

Extract from 'The War of Jenkins' Ear' by Michael Morpurgo

Christopher, the new boy at the boarding school in the novel, has run away on his first night. The following day he is returned to the school by his mother.

The car stayed outside the front door all that afternoon. There was only one way Toby was going to find out what was going on and he was determined to try. His classroom opened into the oak-panelled hall that was the heart of the school. It served variously as an assembly hall every morning, a cinema on Sunday evenings, and a library. The wide steps that led from the hall were known as the Bloody Steps. Carpeted in deep crimson, with polished brass stair rods, they led to the Headmaster's, Mr Rudolph, study.

Rudolph's study. To be summoned up those dreaded steps meant only one thing – the cane. Everyone knew that if you stood at the bottom of the Bloody Steps, by the bookcases, and pretended to be looking for a book, you could often hear what was going on inside the study. But how was he going to manage to bluff his way into the hall in the first place? Mr Cramer may have looked dodderly but he was wily, and you couldn't get out of his maths class that easily. He wasn't going to be fooled by the usual lame excuses – they might prove effective with the younger, greener teachers, especially with the French mistress, Madame Lafayette who taught art too and wore sandals and long flowery skirts. Either she was credulous in anything she was told or she didn't mind half the class being absent at the same time. Mr Cramer wasn't like that.

It took Toby half an hour to think up his scheme. It had risks but it was worth it. He would try it. He put up his hand. 'Please, sir,' he coughed and sniffed as best he could. 'Please, sir, it's my hay fever.'

'I didn't know you had hay fever, Jenkins.'

'Only sometimes, sir. Matron says that if I feel it coming on, I've got to take my tablets.' He hoped he needn't say any more. Matron was the key that opened most doors with teachers. Just the mention of her name was often enough, and so it proved this time. 'Very well, Jenkins. Two minutes.' Toby closed the classroom door behind him and found himself alone in the hall. He was quite confident that Mr Cramer wouldn't check his story with Matron. He could already hear voices.

He stole across the polished floor, unable to stop his sandals squeaking as he went. He peered round the corner. Christopher was sitting on the settle, motionless, his hands on his knees like the statue of an Egyptian pharaoh. The study door opened suddenly and Christopher's mother was coming out. Toby had just enough time to back out of sight along the bookcase. He crouched down and crawled under, backwards. There was nowhere else to hide. 'One thing I'm sure of, Headmaster,' he heard Christopher's mother say, 'is that once he has made a promise, he keeps it. He has promised me and he has promised you that he will never again try to run away. Isn't that right dear?' 'Yes, Mother.' Christopher's voice was quite calm.

Sixième et Cinquième Entry Test

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

You must complete sections A and B. You should spend 45 minutes on Section A and 45 minutes on Section B. Make sure that you write clearly and neatly.

Section A: Comprehension (20 marks)

Read the extract from 'The War of Jenkins' Ear' and answer the following questions. **You should write your answers in complete sentences using your own words.** Pay careful attention to punctuation, spelling and grammar.

You should spend 45 minutes on this section.

1. What else was the oak panelled hall used for apart from a classroom? (1 mark)
2. Why are the stairs called the Bloody Steps? (2 marks)
3. What was the pupils' attitude to visiting the Headmaster's study? (2 marks)
4. How was Toby's teacher Mr Cramer different to the French teacher Mme Lafayette? (2 marks)
5. What excuse does Toby use to leave Mr Cramer's class? (1 mark)
6. Explain what the following quotation suggests, 'Matron was the key that opened most doors with teachers'. (2 marks)
7. In your own words, explain how Christopher was sitting. (2 marks)
8. From what you have read, what sort of person is Christopher? (2 marks)
9. Match the words on the left with their meanings on the right. Use the extract to help: find the words in the passage to help you understand them in context.
Remember to copy your full answers onto your answer paper (6 marks)

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| dodderly | tricked |
| wily | believes easily/trusting |
| summoned | weak/pathetic |
| fooled | cunning/crafty |
| credulous | unsteady/unstable |
| lame | ordered to appear |

Section B: Creative Writing (20 marks)

You should aim to spend **45 minutes** on this section.

An unexpected visitor (someone you know or someone you have never met before)

In the first paragraph write about what you were doing when the visitor arrived.
In the second paragraph describe the arrival of the visitor and how you felt.
In the third paragraph write about what happens next.

Please follow these instructions:

- Write in the first person (I).
- Write in paragraphs. Please leave a line between each paragraph.
- Include plenty of descriptions to add detail to your writing.
- Make your account original and interesting: use your imagination
- Write as accurately as you can. Leave 5 minutes at the end of the test to check your work.
- You should aim to write *at least* 200 words (over half a side of A4)

End of test.