



SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION

ENGLISH

2006

Time 1½ hours

Name:

School:

Instructions:

Answers to be written on separate sheets provided.
Please ensure that you put your name and school on each sheet.

Answer **all** questions and leave yourself ten minutes for checking through.
Poor handwriting and presentation will be penalised.

Read this poem about a family carefully two or three times and think about it before you begin to look at the questions set on it. Then answer the questions.

Try to express yourself in complete sentences. It is a good idea to divide up your time roughly in accordance with the mark scheme.

Tenuous and Precarious

- 1 Tenuous and Precarious
Were my guardians,
Precarious and Tenuous,
Two Romans.
- 5 My Father was Hazardous,
Hazardous,
Dear old man,
Three Romans.
- 10 There was my brother Spurious,
Spurious Posthumous,
Spurious was spurious
Was four Romans.
- 15 My husband was Perfidious,
He was perfidious,
Five Romans.
- Surreptitious, our son,
Was surreptitious,
He was six Romans.
- 20 Our cat Tedious
Still lives,
Count not Tedious
Yet.
- 25 My name is Finis,
Finis, Finis,
I am Finis,
Six, five, four, three, two,
One Roman,
Finis.

Stevie Smith

- a) Why doesn't the cat Tedious count? 2 marks
- b) Did the lady Finis like her father? 3 marks
- c) What did line 18 mean? "He was six Romans". 2 marks
- d) The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines **tenuous** as "Thin, slender, small; rarefied; (of distinction etc.) subtle, over refined ..."
- If Tenuous was like his name, what sort of a man is conjured up for you? 5 marks
- e) Give a *brief* definition of the names of the other five Romans – and the cat – and then describe what sort of people they were. 10 marks
- f) Think of five more Roman names like this for a family and its animals. Make it clear that you know what the word means. Female names tend to end in 'a' or 'ia', or be the names of plants like Wisteria. 10 marks
- g) Write a correspondence between Perfidious and Surreptitious in which they discuss, among other things, Finis and Tedious the cat. Several notes would do and at least one letter ... all dated. They can be *modern* Romans. 10 marks
- h) Of the adjectives 'sad', 'funny', 'sinister', 'quirky', which do you think best suits the poem? Have you any other suggestions? Give some reasons for your choice. 8 marks
- i) Write about 150 words about the use and pleasure you have gained from any dictionary, reference book, guide-book or manual. 10 marks

Total: 60 marks