

ENGLISH ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

DURATION: 1 HOUR

The paper is in two sections. Each section is worth twenty marks.
Spend thirty minutes on each section.

Answer all of the questions in Section A and only one from Section B.

Try to save some time at the end to check over your work.

This extract is taken from The Assassins Of Rome by Caroline Lawrence, part of The Roman Mysteries Series. In these books the child characters solve mysteries in the face of terrible danger. In this passage Jonathan and his uncle Simeon have been caught trespassing in The Golden House of the Emperor Nero. This passage deals with Jonathan's punishment.

'You're lucky', said Agathus, as he and Jonathan watched a slave heat the branding iron in a brazier full of red-hot coals. 'If Josephus hadn't intervened they'd be torturing you by now.'

Jonathan sat shivering in his loin cloth. He didn't feel lucky. They had shaved his head and searched him for lice. They had opened his mouth to examine his teeth. They had stripped him of all his possessions, including the bulla which showed he was a freeborn and his ruby ring. They had even taken away his lemon-scented handkerchief. The only thing they hadn't taken was his mother's signet ring, stuck tightly on his little finger.

Agathus saw Jonathan looking at the ring. 'It will come off soon enough', he said. 'I imagine you'll lose quite a bit of weight in the next few days.'

Jonathan stared stupidly at the steward and then looked back at the metal rod glowing red in the coals.

A slave was about to brand his left arm with the Emperor's seal. Then he would become the property of Titus Flavius Vespasianus.

'Your friend's lucky, too', said Agathus. 'He'll live. If he survives the torture.'

Jonathan felt ill. The bearded man named Josephus had persuaded Domitian not to kill Simeon but merely to put out his eyes and cut off his big toes. That way, Josephus had said, he'll be blind and lame and unable to hurt anyone, but we can still enjoy his beautiful music.

'Are you going to be sick again?' Agathus put his hand on Jonathan's bare shoulder.

Jonathan shook his head. 'Nothing left to throw up', he muttered.

The slave was approaching with the branding iron.

Agathus squeezed Jonathan's shoulder and handed him a leather belt.

'Here, boy. Bite on this. The pain will be quite severe.'

Jonathan placed the leather strap between his teeth and then took it out again.

'My handkerchief', he said, nodding towards his clothing at the end of the rough wooden bench. 'Can I bite on that instead?'

'I suppose, if I fold it several times...' The slave stopped and waited for Agathus to bring the cloth. Jonathan inhaled its lemon fragrance to give himself courage, then clamped it between his teeth and watched the red hot end of the branding iron move towards his shoulder.

It was not the pain that made him pass out, but the smell of burning flesh.

Section A

Answer **all** of the questions in this section. Be sure to support your answers with evidence from the passage and pay attention to the marks awarded for each question.

1. Why is Jonathan shivering? (2)
2. List two reasons that he has for not feeling lucky? (2)
3. Why is the loss of his bulla such a bad thing? (2)
4. What was the one thing that they did not take from him and why might they not have taken this item? (2)
5. What are the two main reasons for Jonathan feeling sick? (2)
6. Why do you think Jonathan chooses to bite on the lemon handkerchief when he is being branded? (2)
7. What does this passage make you feel about what life would be like for a child living in ancient Rome? Support your answer with evidence from the passage. (4)
8. How does the author make Jonathan's branding so terrifying? (4)

Section B

Answer only **one** of the following questions. Take care to plan your answer.

1. Imagine you are the author of Jonathan's adventure and write a continuation of this passage. (20)
2. Write a description of an experience that you have had when you were very frightened. (20)