



**BENENDEN**

**ENGLISH**

**Lower School Entrance Exam for 2021**

**14+**

**Time: 1 Hour**

<b>Full Name:</b> .....
<b>Current School:</b> .....
<b>Date:</b> .....

***Instructions to Candidates:***

- Answer **both** questions, writing your answers in this booklet
- Each is worth 50 marks
- Try to spend roughly the same amount of time on each

Total marks for this paper = 100

## Question 1

Read the following poem and answer the question that follows.

### Tailoring Grief by Theresa Lola

The tailor says you have to get measured  
to make sure grief fits right on your body.  
If grief fits too tight it will suck movement out of you,  
make you as still as the dead you are mourning.  
I once wore grief so tight on my body my ribs tangled into a bow.  
The tailor also says wearing an oversized grief will turn you  
into a tripping hazard. There is only so much a body can take,  
even a plane has weight limits.  
We lined up at the tailors to get measured  
for my grandfather's funeral. The women for their Aso-oke\*,  
the men for their Agbada\*\*. The orange material draped on the table.  
It is our culture to celebrate in colour coordination.  
I handed the tailor a torn page from *Genevieve* magazine  
and pointed out the style I wanted.  
Imagine if Mary wore a Gele\*\*\* for the funeral of Jesus,  
tied it so tight she was dizzy  
enough to feel absent from her body.  
I picked up my cloth from the tailor on the seventh day.  
The off-shoulder dress exposed my neck  
so my dented collarbones could collect my tears.  
At the funeral my grandmother wore a dress  
with sleeves puffed like swollen lungs.  
I held her, the tassels at the end of my dress dangled  
like a rain of breathing tubes.  
From afar our orange dresses looked like saliva dripping  
from the gaping mouth of the sun.  
The whole village watched in holy envy:  
envy is only effective from afar, does not see the layers  
of blood-stained threads that sew this body together.  
Give me a culture that requires grief to be sewn  
delicately on the body, I'll take it any day.

\*high status clothing from West Africa

\*\*wide sleeved robe worn in West Africa

\*\*\*Cloth used to tie back the hair (West and North Africa)

### How does Lola create a vivid description of coping with grief?

You might consider:

- The way in which, according to the poem, grief is expressed
- The choice of language, including imagery (for example similes)
- Your personal response to the poem. How effective do you think the poem is?

Use quotations from the poem to support your ideas.

(50 marks)

## **Question 2**

This is a creative writing assignment.

**Write a short story with the title “I’ll Take it Any Day”.**

This can be based on a real experience or it could be entirely imaginary. The essential aim is to describe events in as much detail as possible so that your reader can picture them vividly.

The quality of your written communication will be assessed in Question 2 so remember to focus on things such as paragraphing, spelling and written accuracy in your writing.

(50 marks)



















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**END OF EXAM**