Seamus Heaney's Nobel Lecture, 'Crediting Poetry', given on 7th December 1995 in Stockholm.*

1 I credit poetry for making this space-walk possible. I credit it immediately because of a  
 line I wrote fairly recently instructing myself (and whoever else might be listening) to  
 “walk on air against your better judgement”. But I credit it ultimately because poetry can  
 5 make an order as true to the impact of external reality and as sensitive to the inner laws  
 of the poet's being as the ripples that rippled in and rippled out across the water in that  
 scullery bucket fifty years ago. An order where we can at last grow up to that which we  
 stored up as we grew. An order which satisfies all that is appetitive in the intelligence  
 and prehensile in the affections. I credit poetry, in other words, both for being itself and  
 for being a help, for making possible a fluid and restorative relationship between the  
 10 mind's centre and its circumference, between the child gazing at the word “Stockholm”  
 on the face of the radio dial and the man facing the faces that he meets in Stockholm at  
 this most privileged moment. I credit it because credit is due to it, in our time and in all  
 13 time, for its truth to life, in every sense of that phrase.

...

15 In one of the poems best known to students in my generation, a poem which could be  
 said to have taken the nutrients of the symbolist movement and made them available in  
 capsule form, the American poet Archibald MacLeish affirmed that “A poem should be  
 equal to: / Not true.” As a defiant statement of poetry's gift for telling truth but telling it  
 slant, this is both cogent and corrective. Yet there are times when a deeper need enters,  
 20 when we want the poem to be not only pleurably right but compellingly wise, not only  
 a surprising variation played upon the world, but a re-tuning of the world itself. We want  
 the surprise to be transitive like the impatient thump which unexpectedly restores the  
 picture to the television set, or the electric shock which sets the fibrillating heart back to  
 its proper rhythm. We want what the woman wanted in the prison queue in Leningrad,  
 25 standing there blue with cold and whispering for fear, enduring the terror of Stalin's  
 regime and asking the poet Anna Akhmatova if she could describe it all, if her art could  
 be equal to it. And this is the want I too was experiencing in those far more protected  
 circumstances in Co. Wicklow when I wrote the lines I have just quoted, a need for  
 poetry that would merit the definition of it I gave a few moments ago, as an order “true  
 30 to the impact of external reality and ... sensitive to the inner laws of the poet's being.”

GENERAL II

(a) Read the extracts from Seamus Heaney's 'Crediting Poetry' on page 2.

(i) Heaney praises poetry for 'its truth to life, in every sense of that phrase' (line 13). What are the different senses of the phrase that Heaney explores?

[4]

(ii) Heaney repeatedly praises poetry as being a force of order. Why and how might a poem create such order?

[3]

(iii) Heaney quotes Archibald MacLeish's affirmation:

*A poem should be equal to:  
Not true*

Giving specific examples from the extract, discuss the idea that poetry aims to capture what is 'not true'.

[5]

(b) *There is fiction in the space between  
The lines on your page of memories  
Write it down but it doesn't mean  
You're not just telling stories*

(Tracy Chapman.)

To what extent do you agree that art can never completely capture reality?

[13]

[Total mark for Question 1: 25]

**Question 2: *START A NEW SHEET OF PAPER NOW***

Write a response, in whatever form seems appropriate, to ONE of the following. It is recommended that you write no more than 700 words.

*EITHER*

- (a) To what extent can studying the past teach us about the future, if at all?

*OR*

- (b) Can we make moral judgements about people from different times and places from our own? Why or why not?

*OR*

- (c) If you could get rid of all pain (mental and physical), would you? Why or why not?

[Total mark for Question 2: 25]

END OF PAPER

# Paper Notes: 13+ General Question Paper (13+ General Past Paper (2023))

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

## Overview

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This is **Eton College's King's Scholarship Examination 2023**, specifically the **General II** paper, designed to assess candidates applying for the prestigious **King's Scholarship** at Eton. The paper is intended for **13+ candidates** seeking entry to Year 9 and represents one of the most academically challenging entrance examinations in British independent education.

The paper comprises **two compulsory questions**, each worth equal marks, to be completed in **one and a half hours**. Question 1 centres on literary criticism and the philosophy of art, using an extract from **Seamus Heaney's Nobel Lecture** to explore the relationship between poetry, truth, and reality. Question 2 offers candidates a choice of three essay prompts covering historical understanding, moral philosophy, and the nature of human experience.

This examination tests sophisticated analytical writing, philosophical reasoning, and the ability to engage with abstract concepts at an advanced level. The paper rewards candidates who can synthesise ideas across disciplines, construct nuanced arguments, and demonstrate intellectual maturity beyond what is typically expected at this age. It is deliberately broad, assessing general intellectual capability rather than subject-specific knowledge.

## How this paper is organised

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The paper is divided into **two equally weighted questions**, with candidates instructed to spend approximately **45 minutes on each**. Each question must be started on a separate sheet of paper, and candidates are required to write their candidate number on every sheet used.

**Question 1** allocates **25 marks** and comprises two parts: section (a) contains three short-answer questions (worth 4, 3, and 5 marks respectively) based on close reading of Heaney's Nobel Lecture, whilst section (b) asks for an extended response (13 marks) to a quotation from Tracy Chapman about art and reality. The questions move from textual analysis to broader philosophical discussion.

**Question 2** also carries **25 marks** and offers candidates a choice of three essay prompts, each requiring a response in 'whatever form seems appropriate'. The recommended word limit is **700 words**. The three options address the value of studying

history, the possibility of cross-cultural moral judgement, and the desirability of eliminating all pain from human experience.

## Topics covered

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- Close reading and textual analysis of literary non-fiction (specifically Seamus Heaney's Nobel Prize acceptance speech)
- The philosophy of poetry and art, including the tension between truth and artistic representation
- Literary criticism and the interpretation of metaphor, particularly Heaney's concept of poetry as 'order'
- The relationship between art and reality, exploring whether creative works can or should capture external truth
- Extended argumentative essay writing on abstract philosophical topics
- The uses and limitations of historical knowledge as a guide to future understanding
- Moral philosophy and cultural relativism, particularly whether ethical standards transcend time and place
- The philosophy of suffering and its role in human experience and personal development
- Analytical writing that integrates quotations and specific textual evidence to support claims
- Constructing balanced arguments that acknowledge complexity and counterarguments in philosophical debates

## How to use this paper for revision

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- Practise reading complex literary prose under timed conditions, focusing on extracting multiple layers of meaning from dense passages like Heaney's Nobel Lecture.
- Develop a vocabulary for discussing abstract concepts in poetry and art. Familiarise yourself with terms like 'symbolism', 'metaphor', 'aesthetic truth', and 'representation'.
- Read extracts from Nobel Prize speeches, acceptance addresses, and other reflective essays by writers and artists to understand the genre's conventions.
- Prepare for philosophical essay questions by considering multiple perspectives on each topic. Practise outlining arguments for and against a position before writing.
- Study examples of different essay structures (linear argument, dialectical, problem-solution) and decide which form suits each prompt in Question 2.
- Read widely in moral philosophy, history of ideas, and political thought. Familiarity with thinkers like Mill, Kant, or Aristotle can strengthen your essays.
- Time yourself writing 700-word essays on abstract topics to develop pacing and the ability to construct a complete argument within space constraints.

## Common mistakes to avoid

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- In Question 1(a)(i), listing different meanings of 'truth to life' without grounding each interpretation in specific evidence from Heaney's text.
- Misunderstanding MacLeish's paradox 'equal to: Not true' by treating it as a simple statement that poetry is false, rather than exploring its nuanced claim about artistic truth.
- Writing a superficial response to Question 1(b) that simply agrees or disagrees with Chapman's quotation without exploring the philosophical complexity of representation.
- In Question 2, choosing a prompt based on initial appeal rather than considering which topic allows you to demonstrate the most sophisticated thinking.
- Producing generic, ungrounded essays in Question 2 that lack specific examples from history, literature, or contemporary life to illustrate abstract claims.
- Rushing through Question 1(a) to save time for the longer responses, when these foundational marks require precision and textual awareness.

## Exam technique

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Begin by reading both questions carefully and deciding which Question 2 prompt you will answer. This mental preparation allows your subconscious to work on ideas whilst you tackle Question 1. Allocate your time strictly: **45 minutes per question** is essential to complete both to a high standard.

For **Question 1(a)**, read Heaney's extract at least twice before attempting any answers. Underline or note key phrases that relate to each sub-question. Your answers must reference the text directly; vague responses lose marks. In part (b), spend five minutes planning your argument's structure before writing. A clear position supported by varied examples (from literature, visual arts, music, or film) will score more highly than a rambling exploration.

In **Question 2**, select the prompt that allows you to deploy your best examples and most nuanced thinking. Spend ten minutes planning your essay's argument and structure. Consider counterarguments and how you will address them. The instruction to write 'in whatever form seems appropriate' offers flexibility, but most candidates will find a well-structured argumentative essay the safest approach. Conclude decisively rather than trailing off into uncertainty.

## What to revise alongside this paper

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Students preparing for this examination should broaden their reading beyond set texts to include **essays, speeches, and non-fiction prose** by major literary figures.

Familiarising yourself with the work of poets who write about poetry (such as T. S. Eliot's critical essays, W. H. Auden's lectures, or Derek Walcott's Nobel address) will deepen your understanding of the aesthetic questions raised in Question 1.

The philosophical dimensions of Question 2 benefit from wider study in **ethics, political philosophy, and the philosophy of history**. Consider reading accessible introductions to moral theory (utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics) and thinking about how these frameworks apply to real historical and contemporary dilemmas. Understanding concepts like cultural relativism, moral universalism, and the problem of suffering will strengthen your responses.

Practise analysing **abstract quotations** from poets, philosophers, and songwriters. The ability to unpack a dense or paradoxical statement, as required with the Tracy Chapman lyric in Question 1(b), is a skill transferable across humanities subjects and appears frequently in Oxbridge interviews and university entrance examinations.

## Key terms

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**Poetry, Symbolism, Metaphor, Aesthetic truth, Representation, Literary criticism, Nobel Lecture, Archibald MacLeish, Anna Akhmatova, Moral relativism, Cultural context, Historical understanding, Philosophical essay, Argumentative structure, Textual analysis**

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