



BANCROFT'S SCHOOL
11+ EXAMINATION

English 11+ Sample Paper 1
Reading Booklet

Section A: A Chance Encounter

In this passage, the narrator, Gabriel, is playing in his back garden when he meets Finnigan.

SAMPLE

I remember my first sight of him – the sound and scavenger look of him – surrounded by summer. Neither of us was older than nine or ten. I was running a car along the garden fence when Finnigan appeared. At first I pretended not to see him, but the car beneath my fingers stopped moving. I slid a glance at him. At school we had seen a wildlife film, and this boy was a scruffy lion. He didn't move or say a thing but I knew, just from his watching, that he could sever my arm. We were the same height and same age and built along similar leggy lines, but he was a lion while I was a small moth. He swiped a fly from his face. "You're that boy," he said.

"...What boy?"

"You know. That boy. Everybody knows."

I pressed my thumb on the bonnet of the car. I looked my questioner up and down. His clothes were shabby and ill-fitting. The fly had returned to his face. "You're the kook* boy," he explained. "Your mother and father are kooks too."

I considered the situation, his evident supremacy. I laughed. "Kooks," I said, and found it a sweet word. I deliberately hopped from one foot to the other, wagging my head. "Kooks," I chirruped again, to prove I'd taken no offence.

"Your mother's a witch," he said. "Everybody knows."

There seemed no response to this so I smiled, pretended my knee itched and attended to scratching it. The gypsy boy watched silently, the fly sniffing the corner of his mouth. I had never seen him before and was honoured that a stranger should have noticed my family. I didn't want him to go away. I asked, "How come you don't go to school?"

"Why would I?" he replied.

His eyes returned to the car parked on the fence railing. I poked it so it rattled forward. My father's sister Sarah had sent the car in the mail. The plaything had so far managed to escape my mother's usual confiscation. The visitor's eyes lingered on the car until I felt a twitch of nerves – then, mercifully, his gaze moved on to the house. I smelt the paint on the fence, the heat in the leaves, the parched conclusion of the afternoon. The boy, so close, smelt of nothing. He slipped a fist between the fence and asked, "What do I have in my hand?"

I looked at the fist curled under my nose. His fingers were brown as a conker, the skin on the knuckles broken. In my mind's eye I pictured what such fingers could hide. A tooth, a stone, a beetle. "Money?"

He smiled. "You cheated." His fingers unfurled, there lay three damp coins. I had never seen such riches in the palm of a boy. "Where did you get it?" I asked.

"Took it from mother's purse." His smile grew.

"Won't she find out? You'll get in trouble."

"She won't find out. Not unless you tell." Then, unexpectedly, he said, "Do us a favour?"

"Yes I will! What?"

"Hide this money in your pocket."

I shied away, gormless. "How come?"

"No pockets." He slapped his trousers. "Just until Saturday."

My throat went dry. He stood there saying nothing while I flailed with my conscience.

Vocabulary help:

*kook – crazy person

When you have read this passage please use the booklet marked **Section A** to answer the question.



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English 11+ Sample Paper 1

Section A

Time allowed 25 minutes

First name	
Last name	
Date of birth	
Name of my school	

Instructions:

There are different types of questions. The space given for your answer shows you how you need to answer each question:

- For some questions you must write only one word or phrase.
- Other questions need longer answers in one or more sentences.
- A few questions ask you to write at greater length.
- The number of marks available for each question will also show you how many points you need to make.

Try to answer all the questions.

Write neatly.

If you finish within the allocated time, go back and check your answers.

Section A: Reading and Understanding

Part 1

These questions refer to the passage called ***A Chance Encounter*** which is in your reading booklet. The narrator, Gabriel, is the boy who is telling the story.

1. What is the narrator doing when he first sees Finnigan?

.....[1]

2. Look at lines 3-4. Name **two** things which the narrator does when he has noticed Finnigan.

.....
.....[2]

3. Look at lines 5-8. Why does the narrator call Finnigan a “scruffy lion”?

.....
.....
.....[3]

4. Look at line 15. Which of the following options is closest in meaning to ‘evident supremacy’? Tick one.

Clear enjoyment

Obvious power

Apparent embarrassment

Stupid ignorance

[1]

5. Look at lines 15-17. Name **two** things that the narrator does to try to show that he is not affected by Finnigan's comments.

.....

.....

.....[2]

6. In lines 26-27, what is meant by "the plaything had so far managed to escape my mother's usual confiscation"?

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

7. Look at lines 45-46. What do you think the writer/narrator means by "flailed with my conscience"?

.....

.....

.....[2]



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English 11+ Sample Paper 1

Section B

Time allowed 20 minutes

First name	
Last name	
Date of birth	
Name of my school	

Instructions:

You should use about 5 minutes for planning and 15 minutes for writing.

You will be awarded marks for organising your writing well and making the essay interesting.

Be careful with spelling, punctuation and paragraphing; you will earn more marks if your writing is accurate.

Use all of the time allowed.

Section B: Essay title: Write about a time when friendship was important to you

In your response, you might want to consider:

- What the qualities of a good friend are
- Times that these qualities are needed
- How a meaningful friendship might impact our lives

[20 marks]

You do not have to use these bullet points – your own ideas are equally as valid, as long as you keep the essay title in mind. Your response can be real or imagined.

Use the box below to plan your essay.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal dotted lines. A large, light gray watermark reading "SAMPLE" is oriented diagonally across the page.

