City of London School

Specimen Entrance Examination
to join Old Grammar in 2018

ENGLISH
Passage and Instructions

Instructions

- You have one hour to complete the paper
- You should spend roughly 30 minutes on each section
- Both sections are worth equal marks
- Once you have finished Section A you should immediately begin Section B
- Section A assesses reading and is multiple choice: each question has only one correct answer
- Section B assesses creative writing: read the instructions and then continue the story in the lined space provided
- To answer both sections you will first need to read the passage over the page
- Certain words and phrases have been underlined; this is to help you find them when answering questions in Section A

Please write your name on both answer booklets.

Turn over the page and read the passage when the exam begins.

Passage

"Ready?"
"Ready."
"Now?"
"Soon."
"Do the scientists really know? Will it happen today, will it?"
"Look, look; see for yourself!"
The children pressed to each other like so many roses, so many weeds, intermixed, peering out for a look at the hidden sun.
It rained.
It had been raining for seven years; thousands upon thousands of days compounded and filled from one end to the other with rain, with the drum and gush of water, with the sweet crystal fall of showers and the concussion of storms so heavy they were tidal waves come over the islands. A thousand forests had been crushed under the rain and grown up a thousand times to be crushed again. And this was the way life was forever on the planet Venus, and this was the schoolroom of the children of the rocket men and women who had come to a raining world to set up civilization and live out their lives.
"It's stopping, it's stopping!"
Margot stood apart from them, from these children who could never remember a time when there wasn't rain and rain and rain. They were all nine years old, and if there had been a day, seven years ago, when the sun came out for an hour and showed its face to the stunned world, they could not recall. Sometimes, at night, she heard them stir, in remembrance, and she knew they were dreaming and remembering gold or a yellow crayon or a coin large enough to buy the world with. She knew they thought they remembered a warmness, like a blushing in the face, in the body, in the arms and legs and trembling hands. But then they always awoke to the tatting drum, the endless shaking down of clear bead necklaces upon the roof, the walk, the gardens, the forests, and their dreams were gone.
All day yesterday they had read in class about the sun. About how like a lemon it was, and how hot. And they had written small stories or essays or poems about it: *I think the sun is a flower, That blooms for just one hour.* That was Margot's poem, read in a quiet voice in the still classroom while the rain was falling outside.
"Aw, you didn't write that!" protested one of the boys.
"I did," said Margot. "I did."
But that was yesterday. Now the rain was slackening, and the children were crushed in the great thick windows.
"Where's teacher?"
"She'll be back."
"She'd better hurry, we'll miss it!"
Margot stood alone. She was a very frail girl who looked as if she had been lost in the rain for years and the rain had washed out the blue from her eyes and the red from her mouth and the yellow from her hair. She was an old photograph dusted from an album, whitened away, and if she spoke at all her voice would be a ghost. Now she stood, separate, staring at the rain and the loud wet world beyond the huge glass.
"What're *you* looking at?" said William.
Margot said nothing.
He gave her a shove. But she did not move; rather she let herself be moved only by him and nothing else. They edged away from her, they would not look at her. And this was because she would play no games with them in the echoing tunnels of the underground city. When the class sang songs about happiness and life and games her lips barely moved. Only when they sang about the sun and the summer did her lips move as she watched the drenched windows. And then, of course, the biggest crime of all was that she had come here only five years ago from Earth, and she remembered the sun and the way the sun was and the sky was when she was four in Ohio. And they, they had been on

Venus all their lives, and they had been only two years old when last the sun came out and had long since forgotten the colour and heat of it and the way it really was.
But Margot remembered.
"It's like a penny, or a fire in the stove," she said once, eyes closed.
"You're lying, you don't remember!" cried the children.
But she remembered and stood quietly apart from all of them and watched the patterning windows. And once, a month ago, she had refused to shower in the school shower rooms, had clutched her hands to her ears and over her head, screaming the water mustn't touch her head. So after that, dimly, dimly, she sensed it, she was different and they knew her difference and kept away. There was talk that her father and mother were taking her back to Earth next year; it seemed vital to her that they do so, though it would mean the loss of thousands of dollars to her family.
"Get away!" The boy gave her another push. "It was all a joke, wasn't it?" He turned to the other children.
"Nothing's happening today. *Is* it?"
They all blinked at him and then, understanding, laughed and shook their heads.
"Oh, but," Margot whispered, her eyes helpless. "But this is the day, the scientists predict, they say, they *know*, the sun…"
"All a joke!" said the boy, and seized her roughly. "Hey, everyone, let's put her in a closet before the teacher comes!"
"No," said Margot, falling back.
They surged about her, caught her up and bore her, protesting, and then pleading, and then crying, back into a tunnel, a room, a closet, where they slammed and locked the door, just as the teacher arrived.
"Ready, children?" She glanced at her watch.
"Yes!" said everyone.
"Are we all here?"
"Yes!"
The rain slacked still more. They crowded to the huge door. The rain stopped.
It was as if, in the midst of a film concerning an avalanche, a tornado, a hurricane, a volcanic eruption, something had, first, gone wrong with the sound apparatus, thus muffling and finally cutting off all noise, all of the blasts and repercussions and thunders, and then, second, ripped the film from the projector and inserted in its place a beautiful tropical slide which did not move or tremor. The world ground to a standstill. The silence was so immense and unbelievable that you felt your ears had been stuffed or you had lost your hearing altogether. The children put their hands to their ears. They stood apart.
The door slid back and the smell of the silent, waiting world came in to them. The sun came out.

Now turn to Section A and answer the questions.

Your Name:

ENGLISH – SECTION A

Instructions

- Answer each question by writing A, B, C or D in the space provided
- Each question has only one correct answer
- Spend no more than 30 minutes on this section
- You may move straight on to Section B when you have finished

1. What are the children feeling at the start of the extract?
   - **A.** Excited
   - **B.** Confused
   - **C.** Afraid
   - **D.** Bored

   Your answer: _____

2. What is the term used for this kind of comparison: 'like so many roses'?
   - **A.** Metaphor
   - **B.** Simile
   - **C.** Personification
   - **D.** Imagery

   Your answer: _____

3. What is the effect of describing the children as 'like so many roses, so many weeds'?
   - **A.** It suggests that some of the children will be nice, some not so nice
   - **B.** It suggests that some of the children are rosy-cheeked, some are not
   - **C.** It suggests that All of the children are growing fast
   - **D.** It suggests that some of the children are strong, some are not

   Your answer: _____

4. What does ‘compounded’ mean in this context?
    A. Made worse
    B. Separated
    C. Added together
    D. Muddled

Your answer: _____

5. Re-read the paragraph beginning ‘It had been raining for seven years…’ Which of the following phrases best explains it?
    A. It rained so hard that people’s heads hurt in the storms and tidal waves
    B. It rained so hard that a thousand forests grew up on the planet
    C. It rained so hard that life was in a cycle of creation and destruction
    D. It rained so hard that it got into the schoolroom of the rocket men and children

Your answer: _____

6. What is the effect of writing ‘rain and rain and rain’?
    A. It makes it more effective
    B. It is raining a lot
    C. It makes it seem like the rain never ends
    D. It makes the rain seem peaceful and relaxing

Your answer: _____

7. What does ‘they always awoke to the tatting drum’ refer to?
    A. An alarm clock
    B. Someone playing a drum
    C. Music
    D. The sound of the rain

Your answer: _____

8. Which phrase best describes Margot?
    A. Tall with blonde hair and blue eyes
    B. Delicate, skinny and very pale
    C. Rosy-cheeked and blonde
    D. Strong and sturdy with white hair

Your answer: _____

9. Why doesn't Margot play with the other children?
    A. She can't catch the ball
    B. She doesn't know how to play tag
    C. She is older than all of the others
    D. She is an outsider

Your answer: _____

10. What does ‘she was an old photograph’ suggest about Margot?
    A. She wears old-fashioned clothing
    B. She doesn’t smile
    C. She is pale and seems faded
    D. She poses when people look at her

Your answer: _____

11. What does Margot mean when she writes in her poem ‘I think the sun is a flower, That blooms for just one hour’?
    A. The sun is a natural thing
    B. The sun is beautiful and fragile
    C. The sun is round, like a flower
    D. The sun is dying

Your answer: _____

12. Margot says the sun is like a ‘flower’, a ‘penny’ and a ‘fire’. What does this tell us about her?
    A. She has a good memory
    B. She has a sensitive, imaginative nature
    C. She has a talent for annoying people
    D. She likes to prove others wrong

Your answer: _____

13. What do you understand by the phrase ‘the children were crushed in the great thick windows’
    A. The children were all against the windows looking out
    B. The children had become caught underneath the large windowpanes
    C. The children were sad that they were separated from the outdoors by thick glass
    D. The children don’t know what to do now that the rain is slackening

Your answer: _____

14. Why does Margot only sing when the children sing about summer?

A. She doesn't know the words to the other songs
B. She likes going on holiday
C. They remind her of her home on Earth
D. She has never experienced summer

Your answer: _____

15. Why do the children contradict Margot when she describes the sun?

A. They are jealous of her
B. They think she is lying
C. She is wrong
D. They don't understand her

Your answer: _____

16. Why do you think Margot screams in the shower and refuses to use them?

A. She doesn't like washing
B. It's too much like the rain outside
C. She has a phobia of water
D. She is afraid of drowning in the shower

Your answer: _____

17. Why are Margot's parents considering taking her back to Earth?

A. She's not getting enough exercise on Venus
B. She is not doing well enough at school
C. She is desperately unhappy without the sun
D. She doesn't have any friends here

Your answer: _____

18. What is Margot waiting for?

A. To see and feel the sun
B. To go home
C. The teacher to arrive
D. For the children to notice her

Your answer: _____

19. Which phrase best describes the boy?
    - **A.** Cruel bully
    - **B.** Class clown
    - **C.** Spoilt brat
    - **D.** Good friend

Your answer: _____

20. Why does the boy tell Margot that the prediction is a joke?
    - **A.** He thinks it's funny
    - **B.** He has made a mistake
    - **C.** He wants to upset her
    - **D.** He doesn't want her to be disappointed

Your answer: _____

21. Why do the children shut Margot in the closet?
    - **A.** Because she can't take a joke
    - **B.** They want her to suffer
    - **C.** It's a game they are playing
    - **D.** She would get too sunburnt

Your answer: _____

22. What type of words are 'surged', 'caught', 'bore' and 'protesting'?
    - **A.** Nouns
    - **B.** Adjectives
    - **C.** Verbs
    - **D.** Adverbs

Your answer: _____

23. Re-read the paragraph beginning 'It was as if, in the midst of a film…' Which of the following best describes what this paragraph means?
    - **A.** They watch a film in which scenes of disasters are replaced with a beautiful tropical island
    - **B.** They experience a sound like a natural disaster and then it goes silent
    - **C.** They see a tropical island through the window because the rain has stopped
    - **D.** They experience silence which is in great contrast to the constant rain from before

Your answer: _____

24. Why do the children put their hands over their ears?

- **A.** They don't want to hear Margot crying
- **B.** The teacher has advised them to
- **C.** They are afraid of the sound of the rain
- **D.** The silence is so shocking it is as if it is a noise

Your answer: _____

25. What do you think 'repercussions' mean in this context?

- **A.** Echoing sounds
- **B.** Consequences
- **C.** Rhythms
- **D.** Bouncing

Your answer: _____

Now turn to Section B and begin the writing task.

ENGLISH – SECTION B

INSTRUCTIONS

- Respond to the task in the in the lined space provided over the page.
- You should spend around 30 minutes on this section.
- You do not have to finish the story – quality over quantity is preferred.
- You are being assessed on your ability to:
    - Write using accurate sentences, spelling and punctuation
    - Develop a realistic, well-paced story
    - Write engagingly to interest the reader

TURN OVER TO BEGIN THE TASK

TASK:

The children rush outside into the sunshine, leaving Margot trapped in the closet.

Continue the story from this moment.

- Spend 5 minutes planning your writing in the box below

Begin writing here:

ENGLISH SECTION A: Mark Scheme

1. What are the children feeling at the start of the extract?
   - **A.** Excited
   - **B.** Confused
   - **C.** Afraid
   - **D.** Bored

A

Your answer: _____

2. What is the term used for this kind of comparison: ‘like so many roses’?
   - **A.** Metaphor
   - **B.** Simile
   - **C.** Personification
   - **D.** Imagery

B

Your answer: _____

3. What is the effect of describing the children as ‘like so many roses, so many weeds’?
   - **A.** It suggests that some of the children will be nice, some not so nice
   - **B.** It suggests that some of the children are rosy-cheeked, some are not
   - **C.** It suggests that all of the children are growing fast
   - **D.** It suggests that some of the children are strong, some are not

A

Your answer: _____

What does ‘compounded’ mean in this context?

- **A.** Made worse
- **B.** Separated
- **C.** Added together
- **D.** Muddled

C

Your answer: _____

4. Re-read the paragraph beginning ‘It had been raining for seven years…’ Which of the following phrases best explains it?
   - **A.** It rained so hard that people’s heads hurt in the storms and tidal waves
   - **B.** It rained so hard that a thousand forests grew up on the planet
   - **C.** It rained so hard that life was in a cycle of creation and destruction
   - **D.** It rained so hard that it got into the schoolroom of the rocket men and children

C

Your answer: _____

5. What is the effect of writing ‘rain and rain and rain’?
   - **A.** It makes it more effective
   - **B.** It is raining a lot
   - **C.** It makes it seem like the rain never ends
   - **D.** It makes the rain seem peaceful and relaxing

C

Your answer: _____

6. What does ‘they always awoke to the tatting drum’ refer to?
   - **A.** An alarm clock
   - **B.** Someone playing a drum
   - **C.** Music
   - **D.** The sound of the rain

D

Your answer: _____

7. Which phrase best describes Margot?
   - **A.** Tall with blonde hair and blue eyes
   - **B.** Delicate, skinny and very pale
   - **C.** Rosy-cheeked and blonde
   - **D.** Strong and sturdy with white hair

B

Your answer: _____

Why doesn't Margot play with the other children?

- **A.** She can't catch the ball
- **B.** She doesn't know how to play tag
- **C.** She is older than all of the others
- **D.** She is an outsider

D

Your answer: _____

8. What does ‘she was an old photograph’ suggest about Margot?
   - **A.** She wears old-fashioned clothing
   - **B.** She doesn’t smile
   - **C.** She is pale and seems faded
   - **D.** She poses when people look at her

C

Your answer: _____

9. What does Margot mean when she writes in her poem ‘I think the sun is a flower, That blooms for just one hour’?
   - **A.** The sun is a natural thing
   - **B.** The sun is beautiful and fragile
   - **C.** The sun is round, like a flower
   - **D.** The sun is dying

B

Your answer: _____

10. Margot says the sun is like a ‘flower’, a ‘penny’ and a ‘fire’. What does this tell us about her?
    - **A.** She has a good memory
    - **B.** She has a sensitive, imaginative nature
    - **C.** She has a talent for annoying people
    - **D.** She likes to prove others wrong

B

Your answer: _____

11. What do you understand by the phrase ‘the children were crushed in the great thick windows’
    - **A.** The children were all against the windows looking out
    - **B.** The children had become caught underneath the large windowpanes
    - **C.** The children were sad that they were separated from the outdoors by thick glass
    - **D.** The children don’t know what to do now that the rain is slackening

A

Your answer: _____

12. Why does Margot only sing when the children sing about summer?
    - **A.** She doesn’t know the words to the other songs
    - **B.** She likes going on holiday
    - **C.** They remind her of her home on Earth
    - **D.** She has never experienced summer

C

Your answer: _____

13. Why do the children contradict Margot when she describes the sun?
    - **A.** They are jealous of her
    - **B.** They think she is lying
    - **C.** She is wrong
    - **D.** They don’t understand her

A

Your answer: _____

14. Why do you think Margot screams in the shower and refuses to use them?
    - **A.** She doesn’t like washing
    - **B.** It’s too much like the rain outside
    - **C.** She has a phobia of water
    - **D.** She is afraid of drowning in the shower

B

Your answer: _____

15. Why are Margot’s parents considering taking her back to Earth?
    - **A.** She’s not getting enough exercise on Venus
    - **B.** She is not doing well enough at school
    - **C.** She is desperately unhappy without the sun
    - **D.** She doesn’t have any friends here

C

Your answer: _____

16. What is Margot waiting for?
    - **A.** To see and feel the sun
    - **B.** To go home
    - **C.** The teacher to arrive
    - **D.** For the children to notice her

A

Your answer: _____

17. Which phrase best describes the boy?
    - **A.** Cruel bully
    - **B.** Class clown
    - **C.** Spoilt brat
    - **D.** Good friend

A

Your answer: _____

18. Why does the boy tell Margot that the prediction is a joke?
    - **A.** He thinks it’s funny
    - **B.** He has made a mistake
    - **C.** He wants to upset her
    - **D.** He doesn’t want her to be disappointed

C

Your answer: _____

19. Why do the children shut Margot in the closet?
    - **A.** Because she can’t take a joke
    - **B.** They want her to suffer
    - **C.** It’s a game they are playing
    - **D.** She would get too sunburnt

B

Your answer: _____

20. What type of words are ‘surged’, ‘caught’, ‘bore’ and ‘protesting’?
    - **A.** Nouns
    - **B.** Adjectives
    - **C.** Verbs
    - **D.** Adverbs

C

Your answer: _____

21. Re-read the paragraph beginning ‘It was as if, in the midst of a film…’ Which of the following best describes what this paragraph means?
    - **A.** They watch a film in which scenes of disasters are replaced with a beautiful tropical island
    - **B.** They experience a sound like a natural disaster and then it goes silent
    - **C.** They see a tropical island through the window because the rain has stopped
    - **D.** They experience silence which is in great contrast to the constant rain from before

Your answer: **D**

22. Why do the children put their hands over their ears?
    - **A.** They don’t want to hear Margot crying
    - **B.** The teacher has advised them to
    - **C.** They are afraid of the sound of the rain
    - **D.** The silence is so shocking it is as if it is a noise

Your answer: **D**

23. What do you think ‘repercussions’ mean in this context?
    - **A.** Echoing sounds
    - **B.** Consequences
    - **C.** Rhythms
    - **D.** Bouncing

Your answer: **A**