



SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE EXAMINATION 2024 ENTRY

ENGLISH: Literature (1 Hour)

Instructions to candidates:

- The quality of your answer and therefore your close reading of the printed texts will be assessed: you should think carefully before writing and perhaps briefly plan your answer.
- In answering the question, you should pay close attention to spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation.
- It is advised that you should spend no more than 20 of the available minutes reading and marking up the texts, with the remaining 40 minutes being used to plan and write your answer.
- Answer on lined paper.

READ CAREFULLY the two poems attached overleaf on pages three and four: *The Darkling Thrush* and "*Hope*" is the thing with feathers.

Then answer the following **QUESTION:**

ESSAY: Compare the ways the writers powerfully present feelings of hope in *The Darkling Thrush* and "*Hope*" is the thing with feathers.

In answering the question you should pay particular attention to:

- Your personal reaction to the poems;
- The language and images that are used;
- The way the poems are structured;
- The tone of the poems;
- The message you think the poets are trying to convey.

Try to write as much as you can in the time allowed.

[30 marks]

Text One: *The Darkling Thrush* by Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)

I leant upon a coppice gate
 When Frost was spectre-grey,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
 The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
 Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
 Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
 The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
 The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
 Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
 Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
 The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
 Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
 In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
 Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
 Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
 Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
 His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
 And I was unaware.

**Text Two: *"Hope" is the thing with feathers* by Emily Dickinson
(1830 – 1886)**

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.