



Devonport
High School
For Boys

11+ Familiarisation Paper
2024

English Test

Time Allowed: One Hour

Section A

Read the extract and then answer the 20 multiple-choice questions that follow.

Circle the letter of the answer that you think is correct.

(30 minutes)

Section B

Choose one of the writing tasks. Plan and write in response to the task that you have chosen. (30 minutes)

Name	
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Section A: Spend 30 minutes on this section (20 marks)

Read the extract below and then answer the multiple-choice questions that follow:

White Fang

This extract is from the opening of a novel by Jack London called 'White Fang'. It was first published in 1906. In this opening section, the writer describes two men travelling through the Alaskan wilderness.

Dark spruce forest frowned on either side of the frozen waterway. The trees had been stripped by a recent wind of their white covering of frost, and they seemed to lean towards each other, black and ominous, in the fading light. A vast silence reigned over the land. The land itself was a desolation, lifeless, without movement, so lone and cold that the spirit of it was not even that of sadness. There was a hint in it of laughter, but of a laughter more terrible than any sadness- a laughter that was mirthless as the smile of the sphinx¹, a laughter cold as the frost and partaking of the grimness of infallibility². It was the masterful and incommunicable wisdom of eternity laughing at the futility³ of life and the effort of life. It was the Wild, the savage, frozen- hearted Northland Wild.

But there WAS life, abroad in the land and defiant. Down the frozen waterway toiled a string of wolfish dogs. Their bristly fur was rimed with frost. Their breath froze in the air as it left their mouths, spouting forth in spumes⁴ of vapour that settled upon the hair of their bodies and formed into crystals of frost. Leather harness was on the dogs, and leather traces attached them to a sled which dragged along behind. The sled was without runners. It was made of stout birch-bark, and its full surface rested on the snow. The front end of the sled was turned up, like a scroll, in order to force down and under the bore of soft snow that surged like a wave before it. On the sled, securely lashed, was a long and narrow oblong box. There were other things on the sled--blankets, an axe, and a coffee-pot and frying-pan; but prominent, occupying most of the space, was the long and narrow oblong box.

In advance of the dogs, on wide snowshoes, toiled a man. At the rear of the sled toiled a second man. On the sled, in the box, lay a third man whose toil was over,--a man whom the Wild had conquered and beaten down until he would never move nor struggle again. It is not the way of the Wild to like movement. Life is an offence to it, for life is movement; and the Wild aims always to destroy movement. It freezes the water to prevent it running to the sea; it drives the sap out of the trees till they are frozen to their mighty hearts; and most ferociously and terribly of all does the Wild harry⁵ and crush into submission man--man who

¹ Sphinx: a mythological creature with the head of a woman, the body of a lion, and the wings of a bird. According to Greek myth, she challenges those who encounter her to answer a riddle.

² Infallibility: not likely to be wrong or make a mistake

³ futility: pointlessness

⁴ Spumes: foam / froth

⁵ harry: harass

is the most restless of life, ever in revolt against the dictum⁶ that all movement must in the end come to the cessation of movement.

But at front and rear, unawed and indomitable, toiled the two men who were not yet dead. Their bodies were covered with fur and soft-tanned leather. Eyelashes and cheeks and lips were so coated with the crystals from their frozen breath that their faces were not discernible⁷. This gave them the seeming of ghostly masques, undertakers in a spectral world at the funeral of some ghost. But under it all they were men, penetrating the land of desolation and mockery and silence, puny adventurers bent on colossal adventure, pitting themselves against the might of a world as remote and alien and pulseless as the abysses of space.

They travelled on without speech, saving their breath for the work of their bodies. On every side was the silence, pressing upon them with a tangible presence. It affected their minds as the many atmospheres of deep water affect the body of the diver. It crushed them with the weight of unending vastness and unalterable decree⁸. It crushed them into the remotest recesses of their own minds, pressing out of them, like juices from the grape, all the false ardours and exaltations and undue self-values of the human soul, until they perceived themselves finite and small, specks and motes, moving with weak cunning and little wisdom amidst the play and inter-play of the great blind elements and forces.

An hour went by, and a second hour. The pale light of the short sunless day was beginning to fade, when a faint far cry arose on the still air. It soared upward with a swift rush, till it reached its topmost note, where it persisted, palpitant⁹ and tense, and then slowly died away. It might have been a lost soul wailing, had it not been invested with a certain sad fierceness and hungry eagerness. The front man turned his head until his eyes met the eyes of the man behind. And then, across the narrow oblong box, each nodded to the other

⁶ dictum: formal statement

⁷ discernible: able to be recognised

⁸ decree: official order

⁹ palpitant: trembling

1. 'Dark spruce forest frowned on either side of the frozen waterway.' (line 1)

What poetic technique is used in this sentence?

- a) Simile
- b) Personification
- c) Onomatopoeia
- d) metaphor

2. Read again this sentence from the end of paragraph three:

It freezes the water to prevent it running to the sea; it drives the sap out of the trees till they are frozen to their mighty hearts; and most ferociously and terribly of all does the Wild harrÿ and crush into submission man--man who is the most restless of life, ever in revolt against the dictum that all movement must in the end come to the cessation of movement.

What does 'cessation' mean in this sentence?

- a) Stopping
- b) Freezing
- c) Combining
- d) intimidating

3. Which of these words or phrases best describe the land in paragraph one?

- a) idyllic
- b) intimidating
- c) picturesque
- d) poverty stricken

4. Which two things are true about the dogs?

- a) They are wild
- b) They are cold
- c) Their fur is rough
- d) There is ice on their fur

5. What is taking up the most room on the sled?

- a) Kitchen supplies
- b) Snowshoes
- c) Leather straps
- D) A box

6. Read again this sentence from paragraph 4: *But under it all they were men, penetrating the land of desolation and mockery and silence, puny adventurers bent on **colossal** adventure, pitting themselves against the might of a world as remote and alien and pulseless as the abysses of space.*

What does the word 'colossal' in line 43 tell us about the adventure the men are on?

- a. They are excited by the adventure
- b. The adventure will take a long time
- c. The adventure is overwhelming
- d. The adventure is dangerous

7. What is negatively affecting the men in paragraph 5?

- a) Cold
- b) Silence
- c) Hunger
- d) fear

8. Which word best describes the men?

- a) Homesick
- b) Tired
- c) impressive
- d) Intrepid

9. What time of day is the extract set?

- a) Sunset
- b) Sunrise
- c) Midday
- d) Midnight

10 What type of words are: unending; palpitant; ghostly?

- a) adverbs
- b) prepositions
- c) abstract nouns
- d) adjectives

Select the correct word to complete the following sentences:

11. The men have to transport _____ supplies with a dog sled.
- a. their
 - b. there
 - c. they're
 - d. theyr'e
12. The landscape was completely _____ .
- a. uninhabited
 - b. disinhabited
 - c. ininhabited
 - d. preinhabited.
13. It got darker as the weather got _____ .
- a. worst
 - b. worser
 - c. worse
 - d. worsened
14. Without the dogs, the men would surely _____ their lives.
- a. lose
 - b. loose
 - c. lessen
 - d. loss
15. The landscape is dangerous _____ the dogs can cope well with it.
- a. for
 - b. because
 - c. but
 - d. since

Circle the letter of the sentence that has an error or mistake:

16. Apostrophes

- A. The womens' cricket team won the match.
- B. The flower's scent was lovely.
- C. The men's changing rooms were being cleaned.
- D. The frog's skin was slimy.

17. Semi - colon

- A. For my camping trip, I will need: a warm sleeping bag; a tin plate and cup; a water bottle and a bin bag for dirty clothes.
- B. The water was delicious; it was cold and fresh.
- C. I like brussel sprouts; but my friend likes carrots.
- D. I love school; I find it quite interesting.

18. Speech marks

"Are you ready?" said my teacher. "I am about to start the test."

- A. My teacher asked, "Are you ready?"
- B. "Are you ready?" asked my teacher.
- C. "The test is about to begin", said Miss Smith, "are you ready to start?"

19. Commas

- A. I found my friend's scarf, after she left the park.
- B. My grandmother, who is sixty, lives in Leigham.
- C. If it rains, we will stay in this afternoon.
- D. White Fang, a novel by Jack London, is set in Alaska.

20. Question marks

- A. Is a dog your favourite type of pet?
- B. I wonder if you have any pets?
- C. Do you think dogs make good pets?
- D. Should dogs be on a lead in public places?

Section B

Choose one of the tasks below and plan a piece of original writing based on that task. You must show your planning in the box below before writing an accurate response on the page opposite. Write a minimum of half a side of A4 and a maximum of one side of A4.

You have 30 minutes to plan, write and check your work for its accuracy. Leave time to check your spelling, punctuation and grammar.

1	Write the opening of a story set somewhere with extreme weather. You should try to use descriptive language and to engage your reader. Remember to use paragraphs clearly.
2	Write the text of a leaflet trying to persuade people to go on holiday to Alaska. Remember to use a suitable title and paragraphs. You do not have to use columns or pictures.
3	Write a letter that one of the men in the story might write to a family member back at home. Remember to use the correct letter format and to include interesting detail .

Planning space

