



# TONBRIDGE SCHOOL

Sample Paper for Entrance into Year 9 and 10

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Time allowed:

**45 minutes**

**Name** .....

**School** .....

**Total marks: 50**

**Part One: 25 marks**

**Part Two: 25 marks**

### **Instructions**

Part One: Reading Comprehension 20 minutes

Answer the questions in the spaces provided in this booklet.

Part Two: Writing 25 minutes.

Make sure you **plan** for 5-10 minutes  
and write your plan in the booklet.

**Dictionaries or electronic translators may NOT be used.**

Answers must be handwritten unless permission to type  
has been granted in advance by Tonbridge School.

## PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Spend **20 minutes** on Questions 1 – 15, which are based on the passage below.

Take no longer than **2 minutes** to scan for the main ideas of the passage before starting the questions. It is not necessary to read it all through first.

---

### CAN BANANAS BE ART?

**Paragraph 1:** From well before dawn one summer's day, early visitors to Trafalgar Square in London were surprised to see a mountain of bananas piled up on the ground near the National Gallery steps. The 30,000 pieces of fruit had been deposited there by a large truck just after midnight. The mound was fully eight feet high, and its creator, Doug Fishbone, said nothing more than that it was an art installation with which he wanted the public to engage. Local art students had been drafted in to guard the heap to make sure that it was not dismantled prematurely, but by around 3pm the artist had begun to take it apart and hand out small bunches of bananas to passers-by.

**Paragraph 2:** Are bananas art? The jury is still out on that. Throughout the day the artwork was described in a variety of ways by chance onlookers and official visitors such as art critics and journalists: it was a post-modern work of staggering genius, a cunning marketing ploy, an impromptu food bank, a communist message about sharing resources, a damning comment on food travel miles, or a chimpanzee's dream. The free bananas were popular, though, and some enterprising individuals arrived with carrier bags to collect as many as possible and even sell them on. One man, when challenged, was completely unrepentant. "If these people can call a bunch of bananas art, then so can I. I'll give them a fancy name and sell them at the tube station for 100% profit."

**Paragraph 3:** Despite being pressured by the public for an explanation, Fishbone refused to give one, saying that he wanted this piece to acquire meaning by involving the audience. "It's such a big physical presence and changes so much in different contexts that I cannot honestly say any more whether it still has its original meaning," he said. The crowd resorted to their own theories. Some thought it could be a war memorial. Marxists felt it was a comment on capitalist greed. Older people seemed more inclined to dismiss it as just a stunt, whereas younger people accepted the idea that there could be artistic merit in everyday objects and so were more sympathetic. Art students admired its vivid hue and composition.

**Paragraph 4:** Fishbone did, however, let slip the origin of his inspiration: while he was living in South America a few years ago, he had come across a heap of plantains dumped on the road to sell. He was brought up short by its golden beauty. It looked magnificent in the sunlight, and immediately he decided to construct a work with the same aesthetic appeal in an artistic context. He had created five similar installations in major cities in several continents across the world, and they had been positively received on the whole, even in sophisticated art centres like New York.

**Paragraph 5:** Critics were reluctant to accept the sculpture as anything other than a prosaic heap of fruit, or a hollow publicity stunt. One said, "I could get the same kind of public attention by standing on my head and it would be equally meaningless. A heap of bananas in Trafalgar Square is not art." Another called it a freakshow and commented that when folks back home in the States saw the photos, they would think the Brits were idiots. Hardly the effect the artist was looking for, you might think. But you would be wrong: Fishbone was delighted with the controversy... while still refusing to attribute a particular meaning of his own to the work. "If people think I'm bananas, then that's just fine," he grinned. "The debate has already lasted longer than the installation and so I've gained my objective, which was to get people talking about what art is and what it means."

---

**Answer ALL the questions 1 – 15. Use the indicated paragraph numbers to help you find the answers in the text.**

**Questions 1 – 5** Give equivalent words or short phrases for the following expressions to demonstrate their meaning as used in the context of the passage:

|                                                |         |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 'dismantled prematurely' (paragraph 1)       | 2 marks |
| 2 'chance onlookers' (paragraph 2)             | 2 marks |
| 3 'vivid colour and composition' (paragraph 3) | 2 marks |
| 4 'same aesthetic appeal' (paragraph 4)        | 2 marks |
| 5 'hollow publicity stunt' (paragraph 5)       | 2 marks |

**Questions 6 – 10** Find answers to the following questions from the indicated paragraphs. Make sure you write enough for **2 marks** for each answer.

**6** Explain the metaphor '*the jury is still out on that*' in **paragraph 2**.

**7** Which is the best description of the work in **paragraph 2** in your opinion and why?

**8** Why did the artist refuse to comment on the meaning of the work (**paragraph 3**)?

**9** How did art critics react to the installation (**paragraph 5**)? *Make 2 points.*

**10** Why was the artist not upset by any of the adverse comments (**paragraph 5**)?

**Write your answers to Questions 6 – 10 in the boxes below.**

|    |         |
|----|---------|
| 6  | 2 marks |
| 7  | 2 marks |
| 8  | 2 marks |
| 9  | 2 marks |
| 10 | 2 marks |

### Questions 11 – 15

Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer of the passage?

In each of the boxes 11 – 15 below write one of the following:

- TRUE**                      if the statement agrees with claims in the indicated paragraph.
- FALSE**                    if the statement contradicts claims in the indicated paragraph.
- NOT GIVEN**            if it is not known from the indicated paragraph what the writer thinks about the statement.

- 11** The bananas were brought to Trafalgar Square a short while before dawn by trucks (**paragraph 1**).

1 mark

- 12** Some members of the public made further artworks of their own on Trafalgar Square with the bananas they took (**paragraph 2**).

1 mark

- 13** The age of the observer affected how much they liked or disliked the installation (**paragraph 3**).

1 mark

- 14** Plantains are fruit grown in South America which are similar to bananas in size, shape and colour (**paragraph 4**).

1 mark

- 15** Doug Fishbone was disappointed with the response of the critics to his installation (**paragraph 5**).

1 mark

**CHECK YOUR ANSWERS CAREFULLY & THEN GO ON TO PART TWO.**

## PART TWO: WRITING

You should spend about 25 minutes on this task, with 5 – 10 minutes used for planning. Write your plan legibly in this booklet. The absence of a written plan will lose you marks. There are 25 marks in total available for this task.

Rough paper is not allowed.

Please write **ONLY** between 175 and 250 words, ideally aiming for around 200 words. Please use formal academic language. Evidence of careful thinking, logical organisation and quality of expression is **MUCH** more important than a large quantity of words (please do not exceed 200 words).

Write on **ONE** of the following topics, giving reasons for your answer and including relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

---

1. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of travelling by train.

*Make 2 or 3 points on each side and in your conclusion state clearly your opinion on which side outweighs the other.*

2. Describe 2 or 3 of the problems that might be caused by the development of Artificial Intelligence and offer possible solutions for them, assessing how well each might work in practice.

*Make sure you tackle both parts of this question, i.e., problems and solutions. Give examples to support your answer.*

3. 'The arts (music, theatre, art etc.) are a luxury, not a necessity.'

*How far do you agree with this statement? Give clear reasons for your opinion and illustrate them with examples from your own knowledge and experience.*

4. 'There is no sport better than football.'

*Develop an argument either for or against this claim (but not both) and support it with evidence and / or examples from your own knowledge and experience.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

[illegible]

[illegible]

**END OF PAPER**