



SIR WILLIAM PERKINS'S SCHOOL

Year 7 entry Specimen Paper

English Entrance Exam

Paper 1

Reading Extract

Please use the Answer Booklet to write your answers

English Entrance Exam Specimen, Paper 1 Reading Extract

The extract below is from **A Christmas Carol** written by Charles Dickens in 1843. In this extract, it is Christmas Eve and Mr and Mrs Fezziwig are hosting a big party in the warehouse in which they work. The meaning of the words in bold is given in the **Word Bank** at the end of the passage.

Clear away! There was nothing they wouldn't have cleared away, or couldn't have cleared away, with old Mr Fezziwig looking on. It was done in a minute. Every movable was packed off, as if it were dismissed from public life for evermore; the floor was swept and watered, the lamps were radiant, fuel was heaped upon the fire; and the warehouse was snug, and warm, and dry, as you would desire to see upon a winter's night. 5

The vast workroom which was typically depressed by the tedium of daily work was as bright as a ball-room.

In came a fiddler with a music-book, and went up to the **lofty** desk, and made an orchestra of it, and tuned his fiddle like fifty stomach-aches. In came Mrs Fezziwig, one vast **substantial** smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In came the six young followers whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker. In came the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman. In came the boy from over the way, who was suspected of not being given enough food by his parents; trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door but one, who was proved to have had her ears pulled by her mistress. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some pushing, some pulling; in they all came, anyhow and everyhow. And then the dancing began. Away they all went, twenty couples round the room, up and down, round and round. Old Fezziwig, clapping his hands to stop the dance, cried out, "Well done!" and the fiddler plunged his hot face into a pot of wine, especially provided for that purpose. But **scorning** rest, upon his reappearance, the very same fiddler instantly began again, though there were no dancers yet, as if his earlier self had been carried home, exhausted, and he were a brand new man. 10
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There were more dances, and there were **forfeits**, and more dances, and there was cake, and there was **negus**, and there was a great piece of Cold Roast Chicken, and there was a great piece of Cold Boiled Ham, and there were mince-pies, and plenty of beer. But the great effect of the evening came after the Roast Chicken and Boiled Ham, when the fiddler (an artful dog, mind! The sort of man who knew his business better than you or I could have told it him!) struck up the tune of "Sir Roger de Coverley." Then old Fezziwig stood up to dance with Mrs Fezziwig. Soon they were joined by twenty-four couples; they were people who were not to be trifled with; they were people who *would* dance, and had no notion of walking. 30
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But if they had been twice as many -- ah, four times -- old Fezziwig would have been a match for them, and so would Mrs Fezziwig. As to *her*, she was worthy to be his partner in every sense of the term. If that's not high praise, tell me higher, and I'll use it. A positive light appeared to issue from Fezziwig's legs. They shone in every part of the dance like moons. You couldn't have predicted, at any given time, what would have become of them next. And when old Fezziwig and Mrs Fezziwig had gone all through the dance; advance and retire, both hands to your partner, bow and curtsy, corkscrew, thread-the-needle, and back again to your place; Fezziwig danced so expertly, that he appeared to wink with his legs, and came upon his feet again without a stagger.

Word Bank

Lofty (line 10): very tall

Substantial (line 12): of great importance, size or worth

Forfeits (line 30): a fun penalty, given during a game, for doing something wrong

Negus (line 31): a hot, sweet, spicy drink



SIR WILLIAM PERKINS'S SCHOOL

Sir William Perkins's School | Guildford Road | Chertsey | Surrey KT16 9BN
T. 01932 574917 F. 01932 574901 E. admissions@swps.org.uk www.swps.org.uk

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