

13+ PAST PAPER PACK

Oundle School 13+ English 2022

Complete Past Paper Pack

CONTENTS

01 Question Paper

Oundle School 13+ English. Work through this paper first.

Includes Paper Notes: overview, topics, revision tips, common mistakes.

02 Question Paper

Oundle School 13+ English. Work through this paper first.

Includes Paper Notes: overview, topics, revision tips, common mistakes.

03 Question Paper

Oundle School 13+ English. Work through this paper first.

Includes Paper Notes: overview, topics, revision tips, common mistakes.

04 Question Paper

Oundle School 13+ English. Work through this paper first.

Includes Paper Notes: overview, topics, revision tips, common mistakes.

PRACTISE THE REAL THING

Download more free 13+ past papers at [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk)



OUNDLE

School

EXAMINATION PAPER
Junior Entry 2022

English

Time allowed: 1 hour

Name: _____

Instructions

- Dictionaries are not allowed.
- Answer on lined paper. Write your name clearly at the top of each sheet of paper that you use.
- Answer ALL the questions in Section A. Choose ONE question from Section B.
- You are expected to write clearly and accurately throughout each of your answers. You should leave some time towards the end of the examination to check your work carefully.
- The maximum number of marks for this paper is 60.

Section A : Response to a Passage

You should spend 35 minutes on this section.

Read the following passage taken from "Avalanche!" by A Rutgers van der Loeff and answer the questions which follow.

Read the following passage taken from "Avalanche!" by A Rutgers van der Loeff and answer the questions which follow.

"The whole upper storey must have been ripped off and smashed," Antti heard someone say. "Anyone sleeping downstairs will have more chance of getting out alive."

5 What Antti had heard was true. Werner, who had been sleeping on the ground floor of the strong old house, was still alive. He crawled round among the wreckage like an ant that has lost its way, hardly knowing which way up he was, but pushing forward, driven by the blind urge for self-preservation, in the hope of finding the light.

10 He had been waked by a single crash and the hissing of something like a thunderbolt that whizzed past, singeing everything on its way. The noise of the crash seemed to consist of every kind of sound and to end in a shuddering jolt like the explosion of some mysterious firework, invisible in the blackness of the night. The whole thing seemed so unreal that at first he was not even frightened. He remembered only a feeling of immense surprise. Then the house began to tremble. And suddenly fear gripped him. The House shuddered and jerked and cracked as though it were being squeezed in some gigantic fist. Werner could not utter a sound. In a flash he thought of his father and mother asleep upstairs, but he
15 could not move or call out. While the house was being crushed together with deafening cracks and rendings he lay in bed paralysed with fear. It all happened so quickly. The room began to sway, the walls caved in and split, the floor itself seemed to hump itself up in waves, and then suddenly everything was dark and still. There was no sign of the dim
20 light from the little opening in the stove which his mother always left uncovered and which always cast a faint reflection through the open door and over the threshold of his little room. There was no more misty light from the night outside through the crack in the shutters. Not even a creak or a sigh from the broken woodwork. Only the silence and the blackness.

The Questions

- 1) What opinion does the speaker give in lines 1-2 which shows that a dreadful event has just taken place? (2 marks)
- 2) With what is Werner compared in lines 4-6 and why is this simile appropriate? (4 marks)
- 3) Explain what is meant by “ the blind urge for self preservation” Line 6. What does this reveal about Werner? (3 marks)
- 4) Looking at lines 7-10 find and explain the effects of **three** onomatopoeic words. (3 marks)
- 5) Why is Werner not initially frightened and what happens to change his feelings? (4 marks)
- 6) How is language used in lines 11-13 (Then the house...fist.) to capture the experience of an avalanche? (You might think about personification, imagery, strong verbs and sentencing but feel free to comment on what you notice.) (6 marks)
- 7) Explain the meaning of the **highlighted** phrases as they have been used in the passage
 - a) a shuddering jolt like the explosion of some mysterious firework
 - b) paralysed with fear
 - c) The room began to sway
 - d) the floor itself seemed to hump itself up in waves(8 marks)
- 8) Describe the two comforting things which Werner misses seeing when everything becomes dark and still ? (5 marks)

Total Marks for section A = 35

Turn Over for Section B

Section B Creative Writing

You should have 25 minutes left for this section.

Start this question on a fresh sheet of paper.

Write your name at the top.

Choose **one** option:

Either

1) Imagine that you are the wind. Write about what you do.

Or

2) Describe what you might see if you went out in the morning following a violent stormy night.

Or

3) Use the following picture as the inspiration for your own writing.



Total Marks for section B = 25

Paper Notes: 13+ English Question Paper (13+ English Past Paper (2022))

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

Overview

This is **Oundle School's Junior Entry 2022 English paper**, designed for candidates sitting the **13+ entrance examination** for Year 9 entry. The paper carries **60 marks** and must be completed within **one hour**. It tests both close reading skills through a comprehension exercise and creative writing ability through a choice of imaginative tasks.

The comprehension passage is an extract from **"Avalanche!"** by **A Rutgers van der Loeff**, describing the terrifying experience of a boy named Werner trapped in the wreckage of his home after a natural disaster. Students must demonstrate their ability to analyse language choices, interpret figurative language, explain key phrases, and retrieve specific details. The questions probe understanding of **simile, personification, onomatopoeia**, and the emotional journey of the protagonist.

The creative writing section offers three prompts of varying styles: personification of the wind, descriptive writing about storm damage, or a response to a black-and-white photograph of ancient standing stones. This breadth allows candidates to showcase their strengths, whether in first-person narrative, observational description, or atmospheric scene-setting. The paper suits students preparing for independent or grammar school entry at age 13.

How this paper is organised

The paper is divided into two distinct sections with separate time allocations. **Section A (Response to a Passage)** is worth **35 marks** and students are advised to spend **35 minutes** on it. This section contains **eight comprehension questions** ranging from 2 to 8 marks each, all based on the avalanche passage. Questions progress from straightforward retrieval to more demanding analysis of language techniques and the effects of specific phrases.

Section B (Creative Writing) carries **25 marks** and students should reserve **25 minutes** for it. Candidates must choose **one option** from three creative writing prompts and begin their response on a fresh sheet of paper. The prompts vary in approach but all relate loosely to the theme of natural forces and their aftermath.

Students must answer on lined paper throughout, writing their name clearly at the top of each sheet. Dictionaries are not permitted. The instructions emphasise the

importance of clear, accurate writing and advise students to save time at the end for careful proofreading.

Topics covered

- Close reading and comprehension of narrative fiction describing a disaster scenario
- Identification and explanation of onomatopoeic words and their effects (crash, hissing, whizzed)
- Analysis of simile and its appropriateness (Werner compared to an ant that has lost its way)
- Understanding figurative expressions and phrases in context (blind urge for self-preservation, paralysed with fear, shuddering jolt)
- Analysis of personification and vivid verb choices in descriptive prose (house shuddered, jerked, cracked)
- Interpretation of a character's emotional state and how feelings change within a passage
- Retrieval of specific sensory details from the text (comforting lights Werner misses in the darkness)
- Creative writing using personification (writing from the perspective of the wind)
- Descriptive writing based on observation (aftermath of a violent storm)
- Imaginative writing inspired by a visual stimulus (photograph of standing stones)

How to use this paper for revision

- Practise reading extracts from classic and modern children's novels that deal with danger, survival, or heightened emotion, paying close attention to how authors build tension through sentence structure and word choice.
- Revise the technical terms for literary devices, especially **simile**, **metaphor**, **personification**, **onomatopoeia**, and **imagery**, and practise identifying them quickly in unfamiliar passages.
- When answering questions about figurative language, always explain both what the phrase means and what effect it creates, rather than simply defining the technique used.
- For questions with higher mark allocations, such as the 6-mark language analysis in Question 6, plan to make multiple developed points rather than a single observation.
- Read the creative writing prompts carefully and select the one that excites you most or that you can visualise most clearly, as enthusiasm will strengthen your writing.
- Before starting your creative piece, spend two minutes jotting down vocabulary or phrases linked to the theme (wind, storm, ancient stones) so you can draw on varied language under time pressure.
- Leave at least five minutes at the end to re-read both your comprehension answers and your creative piece, checking for spelling errors, missing punctuation, and unclear phrasing.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Identifying a literary device without explaining its effect or relevance, which wastes the opportunity to gain full marks on analysis questions.
- Copying out large chunks of the passage in comprehension answers instead of selecting precise quotations and commenting on them in your own words.
- Writing about what happens in the passage rather than analysing how language is used, especially in Question 6 where the focus must be on technique.
- Spending too long on early questions and then rushing the higher-mark questions at the end of Section A, where more detailed responses are required.
- Choosing a creative writing prompt impulsively without considering which one you can sustain for a full 25 minutes or which suits your strengths.
- Forgetting to paragraph in the creative writing section, which makes the piece harder to read and gives an impression of disorganised thought.

Exam technique

Begin by skimming the entire paper to understand what is expected in each section. Read the comprehension passage twice before attempting any questions: once to grasp the story, and a second time to notice language choices and techniques. Answer the **Section A questions in order**, as they generally increase in difficulty and mark value. For lower-mark questions (2 or 3 marks), a concise answer with a brief quotation is usually sufficient. For higher-mark questions, especially Question 6 worth 6 marks, aim for at least three distinct points with embedded quotations and clear explanation of effects.

In **Section B**, take two minutes to choose your creative writing prompt and plan your structure or key ideas. If you choose the wind personification, decide on a consistent tone and point of view. If you choose the storm aftermath, plan a logical progression through a setting. If you choose the photograph, think about mood and atmosphere. Aim to write at least two sides of lined paper, but prioritise quality of description, varied sentence structures, and careful punctuation over sheer length.

Reserve the final five minutes to proofread. Check that you have answered all eight comprehension questions, that quotations are accurately copied, and that your creative piece has a clear structure with paragraphs. Correct any obvious spelling or grammatical errors, as the instructions emphasise the importance of writing clearly and accurately.

What to revise alongside this paper

Students preparing for this paper should revise the full range of **figurative language techniques**, including metaphor, extended metaphor, alliteration, and assonance, as questions about language effects can draw on any of these. Practise close reading of extracts from novels that feature vivid description of extreme weather, natural disasters, or survival scenarios, such as works by Michael Morpurgo, Michelle Paver, or classic adventure fiction. Familiarity with these texts will build confidence in analysing tone and emotional arc.

For creative writing, study how professional writers use **personification** and **sensory detail** to bring settings and natural forces to life. Read poetry about wind, storms, or ancient landscapes (Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, or Gillian Clarke) to see how rhythm and word choice create mood. Practise writing descriptions that appeal to all five senses, not just sight, and experiment with varying sentence length to control pace and emphasis.

Broader skills to consolidate include embedding quotations smoothly into analytical sentences, structuring paragraphs with clear topic sentences, and proofreading for

common errors such as comma splices, sentence fragments, and confused homophones. Timed practice under exam conditions will help you judge how much detail to include in answers of different mark values.

Key terms

Simile, Personification, Onomatopoeia, Imagery, Figurative language, Metaphor, Inference, Textual evidence, Quotation, Narrative voice, Atmosphere, Tension, Descriptive writing, Creative writing, Language analysis

For more free 11+ practice papers, past papers and online practice tests, visit [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk).



OUNDLE

School

EXAMINATION PAPER
Non Common Entrance 2022
Third Form entry

English

Time allowed: 1 hour

Name: _____

Instructions

- Dictionaries are not allowed.
- Answer on lined paper. Write your name clearly at the top of each sheet of paper that you use.
- Answer **ALL** the questions in **Section A**. Choose **ONE** question from **Section B**. You should divide your time equally between both sections.
- You are expected to write clearly and accurately throughout each of your answers. You should leave some time towards the end of the examination to check your work carefully.
- The maximum number of marks for this paper is 50.

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

You should spend 30 minutes on this section

Waris is a young girl, living with her family in the desert in Somalia, in Africa. She decides to run away because her father arranges a marriage for her with a very old man. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow. Leave yourself enough time to answer the last question in full detail.

A slight sound awoke me, and when I opened my eyes, I was staring into the face of a lion. Riveted awake, my eyes stretched wide – very wide – as if to expand enough to contain the animal in front of me. I tried to stand up, but I hadn't eaten for several days, so my weak legs wobbled and folded beneath me. Collapsing, I slumped back against the tree where I had been resting, sheltered from the African desert sun that becomes so merciless at noon. I quietly leaned my head back, closed my eyes, and felt the rough bark of the tree pressing into my skull. The lion was so near I could smell his musty scent in the hot air. I spoke to God: 'It's the end for me, my God. Please take me now.'

My long journey across the desert had come to an end. I had no protection, no weapon. Nor the strength to run. I knew I couldn't beat the lion up the tree, because with their strong claws, lions are excellent climbers. By the time I got half way up – BOOM – one swipe and I'd be gone. Without any fear, I opened my eyes again and said to the lion, 'Come and get me. I'm ready for you.'

He was a beautiful male with a mane of golden hair and a long tail switching back and forth to flick the flies away. He was five or six years old, young and healthy. I knew he could crush me instantly; he was the king. All my life I'd watched those paws take down wildebeest and zebras weighing hundreds of pounds more than me.

The lion stared at me and slowly blinked his honey-coloured eyes. My brown eyes stared back, locked on his. 'Go on. Take me now.' He looked at me again, then looked away. He licked his lips and sat down on his haunches. Then the lion rose and paced back and forth in front of me elegantly. Finally, he turned ...

.....

This nightmare journey began because I was running away from my father. I was about thirteen at the time and living with my family in the Somalian desert, when my father announced that he had arranged my marriage to an old man. While my father and the rest of the family were still sleeping, my mother woke me and said, 'Go now.' Immediately I was jolted awake, then flooded with the sick sensation of what I had to do.

I shivered and walked away from our hut with my mother. In the gloomy light I struggled to see her face, trying to memorise its features, because I wouldn't see that face again for a long time. I had planned to be strong, but instead choked on my tears and hugged her hard. 'Go – go before he wakes up,' she said softly into my ear. I felt her arms tighten around me. 'You just be very careful. Careful!' I ran off into the black desert night.

By midday I'd travelled deep into the red sand, and deep into my own thoughts. Where on earth was I going? The landscape stretched on to eternity,

the sand broken only by a thorn tree. I could see for miles and miles. Hungry, thirsty and tired, I slowed down and walked. What was going to happen next?

As I pondered this question, I thought I heard a voice: 'W-A-R-I-S ... W-A-R-I-S ...' My father was calling me! I was not hearing things; it was my father, and he was getting closer. He'd tracked me down by following my footprints through the sand. Suddenly I looked back and saw him coming over the hill behind me. He'd spotted me too. Terrified I ran faster. And faster. It was as if we were surfing waves of sand; I flew up one hill and he glided down the one behind me. On and on we continued for hours. 40 45

My heart pounding, finally I stopped, hiding behind a bush, and looked around. Nothing. I listened closely. No sound. Papa, I reasoned, had turned around to try and make it back home, because now the sun was setting. He'd have to run back through the darkness, listening for the night-time sounds of our family, tracing his path by the voices of children screaming, laughing, the animal noises of herds mooing, bleating. The wind carries sounds great distances across the desert, so these noises acted as a lighthouse when we were lost in the night. 50

I kept running until the sun set, the light was gone, and the night was so black I couldn't see. In the morning, the sun burning my face woke me. I got up and continued to run; for days I managed to keep it up. How many days? I'm not sure. All I know is that for me, there was no time; there was only hunger, thirst, fear, pain. At midday when the sun was at its hottest, I would sit under a tree and rest. 55

It was during one of these rests that I fell asleep and the lion woke me ... By this point I no longer cared about my freedom; I just wanted to go back home to Mama. 60

1. Look again at lines 1-23. How does the writer show how dangerous the lion could be in these lines? Use quotations to support your answer. [4 marks]
2. Using your own words, what do we learn about the writer's mother? [3 marks]
3. Look again at lines 40-53. How does the writer create a vivid impression of what happens here? [4 marks]
4. Looking at the passage as a whole, what do we learn about the character of the writer? [4 marks]
5. How does the writer create tension in the passage? Refer closely to the text to support your answer. [10 marks]

[Total: 25 marks]

TURN OVER

SECTION B: COMPREHENSION

You should spend 30 minutes on this section

Answer ONE of the following questions. You are reminded of the importance of clear and accurate written English and of careful presentation in your answer. All questions carry equal marks.

1. Describe an occasion in your life when you felt afraid. Write in a way that creates a clear picture in the reader's mind of what happened and how you felt. [25 marks]

OR

2. 'I listened closely. No sound.' Write a story that begins with these words. [25 marks]

OR

3. 'Wild animals are majestic and deserve our respect.' Use this title as the basis for EITHER:

(a) an article in a wildlife magazine

OR

(b) a letter to a newspaper where you argue for more protection for the natural world.

[25 marks]

Paper Notes: 13+ English Question Paper (13+ English Past Paper (2022))

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

Overview

This is **Oundle School's 13+ English entrance examination** from **2022**, designed for candidates applying for Third Form entry (Year 9). The paper is a one-hour assessment carrying **50 marks in total**, divided equally between two sections: a comprehension exercise based on a prose extract, and a creative or argumentative writing task.

Section A presents an extract from a first-person narrative about Waris, a 13-year-old Somali girl fleeing an arranged marriage and encountering a lion in the desert. Candidates must answer **five comprehension questions** worth 25 marks, ranging from close textual analysis to broader evaluation of the writer's technique. The questions test inference, language analysis, characterisation, and the ability to write about how tension is created.

Section B offers **three creative or transactional writing options**, also worth 25 marks. Candidates choose between writing a personal narrative about fear, a story opening with a given prompt, or an article or letter arguing for wildlife protection. The paper suits students transitioning from Key Stage 3 into the independent school environment, assessing both analytical reading skills and the ability to write with flair and accuracy under timed conditions.

How this paper is organised

The paper is divided into two equal sections, **30 minutes per section**, with candidates advised to divide their time accordingly. **Section A: Comprehension** is compulsory and contains five questions on a single prose passage. The marks allocated rise progressively: the first four questions are worth 3, 4, 4, and 4 marks respectively, while the final question (on how the writer creates tension) carries **10 marks** and requires sustained, detailed analysis.

Section B: Composition offers three options, each worth **25 marks**. Candidates select one from: a descriptive personal narrative, a story opening with a specified sentence, or a choice between an article for a wildlife magazine or a letter to a newspaper. All three options emphasise the importance of clear, accurate written English and careful presentation.

The rubric specifies that dictionaries are not allowed and that answers should be written on lined paper with the candidate's name clearly marked. Students are

reminded to leave time at the end to check their work, reinforcing the expectation of accuracy and the need for proofreading under exam conditions.

Topics covered

- Close reading and textual analysis of first-person narrative prose
- Inference and deduction from a literary passage set in a non-Western context
- Identifying and explaining the writer's use of language to convey danger and tension
- Analysing characterisation and writer's intention across an extended extract
- Evaluating how a writer creates mood, atmosphere, and suspense through structure, language choices, and pacing
- Personal narrative writing with descriptive detail and emotional authenticity
- Creative story writing from a given opening sentence
- Transactional writing: formal articles and persuasive letters on environmental or ethical topics
- Understanding the conventions of different text types (magazine article vs newspaper letter)
- Accurate spelling, grammar, punctuation, and presentation under timed conditions

How to use this paper for revision

- Practise reading unseen prose extracts in timed conditions and annotating them quickly for language features, narrative voice, and structural techniques.
- When answering comprehension questions, always support your points with short, embedded quotations rather than lengthy copied extracts.
- For the 10-mark tension question, plan to write at least three substantial paragraphs covering different methods (language, structure, pacing, etc.).
- In Section B, spend five minutes planning your creative or transactional piece so it has a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- If you choose the letter or article option, remember to include appropriate conventions: a salutation and sign-off for the letter, a headline and engaging opening for the article.
- Reserve at least five minutes at the end of the hour to proofread your work for spelling, punctuation, and sentence clarity.
- Read widely across fiction and non-fiction to build familiarity with different narrative voices, persuasive techniques, and descriptive styles.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Copying out large chunks of the passage instead of selecting short, relevant quotations to embed in your analysis.
- In Question 5, simply listing techniques (simile, metaphor) without explaining how they create tension or affect the reader.
- Paraphrasing the text in your own words when a question explicitly asks you to use your own words, but then failing to demonstrate genuine understanding.
- Rushing into Section B without planning, resulting in a story or article that meanders or lacks a clear structure.
- Neglecting to match the tone and conventions of the chosen writing format in Section B (e.g. writing a chatty letter when a formal register is required).
- Running out of time because you spent too long on the early comprehension questions and left insufficient time for the 10-mark question or the composition.

Exam technique

Allocate **30 minutes per section** as instructed, and stick to this division strictly. In Section A, read the passage twice before attempting the questions: once for overall understanding, and again while annotating for key moments, language features, and structural shifts. Answer Questions 1 to 4 relatively briskly (aim for around 15 minutes total), leaving a full 10 to 12 minutes for Question 5, which carries the most weight and demands a structured, detailed response with multiple examples.

In Section B, choose the question that plays to your strengths. If you excel at descriptive writing, opt for Question 1; if you enjoy narrative control and suspense, choose Question 2; if you prefer argument and transactional writing, select Question 3. Spend five minutes planning: sketch an outline, decide on your opening and conclusion, and list key points or images. Write clearly and leave space between lines if possible so you can insert corrections neatly.

Save the final five minutes of the exam to proofread both sections carefully. Check for common errors (missing apostrophes, sentence fragments, unclear pronouns) and ensure your handwriting is legible throughout. A polished, accurate script demonstrates the care and precision Oundle's examiners expect at 13+ entry level.

What to revise alongside this paper

Students preparing for this paper should revise narrative perspective and voice, particularly first-person narration and how it shapes reader sympathy and engagement. Techniques for building tension (short sentences, cliffhangers, sensory detail, internal

monologue) are central to both the comprehension and the creative writing tasks, so study examples from high-quality fiction or film adaptations.

Practise writing under timed conditions across different genres: personal recounts, short stories, formal letters, and articles. Familiarise yourself with the conventions of each (e.g. salutations, paragraph structure, rhetorical questions). Review spelling and punctuation rules, especially apostrophes, comma usage, and sentence boundaries, as accuracy is explicitly rewarded.

To extend your skills further, read widely in contemporary and classic fiction, particularly coming-of-age narratives and survival stories. Study how published writers vary sentence length and employ imagery to control pacing and emotion. This broader reading will deepen your analytical vocabulary and enrich your own creative voice.

Key terms

First-person narrative, Tension, Inference, Characterisation, Language analysis, Structure, Descriptive writing, Personal narrative, Creative writing, Transactional writing, Persuasive techniques, Register and tone, Embedded quotation, Atmosphere and mood, Proofreading

For more free 11+ practice papers, past papers and online practice tests, visit [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk).



OUNDLE

School

EXAMINATION PAPER
Non Common Entrance 2022
Fourth Form entry

English

Time allowed: 1 hour

Name: _____

Instructions

- Dictionaries are not allowed.
- Answer on lined paper. Write your name clearly at the top of each sheet of paper that you use.
- Answer **ALL** the questions in **Section A**. Choose **ONE** question from **Section B**. You should divide your time equally between both sections.
- You are expected to write clearly and accurately throughout each of your answers. You should leave some time towards the end of the examination to check your work carefully.
- The maximum number of marks for this paper is 50.

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

You should spend 30 minutes on this section

Read Anthony Thwaite's poem 'The Bonfire' and then answer the questions that follow. Leave yourself enough time to answer the last question in full detail.

The Bonfire

Day by day, day after day, we fed it
With straw, mown grass, shavings, shaken weeds,
The huge flat leaves of umbrella plants, old spoil
Left by the builders, combustible; yet it
Coughed fitfully at the touch of a match, 5
Flared briefly, spat flame through a few dry seeds
Like a chain of fireworks, then slumped back to the soil
Smouldering and smoky, leaving us to watch

Only a heavy grey mantle without fire.
This glum construction seemed choked at heart, 10
The coils of newspaper burrowed into its hulk
Led our small flames into the middle of nowhere,
Never touching its centre, sodden with rot.
Ritual petrol sprinklings wouldn't make it start
But swerved and vanished over its squat brown bulk, 15
Still heavily sullen, grimly determined not

To do away with itself. A whiff of smoke
Hung over it as over a volcano.
Until one night, late, when we heard outside
A crackling roar, and saw the far field look 20
Like a Gehenna* claiming its due dead.
The beacon beckoned, fierily aglow
With days of waiting, hiding deep inside
Its bided time, ravenous to be fed.

Anthony Thwaite (1930-2021)

* *Gehenna*: a fiery Biblical hell

1. Unable to light the bonfire, the poet describes how it 'slumped back to the soil / Smouldering and smoky' (lines 7-8). How effective do you consider this description to be? [3 marks]
2. Look closely at the second stanza. Give two examples of how the poet uses metaphor here and comment on the effects created by each one. [4 marks]
3. Comment on the poet's use of structure in this poem. [6 marks]
4. The poet compares the bonfire to 'Gehenna', a fiery Biblical hell (line 21). Why do you think he does this? [4 marks]
5. What do you consider the overall meaning of this poem to be? Is it simply about a bonfire or is the poet exploring other ideas? [8 marks]

[Total: 25 marks]

SECTION B: COMPREHENSION

You should spend 30 minutes on this section

Answer ONE of the following questions. You are reminded of the importance of clear and accurate written English and of careful presentation in your answer. All questions carry equal marks.

1. Describe a raging fire in such a way that creates a vivid picture in the reader's mind. Do not attempt to write a poem. [25 marks]

OR

2. 'The beacon beckoned.' Write a story that begins with these words. [25 marks]

OR

3. 'We all get angry.' Use this title as the basis for EITHER:

(a) an article in a teenage magazine offering advice about how to deal with anger

OR

(b) a speech about anger to present to your school assembly.

[25 marks]

END OF PAPER

Paper Notes: 13+ English Question Paper (13+ English Past Paper (2022))

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

Overview

This is **Oundle School's 2022 Non-Common Entrance English examination** for candidates applying for **Fourth Form entry** (Year 9, age 13+). The paper is a one-hour examination worth **50 marks**, divided equally between two sections that test different aspects of English: close reading and analysis of poetry, and creative or persuasive writing.

Section A centres on a poem by **Anthony Thwaite** titled 'The Bonfire', requiring students to analyse language, metaphor, structure, and deeper meaning. The five questions range from **3 to 8 marks**, with the final question inviting interpretive thinking about whether the poem carries symbolic or thematic weight beyond its literal subject. This section should take 30 minutes.

Section B offers three writing tasks of equal value (25 marks each): a descriptive piece about fire, a narrative opening with 'The beacon beckoned', or a choice between an article for a teenage magazine or an assembly speech on anger. Students choose one option and are reminded that accuracy, clarity, and presentation matter as much as creativity. The paper suits pupils who have worked through Key Stage 3 English and are comfortable with both literary analysis and independent writing under timed conditions.

How this paper is organised

The paper is organised into **two equal sections**, each allocated 30 minutes and worth 25 marks. Candidates must answer all questions in Section A and select one question from Section B.

Section A: Comprehension contains five questions on Anthony Thwaite's poem 'The Bonfire'. Marks increase progressively from 3 marks for Question 1 (evaluating a single descriptive phrase) through to 8 marks for Question 5, which asks for an interpretation of the poem's overall meaning and whether it extends beyond its literal subject. Questions 2 and 4 are worth 4 marks each, while Question 3, on poetic structure, carries 6 marks. The rubric advises leaving enough time for the final question.

Section B: Creative and Persuasive Writing offers three tasks, all equally weighted at 25 marks. Question 1 asks for vivid descriptive prose about fire; Question 2 requires a story beginning with 'The beacon beckoned'; Question 3 provides a choice between

writing a magazine article or a speech about anger. The instructions emphasise the importance of clear, accurate written English and careful presentation throughout.

Topics covered

- Close reading and analysis of contemporary 20th-century poetry, specifically Anthony Thwaite's narrative and symbolic verse
- Evaluating the effectiveness of descriptive language and personification in poetic imagery
- Identifying and commenting on metaphor and extended metaphorical language within a stanza
- Analysing poetic structure, including stanza form, line breaks, rhythm, and the relationship between form and content
- Interpreting symbolic and thematic meaning: distinguishing literal description from deeper exploration of ideas such as patience, transformation, or latent power
- Descriptive writing: creating vivid sensory imagery in prose to evoke a scene (fire) for the reader
- Narrative writing: constructing an engaging story from a given opening line with attention to plot, character, and atmosphere
- Persuasive and transactional writing: crafting either a magazine article or a speech with appropriate register, structure, and rhetorical techniques
- Writing accuracy: spelling, punctuation, grammar, and presentation under timed examination conditions

How to use this paper for revision

- Practise annotating poems under time pressure, looking for imagery, metaphor, personification, and structural features such as stanza breaks, enjambment, and rhythm. Aim to spend no more than five minutes per short answer in Section A.
- When writing about metaphor or descriptive language, always quote briefly and precisely, then explain the effect on the reader or the idea being conveyed. Avoid simply identifying techniques without commenting on their impact.
- For the 8-mark interpretive question, plan a short answer that considers both surface meaning and deeper themes. Use evidence from across the poem to support your interpretation, and acknowledge that poetry can be read in more than one way.
- In Section B, spend five minutes planning your chosen writing task before you begin. Sketch a quick structure or list of key points so your answer stays focused and coherent under time pressure.
- Read examples of descriptive, narrative, and persuasive writing in different registers. Notice how professional writers vary sentence length, use figurative language, and match tone to audience.
- Leave five minutes at the end of the exam to check spelling, punctuation, and clarity. Oundle School explicitly reminds candidates that accuracy and presentation contribute to marks in both sections.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Spending too long on early, lower-mark questions in Section A and running out of time for the 8-mark interpretive question, which requires the most developed answer and evidence.
- Identifying poetic techniques (metaphor, personification, alliteration) without explaining their effect or relevance, which earns no marks for analysis.
- Ignoring the instruction 'Do not attempt to write a poem' in Section B, Question 1, and submitting verse instead of vivid descriptive prose.
- Writing a story in Section B that does not begin with the exact words given ('The beacon beckoned'), which fails to meet the task requirement.
- Choosing the magazine article or speech option in Section B, Question 3, but using an inappropriate tone or forgetting the conventions of the chosen format (for example, omitting a greeting in a speech or failing to address a teenage audience in the article).

Exam technique

Start by reading the poem carefully at least twice before attempting any question. Underline or annotate key words, images, and structural features as you read. This preparation will save time when answering specific questions and help you see patterns across the whole text.

In Section A, answer the questions in order but keep an eye on the mark allocation. Questions worth 3 or 4 marks need only a few well-chosen points; the 6-mark and 8-mark questions require more development, evidence, and possibly multiple ideas. Write in continuous prose, not bullet points, and always support your comments with brief quotations from the poem.

For Section B, read all three options before choosing. Pick the task that plays to your strengths, whether that is descriptive writing, storytelling, or persuasive argument. Spend about five minutes planning, 20 minutes writing, and five minutes checking. Remember that clarity, accurate spelling and punctuation, and thoughtful presentation count towards your final mark, so resist the temptation to rush the checking phase.

What to revise alongside this paper

Alongside this paper, revise the full range of **poetic techniques** commonly tested at 13+: simile, alliteration, assonance, rhythm, and rhyme scheme, as well as how poets use line breaks and stanza form to shape meaning. Practise writing about the effects of language choices rather than simply naming them.

Broaden your reading of 20th and 21st-century poetry to include poets who write about nature, memory, and transformation. Look at how different poets handle similar subjects and experiment with structure. This will help you write more confidently about symbolic or thematic meaning in unseen poems.

Work on timed writing tasks in different formats: descriptions, stories, articles, and speeches. Study model answers to understand how to match tone and structure to audience and purpose. Strengthen your accuracy by keeping a list of words you commonly misspell and revising punctuation rules for direct speech, complex sentences, and apostrophes.

Key terms

Metaphor, Personification, Imagery, Stanza, Structure, Enjambment, Symbolism, Tone, Descriptive writing, Narrative, Register, Persuasive writing, Transactional writing, Alliteration, Simile

For more free 11+ practice papers, past papers and online practice tests, visit [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk).



OUNDLE

School

EXAMINATION PAPER
Academic Scholarship 2022

English

Time allowed: 2 hours

Name: _____

Instructions

- Dictionaries are not allowed.
- Answer on lined paper. Write your name clearly at the top of each sheet of paper that you use.
- Answer **ALL** the questions in **Section A**. Choose **ONE** question from **Section B**. You should divide your time equally between both sections.
- You are expected to write clearly and accurately throughout each of your answers. You should leave some time towards the end of the examination to check your work carefully.
- The maximum number of marks for this paper is 60.

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

You should spend 60 minutes on this section

Both the poems below are about school. Read the poems carefully and then answer the questions that follow. Questions 1 and 2 are about the first poem. Questions 3 and 4 are about the second poem. Question 5 invites you to consider both poems together. You should leave yourself enough time to answer Question 5 in full detail. Support all your answers with quotations from the poems, as appropriate.

Geography Lesson

Our teacher told us one day he would leave
And sail across a warm blue sea
To places he had only known from maps,
And all his life had longed to be.

The house he lived in was narrow and grey
But in his mind's eye he could see
Sweet-scented jasmine clinging to the walls,
And green leaves burning on an orange tree.

He spoke of the lands he longed to visit,
Where it was never drab or cold.
I couldn't understand why he never left,
And shook off the school's stranglehold.

Then halfway through his final term
He took ill and never returned.
And he never got to that place on the map
Where the green leaves of the orange trees burned.

The maps were redrawn on the classroom wall;
His name was forgotten, it faded away.
But a lesson he never knew he taught
Is with me to this day.

I travel to where the green leaves burn,
To where the ocean's glass-clear and blue,
To all those places my teacher taught me to love
But which he never knew.

Brian Patten (born 1946)

Rain, Book, Classroom

A storm shades the page
like a stage light, dimmed,
rain hammers hard on roof-felted tin

and the children's cheeks are bright as Christmas. Down the soot-soft tunnels of their fixed dark eyes,	5
 down tracks as fine as printed lines, black on the blank winter fields of the page, steam trains	 10
 to where we've never been: a frontier town with one saloon, a clapboard school with stove smoke rising,	 15
 where a storm shades the page like a stage light, dimmed, where rain hammers hard on roof-felted tin.	

Kate Clanchy (born 1965)

On 'Geography Lesson'

1. How does the poet present the Geography teacher in this poem? [4 marks]
2. Comment on the effects of some of the poet's use of similes and metaphors in the poem. [5 marks]

On 'Rain, Book, Classroom'

3. What does the poet suggest happens in the lesson in this poem? [4 marks]
4. Comment on the poet's use of structure in this poem. [5 marks]

On both poems

5. Compare and contrast these two poems in any way you think is interesting and appropriate.
You may wish to look at:
 - the content and meaning of the poems;
 - the form and structure of the poems;
 - the use of literary techniques.

[12 marks]

[Total: 30 marks]

TURN OVER

SECTION B: COMPREHENSION

You should spend 60 minutes on this section

The following are all opening sentences from a selection of different novels. Write a story or a piece of descriptive writing using **ONE** of these sentences as your opening or closing sentence. Credit will be given for how well your writing fits with your chosen sentence as well as for its creativity and flair. You are reminded of the importance of clear and accurate written English and of careful presentation in your answer. All questions carry equal marks.

1. Night is generally my time for walking. [30 marks]

OR

2. There is no rule against carrying binoculars in the National Gallery. [30 marks]

OR

3. It was the last letter in Irene Redfield's little pile of morning mail. [30 marks]

OR

4. He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the pine trees. [30 marks]

OR

5. 'Will she last out the night, I wonder?' [30 marks]

Paper Notes: 13+ English Question Paper (13+ English Past Paper (2022))

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 **2022 Academic Scholarship English examination** from **Oundle School**, a prestigious independent boarding school in Northamptonshire. The paper is designed for **13+ candidates** (Year 9 entry) seeking academic scholarships and tests a sophisticated level of literary analysis alongside creative writing. With a total of **60 marks** and a **two-hour time limit**, the examination is divided equally into two distinct sections: a poetry comprehension task focusing on school-themed poems, and a creative writing task inspired by opening lines from classic novels.

The paper demands close reading skills, the ability to analyse poetic techniques in detail, and the capacity to produce original, polished prose under timed conditions. Candidates engage with contemporary poetry by **Brian Patten** and **Kate Clanchy**, both poets known for accessible yet layered work, before demonstrating their own narrative or descriptive writing abilities. The choice of five different opening sentences allows candidates to select the prompt that best suits their creative strengths.

This examination is particularly well suited to able students preparing for competitive independent school entrance at 13+, especially those with a genuine interest in literature and creative expression. The absence of dictionaries and the requirement for self-directed time management reflect the academic rigour expected at scholarship level.

How this paper is organised

The paper comprises **two equal sections**, each allocated 60 minutes and carrying 30 marks. **Section A (Comprehension)** presents two complete poems on the theme of school: 'Geography Lesson' by Brian Patten and 'Rain, Book, Classroom' by Kate Clanchy. Candidates must answer **all five questions**: questions 1 and 2 analyse the first poem (worth 4 and 5 marks respectively), questions 3 and 4 analyse the second poem (worth 4 and 5 marks), and question 5 is a comparative essay worth 12 marks that invites candidates to explore both poems together, considering content, form, structure, and literary techniques.

Section B (Creative Writing) offers five different opening sentences from published novels, and candidates must choose **one** to use as either the opening or closing sentence of an original story or piece of descriptive writing. All five options carry equal

marks (30 marks each). The sentences range from atmospheric and mysterious to action-oriented, giving candidates scope to select a prompt that aligns with their imaginative preferences.

Candidates are instructed to write on lined paper (not in the question booklet), to write their names clearly on each sheet, and to leave time for careful checking. Clear and accurate written English is explicitly emphasised throughout both sections.

Topics covered

- Close reading and analysis of contemporary poetry, specifically works by Brian Patten and Kate Clanchy exploring the theme of school and learning
- Identification and interpretation of poetic techniques including similes, metaphors, imagery, and their effects on meaning and mood
- Analysis of poetic structure including stanza organisation, line breaks, repetition, cyclical structure, and framing devices
- Comparative literary analysis: identifying similarities, differences, and connections between two texts in terms of content, form, and technique
- Understanding of character presentation in poetry, particularly how a poet conveys personality, emotion, and backstory through language choices
- Narrative or descriptive creative writing: constructing an original story or descriptive piece that integrates a given opening or closing sentence
- Stylistic coherence and tonal consistency in creative writing, matching the register and atmosphere of a literary opening line
- Textual evidence and quotation: selecting apt quotations from poems to support analytical points
- Critical vocabulary and terminology: using appropriate literary terms to discuss poetic devices and structural choices

How to use this paper for revision

- Read both poems at least twice before attempting any questions: once for overall meaning and a second time to notice specific techniques and structural patterns.
- Practise analysing poetry under timed conditions, spending roughly 8 minutes on the 4-mark questions and 10 minutes on the 5-mark questions, reserving 24 minutes for the comparative essay.
- Build a bank of quotations quickly by underlining or noting key phrases as you read, so you can reference them efficiently when writing your answers.
- For the creative writing section, spend the first five minutes planning your response and deciding whether to use the sentence as an opening or a conclusion, then outline your narrative arc or descriptive focus.
- Revise key poetic techniques (metaphor, simile, imagery, personification, alliteration, enjambment, caesura, repetition) and practise identifying them in unfamiliar poems.
- Read opening lines from a variety of novels and short stories to become familiar with different narrative voices, tones, and settings, then practise continuing them in your own style.
- Leave at least five minutes at the end to proofread your answers in both sections, checking for clarity, spelling, punctuation, and coherence of argument.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Rushing through the poems without noticing structural features such as repeated lines, cyclical patterns, or shifts in tone between stanzas.
- Quoting extensively from the poems without then explaining the effect or significance of the quoted material, resulting in description rather than analysis.
- In the comparative question, writing two separate mini-essays about each poem rather than integrating comparisons throughout the response.
- Choosing a creative writing prompt based on initial appeal without considering whether it suits your strengths, then struggling to develop the narrative or description effectively.
- Ignoring the instruction that the given sentence can be used as either an opening or closing, which can unlock more creative possibilities, especially for reflective or circular narratives.
- Neglecting to demonstrate how your creative writing connects meaningfully with the chosen sentence, making it feel awkwardly grafted on rather than integral to the piece.

Exam technique

Divide your two hours strictly into two equal halves, spending **60 minutes on Section A** and **60 minutes on Section B**. Within Section A, allocate time proportionally to marks: around 8 minutes each for the 4-mark questions, 10 minutes each for the 5-mark questions, and 24 minutes for the 12-mark comparative essay. Read both poems carefully at the start, annotating for techniques and structural features before you begin writing. Always support your points with brief, relevant quotations and explain the effect or significance of the techniques you identify.

For Section B, spend the first five to eight minutes reading all five opening sentences, selecting the one that inspires you most, and planning your response. Decide early whether to use the sentence as an opening or a closing, as this choice will shape your entire structure. Aim for roughly 45 minutes of sustained writing, allowing time to develop character, setting, atmosphere, and a clear narrative or descriptive arc. Your writing should feel like a natural extension of the given sentence, matching its tone and style.

Reserve the final five minutes of the entire examination to proofread both sections. Check that your poetry answers are clearly structured with topic sentences, evidence, and analysis, and that your creative writing is coherent, accurately punctuated, and free from basic errors. Presentation and clarity of expression are explicitly credited in the mark scheme.

What to revise alongside this paper

Candidates should broaden their experience of contemporary British poetry, particularly work that explores everyday settings and experiences in unexpected ways. Reading more poems by **Brian Patten**, **Kate Clanchy**, **Carol Ann Duffy**, and **Simon Armitage** will build familiarity with accessible yet technically sophisticated verse. Practising comparative poetry essays using unseen poems is essential preparation for scholarship-level work, as is learning to articulate observations about structure and form with precision.

For creative writing, read widely across different genres and periods, paying close attention to how published authors establish voice, setting, and mood in opening paragraphs. Study short story collections and novel openings to understand pacing, characterisation, and narrative hooks. Experiment with writing in different registers and tones, from atmospheric and descriptive to dialogue-driven and action-focused.

Revise the formal terminology for discussing poetic structure (quatrains, couplets, free verse, volta, refrain) and narrative techniques (first-person, third-person limited, omniscient narration, flashback, foreshadowing). Understanding these terms will allow

you to articulate your observations with the sophistication expected at 13+ scholarship level.

Key terms

Metaphor, Simile, Imagery, Cyclical structure, Repetition, Stanza, Enjambment, Juxtaposition, Tone, Personification, Narrative voice, Comparative analysis, Symbolism, Alliteration, Poetic persona

For more free 11+ practice papers, past papers and online practice tests, visit [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk).