

Eton College King's Scholarship Examination 2022

GENERAL II

(One and a half hours)

Remember to write your candidate number on every sheet of answer paper used.

You must answer both questions.

Each question is worth the same number of marks.

*You need not answer the questions in the order set, **but you must start each one on a separate piece of paper.***

Spend about 45 minutes on each question.

Do not turn over until told to do so.

Question 1: START A NEW SHEET OF PAPER NOW

So language, smithied at the common fire,
 Grew to its use; as sneath and shank and haft¹
 Of well-grained wood, nice instruments of craft,
 Curve to the simple mould the hands require,
 Born of the needs of man. 5

The poet like the artisan
 Works lonely with his tools; picks up each one,
 Blunt mallet knowing, and the quick thin blade,
 And the plane that travels when the hewing's done;
 Rejects, and chooses; scores a fresh faint line; 10

Sharpens, intent upon his chiselling;
 Bends lower to examine his design,
 If it be truly made,
 And brings perfection to so slight a thing
 But in the shadows of his working-place, 15

Dust-moted, dim,
 Among the chips and lumber of his trade,
 Lifts never his bowed head, a breathing-space
 To look upon the world beyond the sill,
 The world framed small, in distance, for to him 20

The world and all its weight are in his will.

¹ *Sneath*: the handle of a scythe.

Shank: a long narrow part of a tool, connecting the handle to the operational end.

Haft: the handle of a knife.

GENERAL II

- (a) Read the extract from Vita Sackville-West's 'Craftsmen' on page 2.
- (i) (A) List three similarities between the poet and the craftsman. [3]
- (B) Explore why the poet might make this equation between the poet and the craftsman. [4]
- (ii) Language is described in the poem as 'smithied at the common fire'. Discuss the idea, giving examples from the English Language, that language is shaped by its users. [5]
- (b) 'mechanical employment ... [is that] in which the mind has little or no part. Parallel to such servile works are those arts ... which owe their origin and their method to hazard², not to skill' (John Henry Cardinal Newman).

To what extent do you agree that art is the product of 'hazard', rather than the 'skill' attributed to the craftsman?

[13]

[Total mark for Question 1: 25]

² *Hazard*: chance, probability, luck.

Question 2: *START A NEW SHEET OF PAPER NOW*

Write a response, in whatever form seems appropriate, to ONE of the following. It is recommended that you write no more than 700 words.

EITHER

- (a) In what sense can a fictional character be real?

OR

- (b) Can you ever make the same mistake twice?

OR

- (c) If you had the power to change the past so that the human race never existed, would you?

[Total mark for Question 2: 25]

END OF PAPER