



Shrewsbury
School

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE EXAMINATION 2023 ENTRY

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 pages three and four: *Blessing* and *War Photographer*.

Then answer the following **QUESTION:**

ESSAY: Compare the ways the writers present powerful images in *Blessing* and *War Photographer*.

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: *Blessing* by Imtiaz Dharker (b. 1954)

The skin cracks like a pod.
There never is enough water.

Imagine the drip of it,
the small splash, echo
in a tin mug,
the voice of a kindly god.

Sometimes, the sudden rush
of fortune. The municipal pipe bursts,
silver crashes to the ground
and the flow has found
a roar of tongues. From the huts,
a congregation: every man woman
child for streets around
butts in, with pots,
brass, copper, aluminium,
plastic buckets,
frantic hands,

and naked children
screaming in the liquid sun,
their highlights polished to perfection,
flashing light,
as the blessing sings
over their small bones.

Text Two: *War Photographer* by Carol Ann Duffy (b. 1955)

In his dark room he is finally alone
with spools of suffering set out in ordered rows.
The only light is red and softly glows,
as though this were a church and he
a priest preparing to intone a Mass.
Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh. All flesh is grass.

He has a job to do. Solutions slop in trays
beneath his hands, which did not tremble then
though seem to now. Rural England. Home again
to ordinary pain which simple weather can dispel,
to fields which don't explode beneath the feet
of running children in a nightmare heat.

Something is happening. A stranger's features
faintly start to twist before his eyes,
a half-formed ghost. He remembers the cries
of this man's wife, how he sought approval
without words to do what someone must
and how the blood stained into foreign dust.

A hundred agonies in black and white
from which his editor will pick out five or six
for Sunday's supplement. The reader's eyeballs prick
with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers.
From the aeroplane he stares impassively at where
he earns his living and they do not care.