

To Do Again

DAME ALICE OWEN'S SCHOOL

ENGLISH ENTRANCE EXAMINATION 2003

Time allowed: One hour.

Surname:

First name(s):

Registration No:

Read these instructions before you start:

1. Read the passage very carefully before you answer any of the questions.
2. You should spend about **forty minutes** on reading the passage and answering the thirteen questions in Section A, and about **twenty minutes** on the imaginative writing in Section B.
3. Write clearly and accurately.
4. Dictionaries are not allowed.
5. You may use a pen or pencil for this paper.
6. Look carefully at how many marks are given for each question, and answer each one fully.

Mark	Percentage

N.B. The text is very long and it is assumed that there are further cuts. The questions which follow are very close to the original.

PASSAGE

from CIDER WITH ROSIE by Laurie Lee

lines
1-14
(question 2)

Winter was no more typical of our valley than summer, it was not even summer's opposite; it was merely that other place. And somehow one never remembered the journey towards it; one arrived, and winter was here. The day came suddenly when all details were different and the village had to be rediscovered. One's nose went dead so that it hurt to breathe, and there were jigsaws of frost on the window. The light filled the house with a green polar glow; while outside – in the invisible world – there was a strange hard silence, or a metallic creaking, a faint throbbing of twigs and wires.

The kitchen that morning would be full of steam, billowing from kettles and pots. The outside pump was frozen again, making a sound like broken crockery, so that the girls tore icicles from the eaves for water and we drank boiled ice in our tea.

'It's wicked,' said Mother. 'The poor, poor birds.' And she flapped her arms with vigour.

lines
16-18
(question 3)

She and the girls were wrapped in all they had, coats and scarves and mittens; some had the shivers and some drops on their noses, while poor little Phyllis sat rocking in a chair holding her chilblains like a handful of bees.

There was an iron-shod clatter down the garden path and the milkman pushed open the door. The milk in his pail was frozen solid. He had to break off lumps with a hammer.

'It's murder out,' the milkman said. 'Crows worryin' the sheep. Swans froze in the lake. An' tits droppin' dead in mid-air....' He drank his tea while his eyebrows melted, slapped Dorothy's bottom, and left.

'The poor, poor birds,' Mother said again.

They were hopping around the windowsill, calling for bread and fats – robins, blackbirds, wood-peckers, jays, never seen together save now. We fed them for a while, amazed at their tameness, then put on our long wool mufflers.

'Can we go out, Mother?'

'Well, don't catch cold. And remember to get some wood.'

First we found some old cocoa-tins, punched them with holes, then packed them with smouldering rags. If held in the hand and blown on occasionally they would keep hot for several hours. They were warmer than gloves, and smelt better too. In any case, we never wore gloves. So armed with these, and full of hot breakfast, we stepped out into the winter world.

It was a world of glass, sparkling and motionless. Vapours had frozen all over the trees and transformed them into confections of sugar. Everything was rigid, locked-up and sealed, and when we breathed the air it smelt like needles and stabbed our nostrils and made us sneeze.

Having sucked a few icicles, and kicked the water-butt – to hear its solid sound – and breathed through the frost on the window-pane, we ran up into the road. We hung around, waiting for something to happen. A dog trotted past like a ghost in a cloud, panting his aura around him. The distant fields in the low weak sun were crumpled like oyster shells.

Presently some more boys came to join us, wrapped like Russians, with multi-coloured noses. We stood round in a group and just gasped at each other, waiting to get an idea. The thin ones were blue, with hunched up shoulders, hands deep in their pockets, shivering. The fat ones were rosy and blowing like whales; all of us had wet eyes. What should we do? We didn't know. So the fat ones punched the thin ones. Then

the thin ones punched the fat ones, who half-died coughing. Then we all jumped up and down for a bit, flapped our arms, and blew on our cocoa-tins.

'What are we goin' to *do*, then, eh?'

We quietened down to think. A shuddering thin boy, with his lips drawn back, was eating the wind with his teeth. 'Giddy up,' he said suddenly, and sprang into the air and began whipping himself, and whinnying. At that we all galloped away down the road, bucking and snorting, tugging invisible reins, and lashing away at our hindquarters.

Now the winter's day was set in motion and we rode through its crystal kingdom. We examined the village for its freaks of frost, for anything we might use. We saw the frozen spring by the side of the road, huge like a swollen flower. Water-wagtails hovered above it, nonplussed at its silent hardness, and again and again they dropped down to drink, only to go sprawling in a tumble of feathers. We saw the stream in the valley, black and halted, a tarred path threading through the willows. We saw trees lopped-off by their burdens of ice, cow-tracks like pot-holes in rock, quiet lumps of sheep licking the spiky grass with their black and rotting tongues. The church clock had stopped and the weather-cock was frozen, so that both time and the winds were stilled; and nothing, we thought, could be more exciting than this; interference by a hand unknown, the winter's No to routine and laws – sinister, awesome, welcome.

We could hear the pond as we ran down the hill, the shouts that only water produces, the squeal of skates, the ring of the ice and its hollow heaving grumble. Then we saw it; black and flat as a tray, the skaters rolling round it like marbles. We broke into a shout and charged upon it and fell sprawling in all directions. This magic substance, with its deceptive gifts, was something I could never master. It put wings on my heels and gave me the motions of Mercury, then threw me down on my nose. Yet it chose its own darlings, never the ones you supposed, the dromedary louts of the schoolroom, who came skating past with one leg in the air, who twirled and simpered, and darted like swifts; and never fell once – not they.

I was one of the pedestrians, and we worked up a slide across the polished darkness. So smooth that to step on it was to glide away, while the valley slid past like oil. You could also lie prone and try to swim on the ice, kicking your arms and legs. And you saw deep down, while in that position, little bubbles like cold green stars, jagged ominous cracks, dead ribbons of lilies, drowned bulrushes loaded like rockets.

The frozen pond on such a winter's evening was a very treadmill of pleasure. Time was uncounted; we played ourselves into exhaustion. We ran and slid till we dripped with sweat; our scarves were pearly with our breath. The reeds and horse-tails at the pond's edge smelt as pungent as old men's fingers. Hanging branches of willow, manacled in the ice, bloomed like lilac in the setting sun. Then the frost moon rose through the charcoal trees and we knew that we'd played too long.

We had promised Mother we would fetch some wood. We had to get some each day in winter. Jack and I, hands in pockets, mooched silently up the lane; it was night now, and we were frightened. The beech wood was a cavern of moonlight and shadows, and we kept very close together.

The dead sticks on the ground were easily seen, glittering with the night's new frost. As we ripped them from the earth, scabbed with soil and leaves, our hands began to burn with the cold. The wood was silent and freezing hard, white and smelling of wolves. Such a night as lost hunters must have stared upon when first they wandered north into the Ice Age. We thought of caves, warm skins and fires, grabbed our sticks, and tore off home.

lines
58-68
(question 9)

Section A

1. What evidence in the first paragraph tells you that it is a cold day? (2 marks)
2. How does the author contrast the inside and the outside of the house in lines 1-14? (2 marks)
3. Give three different examples of the cold day in lines 16-18. (3 marks)
4. What form of transport did the boy use when he said "Giddy up"? (1 mark)
5. Why does the author call the village a crystal kingdom? (1 mark)
6. Explain the meaning of the following phrases:
 - a. Vapours had frozen all over the trees and transformed them into confections of sugar. (1 mark)
 - b. A dog trotted past like a ghost in a cloud. (1 mark)
 - c. A treadmill of pleasure. (1 mark)
7. How do the boys dress differently from the girls? (1 mark)
8. How do they prepare to go outside? (2 marks)
9. Copy out three short descriptions after "freaks of frost" from lines 58-68 (6 marks)

as in the text:

what it tells us:

e.g. We saw the frozen spring by the side of the road, huge like a swollen flower.	The spring was like a flower which had just bloomed.
1. For anything we might use	
2.	
3.	

10. Give two words which could be used to describe the atmosphere or mood at the beginning of the passage, and two words for the end. (4 marks)

beginning:

end:

11. How did Laurie Lee feel about the frozen pond? (4 marks)
12. What did the boys do first when they went outside? (2 marks)
13. How did the boys know that they had played too long? (3 marks)

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Section B

14. Imagine that you wake up one morning on a winter's day. What would you do and where would you go? Describe it in three or four paragraphs. (12 marks)