

REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

11+ English

January 2012

11+ reading section

You should spend thirty minutes on this section. Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions.

Mount Etna

Everyone dreams of adventure. Perhaps they dream of a life on the space station looking for new stars or maybe exploring the jungles of Peru. I was living my dream as I shuddered, dwarfed by the vast rumbling belly of the fire giant rising up before me.
Yesterday morning, I had been cocooned under a warm duvet; a change was inevitable but my spread wings would have engines attached. The telephone had buzzed and jolted me awake. It was my editor telling me to get on a plane to Sicily immediately: Mount Etna was erupting.

Under a blanket of steel clouds, I strained to hear our guide, an expert scientist, briefing the journalists on the plane about our destination.
He said: "Mount Etna is a volcano on the east of Sicily, an island off the coast of Italy. It is the largest volcano in Europe, currently standing about 3,350 m high, though this varies with summit eruptions (the mountain is 21 m lower now than it was in 1865). Mount Etna is one of the most active volcanoes in the world and is in an almost constant state of eruption. In 2003, the biggest series of eruptions for many years threw up a huge column of ash that could easily be seen from space and fell as far away as Libya, on the far side of the Mediterranean Sea. Although it can occasionally be very destructive, it is not generally regarded as being dangerous; thousands of people live on its slopes and in the surrounding areas. The fertile volcanic soils support extensive agriculture, with vineyards and orchards spread across the lower slopes of the mountain. At the top of the mountain is a volcanic wasteland, dominated by old lava flows and volcanic ash. Few plants grow there, as it is covered by snow for much of the year.
Now buckle up ladies and gentlemen, we're beginning our descent."

The terrain looked more like the surface of an asteroid hurtling through space than an Italian mountain side. But only five minutes earlier we had been walking through a beautiful nature reserve bursting with the fiery colours of flowers and insects. I hung back from the rest of the journalists, taking my time to clamber over the sharp stones and volcanic rock that threatened to rip me to shreds. The hot stench of lava and drifting steam was like hell on earth; I began to worry that our scientific advisor had been too hasty in claiming that it was safe to ascend today. A deep rumble beneath my feet was quickly followed by the other journalists running towards me. My suspicions were right. It was too soon. I turned and fled down the mountain with the others as Mount Etna roared out her titanic strength and rage.

Answer the following questions in full sentences when asked to do so.

1. In one sentence, explain exactly why the writer of the passage goes to Sicily. *(2 marks)*

_____

_____

2. Find and write down the THREE most important pieces of factual information about Mount Etna that you would choose to use first if you were introducing the mountain to people who had not heard of it before. *(3 marks)*

1: _____

_____

2: _____

_____

3: _____

_____

3. Find and write down THREE comparisons used to describe the volcano. *(3 marks)*

1: _____

_____

2: _____

_____

3: _____

_____

4. Why does the writer say that a change was “inevitable” (line 4)? *(1 mark)*

_____

_____

5. What mood or emotions does the writer want to suggest that they are feel when they write that “the telephone had buzzed” (line 5)? *(1 mark)*

_____

_____

6. Explain, in a sentence of your own words, why people have always lived around the bottom of Mount Etna despite the threat of eruptions. *(1 mark)*

_____

_____

7. Explain why books with details of Mount Etna in them could be wrong. *(1 mark)*

_____

_____

8. The ending of the narrative is dramatic and full of tension. Identify THREE different techniques that the writer uses to create a sense of panic. You should think about the vocabulary, the use of imagery, and sentence structures. *(3 marks)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Explain the structure of the narrative by summarising briefly what each paragraph is about: *(3 marks)*

Paragraph 1 (lines 1-6) is about:

_____

_____

Paragraph 2 (lines 7-20) is about:

_____

_____

Paragraph 3 (lines 21-29) is about:

_____

_____

10. a. Re-read lines 4-5. What comparison does the writer use to describe waking up? *(1 mark)*

_____

_____

b. Give TWO reasons how this comparison is connected to the events in the rest of the narrative. *(2 marks)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Explain how the writer's emotions change during the narrative. Use short quotations to prove what you say and refer to at least two different emotions. (*2 marks)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Imagine that you are the journalist who returns to write a front page newspaper article about your experience. Write a suitable headline for your story – you should try to make your headline sound as dramatic as possible and include details of the story. *(2 marks)*

_____

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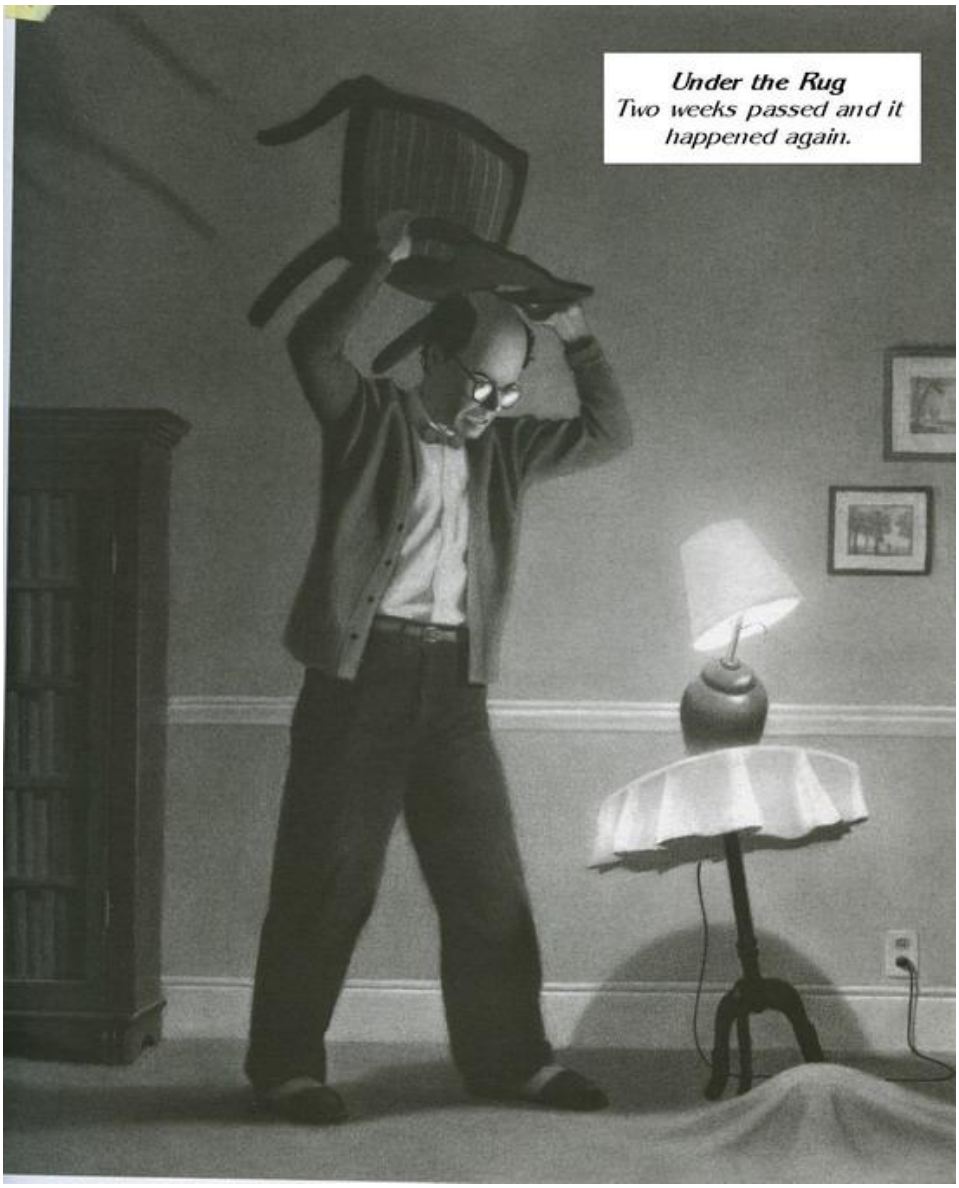
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11+ writing section

You should spend 30 minutes on this section. Plan before you begin and leave some time to check your accuracy at the end. Use a wide vocabulary, paragraph correctly and be descriptive.

Choose ONE question from the following to answer:

1. Study the picture carefully. Copy the quotation: "Two weeks passed and it happened again." and then continue the story. You may leave the story on a cliffhanger if you wish.



OR

2. **Write a short story about a character who lives near a volcano**.

You should focus on:
- building tension towards a dramatic moment
- describing a dramatic event and the range of emotions that the person feels
- using descriptive techniques to help the reader to picture the scene in detail.
- using metaphors and similes that are appropriate to the story, setting, and the character

(25 marks)

PLANNING

REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

11+ English

January 2011

Read the following passage carefully then answer all of the questions that follow.

"Listen. Can you hear the rustling?" Sarah whispered to her brother who was in the other bed. No response. Silence crept about the room and pressed its hands against Sarah's straining ears. She could make out vague shapes in the gloom: a snake sliding into the shadows; dwarfish girls frozen in the act of crawling about; and small, glinting mice sitting hunched on wheels on the floor.

Crash! She sat bolt upright. The hairs on the back of neck prickled and her heart began to thump. Dad was a heavy sleeper; he wouldn't wake up even if a herd of drum playing, blindfolded elephants came dashing into the house. But Tom should have stirred; Sarah could only just make out the lumpy duvet lying peacefully across the room. Just like his Dad, she thought. Downstairs there were some further rustling noises, a thud, and then silence. What if the burglar had decided to move in, Sarah thought, but he can't, we don't have enough bedrooms. Being a girl of some bravery, even in the masked face of danger, Sarah picked up Cuddles, pushed back the extra blankets on her bed and swung her legs over the side. One foot, then the other, wormed its way quickly into a slipper for warmth and Sarah carefully moved across the bedroom.

In the dark kitchen below, a rather clumsy figure was stealing the milk from the fridge, but they had their eyes on the TV in the other room. They knew they would be in trouble if they were found there and glanced up guiltily as a floorboard creaked ominously over their heads.

Sarah drifted across the landing like a ghost. She looked over the banister into a dark mouth. One giant tooth glinted back at her: the radiator. Sarah held her breath as she crept down the stairs, one hand gripping the banister tightly. What would she do if he had a knife? Or a gun? Perhaps she could call the police? But they would take too long to get through the snow. Slowly, slowly, Sarah was homing in on the sound; she was close now. The glow from the open fridge went out. Moonlit oozed in, casting strange shadows which stretched across the kitchen; long, dark fingers seemed to grip the room, tigering the walls. Sarah suddenly realised that whoever was in the house must now be creeping up behind her.
A voice whispered into her ear, "What are you doing, Sis?"

Sarah screamed. The thump upstairs told her that she must have screamed very loudly indeed.

Reading task
Spend 30 minutes on this section. It is worth 25 marks; the marks for a question are next to it in brackets. If a question seems hard then move on to the next one and return to questions that you have left out at the end, if you have time.

1. What does Sarah think is downstairs? (1)

_____

2. List THREE pieces of evidence that suggest that it is a cold night. (3)

_____

_____

_____

3. How can you tell that the story is from Sarah's point of view? Use words from the passage to prove what you say. (2)

_____

_____

4. (a) Re-read lines 21-23. Explain what the phrase "tigering the walls" means and what is being suggested here, by answering the following questions: (3)
What features of a "tiger" might the writer be thinking about here? _____

_____

Describe what the wall looks like to Sarah.

_____

_____

How does this description of the wall suggest that Sarah is scared?

_____

_____

(b) Explain what <u>different</u> ideas the phrase "masked face of danger" suggests in line 12. (3)

IDEA 1:_____

_____

IDEA 2:_____

_____

IDEA 3:_____

_____

5. Explain TWO different feelings that Sarah has in the second paragraph after she has heard the loud noise downstairs. You should select evidence from the passage to prove what you write. (4)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. a. Find a short quotation (it could be a simile) in the story that you think adds to the frightening atmosphere. Write it down here:

_____ (1)

b. Explain how the words create fear for the reader: (1)

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. How does the writer use the order in which you find out information in the story to make the ending surprising for Sarah and the reader? Write down TWO ways: (2)

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Give THREE <u>different</u> ways that the writer uses to make the story tense and exciting. (3)

_____

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_____

9. Suggest a title for the book that this passage might be found in. Give a reason for your choice. (2)
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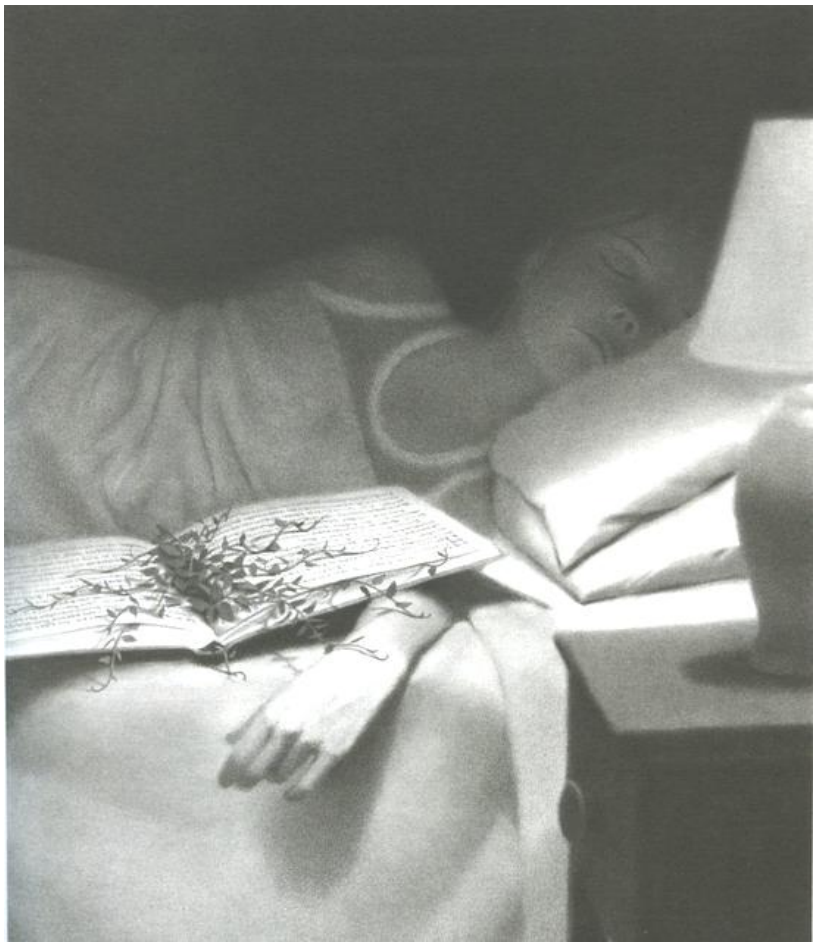
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Writing task

You should spend 30 minutes on this section. Plan for five minutes and leave some time to check your accuracy at the end. Use a wide vocabulary, paragraph correctly and be descriptive.

Choose ONE question from the following to answer:

1. Study the picture carefully. Copy the quotation: "He had warned her about the book. Now it was too late." and then continue the story.



OR

2. Write a story called "The Coldest Day". It should focus on describing a dramatic event and use descriptive techniques to help the reader to picture the scene in detail.

(25 marks)

PLANNING

REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

11+ English

January 2010

RGS English entrance examination 2010

Read the following passage carefully then answer all of the questions that follow.

As Tom turned the corner into the main road, he held on tightly to his mother's hand. There was an explosion of fiery noise and colour before him with every shop along the High Street trying its best to attract customers. Across the road, Tom could see two circus performers skilfully juggling both knives and flaming clubs. What a terribly dangerous thing to do, he thought, and yet he secretly imagined himself letting go of his mother's hand there and then and running to join their circus.

"Hold tight now, Thomas," whispered his mother, as if she could read his glowing face like a book. Huddled deep in a thick coat and scarf, and gingerly stepping between icy puddles, the pair made their way into the throng of busy shoppers. Street traders offered their wares at every step. Tom could smell the sweet, rich tang of chestnuts and the deep, warm aroma of a roasting pig. For a moment, he closed his eyes and was carried along in the crowd imagining the early morning when he would race downstairs to a pile of presents wrapped in rainbows. Suddenly, a great trumpeting noise burst upon Tom's daydream and he opened his eyes to see, not a herd of elephants but a group of musicians playing brass instruments and seasonal tunes. As he began to hum along merrily, Tom slowly realised that no-one was holding his hand.

He spun around searching for just one face in the crowd. Where was his mother? Like a grotesque puppet show, giant faces, arms and legs loomed out of the swarming masses around him and came perilously close to bowling him over before disappearing into the swirl of angry colour about him. Tom called out but his voice was drowned in the din of the busy high street. The braziers used by the street cooks spat fire at him like awful dragons. Two great droplets began to form upon his cheeks. His shoulders slumped and his breath was ragged. Dark clouds gathered in the sky above his head. Traders, shoppers and other pedestrians began to scatter into doorways or homewards as a heavy rain began to fall. Tom just stood still; he had nowhere to go. Thunder rumbled closer and closer and the rain fell harder and harder. Tom could feel an icy trickle run its finger down his spine and he shivered.

Suddenly the rain stopped. An azure sky was suspended over his head and a warm embrace scooped him upwards. It was mother with a great blue umbrella. She had found him.

Glossary

azure — the blue of the sky on a clear, bright day

braziers — a container used to burn coals; the sides are made of wire mesh

Reading task
Spend 30 minutes on this section. It is worth 25 marks. If a question seems hard then move on to the next one and return to questions that you have left out at the end, if you have time.

1. What time of year is it? (1)

_____

2. List THREE real things or events that frighten Tom on the high street. (3)

_____

_____

_____

3. How can you tell that the story is from Tom's point of view? Use words from the passage to prove what you say. (2)

_____

_____

4. (a) Re-read lines 15-17. Explain what the phrase "swarming masses" means and what is being suggested here by answering the following questions: (3)
What does the word "swarming" compare the people in the street to? _____

_____

Describe what the people may be doing when they are "swarming".

_____

_____

How does this description of the people suggest that Tom is scared?

_____

_____

(b) Explain what ideas the phrase "wrapped in rainbows" suggests in line 11. (3)

IDEA 1:_____

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IDEA 2:_____

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IDEA 3:_____

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5. Explain TWO different feelings that Tom has in the first paragraph when he first sees the high street. You should select evidence from the passage to prove what you write. (4)

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6. Using the first three paragraphs in the passage (lines 1–23) find and copy down a quotation that suggests that Tom feels:

(a) safe and content (1)

_____

(b) scared (1)

_____

7. In the last paragraph (lines 24–25) how does the writer suggest the change in how Tom is feeling? Write down TWO ways: (2)

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Give THREE ways that the writer uses to make the story tense and exciting. (3)

_____

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9. Suggest a title for the book that this passage might be found in. Give a reason for your choice. (2)

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Writing task

You should spend 30 minutes on this section. Plan for five minutes and leave some time to check your accuracy at the end. Use a wide vocabulary, paragraph correctly and be descriptive.

Imagine that a young child becomes lost and discovers that they have been locked in a park. The child's frightened mood changes when, suddenly, help arrives. Describe the setting in detail and suggest how scared they feel, then describe the arrival of help and show how their emotions change.

Think about:

- descriptive ways of showing what time of day it is and what the weather is like

- the sights and sounds of the park and a frightening moment

- how you will suggest the feelings of the young child as they try to find a way out

- how to build up tension to the surprise of the arrival of help (what will the help be?)

- how you will show the different emotions that your character feels

(25 marks)

PLANNING:

Writing Section – write your answer here.