



ST. NICHOLAS COLLEGE
RABAT MIDDLE SCHOOL
HALF YEARLY EXAMINATIONS
FEBRUARY 2017

LEVEL
6-7

YEAR 7

ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION

SECTION B: Read the following text and then answer the questions on the main paper.

John Dafte

1 His name was John Dafte, but in the school register his name was written down as Dafte John. No one made jokes about it.¹ He was a tall, hairy boy, with huge shoulders and long arms and a voice like a big drum. School boxing champion, captain of both the cricket and football teams – there wasn't a sport he didn't **shine** in. We called him Prince
5 Kong.

I admired him a lot. He was a smiling, kind hero. He only had to walk out onto the playground for the bullies to hide. 'Pick on someone your own size,' he'd say.

On the Monday morning after half term, he came to school with two black eyes, and a broken nose. We crowded round him kindly.

10 'Did you fight with a bulldozer?'

'Your mum been beating you up?'

I was not as surprised as the others that he should have lost a fight. I know that it's useless having the strength of ten, if you happen to pick a **quarrel** with eleven. It would be just like Prince Kong, I thought, to go charging in to save someone from a gang of
15 bullies, without stopping to count; what did puzzle me was that he should lie about it. Instead he pushed us roughly out of his way, his head down, talking to himself said, 'Walked into a door.'

We watched him walk slowly into school, and followed at a distance, puzzled and sad.

20 He and I were in different forms, so I did not see him again until school was over. I was waiting for one of my friends when he came down the steps, caught sight of me and stopped. For the first time I felt **nervous** of him, and smiled uneasily. He limped over and stood looking down at me. A long way down.

25 'You're clever, aren't you?' he said. 'I mean, you come top all the time. Brainy. Good at working things out – you know, problems.'

I replied shyly, 'Oh, I don't know – just lucky, I guess.'

'No. You're clever,' he repeated. I realised suddenly that he wanted me to be clever. His eyes were looking straight into my eyes as if begging me.

30 'Well...' I said – I didn't think it was nice to boast, but I didn't want to let him down – 'sort of, I suppose.'

I thought he looked a bit happier but he did not say anything.

'Is there...? Can I...? I mean, if there's anything I can do, just ask,' I said, feeling uncomfortable under his **gloomy** glare.

'Walking home with anybody?' he asked.

35 'No,' I lied. I could see Mark on the steps. I knew *he* would understand. It was an honour to walk with Prince Kong.

¹'Daft' means 'stupid'

‘Can I come with you, then?’ he asked. ‘Only I got a problem, see?’
‘Yes,’ I said eagerly. ‘Of course.’ I couldn’t imagine what problem it could be.
Prince Kong never worried about his school work. Knowing that he was very strong, he
40 was happy to stay at the bottom. Like a submarine does, so that nobody can see *it*.
‘If you tell anybody, I’ll skin you,’ he said.
‘I won’t!’
‘*You’d* better not.’

(Adapted from ‘The Champions’ by Vivien Alcock)

