DULWICH COLLEGE
FOUNDED 1619

Year 7 Entrance and Scholarship Examination English

Specimen Paper B

TIME: 60 minutes plus 10 minutes' reading time

ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

You have 10 minutes to read the passage and questions. Do not write or type anything during this time.

Pay careful attention to the number of marks available for each questions and think about how you are going to make the best use of your time.

An Unusual Meeting

The passage is set in England, a long time ago. The Wart is an 11-year-old boy.

Paragraph 1 The Wart slept well in the wood where he had laid himself down. At first he only dipped below the surface of sleep, and skimmed along like a salmon, so close to the surface of the water that he imagined himself in the air. He thought himself awake when he was already asleep. He imagined he could see the stars above his face, whirling around on their axis. He could hear rustling coming from the trees above him, and soft wing-beats, and stealthy bellies moving over the grass-blades.

Paragraph 2 It was nine o'clock when he awoke, ravenous. Hearing a curious faint clanking noise, he decided to investigate. The noise was coming from a clearing, where there stood a snug little dwelling built of stone. There was a well, and the metallic noise which the Wart had heard was caused by a very old gentleman who was drawing water out of it by means of a bucket and chain.

Paragraph 3 The old gentleman was a fascinating spectacle. He was dressed in a flowing gown with fur edges, and had on a pointed hat like a dunce's cap, a pair of spectacles which sat on the end of his nose, and snowy whiskers. His shoulders were streaked with bird-droppings, among the stars and triangles of his gown, and a large spider was slowly spinning a web on the tip of his hat, as he gazed and slowly blinked at the boy in front of him.

Paragraph 4 He nodded to the Wart, and walked off towards the cottage. The Wart followed him, offering to carry his bucket, which seemed to please the old gentleman, and waiting while he counted his keys, muttered, and dropped them in the grass. Finally, when they reached the cottage, he climbed up a ladder after his host, and found himself in the most marvellous room he had ever been in.

Paragraph 5 There was a real phoenix hanging from the rafters, hundreds of brown books in leather bindings, stuffed birds, fossils, boars' tusks and claws of tigers. The Wart feasted his eyes on the extraordinary sight.

Paragraph 6 Merlin took off his pointed hat, and immediately there was a little scamper in one of the dark corners, and a flap of soft wings, and a young tawny owl was sitting on the top of his head.

Turn over

Paragraph 7 'Oh, what a lovely owl!' cried the Wart. But when he went up to it and held out his hand, the owl stood up stiff as a poker, closed its eyes so there was only the smallest slit to peep through, and looked the other way.

Paragraph 8 'We see so little company,' explained Merlin, 'that Archimedes is a little shy of strangers. Come, Archimedes, I want you to meet a friend of mine.' He took a dead mouse from under his hat, and gave it to the Wart, who offered it rather gingerly to Archimedes. The owl looked closely at the mouse, blinked at the Wart, then hopped onto his outstretched hand. He stood there with an expression of rapture on his face, as if he were saying grace, and then took the morsel as gently as if it were a soap bubble. He held it up in his right foot, as if he were a boy holding a stick of rock. He examined it, and nibbled its tail. He looked round at the company with the tail hanging out of the corner of his mouth, turned his head away, politely swallowed the tail, and began to scratch himself with his left toe.

Paragraph 9 'Let him alone,' said Merlin. 'For perhaps he does not want to be friends with you until he knows what you are like. With owls, it is never easy-come and easy-go. Now it is time for breakfast!'

Paragraph 10 The Wart saw that the most perfect breakfast was laid out neatly for two, on the table before the window. There were peaches, melons, strawberries, kidneys and mushrooms on toast, coffee and chocolate.

Paragraph 11 'Have some mustard,' said Merlin.

Paragraph 12 The mustard-pot got up and walked over to his plate on thin silver legs that waddled like the owl's. Then it uncurled its handles and one handle lifted its lid with exaggerated courtesy while the other helped him to a generous spoonful.

Paragraph 13 'Oh, I love the mustard-pot!' cried the Wart. 'Where ever did you get it?'

Paragraph 14 At this, the pot beamed all over its face and began to strut a bit, but Merlin rapped it on the head with a teaspoon, so that it sat down and shut up at once.

Paragraph 15 'It's not a bad pot,' he said grudgingly. 'Only it is inclined to give itself airs.'

Questions

1. **Re-read paragraph 1. Find three sounds which the Wart hears as he sleeps, and explain, in your own words, what you think makes each sound.**

First sound: _____

What makes it: _____

_____ **(2 marks)**

Second sound: _____

What makes it: _____

_____ **(2 marks)**

Third sound: _____

What makes it: _____

_____ **(2 marks)**

2. **The writer tells us in paragraph 1 that the Wart 'only dipped below the surface of sleep'. Explain in your own words what you think this means.**

_____

_____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

3. **Finding information from paragraph 2, write down two feelings the Wart has when he wakes up. Use your OWN words, not those of the passage.**

First feeling: _____

_____ **(1 mark)**

Second feeling: _____

_____ **(1 mark)**

4. In your own words, explain what the following three phrases mean, as they are used in paragraphs 2 and 3.

a) 'a snug little dwelling':

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

b) 'a fascinating spectacle':

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

c) 'snowy whiskers':

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

5. Re-read the description of Merlin in paragraph 3. Find and write out <u>two</u> amusing details about Merlin's *appearance* and explain in what ways they are funny.

First detail: _____

_____

_____ **(1 mark)**

Why it is funny: _____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

Second detail: _____

_____

_____ **(1 mark)**

Why it is funny: _____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

6. Find and copy out a phrase from paragraph 4 which tells us something about the Wart's character, then explain what we learn about his character from this phrase.

Chosen phrase: _____

_____

_____ **(1 mark)**

What we learn from this: _____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

7. Explain <u>in your own words</u> the Wart's reaction to Merlin's room in paragraph 5.

(2 marks)

8. *There are <u>24</u> marks for this question, of which 8 are awarded for the accuracy of your written English (punctuation, grammar, use of English and spelling), and 16 are awarded for the inventiveness and sophistication of your descriptive writing.*

Look again at paragraph 5. Using details from the passage, and your own imagination, continue the description of Merlin's room.

Try to describe what we might see, hear, and feel, if we were in the room.

You will be rewarded for:

- **Inventive vocabulary**
- **Appropriate use of similes and metaphors**
- **Correct use of punctuation, spelling and grammar**

There are more lines on the next page

(24 marks)

9. Explain the meaning of these three words <u>as they are used in paragraph 8:</u>

Gingerly

(2 marks)

Rapture

(2 marks)

Morsel

(2 marks)

10. In paragraph 8, the writer uses a *simile* when he writes: 'he took the morsel as gently as if it were a soap bubble'. Find <u>two more similes</u> in paragraph 8, and explain what each simile tells us about the owl's behaviour.

1st simile:

(1 mark)

What it tells us:

(2 marks)

2nd simile: _____

_____

_____ **(1 mark)**

What it tells us: _____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

11. Explain in your own words:

a) What the writer means when he says the pot behaves with 'exaggerated courtesy'.

_____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

b) What Merlin means when he says that the pot is 'inclined to give itself airs'.

_____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

c) Why Merlin says 'it's not a bad pot' *grudgingly*.

_____

_____

_____ **(2 marks)**

12. Re-read paragraphs 8 – 15.

This part of the passage tells us a good deal about Merlin's character. Explain *in detail* your impression of his personality. You may quote from the passage if you wish, but you must also explain *in your own words* what you think about him. Make <u>FOUR</u> separate points.

(8 marks)

END OF EXAMINATION