

THE LIVERPOOL INSTITUTE

Margaret Bryce Smith Scholarships, 1961

ENGLISH

Time allowed: 2 hours

1. Read this passage carefully and then answer the questions which follow:

Uncle Thomas was the first to draw my attention to the possibilities of the old bureau. He was pottering about the house one afternoon, having ordered me to keep at his heels for company - he was a man who hated to be left one minute alone - when his eye fell on it. 'H'm! Sheraton!' he remarked. (He had a smattering of most things, this uncle, especially the vocabularies.) Then he let down the flap, and examined the empty pigeon-holes and dusty panelling. 'Fine bit of inlay,' he went on. 'Good work, all of it. I know the sort. There's a secret drawer in there somewhere.' Then, as I breathlessly drew near, he suddenly exclaimed: 'By Jove, I do want a smoke!' And, wheeling round, he abruptly fled for the garden, leaving me with the cup dashed from my lips. What a strange thing, I mused, was this smoking, that takes a man suddenly, be he in the court, the camp, or the grove. Would it be even so with myself, I wondered, in those unknown grown-up years to come?

But I had no time to waste in vain speculations. My whole being was still vibrating to those magic syllables 'secret drawer'. For, besides its own special bliss, who ever heard of a secret drawer with nothing in it?

- a. What word of your own would you use to sum up Uncle Thomas's treatment of his nephew? Give as many reasons as you can for your choice.
 - b. Which word in the first few lines of the passage shows that Uncle Thomas had nothing in particular to do that afternoon?
 - c. What do the words 'empty pigeon-holes and dusty panelling' tell you about the bureau?
 - d. What words tell you of the boy's interest when he first hears of the secret drawer?
 - e. What do you understand by 'with the cup dashed from my lips'?
 - f. What do you think is meant by 'be he in the court, the camp, the grove'?
 - g. In your own words, say what you think the boy's attitude to his uncle was, giving your reasons.
 - h. What 'vain speculations' momentarily occupied the boy?
 - i. What is the 'special bliss' of a secret drawer?
 - j. Choose three words from the passage which describe swift movement.
2. Write about two pages on one of the following:
 - a. A story entitled 'Footsteps'.
 - b. Early morning on the Beach.
 - c. A story beginning: 'You can imagine our surprise when Father began to dig in our new garden and found.....'
 - d. One of the clowns in a visiting circus takes ill and you volunteer to go in his place. Describe your adventures.

3. Read the following poem carefully, and then answer the questions below:

He pauses a moment and looks at the earth far under,
Featureless, small, and those steep miles between;
His spirit shrinks, but he grips and with closed eyes throws
Bodily outward; his breath is snatched up as he goes
Hurling, a blunt weight, downward through the tense storm
Of air

.. A pull

That lifts him to an abrupt stillness, and then
Thought clears, his body loosens, he glides smoothly as a gull.

- a. Of what do you think this is a description?
 - b. Why do you think 'he pauses a moment'?
 - c. Describe what he sees in your own words.
 - d. What effect does this view have on him?
 - e. How does he overcome it?
 - f. What do you think he has pulled?
 - g. Write a sentence describing his sensations before the pull, in your own words but as vividly as possible.
 - h. Write another sentence which describes clearly what happens to him after the pull.
4. Read the following short sentences:

Peter likes Paul. Peter did not invite Paul to his party. Peter forgot to send Paul an invitation card. Peter's mother had bought some invitation cards from Woolworth's.

Now compose one sentence, combining all this information, but avoiding using 'joining words' like 'and' or 'but'. You may change the order of the facts if you wish.

5. Many words in English have almost, but not quite, the same meaning. Explain the difference between the two words in each of the following pairs:
- a. stupidity, ignorance;
 - b. enthusiasm, interest;
 - c. loneliness, solitude.
6. The following three headlines are taken from popular newspapers:
- a. Leading Red Talks.
 - b. Soccer Ace Quits.
 - c. Ike Slams Mr. K.

Explain what each of these news items is likely to be about.

7. Some words are more vivid than others. Can you say what effect is added if:
- a. 'to grope' is used instead of 'to search';
 - b. 'to flutter' instead of 'to fly';
 - c. 'to lounge' instead of 'to sit';
 - d. 'to trudge' instead of 'to walk'?