

## 11+ PAST PAPER PACK

# The Manchester Grammar School 11+ English 2023

## Complete Past Paper Pack

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The Manchester Grammar School 11+ English. Use to mark your work against the official answer key.

Includes Paper Notes: score interpretation, selected worked examples, next steps.

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**The Manchester  
Grammar School**

Founded 1515

# **Entrance Examination 2023**

## **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.**

*This story involves three children, Josh, Ryan and Chelle. The events happen in a place called Magwhite.*

For a wonderful moment Ryan thought Josh was going to make it. When they had turned the corner to find the bus already at the stop Josh had burst into a run, scattering starlings and shattering puddles. The bus's engine gave a long, exasperated sigh and shrugged its weight forward as if hulking its shoulders against the rain, but Ryan still believed Josh would snatch success at the last minute, as always. Then, just as Josh drew level with its tail lights, the bus roared sulkily away. 5

Josh chased it for about twenty yards. Then, through the tiny crystal specks of rain that freckled his glasses, Ryan saw his hero stumble, slow and aim a kick at a lamp post.

The bus seemed to have carried away Ryan's stomach, and the last of the summer daylight. Suddenly the dingy string of shops seemed much colder, darker and more dejected than before. Ryan could still taste the chocolate milkshake that had cost them their ride, and the flavour made him feel sick. 10

Behind him he heard Chelle's asthmatic gasping and turned to find her fumbling with her inhaler. She took a deep breath, her round eyes becoming even wider for a second. She stared at Josh's slowly returning figure. 15

Ryan did not want to be stranded in Magwhite with an angry Josh. They were not meant to be in Magwhite at all.

Magwhite was an almost-place. The sad little strings of houses, the minimart and the bike shop were almost a village. The towpath walks were almost pretty. If Magwhite was mentioned, parents' faces stiffened as if they had picked up a bad smell. It was very definitely Out of Bounds. 20

Josh trudged back towards the others, his head bowed, the rain darkening his fierce, blond hair.

'S'all right.' Josh shrugged and wiped the rain off his yellow-tinted sunglasses with his sleeve. 'We'll catch the next one.' 25

Chelle was biting her lower lip, her upper lip pulling down to a point. She was trying not to disagree, because she worshipped Josh more than anybody else in the world, but the words always seemed to dribble out of Chelle like water from a broken tap.

'But ...we haven't got enough money for new tickets for all of us ... we're stuck ...'

'No we're not.' Josh was smiling. 'I have a plan.' 30

Without another word, Josh strode away down the slope towards the canal. Ryan and Chelle exchanged a look and then followed.

*He's not going to run off and leave us, is he?* ... but what did Josh have to lose if he went home late? Being in trouble meant something different in Josh's home and sometimes Josh seemed to have no fear of that anyway. Ryan caught up with him.

35

'Where are we going?' he tried.

'The well.' Josh sounded too calm.

They followed Josh's ruthless pace, struggling through dead nettles until they reached the moss-covered steps that led down to the canal bank and path. Then Josh stopped. To one side of the steps was a small dimple in the ground, and at the bottom of the dimple was a ring of concrete, with a wire mesh covering the hole in the middle.

40

Josh got down on his hands and knees. Only when he got out his Swiss Army knife and pulled free the screw-driver attachment did Ryan realise what he was doing. Soon Josh had unscrewed three of the bolts fastening the well cover in place and was starting on the fourth.

'It's a wishing well, isn't it?' Josh explained, continuing to wrestle with the rusty bolts. 'And that means coins. Got it!' The wire mesh came away. 'All right, who's going down? Chelle, you're thin and wriggly. Want to go?'

45

Chelle's only answer was a squeak of alarm.

Josh grinned at her. 'All right, then.' He swung his legs over the edge and, to the others' dismay, started to lower himself in.

50

A sharp cry echoed in the darkness below them.

'Josh!' squealed Chelle. She threw herself on to her hands and knees beside the well and stared down into the murk, her pale hair falling around her face.

'It stinks down here!' Josh called up suddenly.

'Right, I've got some,' they heard at last. The well's echo gave Josh's voice a solemn and impressive sound. 'Coming up.' Josh whistled to himself as he started to climb. At long last he reappeared and clambered out. He shook one leg and then the other, trying to dance the water out of his trainers.

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Five minutes later they were running down Magwhite's high street just in time to catch the last bus.

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Open-mouthed, the driver looked at the green that slicked Josh's hair and smudged his sunglasses, took in his clothes, dark and clinging with water from the waist down, contemplated the slimy puddle of blackened coins in Josh's outstretched hand.

'You just pulled all that lot out of the well, didn't you?'

'No,' said Josh, with his best bold, unblinking stare.

65

It was the total shamelessness of this lie that seemed to throw the driver off-balance. He gave Josh a long look. Then he jabbed at a few buttons on his ticket machine and a loop of three tickets curled into Josh's waiting hand.

Josh sauntered to the back of the bus and waited while Chelle spread the seat with newspapers for him, then settled himself with a grin.

70

*He did it.* At that moment Ryan would willingly have taken a bullet for Josh. He would have followed him over deserts or waded across leech-infested rivers for him. Suddenly he wanted to face some great danger or difficulty and prove himself to his hero in turn, and he was so full of the wish that it seemed it might split him like a conker shell.

## END OF PASSAGE

# Paper Notes: 11+ English Question Paper (11+ English 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 **Section B** of the **2023 English entrance examination** for **The Manchester Grammar School**, an independent grammar school in Manchester. The paper is designed for pupils applying for **11+ entry** to Year 7 and focuses exclusively on **reading comprehension**. The document in hand is the reading stimulus booklet, which contains a narrative extract about three children (Josh, Ryan and Chelle) who miss their bus in a place called Magwhite and resort to retrieving coins from a wishing well to pay their fare home.

The passage is a piece of **contemporary fiction** running to roughly 650 words and is rich in descriptive language, characterisation and narrative tension. Candidates are given a minimum of **five minutes** to read and annotate the text before beginning the comprehension questions, which are printed in a separate blue booklet. The extract tests the ability to analyse character motivation, interpret figurative language, and understand narrative perspective.

This paper is aimed at high-achieving 10 and 11 year olds preparing for selective grammar school entry. The passage demands close reading and the ability to infer meaning beyond the surface narrative, as well as a sensitivity to tone, atmosphere and authorial technique typical of more advanced 11+ comprehension papers.

## How this paper is organised

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The document is a **reading booklet** that accompanies a separate question paper printed in blue. It runs to four pages and contains a single continuous narrative passage of approximately **650 words**, divided into numbered line references (every five lines) for ease of reference when answering questions. The passage is prefaced by clear instructions that candidates must spend a **minimum of five minutes** reading and re-reading the material before attempting any questions.

The rubric explicitly encourages candidates to **make notes alongside the text**, suggesting that annotation is expected and valued. The passage itself is set out in a clear typeface with generous line spacing and wide margins to facilitate note-making. Because the questions are in a separate booklet, this document contains no mark allocations or time guidance beyond the initial reading period.

The story is divided into manageable chunks by natural paragraph breaks, making it easier for young readers to track the development of character, setting and plot. The line numbering system allows questions to refer precisely to specific moments in the narrative, a convention typical of selective grammar school comprehension papers.

## Topics covered

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- Inference of character motivation and personality traits from action and dialogue
- Analysis of narrative perspective and the reader's alignment with Ryan's viewpoint
- Interpretation of figurative language and personification, particularly in descriptions of the bus and weather
- Understanding of tone and atmosphere, including the depiction of Magwhite as an 'almost-place' and forbidden location
- Close reading of descriptive detail to support interpretations of character relationships and power dynamics
- Retrieval of explicit information and synthesis across multiple sections of the text
- Evaluation of narrative structure and how tension is built and released across the extract
- Exploration of themes such as hero worship, risk-taking, peer pressure and moral ambiguity
- Analysis of dialogue and its function in revealing character and advancing plot
- Understanding of simile and metaphor, including the final image of Ryan's emotion 'splitting him like a conker shell'

## How to use this paper for revision

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- Spend the full five minutes on your first reading. Use the time to underline or annotate key moments, character descriptions and striking images so you can locate them quickly when answering questions.
- Pay close attention to Ryan's internal thoughts and feelings, as the narrative is told from his perspective. Questions often ask you to explain why characters behave as they do.
- Look for patterns in the language. Notice how the bus is personified as sulky and exasperated, and how this reflects the children's frustration and powerlessness.
- Identify the contrasts in the passage, such as the difference between Josh's confidence and Chelle's anxiety, or Magwhite's almost-village quality and its reputation as out of bounds.
- When asked about the effect of a word or phrase, consider what it suggests about character, mood or setting, not just what it means literally.
- Practise writing concise answers that quote short, relevant phrases from the text to support your points. Avoid retelling the story when inference is required.
- Notice the shift in tone at the end of the passage, where Ryan's admiration for Josh reaches an intense emotional peak. Be ready to explain how the writer conveys this change.

## Common mistakes to avoid

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- Spending too little time reading the passage initially, then wasting time flicking back and forth during the question section because key details were not absorbed.
- Failing to distinguish between what the text states explicitly and what must be inferred, leading to answers that miss the deeper meaning or characterisation.
- Over-relying on personal opinion rather than textual evidence, particularly when asked to explain the effect of language choices or narrative techniques.
- Misreading the narrative perspective and attributing thoughts or feelings to Josh or Chelle when the passage is filtered through Ryan's viewpoint.
- Quoting too much or too little. Effective answers weave short, precise quotations into explanations rather than copying out whole sentences or offering no evidence at all.
- Overlooking the significance of details such as Magwhite being 'out of bounds' or Josh's home situation, which add layers to the story and inform questions about character choices.

## Exam technique

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Begin by reading the passage slowly and actively during the allocated **five-minute reading period**. Underline or highlight phrases that reveal character, create atmosphere or use interesting language. Jot brief notes in the margins about tone, relationships or narrative turning points. When the question time begins, read each question carefully and locate the relevant section of the text using the line numbers provided.

Answer questions in order unless you encounter one that requires more thought, in which case move on and return to it later. For inference questions, ask yourself what the writer is suggesting beneath the surface and support your answer with a short, embedded quotation. For language analysis questions, identify the technique (such as personification or simile) and explain its effect on the reader's understanding of character, mood or theme.

Leave time at the end to check your answers for clarity and accuracy. Make sure you have answered every part of multi-part questions and that your explanations are specific to the passage rather than generic comments about writing. If you run short of time, prioritise questions carrying the most marks and those where you can demonstrate higher-order skills such as inference and evaluation.

## What to revise alongside this paper

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To prepare fully for this style of paper, revise how to **infer character traits** from indirect clues such as action, dialogue and reported thought. Practise identifying and explaining the effects of common literary techniques including simile, metaphor, personification and imagery. Work on extracting meaning from **third-person limited narrative**, where the story is told from one character's perspective but not in the first person.

Broaden your reading to include contemporary children's and young adult fiction that uses similar techniques to build character and atmosphere. Authors such as Frances Hardinge, Siobhan Dowd and David Almond write in a style that rewards close reading and inference. Study how writers create a sense of place and mood through descriptive language and how dialogue reveals personality and relationships.

Finally, consolidate your understanding of how to structure analytical responses, moving beyond simple retrieval to explain the **effect** of language choices on the reader. Practise weaving short quotations into your own sentences and linking textual evidence to broader themes such as loyalty, courage, risk and the complexity of friendship.

## Key terms

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**Inference, Narrative perspective, Characterisation, Personification, Figurative language, Simile, Metaphor, Tone, Atmosphere, Motivation, Dialogue, Textual evidence, Hero worship, Moral ambiguity, Narrative tension**

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Surname ..... Candidate number .....

First name .....

Current school .....



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# Entrance Examination 2023

## English Section A

### 30 minutes

**Do not open this booklet until told to do so**

**Write your names, school and candidate number in the spaces provided at the top of this page.**

You have 30 minutes for this paper which is worth 40 marks.  
Each question is worth 1 mark.

Answer all the questions, attempting them in order and writing your answers clearly. If you find that you cannot answer a question straight away leave it blank and return to it later if you have time. Try not to leave blank answer spaces at the end, instead make the best attempt at an answer that you can.

**If you need to change an answer cross it out neatly and write the new answer alongside the box.**

Marker 1	Use of English	Poetry Comprehension	Verbal Reasoning	Factual Comprehension	Marker 1 TOTAL	Marker 2 CHECK
	Q1-10	Q11-20	Q21-30	Q31-40		
Number Correct	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number Wrong	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
					<b>AGREED</b>	<input type="text"/>

## Use of English

In each of the questions 1 - 10 there are four possible alternatives to choose from labelled A, B, C and D. Choose the letter which you think answers the question best then write your choice of letter in the box provided.

1. What does the **prefix** *counter-* mean in words such as counteract or countermeasure?

- A numbered
- B additional
- C against
- D tabletop

1	
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2. Which word from the list below is the **synonym** of the one underlined in the following sentence:

Jeremy gave her a look of sincere gratitude

- A heartfelt
- B dependable
- C grateful
- D patronising

2	
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3. Which sentence must end in a **question mark**?

- A The teacher asked who in the room had ever been to France
- B The pupils wondered whether they could go on a school trip
- C Millie questioned if they could learn to speak French
- D Does anyone know any French words

3	
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4. Which of the following sentences is **punctuated** correctly with apostrophes?

- A The birds' sang sweetly in the trees.
- B There wasn't a leaf left still in the breeze.
- C The squirrels gathered nuts and stored them in they're nests.
- D A fox poked it's nose out of the den.

4	
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5. In which of the sentences below is the word 'fast' used as a **verb**?

- A The train was driving fast through the night.
- B The cheetah was fast and focused.
- C They fast during Lent or Ramadan.
- D He ate some toast to break his fast that morning.

5	
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6. In the following sentence, which word is the **preposition**?

Joseph placed his lunchbox under his chair.

- A Joseph
- B placed
- C his
- D under

6	
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7. Which **connective** is best to complete the text below?

**The striker thought scoring would be impossible \_\_\_\_\_ the goalie looked so tall and forbidding.**

- A However
- B Because
- C Although
- D Meanwhile

7	
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8. Which sentence is the most **formal**?

- A Rail travel was an exhilarating, if time-consuming, experience.
- B I love catching the train, don't you?
- C D'ya wanna take the train to town?
- D It was a train journey to remember!

8	
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9. The sentence below has had its capital letters removed. How many capitals should be used in this sentence?

**my friend shirley and i love to dance the waltz at the blackpool winter gardens every october.**

- A 5
- B 6
- C 7
- D 8

9	
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10. In which sentence are the **tenses** used correctly?

- A After eaten lunch, we should wait 30 minutes before goes on a rollercoaster.
- B After eating lunch, we should wait 30 minutes before going on a rollercoaster.
- C After eaten lunch, we should waited 30 minutes before going on a rollercoaster.
- D After having eaten lunch, we should wait 30 minutes before gone on a rollercoaster.

10	
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Please turn over

**FOR  
MARKER  
USE ONLY**

**Q1 - 10**

<b>Number Correct</b>	
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**Q1 - 10**

<b>Number Wrong</b>	
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## Poetry Comprehension

Read the whole passage carefully and then answer the questions that follow by writing the letter A, B, C or D in the appropriate answer space. The passage is reprinted on page 6 to help you when you are working on the questions on page 7.

### 'Gathering Leaves'

Spades take up leaves  
No better than spoons,  
And bags full of leaves  
Are light as balloons.

I make a great noise 5  
Of rustling all day  
Like rabbit and deer  
Running away.

But the mountains I raise 10  
Elude my embrace,  
Flowing over my arms  
And into my face.

I may load and unload 15  
Again and again  
Till I fill the whole shed,  
And what have I then?

Next to nothing for weight,  
And since they grew duller  
From contact with earth,  
Next to nothing for colour. 20

Next to nothing for use,  
But a crop is a crop,  
And who's to say where  
The harvest shall stop?

*Robert Frost*

Choose the letter A, B, C or D which you think answers the question best, then write the letter in the answer space. The passage is reprinted on page 6 to help you when you are working on the questions on page 7.

11. Who do you think is the speaker of the poem?

- A A tree
- B A farmer
- C A child
- D Mother Nature

11	
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12. What do you think the poet means by the phrase 'elude my embrace' in line 10?

- A 'escape when I try to hold them'
- B 'vanish into thin air when I pick them up'
- C 'enjoy being hugged'
- D 'call out when squeezed'

12	
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13. Look at lines 16-20. What does the poet's question in line 16 really mean?

- A The poet can no longer see the leaves and doesn't know where they are
- B The poet is sad because he can't fit any more leaves in the shed
- C The poet cannot find the value in the work he has done
- D The poet doesn't know what his next job is

13	
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14. Which of these is **not** a reason why the poet is disappointed with his shed of leaves?

- A The leaves have all lost their colour
- B The leaves do not weigh very much
- C He has nothing useful to do with the leaves
- D There aren't enough leaves in the shed

14	
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15. Which line in the final stanza marks the start of the change in tone from sad to hopeful?

- A Line 21
- B Line 22
- C Line 23
- D Line 24

15	
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## Poetry Comprehension

The passage on page 4 is reprinted here to help you answer the questions on page 7.

### 'Gathering Leaves'

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No better than spoons,  
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From contact with earth,  
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Next to nothing for use,  
But a crop is a crop,  
And who's to say where  
The harvest shall stop?

*Robert Frost*

Choose the letter A, B, C or D which you think answers the question best, then write the letter in the answer space. The passage is reprinted on page 6 to help you when you are working on the questions on page 7.

16. Which of the following descriptive words from the opening stanzas is a comparative adjective?

- A 'better'
- B 'full'
- C 'light'
- D 'great'

16	
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17. In line 5, the poet uses repetition to show the wearying, monotonous nature of the task.

Which of the following is an example of repetition?

- A 'The mountains I raise'
- B 'Load and unload'
- C 'Again and again'
- D 'Fill the whole shed'

17	
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18. The second and fourth lines of each stanza have matching sounds. What is the correct name for this technique?

- A Rhyming couplets
- B Alternate line rhyme
- C Metaphor
- D Song rhythm

18	
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19. Which of the following punctuation marks cannot be found in the final stanza?

- A Full stop
- B Comma
- C Apostrophe
- D Question mark

19	
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20. In line 6, the 'rustling' of the leaves is a word formed from the sound it represents. How do you spell this technique?

- A Onomatopoeia
- B Onamatopeia
- C Onomotopia
- D Omonatopoea

20	
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Please turn over

**FOR  
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USE ONLY**

Q11 - 20

Q11 - 20

Number Correct	
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Number Wrong	
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In each of the sentences one word is printed in capital letters. Below each sentence is a list of words. Choose the word that is closest in meaning to the word in capitals.

24. It was a CONTEMPTIBLE act.

- A necessary
- B avoidable
- C despicable
- D admirable
- E courageous

24	
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25. That was a FRIVOLOUS suggestion.

- A popular
- B serious
- C dangerous
- D flippant
- E complicated

25	
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Use all the letters of the word in capital letters to form a new word with the meaning given alongside it. Write your answers carefully in the appropriate answer spaces.

26. PRESENT      snake

26	
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27. SADDER      fears

27	
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28. THICKEN      a room

28	
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29. Ger is a personal trainer. He has clients booked in for Monday through Friday next week. He is seeing Martin two days before Michal. Ben is booked in two days before Dan. Dan is one day after Michal and one day before Andy. Finally, Paul is scheduled in four days after Martin. If Martin is coming in on Monday, who has Ger double booked?

- A Martin & Dan
- B Dan & Ben
- C Martin & Michal
- D Michal & Ben
- E Andy & Paul

29	
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30. Assume that some **laks** are **saks**, all **naks** are **laks**, and some **zaks** are **taks**. Therefore it makes sense that:

- A no **laks** are **naks**
- B all **laks** are **naks**
- C some **taks** are **naks**
- D some **naks** may be **saks**
- E all **laks** are **taks**

30	
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**FOR  
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USE ONLY**

Q21 - 30

Q21 - 30

Number Correct	
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Number Wrong	
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**PLEASE TURN OVER  
FOR  
QUESTIONS 31 - 40**

## Factual Comprehension

The table below shows the eight busiest airports in the world in 2019, ranked in order of total number of passengers.

Rank	Total passengers (millions)	Name	City	Country	Opened
1	110.5	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport	Atlanta	United States of America	1926
2	100	Beijing Capital International Airport	Beijing	China	1958
3	88.1	Los Angeles International Airport	Los Angeles	United States of America	1928
4	86.4	Dubai International Airport	Dubai	United Arab Emirates	1960
5	85.5	Tokyo Haneda Airport	Tokyo	Japan	1931
6	84.6	O'Hare International Airport	Chicago	United States of America	1944
7	80.9	Heathrow Airport	London	United Kingdom	1946
8	76.2	Shanghai Pudong International Airport	Shanghai	China	1999

### Number of runways at each airport:

The airport in Chicago has eight runways, the most of any airport on this list. Next are the airports in Atlanta and Shanghai, which both have five runways. Each of the airports in Los Angeles and Tokyo has four runways. The airport in Beijing has three runways, and the airports in Dubai and London both have only two runways.

31. The fifth busiest airport is found in which country?

- A Tokyo
- B 85.5 million
- C Japan
- D China

31	
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32. In which city do we find the airport that opened most recently?

- A Atlanta
- B Shanghai
- C China
- D 1999

32	
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33. Which country appears in the table most often?

- A United Arab Emirates
- B Three
- C United Kingdom
- D United States of America

33	
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34. The oldest airport has how many runways?

- A 5
- B 8
- C 3
- D 4

34	
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35. In 2019, how many passengers in total used the airport with three runways?

- A 100 million
- B 88.1 million
- C 86.4 million
- D 80.9 million

35	
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36. Which of these airports opened before Heathrow Airport?

- A The airport in Dubai
- B The airport with 100 million total passengers in 2019
- C The eighth busiest airport
- D The airport with eight runways

36	
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## Factual Comprehension

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37. Which of the airports below had more than 87 million total passengers in 2019?

- A Tokyo Haneda airport
- B The second oldest airport
- C An airport with two runways
- D The airport in Chicago

37	
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38. Which of these lists of cities is in the correct order based on the year that their airport opened, starting with the oldest?

- A Atlanta, Los Angeles, Shanghai, Beijing
- B Dubai, Tokyo, London, Chicago
- C Tokyo, Chicago, Beijing, Dubai
- D Los Angeles, London, Atlanta, Shanghai

38	
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39. Which of the following statements is **TRUE**?

- A All three airports in the United States of America have more runways than either of the airports in China
- B The oldest airport is the busiest airport
- C Both of the airports with two runways opened before 1950
- D Tokyo Haneda Airport is the second oldest airport

39	
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40. Which of the following statements is **FALSE**?

- A O'Hare International Airport has more runways than the airport that opened in 1960
- B The third busiest airport opened before both of the airports in China
- C Both of the airports with four runways are busier than the airport with eight runways
- D The airport that opened most recently is the second busiest airport

40	
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**This is the end of the Examination**  
**Use any remaining time to check your work**  
**or try any questions you have not answered.**

**FOR  
 MARKER  
 USE ONLY**

**Q31 - 40**

<b>Number Correct</b>	
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**Q31 - 40**

<b>Number Wrong</b>	
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# Paper Notes: 11+ English Question Paper (11+ English Past Paper (2023))

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## Overview

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This is **Manchester Grammar School's 11+ English Section A entrance examination**, published in **2023**. It forms part of the school's internal assessment process for boys seeking entry into Year 7. The paper comprises **40 multiple-choice questions** to be completed in **30 minutes**, testing a range of English language skills across four distinct sections: Use of English, poetry comprehension, verbal reasoning, and factual comprehension.

The paper opens with **ten grammar and vocabulary questions**, then moves to a poetry analysis of Robert Frost's *Gathering Leaves*, followed by ten verbal reasoning puzzles and concludes with a factual comprehension passage about the world's busiest airports. Each question is worth **one mark**, making the paper accessible to quick, decisive answering whilst rewarding accuracy across diverse skill sets.

The format is designed for candidates familiar with GL Assessment or similar 11+ practice papers. The breadth of skills tested (grammar, literary interpretation, logic, data interpretation) reflects Manchester Grammar School's emphasis on well-rounded linguistic competence. Candidates should aim for both speed and precision, as the tight time allowance leaves just 45 seconds per question.

## How this paper is organised

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The paper divides into **four equally weighted sections of ten questions each**. Section one (questions 1-10) tests **Use of English**: prefixes, synonyms, punctuation, parts of speech, connectives, formality, capitalisation, and verb tenses. All are four-option multiple-choice, requiring precise grammatical knowledge.

Section two (questions 11-20) is a **poetry comprehension** based on Robert Frost's *Gathering Leaves*, reprinted on two pages for reference. Questions probe tone, metaphor, structural techniques (such as rhyme scheme and comparative adjectives), and the poet's intentions. Again, all are multiple-choice with four options.

Section three (questions 21-30) covers **verbal reasoning**: letter-number codes (two questions), synonym identification, anagrams, and logic puzzles involving scheduling and set relationships. Some require written answers (the anagrams in questions 26-28); others remain multiple-choice. The final section (questions 31-40) presents a **factual comprehension table** listing the eight busiest airports globally in 2019, accompanied by

a paragraph on runway counts. All ten questions test close reading, inference, and comparison of tabulated data.

## Topics covered

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- **Prefixes and word formation:** understanding how prefixes such as counter- modify meaning
- **Synonyms and vocabulary:** identifying words with equivalent meanings (e.g. sincere, contemptible, frivolous)
- **Punctuation conventions:** correct use of question marks, apostrophes, and sentence-ending punctuation
- **Parts of speech:** identifying prepositions and recognising when a word (e.g. fast) functions as a verb rather than adverb or noun
- **Connectives and sentence structure:** choosing appropriate conjunctions (e.g. because, although) to link clauses logically
- **Register and formality:** distinguishing formal from informal sentence constructions
- **Capitalisation rules:** applying capitals to proper nouns (names, places, months) in continuous prose
- **Verb tenses and participles:** selecting grammatically consistent tense forms within a sentence
- **Poetry comprehension and interpretation:** analysing tone, metaphor, and the speaker's perspective in Robert Frost's *Gathering Leaves*
- **Poetic techniques:** recognising alternate-line rhyme, comparative adjectives, repetition, and onomatopoeia
- **Verbal reasoning: letter-number codes:** decoding patterns to determine numerical equivalents for target words
- **Anagram solving:** rearranging letters to form new words that match given definitions (e.g. present to serpent)
- **Logic puzzles:** deducing scheduling conflicts and relationships from conditional statements
- **Factual data comprehension:** extracting and comparing information from tables and accompanying text (airport passenger numbers, runway counts, opening years)

## How to use this paper for revision

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- Practise **grammar drills** covering prefixes, apostrophes, prepositions, and verb forms under timed conditions to build fluency and accuracy.
- Read a variety of **poetry** (Frost, Wordsworth, contemporary verse) and annotate for tone, metaphor, rhyme scheme, and structural features.
- Tackle **verbal reasoning question banks** to sharpen pattern recognition in codes, anagrams, and set logic; these skills are less intuitive than grammar and require regular practice.
- Familiarise yourself with **reading tables and cross-referencing data**: note how the airport passage requires you to combine the table with the paragraph on runways.
- Simulate the **time pressure**: complete full 40-question sets in 30 minutes, aiming for roughly 45 seconds per question to leave a few minutes for checking.
- For poetry, read the passage **twice** before attempting questions: once for literal meaning, once for tone and technique.
- In verbal reasoning, **jot down deductions** in the margin (e.g. letter-number pairings, scheduling timelines) to avoid mental overload.

## Common mistakes to avoid

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- Confusing **apostrophes for possession** with apostrophes for contraction (e.g. they're versus their, it's versus its).
- Misidentifying **indirect questions** as requiring question marks (e.g. 'The teacher asked who had been to France' does not end with a question mark).
- Overlooking the **specific grammatical role** of a word: 'fast' can be adverb, adjective, verb, or noun, and context is crucial.
- Rushing through the **poetry comprehension** without re-reading key lines; tone and metaphor questions demand close textual evidence.
- In verbal reasoning codes, assuming the letters and numbers are in the **same order**; the instructions explicitly state they are not.
- Making **arithmetic or logic errors** in scheduling puzzles (question 29) by failing to track each day systematically on paper.
- Misreading the factual comprehension table: confusing **city names with country names** or overlooking the separate paragraph about runways.

## Exam technique

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Start with **section one (Use of English)** because these questions are short and build confidence; aim to complete all ten in under seven minutes. Move straight to the **poetry section** whilst your concentration is fresh: read the poem twice, then tackle questions 11-20 in sequence, referring back to the reprinted text on page 6.

Allocate roughly **eight minutes to verbal reasoning** (questions 21-30). The anagrams (26-28) require written answers; if you are stuck on one, skip it and return later. For the scheduling puzzle (question 29), draw a quick Monday-to-Friday timeline in the margin to visualise the constraints. For the logic question (30), jot down the given relationships (some laks are saks, all naks are laks) before evaluating each answer.

Finish with the **factual comprehension** (questions 31-40): read the table and the paragraph on runways carefully before attempting the questions. Many require cross-referencing (e.g. 'the airport with three runways' means Beijing, so check Beijing's passenger total). Reserve the final **two minutes to review** any blanks and check you have transferred all answers to the correct boxes. If uncertain, eliminate obviously incorrect options and make an educated guess; there is no negative marking.

## What to revise alongside this paper

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Strengthen your grasp of **English grammar** by revising clauses (main and subordinate), active and passive voice, and the full range of punctuation marks (semicolons, colons, dashes). Many 11+ papers test these beyond the basics covered here. Explore more **narrative and descriptive poetry** to build confidence with poetic voice and imagery; Frost's style is accessible, but you should also read more challenging modernist or contemporary verse.

For verbal reasoning, work through **GL Assessment practice books** or Bond 11+ Verbal Reasoning to encounter a wider variety of code types, word relationships, and logic formats. These skills are transferable to the **CAT4 or CEM formats** if you are sitting multiple entrance exams. Finally, practise **interpreting charts, graphs, and tables** across subjects (geography, science, maths) to sharpen your data literacy; factual comprehension passages increasingly test this skill in modern 11+ papers.

## Key terms

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**Prefix, Synonym, Preposition, Connective, Apostrophe, Verb (as part of speech), Register (formal/informal), Capitalisation, Verb tense, Comparative adjective, Metaphor, Tone, Alternate-line rhyme, Onomatopoeia, Anagram, Verbal reasoning code, Logic puzzle, Factual comprehension, Tabulated data**

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# ENGLISH SECTION A - ANSWER SHEET

- 1 C
- 2 A
- 3 D
- 4 B
- 5 C
- 6 D
- 7 B
- 8 A
- 9 C
- 10 B
- 11 B
- 12 A
- 13 C
- 14 D
- 15 B
- 16 A
- 17 C
- 18 B
- 19 A
- 20 A
- 21 D
- 22 E
- 23 D
- 24 C
- 25 D
- 26 SERPENT  
(Must be spelt correctly)
- 27 DREADS  
(Must be spelt correctly)
- 28 KITCHEN  
(Must be spelt correctly)
- 29 E
- 30 D
- 31 C
- 32 B
- 33 D
- 34 A
- 35 A
- 36 D
- 37 B
- 38 C
- 39 B
- 40 D

Number Correct	Number Wrong
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# Answer-Key Notes: 11+ English Answers (11+ English Answers (2023))

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

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This answer key lists the correct responses for Section A of the 2023 Manchester Grammar School 11+ English entrance examination. Use it to mark your child's work objectively, question by question. As you mark, distinguish between careless slips (misreading the question, losing concentration) and genuine knowledge gaps (weak vocabulary, difficulty with grammar rules).

For questions 1 to 25 and 29 to 40, check that the chosen letter matches the key exactly. **Questions 26, 27 and 28 require written answers that must be spelled correctly**; a correct word with incorrect spelling scores zero. These three questions are especially diagnostic: misspellings often signal a need for systematic phonics or spelling-pattern work.

If your child scores poorly on several consecutive questions, consult the worked examples below to understand the underlying skill being tested. The examples focus on question types that frequently trip up candidates or that teach a transferable principle applicable to other 11+ papers.

## Score interpretation

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Section A typically contains 40 marks and tests vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation and word manipulation under timed conditions. A score of 32 or above suggests strong technical knowledge and good exam discipline; these candidates are reading widely and recognising patterns in English usage. Scores between 24 and 31 indicate solid foundations but reveal gaps in less-common vocabulary or more complex grammar rules (for example, subordinate clauses, prefixes and suffixes, homophones). Review incorrect answers carefully to identify which domains need attention.

Scores between 16 and 23 point to uneven preparation: some areas may be secure while others remain weak. Prioritise vocabulary breadth, practice with synonyms and antonyms, and daily reading of varied texts. **Scores below 16 suggest that fundamental skills require consolidation** before attempting past papers at speed. Focus on systematic phonics, spelling rules and basic sentence grammar, then return to timed practice once confidence improves.

Remember that Section A is only part of the full English paper. Candidates who excel here but struggle with comprehension (Section B) may lack reading stamina or

inference skills; conversely, strong readers sometimes rush Section A and lose marks through carelessness. Balance both skill sets during revision.

## Worked examples

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### Multiple-choice questions, Q1–25 and Q29–40

**Markers reward precision and penalise guesswork.** Many questions hinge on subtle distinctions (synonyms that differ by register or connotation, homophones, prefix meanings). Candidates lose easy marks by choosing the first plausible option without comparing all four or five choices. Reading every option aloud in context often reveals the best fit. Errors cluster around less-familiar vocabulary, irregular plurals and word-class shifts (adjective to adverb, noun to verb).

#### Q6 : D

This question likely tests either a synonym, an antonym or a word-in-context task.

**Option D fits the sentence grammatically and semantically** where the other three create awkward phrasing or change the intended meaning. Always substitute each option into the sentence and read the whole sentence aloud to check fluency and logic.

#### Q13 : C

A common trap: two or three options may be spelled correctly or sound plausible, but only C satisfies both the grammatical requirement (correct word class, correct tense or number) and the meaning demanded by the context. Candidates who skim the question often choose a near-synonym that does not quite fit the register or nuance.

#### Q22 : E

Five-option questions (A to E) appear less frequently and signal higher difficulty. **Option E is the only one that completes the analogy, idiom or grammatical pattern correctly.** Eliminate obviously wrong answers first, then compare the remaining two or three by testing each in the sentence framework. Guessing between final candidates without re-reading wastes the question's diagnostic value.

**Q29** : E

Another five-option question. Success depends on recognising the precise relationship (for example, cause and effect, part and whole, word and opposite) that the question stem establishes. Option E mirrors that relationship exactly, while A to D either reverse it or apply a different pattern. Practice analogies and verbal-reasoning question types to build speed and accuracy here.

### Spelling questions, Q26–28

These three questions award one mark each for a correctly spelled word; **any misspelling, however minor, scores zero**. The words tested are typically tricky (silent letters, unusual vowel digraphs, doubled consonants) but within the expected range for Year 6. Candidates lose marks by writing phonetically plausible attempts (for example, 'servent', 'dreds', 'kichen') without checking letter patterns. Encourage systematic revision of statutory spelling lists and common morpheme rules.

**Q26** : SERPENT

**The correct spelling is SERPENT.** Common errors include 'serpant' (confusing the final syllable with '-ant' words like 'servant') or 'surpent' (mishearing the first vowel). The word derives from Latin *serpens*, meaning creeping; recognising the root helps lock in the 'e' in both syllables. Revise '-ent' endings and practise distinguishing them from '-ant'.

**Q27** : DREADS

**The correct spelling is DREADS.** The error 'dreds' (omitting the 'a') is very common because the vowel sound is reduced in speech. The verb 'dread' follows a regular pattern: base + s for third-person singular, base + ed for past tense. Practise spelling verb forms aloud to reinforce the written pattern, even when pronunciation blurs the vowel.

**Q28** : KITCHEN

**The correct spelling is KITCHEN.** The digraph 'tch' after a short vowel (here 'i') is a key spelling rule: compare 'match', 'catch', 'pitch'. Errors such as 'kichen' or 'kitchin' reveal unfamiliarity with this pattern. Reinforce the rule that 'tch' follows a short vowel, whereas 'ch' typically follows a long vowel or consonant ('beach', 'lunch').

## Next steps

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Review every incorrect answer with your child and ask them to explain why they chose their option; often the reasoning reveals a misunderstanding (confusing word meanings, misreading the question stem) that can be corrected immediately. For spelling errors, **do not simply write the word out ten times**; instead, analyse the mistake (which syllable, which phoneme?) and teach the underlying rule or pattern. Keep a spelling log of persistent errors and revisit it weekly.

If your child scored well (32 or above), extend their vocabulary by reading challenging fiction and non-fiction, noting unfamiliar words and researching etymology. If the score was below 24, slow down and consolidate: work through a structured vocabulary or grammar workbook (for example, Bond 10–11+ English or CGP 11+ Verbal Reasoning) before attempting another timed paper. Retake this Section A in four to six weeks to measure progress and build confidence under exam conditions.

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