



Shrewsbury School

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE EXAMINATION 2018

ENGLISH: Literature (1 hour)

Instructions to candidates:

- The quality of your answer and therefore your close reading of the printed texts will be assessed: you should think carefully before writing and perhaps briefly plan your answer.
- In answering the question, you should pay close attention to spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation.
- It is advised that you should spend no more than 20 of the available minutes reading and marking up the texts, with the remaining 40 minutes being used to plan and write your answer.
- Answer on lined paper.

READ CAREFULLY the two poems attached overleaf on page three: *The School in August* by Philip Larkin, and *Thug*.

Then answer the following **QUESTION**:

ESSAY: Compare the ways in which the poets vividly portray the experience of education in these two poems.

In answering the question you should pay particular attention to:

- Your personal reaction to the poems;
- The language and images that are used;
- The way the poems are structured;
- The tone of the poems;
- The message you think the poets are trying to convey.

Try to write as much as you can in the time allowed.

[30 marks]

Text One: *The School in August* by Philip Larkin (1922-1985)
This poem is set in a girls' school.

The cloakroom pegs are empty now,
And locked the classroom door,
The hollow desks are lined with dust,
And slow across the floor
A sunbeam creeps between the chairs
Till the sun shines no more.

Who did their hair before this glass?
Who scratched 'Elaine loves Jill'
One drowsy summer sewing-class
With scissors on the sill?
Who practised this piano
Whose notes are now so still?

Ah, notices are taken down,
And scorebooks stowed away,
And seniors grow tomorrow
From the juniors today,
And even swimming groups can fade,
Games mistresses turn grey.

Text Two: *Thug*
This poem is about a boy's experience of school.

School began it.
There he felt
the tongue's salt lash
raising its welt¹
on a child's heart.
Ten years ruled
by violence left him
thoroughly schooled,
nor did he fail
to understand
the blow of the
headmaster's hand.
That hand his hand
round the cosh² curled.
What rules the classroom
rocks the world.

¹ *welt* : a ridge or scar on the skin

² *cosh* : a short heavy stick used as a weapon