

Higher Ability Selection Test (HAST)

Candidate Information Bulletin

Make sure you find out from the school:

- What day the test will be held
- What time you should arrive
- Where you should go on the day of the test.

The Test Time-Table

There will be four separate tests. The time allowed for each and the order in which they will be taken are as follows:

1	Reading Comprehension	45 Minutes
2	Written Expression	25 Minutes
3	Mathematical Reasoning	40 Minutes
4	Abstract Reasoning	30 Minutes

There will be a short break between tests 2 and 3.

Candidates who arrive late for the first test will be admitted only at the discretion of the supervisor, and additional time will not be allowed.

You should bring:

- two **HB** or **B** pencils for the multiple-choice tests
- a good quality eraser
- a pencil sharpener
- two blue or black pens for the Written Expression test.

No other equipment will be needed. For example, you will not require a ruler, paper or calculator.

Writing your Answers

You will be given a special answer sheet for the multiple-choice tests in Reading Comprehension, Mathematical Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning, and lined paper for the Written Expression.

For each question there are four small ovals labelled A, B, C and D on the multiple choice answer sheet. Use an HB or B pencil to mark clearly the oval of your choice.

Example (Answer 'B' selected)



If you wish to change your answer, carefully rub out the first mark and then mark your new choice.

Please remember, when working on the multiple-choice answer sheet

Do not:

- × fold or tear the answer sheet
- × make marks anywhere other than in the designated areas on the answer sheet
- × use ink, ball-point pen or felt pen on any part of the answer sheet.

What are the Tests Like?

The test items attempt to assess the following skills: analysis, comprehension, interpretation and reasoning. The answer to the question is clearly important as are the procedures by which you arrive at the answer.

1 Reading Comprehension

This test measures how well you can understand and interpret ideas in language. The test asks you to look at written and visual material and answer questions on it. The topics for the material may be drawn from subject areas such as English, Art, History, Geography and Social Studies, though no special knowledge in these areas is needed. All the information you need to answer the questions is printed on the paper, so if you do not know or fully understand something you may be able to work out what it means from the stimulus material. Overall there will be 40 multiple-choice questions in this test.

2 Written Expression

This test is concerned with your ability to express your thoughts and feelings in writing.

In assessing written expression, markers consider the following issues:

THOUGHT and CONTENT

- what is made of and developed from the task
- the kinds of thoughts and feelings offered in response to the task

STRUCTURE and ORGANISATION

- the shape and form of the piece
- the sequence and cohesion of the piece

EXPRESSION, STYLE and MECHANICS

- the effectiveness and appropriateness of the language
- the expressiveness and fluency of the language
- the control of the mechanics of English

The stimulus material that you are given must be the basis of your writing, and you will be penalised if you seem to be rehearsing a piece of writing that is not developed from the stimulus. You should respond to the stimulus in the way that is most interesting to you, and which best displays your ability to write and express yourself.

The stimulus may be a picture, a statement or a combination of the two. In general terms it might be said that the stimulus will allow candidates to: tell a real or imagined story; describe a situation, incident or scene; outline or explain something; and express a point of view or make an argument.

3 Mathematical Reasoning

This test attempts to measure mathematical ability, in contrast to a test of school achievement in mathematics. Consequently, the material used for the questions in this test is selected from a wide variety of sources, and may differ from standard school-based curriculum materials.

The test consists of 28 multiple-choice questions.

4 Abstract Reasoning

This is a non-verbal test that measures abstract reasoning skills, including the capacity to make sense of complex situations, to draw meaning out of events, to perceive and think clearly. The test will ask you to identify and complete various picture sequences and patterns.

Altogether there will be 30 multiple-choice questions.

Here are some practice examples from each test.

Reading Comprehension

PASSAGE

This animal, being a stranger, appears to merit a particular description. The Wom-bat (or, as it is called by the natives of Port Jackson, the Womback) is a squat, thick, short-legged, and rather inactive quadruped, with great appearance of stumpy strength. Its figure and movements, if they do not exactly resemble those of the bear, at least strongly remind one of that animal. Its length, from the tip of the tail to the tip of the nose, is thirty-one inches. Its weight, by hand, is somewhat between twenty-five and thirty pounds ... The neck is thick and short, and greatly restrains the motions of the head, which according to a common expression, looks as if it were stuck upon the shoulders ...

The animal has not any claim to swiftness of foot, as most men could run it down. Its pace is hobbling, or shuffling, something like the awkward gait of a bear. In disposition it is mild

and gentle; but it bites hard, and is furious, when provoked. Mr Bass chased one, and with his hands under the belly suddenly lifted him off the ground and laid him upon his back, along his arm, like a child. It made no noise, nor any effort to escape, not even a struggle. Its countenance was placid, and it seemed as contented as if it had been nursed by Mr Bass from its infancy.

Questions 1 – 3 refer to the passage.

- 1 The wombat described in this passage is
 - A heavy and lame
 - B ill-tempered and swift
 - C shy but alert
 - D slow but strong

- 2 The fact that the writer likens the wombat to a bear most probably suggests that he
 - A expected his readers to be familiar with a bear's appearance.
 - B thought the wombat belonged to the bear family.
 - C wanted his readers to know that the wombat was a large, vicious animal.
 - D believed the wombat's habits to be the same as a bear's.

- 3 The passage can be described best as
 - A a witty discussion.
 - B an informative account.
 - C a carefully planned argument.
 - D a dramatic narrative.

Now read the verse and answer Questions 4 and 5.

The peaceful and submissive wombat
Abhors the very thought of combat.
Shaped like a shaggy little pig,
His joy is but to dig and dig.
A ten foot tunnel is to him
The product of a moment's whim.
But when this impulse, urge or spasm
Is fanned into enthusiasm,
He'll burrow on for miles and miles
And miles of subterranean aisles.

Leon Gellert: from *The Wombat*

- 4 Which one of the following habits of the wombat is most strongly emphasised by the verse?
- A It digs tunnels in which to hide.
 B It burrows with astonishing energy.
 C It moves quickly but without purpose.
 D It retreats underground the moment someone approaches.
- 5 The verse suggests that the wombat digs
- A eagerly and extensively.
 B anxiously and senselessly.
 C intelligently and carefully.
 D impulsively and angrily.
- 1 Which of the letters above contain(s) both curved and straight lines?
- A only P
 B G and P only
 C F, G and P only
 D G, O, P and S only
- 2 Which of the letters contain either only straight lines or only curved lines, but not both straight and curved lines?
- A only L and O
 B F, L and O only
 C F, L, O, S and W only
 D F, G, L, O, P and S only

Answers

- 1 **D** 2 **A** 3 **B** 4 **B**
 5 **A**

Written Expression

Often in books or on radio or television, a person in a story says ‘*Safe at last!*’ when they reach home or find hiding places.

Write a story which uses ‘*Safe at last!*’ as an important saying.

Mathematical Reasoning

Questions 1 and 2 refer to the following information:

Here are some capital letters of the alphabet:

F G L O P S W

Some of the letters contain only curved lines.

Some of the letters contain only straight lines.

Some of the letters contain both curved and straight lines.

- 3 The first diagram shows a number square completed according to a certain rule.

2	2	4
7	5	35
14	10	140

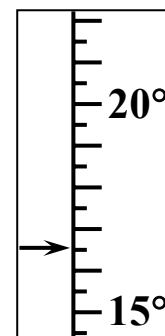
The partly completed number square is constructed according to the same rule.

3	8	
4		20
		*

The * represents

- A 480 . C 220 .
 B 240 . D 192 .

- 4 The temperature is shown at 6:00 a.m. It is rising 1° every thirty minutes.
- At this rate, it will reach 20° at
- A 7:15 a.m.
 B 7:30 a.m.
 C 7:45 a.m.
 D 8:00 a.m.



- 5 Matt walks 30 metres East, then 70 metres South, then 50 metres West, then 50 metres North.

He could return to his starting point by walking



- A 50 metres East, then 20 metres North.
 B 20 metres East.
 C 20 metres East, then 50 metres North.
 D 20 metres East, then 20 metres North.
- 6 Fiona wants to tape a late-night movie. It begins at 23:20 p.m. and ends at 1:50 a.m. What is the shortest videotape she needs, measured in minutes?
- A 60 minutes C 120 minutes
 B 90 minutes D 180 minutes
- 7 Five numbered cards were placed face down on a table so that the numbers could not be seen. Two of the numbers were even, three were odd. Three of the cards were picked up, and the sum of the numbers on them was an even number.

Of the two cards left on the table

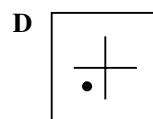
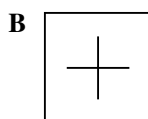
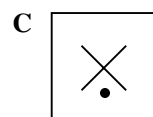
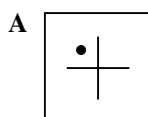
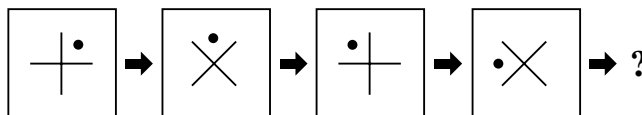
- A one must have had an odd number on it and one an even number.
 B both cards must have had even numbers on them.
 C both cards must have had odd numbers on them.
 D the numbers could have been even on both of them or odd on both of them.

Answers

1 B 2 C 3 A 4 C
 5 D 6 D 7 A

Abstract Reasoning

In the following item, there are four shapes forming a sequence going from left to right. You are to choose from the alternatives (A, B, C and D), the one which would most logically and simply come next in the sequence.



Answer

In the sequence above, the dot rotates anticlockwise, and the cross alternates between two positions. So **D** is the answer. Alternatively, the whole pattern can be seen rotating 45° anticlockwise, again giving **D**.

How Can You Do Your Best?

- Listen carefully to verbal instructions.
- Read the instructions on the front cover of each test carefully.
- Read each test question carefully before you answer it.
- Do not rush. If you find one question too difficult do not spend a long time on it. Leave it out but be sure you place your next answer in its right oval. Each question is of equal value.
- If you cannot decide between two answers in the multiple-choice tests, mark the letter of the answer you think is most likely correct. You may have time to go back to that question but in the meantime you have done the best you can. **No marks will be deducted for incorrect answers.**
- Do not worry if you have left questions out and cannot finish the tests. Remember that the tests *are* difficult.