English Entry Assessment

Question paper

Year 9
placement screener

Name ..... Date ..... Score .....

Time: about 60 minutes. Answer ALL questions. Read the passage twice before you begin. Quote from the text where the question asks you to. Write in full sentences for the longer questions. You have 60 minutes. Total: 43 marks. Show your working where you can. Marks for each question are shown in brackets, like [2]. Total marks: **43**.

READ THIS, THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

The lighthouse had not been lit for forty years, yet every storm the village still turned its eyes toward it, as though waiting for a flame that would never come. Old Marta said the keeper had walked into the sea one winter and the light had drowned with him; the children said he was still up there, counting the waves. The truth, which nobody much wanted, was duller and sadder: the harbour had silted, the ships had stopped, and a building meant to save lives had simply outlived its purpose. Now the tower leaned a little against the wind, its windows blind, its great lamp furred with salt and the slow patience of rust. And still, when the gulls scattered and the sky went the colour of a bruise, the oldest villagers would glance up the cliff path, half-hoping, before they remembered, and looked away.

1 What had happened to the harbour that meant the lighthouse 'outlived its purpose'? Answer in your own words. [2]

RETRIEVAL / INFERENCE

2 The passage gives THREE different explanations for what happened to the keeper. Identify them and state which one the writer presents as true. [3]

RETRIEVAL / STRUCTURE

3 'the sky went the colour of a bruise'. Explain the effect of this image. Consider both colour and feeling. [3]

LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

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4 The writer ends the passage with the villagers who 'half-hoping, before they remembered, looked away'. What does this reveal about the villagers and about the writer's intention? Explain fully. [4]

WRITER'S INTENT / INFERENCE

5 The phrase 'the slow patience of rust' uses personification. Explain what this technique adds here that the plain word 'rust' would not. [3]

LANGUAGE ANALYSIS / TECHNIQUE

6 Identify the subordinate clause in this sentence and explain its function: 'The truth, which nobody much wanted, was duller and sadder.' [2]

GRAMMAR

7 Rewrite this sentence in the passive voice: 'The storms had silted the harbour over many years.' [2]

GRAMMAR / VOICE

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8 Choose the word closest in meaning to 'furred' as used in 'its great lamp furred with salt': (a) covered (b) softened (c) coated (d) warmed. Then explain why the writer chose 'furred' rather than your chosen synonym. [2]

VOCABULARY

9 Give a precise single word for each: (a) a person who looks after a lighthouse; (b) the feeling of longing for the past; (c) an object that has lasted longer than its usefulness. [3]

VOCABULARY

10 The passage uses a semicolon in one sentence and a colon in the next. Quote each and explain the different job each punctuation mark does. [2]

GRAMMAR / PUNCTUATION

11 Identify ONE example of the writer using the weather/setting to mirror the villagers' emotions (pathetic fallacy) and explain how it works. [3]

TECHNIQUE / ANALYSIS

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12 Why might the writer have chosen to delay the 'true' explanation until after the villagers' and children's stories? What is the effect of this structural choice? [3]

STRUCTURE / WRITER'S CRAFT

13 WRITING TECHNIQUE: Write the opening TWO sentences of a description of an abandoned place of your own choosing. You must use (i) one example of personification and (ii) one semicolon used correctly. Underline or label each. [4]

WRITING TECHNIQUE

14 STRETCH: 'The passage is really about how people prefer comforting stories to the truth.' How far do you agree? Support your view with TWO references to the text. [4]

CRITICAL EVALUATION

15 STRETCH: The final sentence is deliberately long and uses repeated commas before its short ending 'looked away'. Explain how the SENTENCE STRUCTURE itself creates meaning here. **[3]**

STRUCTURE / STRETCH

End of assessment. Hand your paper back when you are finished. Well done!