



MERCHANT TAYLORS'  
School

**Entrance Examination**

**January 2021**

**ENGLISH READING  
BOOKLET**

**You should also have a READING PAPER and READING BOOKLET.  
You have 1 HOUR to complete both papers.**

# READING BOOKLET

**Read the following passage carefully all the way through, and then answer the questions that follow. Write your answers in the answer booklet.**

*This is an extract from Benjamin Zephaniah's novel Refugee Boy. The main character, Alem, thinks his father has brought him to England for a holiday. However, Alem's father has brought him here to escape their war-torn home in Eritrea, East Africa. Alem's father abandons him almost immediately and the Refugee Council find Alem temporary accommodation in a children's home near Reading. Here, he meets Sarah, a staff member, for the first time.*

"My name is Sarah and there are another seven members of staff here. All the boys call us by our first names. The staff are never all here at the same time, of course, some prefer night duty, some the day shift, but you should find that all the staff are friendly and willing to help you."

5 Alem showed no emotion as he looked around the drab office. He had only one thing on his mind and he said it: "When am I leaving here?"

"I must be completely honest with you now: I don't know – no one knows. What I do know is that Mariam and her colleagues will try their best to make sure that you don't stay here a moment longer than you need to – but while you are here I promise that we will try to make  
10 you as comfortable as possible."

Alem heard the sounds that came from her mouth but he was not listening to her and she knew it.

"Come on," she said, "bring your bag, I'll show you around."

15 They left the office and began to walk the timber-panelled corridors. In places the highly polished wooden floor creaked and as they progressed Alem began to hear activity in the distance.

"The staff offices are out of bounds to the boys – unless they are invited, of course, but most of the staff spend very little time in the offices anyway."

20 They turned a corner and she opened a side door. The noise hit Alem; it was like an explosive attack upon his ears. The large room was full of boys. In one corner four boys played table football with a small group cheering them on. In another corner a group of boys took turns using hand-held consoles to play each other at Streetfighter on a television screen. Two boys were chasing each other around the room for no apparent reason, while others watched a football match on another television. On the other side of the room,  
25 board games were being played and other boys just stood around shouting at each other. From all this tumult two male adults emerged and headed towards Alem and Sarah. Sarah had fully entered the room but Alem still stood near the door.

"Come in, Alem," said one of the men as he stretched his hand out towards him.

30 Alem was very surprised by the man's very casual use of his name. Alem lifted his right hand nervously, he wasn't used to shaking the hands of adults, but he went for it. The man shook vigorously, too vigorously for Alem's liking.

"My name's Tom, Tom Whittaker but the boys just call me Tom. How are you?"

"I am fine, thank you," Alem replied unhappily.

35 Tom was in his late forties, his brown hair tinged with grey. He was wearing purple corduroys that looked as if they had been handed down from one generation to another and a large black and white jumper that looked as if he had wrapped a whole sheep around himself. He looked genuinely excited to see Alem, which made Alem worried; he wasn't in the mood for excitement.

40 "Well, Alem," Tom said, looking around the room, "these guys may look wild but they're all right when you get to know them; we have our problems but who doesn't?"

The other man stretched out his hand. He was in his late twenties, in jeans and a sweatshirt, and had completely shaved off his hair.

"Hello, my name's Dave."

Alem shook his hand.

45 "I'm new here, so we're kind of in the same boat. It's only my second day."

Alem had another glance around. Since leaving Eritrea he had not seen so many young people in one place. He realised how much he missed the sound of his own generation but he wondered how he would get on with these teenagers, they all seemed so confident. He could see that the boys came from all racial backgrounds, he had never seen such a mix of  
50 boys in one place. Then he saw one boy who was alone, sitting on a chair away from the other boys just staring at the wall in front of him with his eyes wide open.

Tom noticed that Alem was looking at the boy.

"That's Mustafa, nice boy but he's a bit of a loner," Tom said.



MERCHANT TAYLORS'  
School

**Entrance Examination  
January 2021**

# **ENGLISH READING PAPER**

**PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME BELOW AND MAKE IT CLEAR!**

**SURNAME:** .....

**FIRST NAME:** .....

**SCHOOL:** .....

**PAPER – READING: 30 MARKS**

**PAPER 2 – WRITING: 30 MARKS**

**TOTAL: 60 MARKS**

**You should also have a WRITING PAPER and READING BOOKLET.  
You have 1 HOUR to complete both papers.**

## INSTRUCTIONS

- This is the **READING PAPER**. You should also have a **WRITING PAPER** and **READING BOOKLET**.
- You should aim to spend **30 MINUTES** on each paper.
- You are advised to read through the separate **READING BOOKLET** before answering the questions.
- Answer **ALL** questions in the spaces provided in this booklet.
- Check your work carefully at the end.

## PAPER ONE: READING

Read the passage from the separate reading booklet and then complete the following tasks.

1. Put the following items in order (use the numbers 1-5): [5 marks]

- Alem is shown around the children’s home. ....
- Alem notices one boy who was sitting separately from the others. ....
- Alem sees the recreation room for the first time. ....
- Alem is introduced to the children’s home in Sarah’s office. ....
- Alem shakes hands with two of the staff members. ....

2. In your own words, describe what Alem sees as he is shown the recreation room in lines 19-27. [4 marks]

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....







MERCHANT TAYLORS'  
School

**Entrance Examination  
January 2021**

# **ENGLISH WRITING PAPER**

**PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME BELOW AND MAKE IT CLEAR!**

**SURNAME:** .....

**FIRST NAME:** .....

**SCHOOL:** .....

**PAPER – READING: 30 MARKS**

**PAPER 2 – WRITING: 30 MARKS**

**TOTAL: 60 MARKS**

**You should also have a READING PAPER and READING BOOKLET.  
You have 1 HOUR to complete both papers.**

## PAPER TWO: WRITING

- Write in full sentences.
- Organise your work into paragraphs.
- Plan and write in this booklet.
- Marks are awarded for accurate spelling and punctuation.
- You should spend some time planning and checking your work.

Choose **ONE** of the following:

**Either:**

**1. What happens next?**

Carry on from where the passage ends.

- *Don't write about too many different things and avoid repeating parts from the passage.*
- *Imagine what Alem does next, thinking about how he has been feeling in the story so far.*

**Or:**

**2. Describe a character's first sighting of a place or country that they have never been to before.**

- *Choose any place or country.*
- *Remember to use creative description to entertain and excite the reader.*
- *Include at least one big image and focus in on key details.*

For a third option, please turn over.

Or:

**3. Describe the image given below:**

- *Don't tell a story: make sure you only describe the single moment shown in the picture.*
- *Remember to use creative description to entertain and excite the reader.*



**TOTAL MARKS FOR PAPER TWO: 30 MARKS**









