



EPSOM

COLLEGE

English 16+ Scholarship Sample Paper

1 hour

Materials needed:

- Question Paper
- A4 lined paper

Instructions:

- Read through the poem and questions carefully
- Answer Q1 and **either** Q2 **or** Q3.
- You should spend an equal amount of time on each task
- Write your name clearly at the top of your answer sheets
- Use blue/black ink
- Check your work thoroughly

On Her Blindness

My mother could not bear being blind,
to be honest. One shouldn't say it.

One should hide the fact that catastrophic
handicaps are hell; one tends to hear,

publicly, from those who bear it
like a Roman, or somehow find joy

in the fight. She turned to me, once,
in a Paris restaurant, still not finding

the food on the plate with her fork,
or not so that it stayed on (try it

in a pitch-black room) and whispered,
'It's living hell, to be honest, Adam.

If I gave up hope of a cure, I'd bump
myself off.' I don't recall what I replied,

but it must have been the usual sop,
inadequate: the locked-in son.

She kept her dignity, though, even when
bumping into walls like a dodgem; her sense

of direction did not improve, when cast
inward. 'No built-in compass,' as my father

joked. Instead, she pretended to ignore the
void, or laughed it off.

Or saw things she couldn't see
and smiled, as when the kids would offer

the latest drawing, or show her their new toy –
so we'd forget, at times, that the long,

slow slide had finished in a vision
as blank as stone. For instance, she'd continued

to drive the old Lanchester
long after it was safe

down the Berkshire lanes. She'd visit
exhibitions, admire films, sink into television

while looking the wrong way.
Her last week alive (a fortnight back)

was golden weather, of course,
the autumn trees around the hospital

ablaze with colour, the ground royal
with leaf-fall. I told her this, forgetting,

as she sat too weak to move, staring
at nothing. 'Oh yes, I know,' she said,

'it's lovely out there.' Dying has made her
no more sightless, but now she can't

pretend. Her eyelids were closed
in the coffin; it was up to us to believe

she was watching, somewhere, in the end.

(Adam Thorpe 1956-)

Complete task (1) below, and then **either** (2) **or** (3). You should spend an equal amount of time on each task.

1. Explore how the speaker feels about his mother's disability. **(15 marks)**

And **either**

2. 'The simplicity makes the poem more powerful.' Discuss this poem in light of this statement. **(15 marks)**

or

3. Discuss the poet's use of imagery in this poem. **(15 marks)**

TOTAL MARK FOR PAPER = 30 marks

For Question 1 AND 2 or 3

Please refer to the Specific Marking Guidance when applying this marking grid.

AO1 = bullet point 1		AO2 = bullet point 2	
Level	Mark	Descriptor (AO1, AO2, AO4)	
	0	No rewardable material.	
Level 1	1-3	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes little reference to text with limited organisation of ideas. Limited use of appropriate concepts and terminology with frequent errors and lapses of expression. Uses a narrative or descriptive approach that shows limited knowledge of text and how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows a lack of understanding of the writer's craft. 	
Level 2	4-6	General understanding/exploration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes general points, identifying some literary techniques with general explanation of effects. Aware of some appropriate concepts and terminology. Organises and expresses ideas with clarity, although still has errors and lapses. Gives surface readings of text relating to how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows general understanding by commenting on straightforward elements of the writer's craft. 	
Level 3	7-9	Clear relevant application/exploration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a clear response using relevant textual examples. Relevant use of terminology and concepts. Creates a logical, clear structure with few errors and lapses in expression. Demonstrates knowledge of how meanings are shaped in texts with consistent analysis. Shows clear understanding of the writer's craft. 	
Level 4	10-12	Discriminating controlled application/exploration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructs a controlled argument with fluently embedded examples. Discriminating use of concepts and terminology. Controls structures with precise cohesive transitions and carefully chosen language. Demonstrates discriminating understanding of how meanings are shaped in texts. Analyses, in a controlled way, the nuances and subtleties of the writer's craft. 	
Level 5	13-15	Critical and evaluative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents a critical evaluative argument with sustained textual examples. Evaluates the effects of literary features with sophisticated use of concepts and terminology. Uses sophisticated structure and expression. Exhibits a critical evaluation of the ways meanings are shaped in texts. Displays a sophisticated understanding of the writer's craft. 	