

General Advice

Why it is really dumb to ask for a prize for passing the 11+

As a rough rule of thumb, children who get paid for 11+ work fail. This includes payment for work and payment for passing. The larger the remuneration: the worse the result.

Why do parents pay?

- Because they are loving
- They want to allow you to choose your reward
- You are growing up – adults work, adults get paid. No work; no money! Surely you deserve the same privilege?

Why does it fail?

Suppose you are given £1 for a section of 15 questions. Great! The next day there are 17 questions – shouldn't you be paid more? If not you will feel cheated. But then when you go back to 15 questions, you have had a pay cut, which is never a nice feeling. Then you have just 10 questions – but they are really hard. Now what? You will end up in constant negotiations about pay, which will mean you spend more time on 11+ but without actually doing anything. Now you are pitted against your parents – sometimes winning, sometimes losing – not a comfortable situation for either of you. And then if you work hard Mum & Dad will simply run out of spare cash and will not feel motivated to make you work; in essence they are punished/fined every time you get on with your work. They are not stupid – they won't do that for long.

If you are promised a reward for passing and then fail you will feel doubly battered: you failed, and the people who should be supporting you are kicking you in the teeth: punishing you by withholding the much-coveted prize. This inevitably really undermines the trust between you. I've heard Granddads in their 80s who are still bitter that they were promised a bicycle for passing which they didn't get, ever.

Computer Games (of all sorts)

Trust me on this one. Put them away until after the exam. If you need to know the whys and wherefores then look it up; there is plenty of published research for and against. Suffice it to say; when you get to Secondary School they will also be saying "put it away".

No ifs, buts, or just-at-weekends. If you start this whining and wheedling then you are an addict and sound about as attractive as any other addict. The first fortnight is hard on you and your family but it will get easier. In three weeks you will be calmer, much, much more able to concentrate and more conversational (listening as well as talking!). You will be substantially less confrontational and significantly less in need of instant gratification.

Try it and see. If you have problems with it, tell me – I can help.

The difference between pass and fail

Over the years I have been struck that the difference between Grammar school pupils and the others is only in part intelligence. Maybe more important is a positive “can-do” attitude, curiosity and an ability to enjoy a challenge rather than be crushed by it. If you don’t have these skills – develop them.

How to get your parents to help you

First and foremost, your parents are spending a king’s ransom on my tutoring and will have to make real sacrifices to accommodate this. However, time is always at a premium; like you, your parents have been busy all day and you are both tired. They won’t necessarily have either the time or the inclination to help you with the work that I will set. They may not have done this sort of thing for a number of years and may have become a little bit rusty. If you punish your parents by putting up obstacles to getting on with the work, the whole business becomes deeply unattractive. Your parents love you and time with you is short- they really don’t want to be spending this precious time rowing with you. So you need to earn your parents’ time; this can be achieved by laying tables, washing and drying up, cleaning bathrooms, whatever it takes to give your parents the time they need to help you. Ideally, do these chores with your parent and before they ask: they will appreciate the company and the gesture.

Always thank your parents at the end of an “11 plus session”, and if it got heated acknowledge this and thank them for sticking with it. You might even consider giving them a hug. This will make starting next time much easier.

Your parents don’t have to help you with this exam – they can either choose to or choose not to. Look around your school class and I think you’ll find that most parents choose not to. This is not bad parenting, but if you want more from yours, you will have to help them. You are old enough to take on this responsibility. There will be ups and downs, and there will most certainly be rows, frustrations, tears and misunderstandings, that is part and parcel of any big project (like organising a wedding or a house extension). But this will be one of the most intimate things you do with your parents in your childhood. When you yourself are an adult you will look back fondly and with gratitude on these days.

Didn't quite do all the work.....didn't quite pass!

I consider the *Full Course* to be:

- **50+ folders or Scholar's Workbooks** (the average is about 90, the highest 153)
- **Four Mock Exams, with full reports, with me**
- **Watching the free *Weekly Wisdom, Little Lesson in Maths* and *Letter from Sarah* every week**
- **Completing the Free Daily Maths sheet every day**

Those children who have prepared but fail, usually do so by just a few marks. For some children this is a reason to rejoice; that they got so close. For others, it is a tremendous source of disappointment.

Imagine the energy you would put into launching an appeal, really imagine what it feels like to have to try and persuade a panel that your child should be in the

Grammar when they have already been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The panels are always courteous and polite but you would feel as though your guts have been stretched out on the road for the birds to peck at. At that moment it is ghastly. Now put that energy and drive into getting a pass. Leave no stone unturned. You are the parents, take responsibility and make it happen.

Internet Classes

Every Saturday morning, two free little tutorials will be posted up on my Internet site (www.sarahbeswick.co.uk). They will remain there for a week. One will be from the collection called **Weekly Wisdom** (one of my pupils chose the name!) and the other from the collection called **Little Lessons in Maths**. The **Weekly Wisdoms** cover the common tricky bits that generally need some reinforcement. There is also **Letter from Sarah** which is a sort of report from the front line.

Over the last few years, those children who conscientiously watched the **Weekly Wisdom** and **Little Lessons in Maths** every week, were about 20% ahead of the rest in the mock exams.

They are free and available to anyone, whether they are my pupils or not, whether they live near or far off. It is sad that far more children out of area watch them than those children that I teach weekly and weep over when they fail.

If you want you can buy access to all the classes to help with homework or to use on holiday; the details are on the website as are a list of all the classes. Please don't buy them unless you have trouble-free access to the free classes.

Codes - 7 classes

Conversions - 6 classes

Fractions - 10 classes

Little Lessons in Maths - 80 classes

Percentages - 8 classes

Punctuation - 11 classes

Scale - 10 classes

Weekly Wisdom - 53 classes

Total 185 classes for £50

Children are usually pretty fired up to work immediately after their class and then begin to flag over the week. It might therefore be helpful to watch the Internet tutorials three days after their class to try and keep the momentum going.

Homework Folders and The Scholar's Course

You will be given workbooks to borrow and work through at home. These A4 folders go from one child to the next and from one year to the next. If you write on these you will get spots on your bum.....yes, you will! Moreover the children who repeatedly do this tend not to pass the 11+. This isn't a curse but an observation.

If you would prefer workbooks that you *can* write all over, we have produced ***The Scholar's Workbook***, which you can buy online or at class time. Being A5 size, it might be useful to have in your handbag or to go on holiday and relieve you of the burden and bulk of a number of heavy folders. They follow the same format as the folders I lend you.

The Scholar's Workbook

can be bought on line or from me. They cost £10.00 for three books. You can download the first for free from the website. This year I will give it to you in week one so that you can use the YouTube videos that accompany it. I hope this will ease the frustrations of the first week.

Internet support for the Scholar's Course

We are working on free internet classes that accompany the ***Scholar's Workbook***. The idea being that the children can do the book, and then, instead of relying on their parents' free time and good humour, they can summon me up on the computer where I will be to explain every question. Books 2, 3 and 4 have been completed, others are still under construction. More will be rolled out over the coming months. If you think this has potential please nag: it will help. At the very least these should help in the first few weeks. If there is something that is bothering you, let me know and I will see if I can do some classes on them.

11+ Mock Exams Booking Form 2018

Please speak to me to check availability 01722 327525

I would like a place for _____ (child's full name)

Emergency number _____

Home number _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Anything I need to know about? _____

		Full £40 Basic £30	Post £2.50
Mock Exam A	13 th January		
Mock Exam A	20 th January		
Mock Exam A	27 th January		
Mock Exam B	14 th April		
Mock Exam B	21 st April		
Mock Exam B	28 th April		
Mock Exam C	16 th June		
Mock Exam C	23 rd June		
Mock Exam C	30 th June		
Mock Exam D	18 th August		
Mock Exam D	25 th August		
Mock Exam D	1 st September		

Please post or deliver to 37 Silverwood Drive, Laverstock, Salisbury SP1 1SH with payment

Thank you

Mock 11+ Exams General Information

What are the Mocks?

There are three Saturdays to choose from for each exam. The mock exams are held in strict, formal exam conditions. Each exam will include an English paper, a Maths paper, a Verbal Reasoning paper and a Non-Verbal Reasoning paper for those who need it (boys preparing for the Bishop's 11+ or children sitting exams elsewhere).

The papers have been written by me, specifically for these mocks; so the children cannot have done them before and thereby get a "false positive". For this reason they are not released.

The papers are written to give us all as much information as possible. I have resisted giving the boys two short CEM style papers on the grounds that spread over the four subjects there will simply not be enough information about what needs fixing. I don't want to charge for a product I just don't think is useful to getting a pass in the real 11+.

Boys The Non-Verbal Reasoning paper is held under CEM conditions using short timed passages. This is a format they will be familiar with, since I use it in all the classes. Instructions will be pre-recorded on a CD.

Girls and Boys will sit the Maths, English, and Verbal Reasoning as papers lasting about 50 minutes.

Of all the things I do, I think this is probably the most useful; most children have never sat a formal public exam before. A surprising number of issues are usually highlighted, for example, needing cotton hankies, tying hair back and not foot-tapping, quite apart from all the academic stuff. There are many rules of etiquette that you and I take for granted, that are completely unknown to the children. The aim of the mocks is ensure that they give of their best in the real 11+, but also that they aren't fazed by the occasion or embarrass themselves through honest ignorance. They can iron out any problems in a safe environment and can go on to concentrate only on the academic content of the exam.

The evidence from the reports may well be needed in the event that we want to appeal for a child should they just fail. Children who have prepared well generally don't fail, but if they do it is by a very small margin. Whilst it is not the real 11+, the reports do independently show where you child is compared with other local children who are preparing for the 11+.

Remember, every child who fails the 11+ has a story. Few children ever say “I worked really hard and was just a bit thick”. Find out what your story would be and eliminate it.

Times They run from 8:15am to 12:00 or 12:35 for those doing the Non-Verbal Reasoning paper. Please arrive somewhere between 08:00 and 08:15.

Who? Anyone, regardless of whether they are regular pupils or not.

Where? The Scout Hut in St Marks Avenue. Map on www.sarahbeswick.co.uk

Tickets These can be bought directly from me or I can post them out on receipt of payment. Tickets enable me to concentrate on the children as they arrive rather than getting distracted by the finances. Some children are very nervous.

Booking deadlines? If you want a particular weekend, it may be prudent to buy tickets sooner rather than later. The final deadline, if spaces are available, is the day before.

Post There is a charge of £2.50 for post should you be unable to pick it up in person.

Basic report £30 per exam with raw scores and class position.

Presented in a bound A4 folder with bar charts showing the scores of all the children in each paper and each exam, but only your child is identifiable.

There are also some general notes on the performance as a group. About 7 A4 pages of information.

Full report £40 per exam. In addition to the information given in the basic report there are:

- Close observations are taken of each child.
- A detailed report on each paper explaining any inevitable distractions and how the children responded
- We will give you directions to YouTube videos explaining how to do every question type that your child got wrong. This is personalized for each child. This usually amounts to hours of free individually directed tuition.
- Where relevant, we will include samples of your child’s workings or answers to illustrate where things need improving

You don't fatten a pig by constantly weighing it. Four

exams are enough to identify problem areas. The rest of your time should be spent playing and fixing the problems.

What to expect from each

exam The four exams are of the same level of difficulty: that of the 11+. No one expects the children to do well in the first exam, its purpose is to give the children an idea of what they are preparing for and why. Until their first mock the whole experience of 11+ preparation is rather like playing your

first ever football match in thick fog, where you can neither see the goals, your team mates or the opposition, or even know that they exist. If you are going to have a "car-crash", do it as far away from the actual 11+ as possible and practise enough so that you can look back on these mistakes and laugh. Nine-year-olds make the mistakes of nine-year-olds: not writing their name, crying, forgetting pencils, writing their answers in the wrong place, cheating, chatting....the list is almost endless. These are typical responses to each exam:

Mock A

- Nerves
- Finding out what the 11+ feels like and looks like
- Really silly mistakes
- A baseline by which to measure progress
- How it feels to await results
- They find out that they really can concentrate for a whole morning

Mock B

- Tearfulness
- Better concentration
- Keen to see results
- More silly mistakes but a growing realization that it isn't all Sarah's fault!
- Learning the drill: when to get up, what snacks, hair, pencils etc

Mock C

- Settling in well
- Getting on with the exam
- Finding out which I's to dot and which T's to cross before the Summer Holiday
- The children start to believe in themselves

Mock D

- A really strong positive energy towards the exam
- At ease with the process: concentrating on the questions
- They enjoy the morning
- They now recognize many children preparing for the 11+
- We identify how to use the final few weeks most effectively

Remember that the children will experience the difficulties of the first exam whether they sit it in January or August. What we want to achieve through these exams is a sense of familiarity with the exam process so they can just concentrate on the questions and getting them correct.

Picking up reports I will give weekly pupils their reports in a sealed envelope at their next class. Generally the reports are ready by the Tuesday lunchtime following the exam. You can pick them up in person or for £2.50 we can post them out

What is needed?

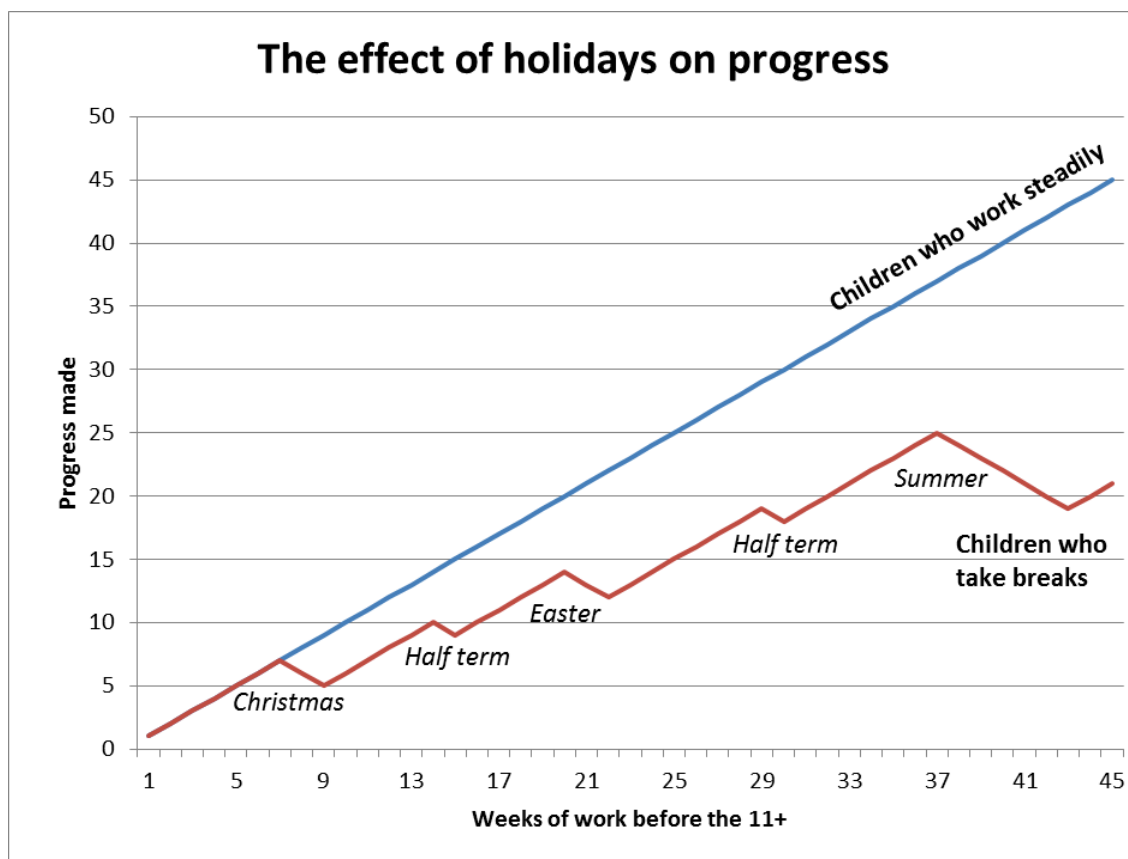
- **Four layers of clothing**
- **Snacks**, not too sticky or salty
- **Drinks** with non-drip top
- **Stick a note** onto their snacks telling them that you love them. It makes a huge difference!
- **Clear pencil case** or plastic bag
- **Pencils** I like the *Papermate* see-through, non-stop pencils. The rubbers work well and there is no need for a sharpener. Also, they don't roll off the table. However, last year 3 boys in the real 11+ were given replacements of lesser quality pencils. This was well intentioned. If this happens to you politely accept but use your own pencil.
- **Rubber**
- **Sharpener**
- **Hairbands** etc. for boys and girls with long hair and floppy fringes.
- **Warm socks**, for the kickers, so they can take their shoes off and kick freely without disturbing anyone.
- **Glasses** if needed: close for reading, distance for clocks and instructions.
- **Watches** or timers (not with calculators), if they promise not to fiddle, distract or peep. Time warnings are given.
- **Check** their bags for calculators, iPads, dictionaries etc. In the past children have bought them not realizing: it will lead to trouble. Both exam boards are very twitchy about espionage: so no phones or cameras. Seriously, they will disqualify you.
- **No** scrap paper. It will be confiscated. Written workings should go on the question sheet.

A word of warning!

My neighbours are nice people, but if they come home tired and hungry after a long day at work and find that someone has parked across their driveway, or on the grass that they have lovingly tended for the past 35 years; they may get a little cross. Please don't annoy them by parking in their space.

We have solid oak tables at which the children work. They were once refectory tables at the Cathedral. They are strong but they cannot withstand gouging with metal implements (e.g. the pinched metal ends of pencils). The number of rude words that have appeared on the tables is causing a certain amount of marital strain in the Beswick household. Willies drawn on the curtains/walls also cause comment. Anyone doing this will be hung, drawn and quartered.

You have been warned.



For every week the children take off, it takes them a week to get back to where they were, therefore six weeks off during the Summer Holidays leads to twelve weeks of stagnation.

Now that 11+ is in September, the impact of the Summer holidays is huge. There will be children who could pass the 11+ but don't because they got rusty over the Summer. There are also less naturally able children who will pass because they keep trundling away. Of course the children need fun and relaxation but they can still put in an hour a day of practice and then play, sleep and eat for the other 23 hours.

Degrees, A levels, GCSEs all take place *before* the holidays, not after. No one would expect to pass their driving test having neglected the car for two months. This all sounds rather harsh and stark but I think it is better to have a bit of straight talking now rather than next October.

The advantage of the September exam is that you have a clean run up to it, unencumbered by flu and vomiting bugs, school plays and concerts. You can choose how to spend your time. One of my less popular phrases is ***"Your choices and actions are your priorities!"*** That one doesn't win me friends!

Daily Maths Sheet

It costs me £520 a year to put this up, plus Internet hosting fees. I do this because so many children struggle with the core skills. Most can't add, subtract, multiply or divide when they start. Many still are unreliable when they finish. This breaks my heart. Please do the Daily Maths sheet. When you are good it will take just 5 minutes, if it takes longer then you need practice. When you get quick, and you soon will, keep Maths-fit. Maths is like running a marathon, it is not the final race but the practice before that wins the day. So this year I will collect the maths sheets from the children every week and stamp this sheet.

Week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
45							22						
44							21						
43							20						
42							19						
41							18						
40							17						
39							16						
38							15						
37							14						
36							13						
35							12						
34							11						
33							10						
32							9						
31							8						
30							7						
29							6						
28							5						
27							4						
26							3						
25							2						
24							1						
23							0						

Record of the books you have worked through

Plastic folders

1	11	21	31	41	51	61	71	81	91
2	12	22	32	42	52	62	72	82	92
3	13	23	33	43	53	63	73	83	93
4	14	24	34	44	54	64	74	84	94
5	15	25	35	45	55	65	75	85	95
6	16	26	36	46	56	66	76	86	96
7	17	27	37	47	57	67	77	87	97
8	18	28	38	48	58	68	78	88	98
9	19	29	39	49	59	69	79	89	99
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

Scholar's Course Books

1	11	21	31	41	51	61	71	81	91
2	12	22	32	42	52	62	72	82	92
3	13	23	33	43	53	63	73	83	93
4	14	24	34	44	54	64	74	84	94
5	15	25	35	45	55	65	75	85	95
6	16	26	36	46	56	66	76	86	96
7	17	27	37	47	57	67	77	87	97
8	18	28	38	48	58	68	78	88	98
9	19	29	39	49	59	69	79	89	99
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

It helps to keep a track of your books. Put a line through the number of the book when you have borrowed it and colour it in when you return it. Then you have your own independent record. I will also have an independent record.

I fondly remember one boy asking me just before the exam *“Does it still count if you borrowed the book but didn’t do the work?”* Actually no, it doesn’t. Just carrying the books down the hill and back up again doesn’t really help anyone. The children who want to please me do this, and that is nice. But the books will only help you if you open them up and find everything you can’t do and have a go at fixing it.

It is normal and quite acceptable to struggle in some, indeed all areas, for months. Have courage and keep going. There is no achievement without endeavour. And when you have learnt something no one can ever take it away from you.

<p>Congratulations you have embarked on your quest you are now an Apprentice you must now complete 2 folders to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 20 books you are now an Exalted Being you must complete 23 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 40 books you are now an Exalted God you must complete 45 to reach the next level</p>
<p>Congratulations you have completed 2 books you are now an Expert you must complete 4 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 23 books you are now a Lesser Deity you must complete 25 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 45 books you are now a Supreme God you must complete 50 to reach the next level</p>
<p>Congratulations you have completed 4 books you are now a Master you must complete 7 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 25 books you are now a Greater Deity you must complete 28 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 50 books you are now the Ultimate Ruler of the Universe</p>
<p>Congratulations you have completed 7 books you are now a Grand Master you must complete 10 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 28 books you are now a Lesser Demi-God you must complete 31 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Ideally, I would like you to complete 50 folders before the exam (the average is about 90). If you still don't pass, then the Grammar school really isn't the right place for you: another school would be better at making the most of your talents.</p> <p>The more practice you put in, the fewer surprises on the day and the better you will be at tackling new problems. There will be questions you have never faced before.</p> <p>Remember borrowing the folders only works if you work through them, and correct your work with an adult.</p>
<p>Congratulations you have completed 10 books you are now a Lord you must complete 13 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 31 books you are now a Greater Demi-God you must complete 34 to reach the next level</p>	
<p>Congratulations you have completed 13 books you are now a Lord Master you must complete 16 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 34 books you are now a Lower God you must complete 37 to reach the next level</p>	
<p>Congratulations you have completed 16 books you are now a Higher Being you must complete 20 to reach the next level</p>	<p>Congratulations you have completed 37 books you are now a Higher God you must complete 40 to reach the next level</p>	

NAME:			MATHS					ENGLISH					VERBAL REASONING					PAPER	WEEKLY WISDOM	LITTLE LESSON IN MATHS	LETTER FROM SHARAH	DAILY MATHS SHEET					
WEEK	DATE	BOOK	1	2	3	4	5	EXTRA	1	2	3	4	5	EXTRA	1	2	3	4	5	EXTRA	E/M/VR						

Some children and parents find a sheet like this helpful to keep a track of their progress. Each row represents a folder and a week's Internet work. All will become clear once you start working

through the folders. There is a lot to take in at first and whilst this seems like an extra burden, it will help you get into your stride and keep you there.

NAME:			MATHS						ENGLISH						VERBAL REASONING						PAPER	WEEKLY WISDOM	LITTLE LESSON IN MATHS	LETTER FROM SARAH	DAILY MATHS SHEET	
WEEK	DATE	BOOK	1	2	3	4	5	EXTRA	1	2	3	4	5	EXTRA	1	2	3	4	5	EXTRA	E/M/VR					

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