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KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOL
WIMBLEDON

Candidate Number:

11+ for 2017 entry
Pre-test for 2019 entry

Specimen Paper 2017

ENGLISH

SECTION A

Comprehension

30 Minutes + 5 minutes reading time

Surname: _____

First name: _____

At the start of the exam, you will have 5 minutes reading time.

You may not write anything during this time or use your pen in any way.

This booklet will be collected 35 minutes after the start of the English examination.

Section A - Comprehension

You will be given **five minutes** to read through the passage and questions which follow. You are not allowed to write during this time. When the invigilator tells you to begin writing, you will have **thirty minutes** in which to answer the questions.

The following passage is taken from 'North Against the Sioux' by Kenneth Ulyatt. Portugee is a cowboy making a dangerous journey in order to get help for some of his friends, besieged in their fort. Fortune is the name of his faithful horse.

The Pass Through The Mountains

Portugee had to go forward along the narrow mountain pass: behind him, and high above, held only by trees, the driven snow had accumulated into one huge, unsteady, fairy-tale bridge. It weighed a thousand tons, but was suspended upon a fragile web of creaking branches. Ahead, the wolves ranged right across the pass, snarling so hungrily that Fortune refused to move another pace.

Portugee tried once more. 'C'mon, Fortune, feller', and slapped the horse's cold grey rump with his pistol. Fortune moved another step or two, and the nearest wolf crouched, ready to spring. Reluctantly, aware of the vast ice bridge above, Portugee raised his gun.

Crack! The wolf leaped, twisted and crashed to the ground between the wolf pack and the terrified horse.

Crack! Another noise shattered the air, but Portugee had not fired again. With mounting horror, he looked up. The whole span of ice seemed to drop a few feet and then stop. At the edges, against the black rock, a shower of snow jetted downwards like water from a fall. The cracking noise came again; dark lines began to run across the face of the ice, and quite slowly three or four blocks as big as buffalo toppled forward into the ravine.

He yelled at the horse. Still Fortune faced the wolves, unaware of the falling terror behind. Portugee slammed his pistol in his holster. Then, with one backward glance at the shattering ice above him, he played his last card. He rose in his stirrups. Digging his hands into the horse's mane, he leaned forward over Fortune's neck. The horse thrust up his head, unused to the weight balanced over him. This was what Portugee wanted. Bending forward as far as he could, he thrust his face down to the horse's mouth. The soft velvet flesh came up to meet him, and as the avalanche broke above, the rider bared his teeth and bit hard into Fortune's muzzle.

Fortune gave a surprised scream, and reared. Gamely, Portugee held on: hair and blood filled his mouth as the horse leaped forward, the wolves scattering beneath his flashing hooves. Jarred and shaken, Portugee could only cling there. It was an old, savage Indian trick, but it worked.

With a roar that filled the air like continuous thunder, the ice bridge broke up. Thousands of tons of frozen snow crashed down into the narrow pass. Blocks of ice as big as stage-coaches pitched along the bottom like marbles. Branches of firs broke and splintered like matchsticks as the avalanche rolled on. The wolf pack turned and broke. For one amazing moment, horse and rider, wolves and foxes fled side by side along the floor of the ravine while just behind them the snow piled an enormous tumbling mass - on the spot where, a few minutes before, they had faced each other for a fight to the death.

Now answer the questions to the best of your ability.

1. Explain in a few words for each one what the following words mean as used in the passage.

   a) accumulated *(line 2)*
   b) fragile *(line 3)*
   c) ravine *(line 14)*
   d) reared *(line 22)*
   e) avalanche *(line 28)*

   a) .....

   b) .....

   c) .....

   d) .....

   e) .....

   (10 marks)

2. Portugee faces **two** dangers at the beginning of the story: what are they?

   .....

   .....

   (2 + 2 marks)

3. Why will Fortune not move forward?

   .....

   .....

   (2 marks)

4. Why is Portugee at first unwilling to fire his gun at the wolves?

   .....

   .....

   (2 marks)

5. There are two cracks: what makes each one?

   .....

   .....

   (2 + 2 marks)

6. Look at the fifth paragraph (which begins ‘He yelled at the horse.’). Quote the phrase that tells us that Portugee thinks there is now only one thing left he can do.

.....

.....

(2 marks)

7. What **two** actions did Portugee carry out on Fortune which the horse had probably never experienced before?

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.....

.....

.....

(2 + 2 marks)

8. Portugee’s idea to make Fortune break though the wolves worked.

   a) Was it his own idea or not?

   .....

   .....

   b) Quote the words that prove this.

   .....

   .....

(2 + 2 marks)

9. From the last paragraph:

   a) Quote **two** images or descriptions that describe the ice or snow.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2 marks)

b) Choose one of these images or descriptions and say why you think it is effective, eg: the sound of the words, what they make you think of, etc.

(4 marks)

10. Explain why the writer describes the fleeing of 'horse and rider, wolves and foxes' as 'one amazing moment'.

(2 marks)

(TOTAL MARKS FOR SECTION A: 40)

Now move on to Section B