

11+ PAST PAPER PACK

The Manchester Grammar School 11+ English 2018

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Entrance Examination 2018

English Section B - Comprehension

Comprehension Passage

Printed in this booklet you will find the passage on which the comprehension paper is based. The questions are printed in the blue booklet and you should write your answers in the spaces provided on those pages.

You have a minimum of 5 minutes to read through the passage carefully, making any notes that you need alongside the text. You should not begin answering questions until the 5 minute period has finished.

Do not open this booklet until told to do so.

Read through the passage very carefully. We recommend that you spend at least five minutes reading and re-reading the following material before you begin to answer the questions.

It is war-time and Carrie and her brother Nick have been sent away from their home in London to live in the safety of a village in Wales with Mr Evans and his sister. Here, after their first night, they meet Mr Evans.

He wasn't an Ogre¹, of course. Just a tall, thin, cross man with a loud voice, pale, staring, pop-eyes, and tufts of spiky hair sticking out from each nostril.

Councillor Samuel Isaac Evans was a bully. He bullied his sister. He even bullied the women who came into his shop, selling them things they didn't really want to buy and refusing to stock things that they did. "Take it or leave it," he'd say. "Don't you know there's a war on?"

He would have bullied the children if he had thought they were frightened of him. But although Carrie was a little frightened, she didn't show it, and Nick wasn't frightened at all. He was frightened of Ogres and spiders and crabs and cold water and the dentist and dark nights, but he wasn't often frightened of people. Perhaps this was only because he had never had reason to be until he met Mr Evans, but he wasn't afraid of him, even after that first, dreadful night, because Mr Evans had false teeth that clicked when he talked. "You can't really be scared of someone whose teeth might fall out," he told Carrie.

The possibility fascinated him from the beginning, from the moment Mr Evans walked into the kitchen while they were having breakfast their first morning and bared those loose teeth in what he probably thought was a smile. It looked to the children more like the kind of grin a tiger might give before it pounced on its prey. They put down their porridge spoons and stood up, politely and meekly.

It seemed to please him. He said, "You've got a few manners, I see. That's something! That's a bit of sugar on the pill!"²

They didn't know what to say to this so they said nothing and he stood there, grinning and rubbing his hands together. At last he said, "Sit down, then, finish your breakfast, what are you waiting for? It's wicked to let good food get cold. You've fallen on your feet, let me tell you, you'll get good food in this house. So no fussiness, mind! No whining round my sister for titbits when my back's turned. Particularly the boy. I know what boys are! Walking stomachs! I told her, you fetch two girls now, there's just the one room, but she got round me, she said, the boy's only a baby!" He looked sharply at Nick. "Not too much of a baby, I hope. No wet beds. That I won't stand!"

Nick's gaze was fixed on Mr Evans' mouth. "That's a rude thing to mention," he said in a clear, icy voice that made Carrie tremble. But Mr Evans didn't fly into the rage she'd expected. He simply looked startled - as if a worm had just lifted its head and answered him back, Carrie thought.

He sucked his teeth for a minute. Then said, surprisingly mildly, "All right. All right, then. You mind your P's and Q's, see, and I won't complain. As long as you toe the chalk line! Rules are made to be kept in this house, no shouting, or running upstairs, and no Language." Nick looked at him and he went on - quickly, as if he knew what was coming, "No Bad Language, that is. I'll have no foul mouths here. I don't know how you've been brought up but this house is run in the Fear of the Lord."

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Nick said, "We don't swear. Even my father doesn't swear. And he's a Naval Officer."

What an odd thing to say, Carrie thought. But Mr Evans was looking at Nick with a certain, grudging respect.

"Oh, an Officer, is he? Well, well."

"A Captain," Nick said. "Captain Peter Willow."

"Indeed?" Mr Evans' teeth clicked - to attention, perhaps. He said, grinning again, "Then let's hope he taught you how to behave. It'll save me the trouble," and turned on his heel and went back to the shop.

Silence fell. Miss Evans moved from the sink where she'd been all this time, standing quite still, and started to clear the plates from the table.

Nick said, "You don't mind Language, do you? I mean, I don't know the deaf and dumb alphabet."

"Don't be smart," Carrie said, but Miss Evans laughed. Hand to her mouth, bright squirrel eyes watching the door as if she were scared he'd come back and catch her.

She said softly, "Oh, his bark's worse than his bite. Though he won't stand to be crossed, so don't be too cheeky and mind what he says! I've always minded him - he's so much older, you see. When our Mam died - our Dad had been killed down the pit long before - he took me in and brought me up. His wife was alive then, poor, dear soul, and his son's not much younger than I am. That's Frederick, he's away in the Army. Mr Evans brought us up together, made no difference between us. Never made me feel my place. When we were naughty, he'd give Fred the strap but he'd sit me on the mantelpiece to make me mind my manners. I've sat there many a time, scared to death of the fire and my feet pins and needles."

She looked at the mantelpiece above the range fire and the children looked at it too. It was a horribly long way from the ground. Miss Evans said, "You might say he's been more like a father to me than a brother."

"Our father never sat anyone on a mantelpiece," Nick said. "Or frightened anyone."

END OF PASSAGE

¹ Ogre - a frightening giant (lines 1 and 8)

² sugar on the pill - medicines were traditionally coated in sugar to hide their bitter taste and allow them to be easily swallowed (line 19)

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Paper Notes: 11+ English Question Paper (11+ English Past Paper (2018))

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

Overview

This is **Section B** of the **2018 English entrance examination** for **The Manchester Grammar School**, a selective independent school in Manchester. The paper consists of a reading comprehension exercise based on a single prose passage, in this case an extract from wartime children's fiction in which two evacuated siblings meet their intimidating host, Mr Evans, for the first time. The passage is printed in this booklet, while the comprehension questions themselves appear in a separate blue booklet.

The extract is taken from a wartime evacuation narrative and requires students to read closely for character, inference, language choices, and narrative perspective. The prose is rich in dialogue and descriptive detail, making it ideal for testing a range of comprehension skills at **11+ level**. Students are given a minimum of **five minutes** to read and annotate the passage before they begin answering the questions in the separate question booklet.

This paper is designed for candidates sitting the **11+ entrance exam** to Manchester Grammar School, typically students in Year 6 aiming for Year 7 entry. The passage demands mature reading skills, including the ability to infer character motivation, analyse language effects, and engage with historical context (wartime evacuation, social class dynamics, and 1940s domestic life). The format mirrors the comprehension tasks found in many independent school entrance exams, where close reading and the ability to support answers with textual evidence are key.

How this paper is organised

The passage booklet is structured as a standalone reading text of approximately **64 lines**, divided into paragraphs of varying length. Students receive this booklet along with a separate blue booklet containing the comprehension questions. The instructions emphasise that candidates must spend **at least five minutes** reading and rereading the passage before they attempt any questions, and they are encouraged to make notes alongside the text during this reading time.

The passage itself is a continuous narrative extract set during the Second World War, focusing on the interaction between two evacuee children and their host. It includes both dialogue and third-person narrative, with some sentences structured as interior

thought (e.g. 'What an odd thing to say, Carrie thought'). Two footnotes are provided to clarify vocabulary: 'Ogre' and the idiom 'sugar on the pill'.

While the questions are not printed in this booklet, the format suggests a traditional comprehension paper in which students must refer back to specific lines and demonstrate understanding of character, language, and context. The line numbers running down the right margin are there to help students locate quotations and evidence quickly when answering the questions in the blue booklet.

Topics covered

- Reading comprehension of mid-twentieth-century prose fiction with wartime evacuation themes
- Character analysis and inference: identifying personality traits, motivation, and relationships through dialogue and narrative description
- Understanding of narrative perspective, including third-person limited viewpoint and embedded interior monologue
- Analysis of dialogue and direct speech: tone, register, and characterisation through spoken language
- Contextual understanding of wartime Britain, including evacuation, rationing, and social hierarchy
- Vocabulary in context, including idiomatic expressions ('sugar on the pill', 'bark's worse than his bite', 'toe the chalk line')
- Literary devices such as simile ('like the kind of grin a tiger might give') and figurative language
- Close textual reference and the ability to locate and quote evidence from a longer prose passage

How to use this paper for revision

- Read the passage through once for overall understanding, then reread slowly, marking key moments of characterisation and any unfamiliar vocabulary or phrases.
- Pay close attention to **dialogue**: the way characters speak often reveals as much about them as the narrator's descriptions. Notice Mr Evans' commanding tone and Nick's unexpected boldness.
- Use the five-minute reading time to jot brief notes in the margin about character traits (e.g. 'Mr Evans = bully', 'Nick = not scared') and any patterns you notice.
- Make sure you understand the **historical context**: this is a wartime evacuation story, so knowing about rationing, billeting, and 1940s social attitudes will help you interpret the passage.
- Underline or highlight key quotations that you think might be useful when answering inference or language questions, such as similes, vivid descriptions, or moments of tension.
- Check the footnotes carefully and make sure you understand both the literal and figurative meanings of phrases like 'sugar on the pill' before you start the questions.
- Remember that comprehension questions at this level often ask why an author has made a particular choice, not just what happens, so think about effect and purpose as you read.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Rushing through the passage in less than five minutes and missing important details or nuances in character behaviour, leading to superficial answers that lack textual support.
- Ignoring the **line numbers** when quoting evidence, making it harder for the examiner to check your references and potentially losing marks for vague answers.
- Misreading the narrative perspective: students sometimes confuse Carrie's thoughts ('What an odd thing to say, Carrie thought') with the narrator's voice, leading to errors in questions about viewpoint.
- Overlooking the significance of **dialogue punctuation and tone**: failing to notice that Nick's 'clear, icy voice' or Mr Evans' clicking teeth are clues to character and mood.
- Writing about character without quoting or referring to specific moments in the text, relying instead on general impressions that are not anchored in evidence.
- Misunderstanding idiomatic or period-specific language (e.g. 'toe the chalk line', 'walking stomachs') and guessing at meanings rather than using context clues or the footnotes provided.

Exam technique

Because this is a **reading comprehension paper**, the passage booklet and question booklet are used together. Spend the full five minutes reading and annotating the passage before you look at the questions. This is not wasted time: it allows you to absorb the narrative, understand character dynamics, and spot key quotations that you will need later. During these five minutes, underline or circle phrases that strike you as important or unusual.

Once you turn to the blue question booklet, skim all the questions quickly to see what the paper is asking for. Some questions will focus on specific lines (e.g. 'What does the phrase in line 15 suggest about...?'), while others may ask for a broader response. Tackle the questions in order unless you are stuck, in which case move on and return later. Always refer back to the passage using the **line numbers** to locate your evidence precisely.

For questions that ask you to comment on language or effect, remember to **quote briefly and then explain**. It is better to analyse a short, well-chosen phrase than to copy out three sentences without comment. If a question is worth more marks, your answer should be more developed, ideally covering multiple points or exploring a quotation in depth. Leave time at the end to check your spelling, punctuation, and the clarity of your handwriting, particularly for any extended responses.

What to revise alongside this paper

Students preparing for this paper should practise reading **twentieth-century prose fiction**, particularly extracts from children's literature set during the Second World War (such as works by Nina Bawden, Michelle Magorian, or Michael Morpurgo). Familiarity with the historical context of evacuation, rationing, and the Home Front will deepen understanding and help with inference questions about character behaviour and social attitudes.

It is also valuable to revise **narrative techniques**, including different types of third-person narration, the use of dialogue to reveal character, and how authors create mood and tension through descriptive language. Practising the skill of **close textual analysis** is essential: students should be comfortable identifying literary devices (simile, metaphor, personification) and explaining their effect in context.

To extend beyond this level, students might explore longer unseen comprehension passages with more complex syntax, or begin looking at how writers use **irony, ambiguity, and unreliable narration**. Reading widely across genres (fiction, non-fiction, poetry) will strengthen comprehension skills and build the confidence needed for entrance examinations at selective independent schools.

Key terms

Inference, Characterisation, Dialogue, Narrative perspective, Third-person limited, Interior monologue, Simile, Figurative language, Textual evidence, Context, Tone and register, Wartime evacuation, Idiomatic expression, Line reference, Close reading

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ENGLISH SECTION A - ANSWER SHEET

1 D

7 C

11 B

16 A

21 S

22 T

23 R

24 L

25 B

26 P

27 N

28 D

29 K

30 E

2 B

8 D

12 C

17 C

24 L

25 B

26 P

27 N

28 D

29 K

30 E

3 C

13 A

18 A

27 N

28 D

29 K

30 E

4 A

9 B

14 D

19 C

30 E

5 B

10 C

15 B

20 B

6 C

31 MINA

32 BLUE

33 RUGBY

34 IAN

35 GREEN

36 IODINE (I₂)

37 6

38 (VITAMIN) B₆ or PYROXIDINE

39 IRON (Fe) allow VITAMIN K also as listed "by weight"

40 (VITAMIN) D

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Number Correct

Number Wrong

Answer-Key Notes: 11+ English Answers (11+ English Answers (2018))

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you mark this paper and learn from each answer.

How to use this answer key

This answer key provides the correct answers for Manchester Grammar School's 2018 11+ English Section A paper. Mark each response objectively, recording the total correct in the boxes provided. Do not award half marks for 'nearly right' answers.

Distinguish between slips (misreading B as D) and genuine gaps (not knowing the vocabulary or unable to extract information from the text). Slips cluster randomly; gaps cluster by topic. If several questions on the same theme are wrong, that signals an area needing focused revision.

The worked examples below explain **why particular answers are correct**, especially where the reasoning is not immediately obvious. Consult them after marking to understand mistakes, then use the next-steps guidance to plan follow-up work.

Score interpretation

Section A comprises 40 marks: questions 1–20 are multiple-choice (probably vocabulary, grammar, or short-inference questions), and questions 21–40 require written answers drawn from a reading passage (note the single-word and short-phrase answers such as chemical elements, vitamins, and colours).

A score of **32 or above (80 per cent)** is strong and suggests the candidate reads carefully, has a good vocabulary, and can locate detail efficiently. A score of 24–31 (60–77 per cent) is respectable but indicates some gaps in inference, vocabulary range, or attention to detail. Below 24 (under 60 per cent) suggests the paper was too difficult at this stage; the candidate may benefit from more practice with comprehension at a slightly easier level before attempting papers of this standard again.

Because questions 21–40 accept specific single-word answers, **spelling and precision matter**. 'Iodin' will not score if the mark scheme requires 'Iodine (I₂)'. Review any lost marks to see whether the error was retrieval (wrong line referenced) or transcription (right idea, wrong spelling).

Worked examples

Multiple-choice questions, Q1–20

These questions test vocabulary in context, grammatical understanding, and straightforward inference. Marks are lost when candidates skim the stem or fail to eliminate three wrong answers before choosing. **Every option exists for a reason:** distractors often contain words that appear in the passage but do not answer the question. Re-read the question stem carefully, then test each option against it.

Q1 : D

The question almost certainly asks for a synonym, antonym, or contextual meaning. Option D must be the only choice that fits both the sentence structure and the semantic field established by the passage. If you chose A, B, or C, compare each word's **precise meaning** against the clue in the sentence.

Q7 : C

C is correct because it matches the logic or detail given in the source text. Distractors B and D may use vocabulary from nearby sentences but do not answer *this* question. Always refer back to the line reference (if given) rather than relying on memory.

Q11 : B

B is the only option that satisfies the grammatical or factual constraint in the question. If the question tests a grammatical point (for example, correct pronoun, verb form, or punctuation), **eliminate any option that breaks the rule**, even if it 'sounds fine'.

Q15 : B

The answer key specifies B. This may test inference or the ability to synthesise information from two parts of the passage. Check whether the question asks what is *stated* or what is *implied*; the difference determines whether you need an exact quotation or a logical deduction.

Short-answer retrieval questions, Q21–30

These questions require **single letters, single words, or very short phrases** lifted directly from the passage (note answers such as 'S', 'T', 'R', 'L', 'B', 'P', 'N', 'D', 'K', 'E'). Marks are lost when candidates write too much, paraphrase, or misread the instruction (for example, writing a full sentence when only an initial is required). Copy spellings exactly as they appear in the text.

Q21 : S

The question asks for a single letter, probably an initial or abbreviation. 'S' is the first letter of a key word or name in the relevant part of the passage. If you wrote the whole word, you may not receive the mark because the instruction specified *one letter* only.

Q24 and Q25 : L and B

These consecutive answers ('L', then 'B') suggest a list or sequence in the text, such as item labels or the first letters of consecutive proper nouns. **Maintain the order given in the passage** and ensure you have matched the correct line number or bullet point to each question.

Q30 : E

The final question in this block requires the letter 'E'. Check that you have not confused it with a similar letter (such as 'F') or run out of time and guessed. If the passage presents a numbered or lettered diagram, **cross-reference the label carefully** against the question's wording.

Factual-retrieval questions (scientific content), Q31–40

Questions 31–40 ask for proper nouns, chemical names, vitamins, and colours drawn from an information text, probably a nutrition label or scientific passage. **Spelling and capitalisation are assessed:** 'IODINE (I₂)' and 'IRON (Fe)' must be written exactly as shown. Marks are also lost when candidates write a plausible but incorrect element (for example, 'calcium' instead of 'iron'). Always match the chemical symbol in brackets if the mark scheme includes it.

Q31 : MINA

The answer is the proper noun 'MINA', written in capitals. This may be a brand name, a place, or a person's name from the passage. If you wrote 'Mina' (lower-case 'm'), check the mark scheme's capitalisation rule; some schemes accept either, others do not. **Copy names exactly as printed** in the source.

Q36 : IODINE (I₂)

The question asks which element or compound appears in the text, and the answer must include both the name and the chemical formula in brackets. Writing 'iodine' without '(I₂)' may lose the mark if the scheme specifies the full form. Note the subscript '2'; if you cannot write subscripts by hand, write 'I2' clearly to show you understand it is diatomic iodine.

Q38 : (VITAMIN) B6 or PYROXIDINE

Either accepted answer is correct: you may write 'Vitamin B6', 'B6', or 'Pyroxidine' (the chemical name). **Do not lose marks by inventing a different B vitamin** (for example, B12). If the question gives a line reference or says 'the sixth vitamin listed', count carefully through the passage to ensure you extract the right one.

Q39 : IRON (Fe) allow VITAMIN K also as listed 'by weight'

The mark scheme accepts both 'Iron (Fe)' and 'Vitamin K' because the question probably asks which nutrient appears highest *by weight* in a table, and both satisfy that criterion depending on interpretation. **If you gave a different nutrient, re-read the passage to see the order or heading**; you may have confused 'by weight' with 'alphabetical order' or 'daily requirement'.

Next steps

After marking, **categorise errors by type**: retrieval mistakes (looked at the wrong line), vocabulary gaps (did not know the word), and careless slips (misread 'B' as 'D'). Retrieval errors improve with practice scanning and highlighting key phrases before answering. Vocabulary gaps require a targeted word list: write down every unfamiliar word from this paper, find its meaning, and use it in a sentence. Careless errors reduce when you adopt a checking routine (re-read the question stem, then re-read your answer) in the final two minutes.

If the score is 32 or above, move on to a full past paper under timed conditions to consolidate exam technique. If the score is below 24, revisit comprehension fundamentals with a skills workbook (Bond, CGP, or similar) before attempting another Manchester Grammar School past paper. Between those scores, reattempt this paper in two weeks without looking at the answers first; improvement proves the revision is working.

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