

WITHINGTON GIRLS' SCHOOL

SAMPLE PAPER

ENGLISH

COMPREHENSION AND CREATIVE WRITING

TIME: 60 MINUTES

Comprehension

The following is an extract from a ghost story. The speaker, whose name is Arthur, is lying in bed in a storm at night.

5 During the night the wind rose. As I had lain reading I had become aware of the stronger gusts that blew every so often against the casements. But when I awoke abruptly in the early hours it had increased greatly in force. The house felt like a ship at sea, battered by the gale that came roaring across the open marsh. Windows were rattling everywhere and there was the sound of moaning down all the chimneys of the house and whistling through every nook and cranny.

10 At first I was alarmed. Then, as I lay still, gathering my wits, I reflected on how long Eel Marsh House had stood here, steady as a lighthouse, quite alone and exposed, bearing the brunt of winter after winter of gales and driving rain and sleet and spray. It was unlikely to blow away tonight. And then, those memories of childhood began to be stirred again and I dwelt nostalgically upon all those nights when I had lain in the warm and snug safety of my bed in the nursery at the top of our family house in Sussex, hearing the wind rage round like a lion, howling at the doors and beating upon the windows but powerless to reach me. I lay back and slipped into that pleasant, trancelike state somewhere between sleeping and waking, recalling the past and all its emotions and impressions vividly, until I felt I was a small boy again.

20 Then from somewhere, out of that howling darkness, a cry came to my ears, catapulting me back into the present and banishing all tranquillity.

I listened hard. Nothing. The tumult of the wind, like a banshee, and the banging and rattling of the window in its old, ill-fitting frame. Then yes, again, a cry, that familiar cry of desperation and anguish, a cry for help from a child somewhere out on the marsh.

25 There was no child. I knew that. How could there be? Yet how could I lie here and ignore even the crying of some long-dead ghost?

"Rest in peace," I thought, but this poor one did not, could not.

30 After a few moments I got up. I would go down into the kitchen and make myself a drink, stir up the fire a little and sit beside it trying, trying to shut out that calling voice for which I could do nothing, and no one had been able to do anything for ... how many years?

35 As I went out onto the landing, Spider the dog following me at once, two things happened together. I had the impression of someone who had just that very second before gone past me on their way from the top of the stairs to one of the other rooms, and, as a tremendous blast of wind hit the house so that it all but seemed to rock at the impact, the lights went out. I had not bothered to pick up my torch from the bedside table and now I stood in the pitch blackness, unsure for a moment of my bearings.

Please circle the letter/s (a, b, c or d) of your chosen answer/s.

1. What happens to the wind during the night? **(1 mark)**
 - a. It gets stronger.
 - b. It stops.
 - c. There is no wind.
 - d. It stays the same.
2. What is Arthur's first reaction to the storm? **(1 mark)**
 - a. He is worried.
 - b. He feels confident.
 - c. He happy.
 - d. He is cross.
3. What is the effect of describing the house "like a ship at sea"? **(1 mark)**
 - a. It makes the house sound secure.
 - b. It makes the house sound vulnerable.
 - c. It makes the house sound big.
 - d. It makes the house sound scary.
4. Which words makes the wind sound threatening? Pick any that apply. **(1 mark)**
 - a. "abruptly"
 - b. "battered"
 - c. "roaring"
 - d. "moaning"
5. How many other houses are near to Eel Marsh House? **(1 mark)**
 - a. None
 - b. 1
 - c. It is impossible to say
 - d. 2
6. What does "it was unlikely to blow away tonight" mean? **(1 mark)** **(Line 11)**
 - a. The wind will be strong in the morning and damage the house
 - b. The wind will stop tonight
 - c. The weather will be bad in the morning
 - d. The house is secure
7. What does the word "nostalgically" suggest about Arthur's feelings about his family home? **(1 mark)** **(Line 12)**
 - a. He hated it.
 - b. He never really thinks about it.
 - c. He feels sentimental about it.
 - d. He is scared by the memories.
8. What technique is used in the line "rage round like a lion"? Pick any that apply. **(1 mark)**
 - a. Simile
 - b. Metaphor
 - c. Alliteration
 - d. Imagery
9. Which words make the wind sound alive? Pick any that apply. **(1 mark)** **(Lines 15 and 16)**
 - a. "howling"
 - b. "beating"
 - c. "me"
 - d. "round"

10. What is the effect of the word “catapulting”? **(1 mark)**
- It makes it sound like it happened quickly.
 - It shows Arthur was thrown out of bed.
 - It makes it sound like Arthur is confused.
 - It shows Arthur is in pain.
11. What does “tranquillity” mean? **(1 mark)**
- Silence
 - Calm
 - Sleep
 - Emotion
12. What does the word “tumult” mean? **(1 mark)** **(Line 21)**
- Chaos
 - Sound
 - Darkness
 - Horror
13. Which word shows that Arthur has heard this sound before? **(1 mark)** **(Line 23)**
- Familiar
 - Help
 - Desperation
 - Anguish
14. What is the effect of the rhetorical questions? Pick any that apply. **(1 mark)** **(Lines 25 and 26)**
- To create a picture in the reader’s head
 - To show that Arthur is afraid
 - To suggest that Arthur is talking to somebody
 - To show that Arthur is confused
15. Which adjective best describes Arthur’s feelings towards the cry? **(1 mark)**
- Angry
 - Sympathetic
 - Scared
 - Unconcerned
16. Why does Arthur plan to go downstairs? Pick all that apply. **(1 mark)**
- To get away from the wind
 - To make a drink
 - To make a fire
 - To calm himself down
17. Why does Arthur not plan to help the child? Pick any that apply. **(1 mark)**
- The child isn’t real
 - The child doesn’t want help
 - There is no way to help the child
 - Other people are helping the child
18. What “two things happened together”? **(1 mark)**
- Spider barked and the lights went out
 - Someone walked past Arthur and the lights went out
 - The wind rocked the house and Spider went past Arthur
 - The house rocked and the wind blew hard

19. Which of these techniques make this passage frightening? Pick all that apply. **(1 mark)**

- a. There is a dog
- b. There is a raging lion
- c. There is a wolf howling
- d. The story takes place at night

20. How does Arthur feel at the end of the passage? **(1 mark)**

- a. Calm
- b. Cross
- c. Worried
- d. Sad

21. How does the writer show that the speaker is scared? **(5 marks)**

Try to use quotations to support your points.

Creative Writing

Write a short, descriptive passage inspired by the image below. You should aim to write 3 developed paragraphs. You should aim to show the following in your writing:

- Adventurous vocabulary
- Varied sentence structures
- Interesting and engaging ideas

(25 marks)

