

Cambridge Secondary 1 Progression Test

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Cambridge
Secondary 1

English Paper 2

Stage 9

V1



UNIVERSITY *of* CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

Section A: Reading

Read this passage from *Rescuing Dad* by Pete Johnson and then answer the questions in the question paper.

It was far worse than I'd expected. I mean, I knew it was going to be bad. But my school report was nothing short of tragic.

I'll spare you the gory details. It'll only upset you. Let me just say that I'd never seen so many Ds and Es on one page in my entire life.

Actually, I think I'm pretty intelligent but not when it comes to school subjects. I'm clever in other ways, though. Like I'm very observant. I notice things. I'm sure I'd make an excellent detective or private eye. I started imagining myself solving all these mysteries. I really cheered myself up. 5

Then I glanced down at that dire report and it was back to reality. My Mum was going to take one look at this and start charging about like a rhino with a sore head. To make matters worse, Claire, my younger sister, is adored by all her teachers... 10

If only I could lose this report or say it had been snatched away by a passing Alsatian dog. One boy in my class really did get his report chewed up by a gerbil. The trouble is, I don't know any gerbils. And it's too late to improve my social life now. Anyway, schools have copies of everything, don't they? They've probably got the report of Joe Miles – yes, that's me – up on the noticeboard so staff can throw darts at it. 15

So what can I do? I could try and alter it. The trouble is, I'd have to change just about every line. Or I could just forget to show it to my Mum. That was very tempting. Only there's this silly slip your parents have to sign to prove they've read it. And anyway, my Mum always knows when reports are due. It's as if she's got special antennae. 20

Mum arrived a few minutes later with Claire, who'd just had a music lesson. I smiled merrily at them.

'Did you have a funky day, Mum?'

'A very tiring one,' she sighed. 'Will you set the table, Joe?'

'Sure, no problem.'

I set the table for tea quite superbly. And all the time I was waiting for a question that never came. 25

It was incredible. Mum had forgotten all about my report. This was a moment for the record books. I think she must have been very flustered about her work. She shares a job at a bank with this other woman. Only the other woman has been away ill so all her work has come to Mum. This was pretty horrible for Mum, but it got me off the hook, temporarily at least. 30

The evening rolled on. I was sweating now, just dreading the moment when Mum's memory came rushing back.

About half past seven Dad came home. He put his case in the hall, went upstairs, got changed, read Claire a bit of a story and then came downstairs again and sank down into his chair in the sitting room.

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Mum brought him in his meal on a tray. She used to talk with him while he was eating. And Dad was always full of funny stories about the people he'd met. He'd even mimic their voices. But now he hardly says anything to her. And she usually goes back into the kitchen and listens to a discussion about the state of the economy or something equally depressing on the radio, while Dad chomps away watching television.

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He chats with me though. He'll tell me about his day – he's a salesman for an office supplies firm. But much more interestingly, Dad also partly owns a shop called Fantasy Adventure. It's pretty small but absolutely crammed with old comics, books, videos, model kits and posters. And sometimes Dad will drop into the shop after work – it really is his pride and joy – and bring back something for me.

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He did that night. He gave me one of the American comics which I collect. I started reading it but all the time I was waiting for my moment.

You see, I had a plan: to get Dad to read my report and sign that annoying slip thing when Mum wasn't looking. Now, of course, Dad wouldn't be thrilled by my report either. He'd sigh and suck his teeth a bit, but then he'd forget all about it, as he's nowhere near as bothered about school as my Mum.

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The phone rang. I was sure that it was my nan. She often rings about this time. And she'd be chatting to my Mum for ages. So here was my chance. 'Dad,' I said, 'could you get rid of some people for me, please?'

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He put down his mug of tea. 'Like who?'

'Like all my teachers for a start.'

Dad grinned. 'What have they done now?'

'They've all got together and cooked up this nasty report.' Then I added casually, 'Want to take a quick look?'

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'I think I'd better.'

I leaned forward confidently. 'I'll warn you now, it's not a pretty sight.'

'I think I can take it.'

But Dad put the report down, a shaken man. 'This is just awful,' he pronounced.

'I know, but don't let it spoil your evening. The sun's trying to shine and there's a great football match on – well, any minute actually. So if you would just autograph the little slip here we can move on to happier topics, like who's going to win the...'

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'Just hold on a moment. Has your Mum seen this?'

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