The North London Independent Girls' Schools' Consortium

YEAR 7 ENTRANCE

January 2010

ENGLISH
Supplementary Paper
Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

The reading passage is printed on a separate piece of paper

First Name	
Last Name	

Total Marks: Part A		**Total Marks: Part B**		**Total Marks: Part A & B**	

PART B: WRITING

INSTRUCTIONS:

Spend 30 minutes on your writing.

Remember to leave time to check your work carefully.

TASK:

Write a story in which you describe what happens when a brother and sister discover something interesting in a wood.

50 marks

50 marks

THE TROUT

One of the first places Julia always ran to when they arrived on holiday was The Dark Walk. It is a laurel walk, very old; almost gone wild; a lofty midnight tunnel of smooth, sinewy branches. Underfoot the tough brown leaves are never dry enough to crackle: there is always a suggestion of damp and cool trickle.

She raced right into it. For the first few yards she always had the memory of the sun behind her, then she felt the dusk closing swiftly down on her so that she screamed with pleasure and raced on to reach the light at the far end; and it was always just a little too long in coming so that she emerged gasping, clasping her hands, laughing, drinking in the sun. When she was filled with the heat and glare she would turn and consider the ordeal again.

This year she had the extra joy of showing it to her small brother, and of terrifying him as well as herself. And for him the fear lasted longer because his legs were so short and she had gone out at the far end while he was still screaming and racing.

When they had done this many times they came back to the house to tell everybody that they had done it. He boasted. She mocked. They squabbled.

"Cry baby!"

"You were afraid yourself, so there!"

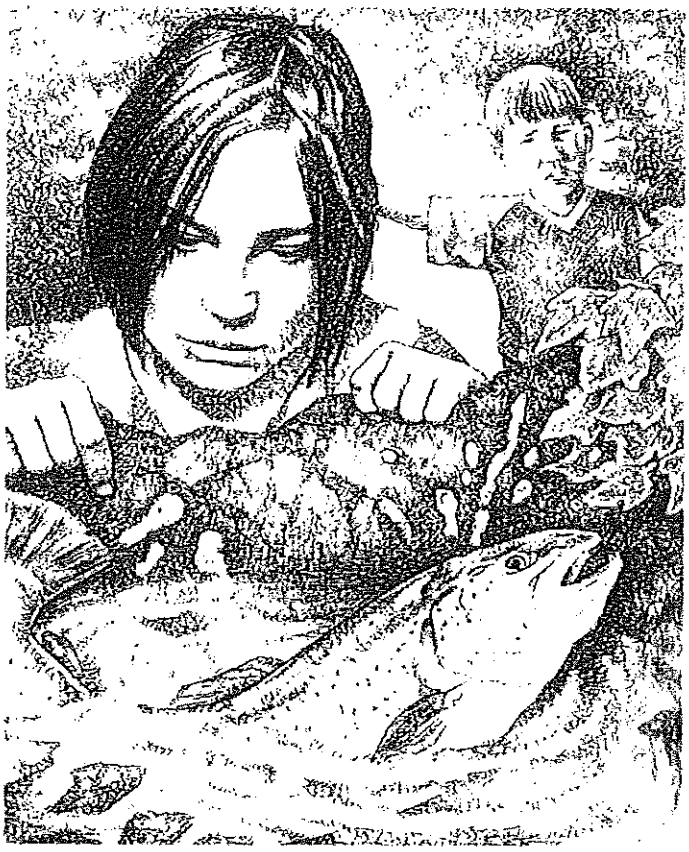
"I won't take you anymore."

"You're a big pig."

"I hate you."

Tears were threatening, so somebody said, "Did you see the well?" She opened her eyes at that and held up her long lovely neck suspiciously and decided to be incredulous. She was twelve and at that age little girls are beginning to suspect most stories. How could there be a well! In The Dark Walk? That she had visited year after year? Haughtily she said, "Nonsense."

But she went back, pretending to be going somewhere else, and she found a hole scooped in the rock at the side of the walk, choked with damp leaves, so shrouded by ferns that she uncovered it only after much searching. At the back of this little cavern there was about a quart of water. In the water she suddenly perceived a panting trout. She rushed for Stephen and dragged him to see, and they were both so excited that they were no longer afraid of the darkness as they hunched down and peered in at the fish in his tiny prison, his silver stomach going up and down like an engine.



Nobody knew how the trout got there.

Her mother suggested that a bird carried the spawn. Her father thought that in winter a small streamlet might have carried it down there as a baby, and it had been safe until the summer came and the water began to dry up. She said, "I see," and went back to look again and consider the matter in private. Her brother remained behind, wanting to hear the whole story of the trout, not really interested in the actual trout but much interested in the story which his mummy began to make up for him on the lines of, "So one day Daddy Trout and Mummy Trout..." When he retailed it to her she said "Pooh."

It troubled her that the trout was always in the same position: he had no room to turn. All the time the silver belly went up and down; otherwise he was motionless. Hunched over him she thought how all the winter, while she was at school, he had been there. All the winter, in The Dark Walk, all night, floating around alone. She drew the leaf of her hat down around her ears and chin and stared. She was still thinking of it as she lay in bed.

It was late June, the longest days of the year. The sun had sat still for a week, burning up the world. Although it was after ten o' clock it was still bright and still hot. She lay on her back under a single sheet, with her long legs spread, trying to keep cool. She could see the D of the moon through the fir tree – they slept on the ground floor. Before they went to bed her mummy had told Stephen the story of the trout again, and she, in her bed, had resolutely presented her back to them and read her book. But she had kept one ear cocked.

"And so, in the end, this naughty fish who could not stay at home got bigger and bigger, and the water got smaller and smaller..."

Passionately she had whirled and cried, "Mummy, don't make it a horrible old moral story!" Her mummy had brought in a fairy godmother then, who sent lots of rain, and filled the well, and a stream poured out and the trout floated away down to the river below. Staring at the moon she knew that there are not such things as fairy godmothers and that the trout, down in The Dark Walk, was panting like an engine. She heard somebody unwind a fishing reel. Would the beasts fish him out!

She sat up. Stephen was a hot lump of sleep, lazy thing. The Dark Walk would be full of little scraps of moon. She leaped up and looked out of the window. Quietly she lifted the large jug of water and climbed out of the window and scuttled along the cool but cruel gravel down to the opening of the tunnel. Her pyjamas were very short so that when she splashed water it wet her ankles. She peered into the tunnel. Something alive rustled inside there. She raced in, and up and down she raced, and flurried, and cried aloud, "Oh, gosh, I can't find it," and then at last she did. Kneeling down in the damp, she put her hand into the slimy hole. When the body lashed they were both mad with fright. But she gripped him and shoved him into the jug and raced, with her teeth ground, out to the other end of the tunnel and down the steep paths to the river's edge.

All the time she could feel him lashing his tail against the side of the jug. She was afraid he would just jump right out. The gravel cut into her soles until she came to the cool ooze of the river's bank. She poured out, watching until he plopped. For a second he was visible in the water. She hoped he was not dizzy. Then all she saw was the glimmer of the moon in the silent-flowing river, the dark firs, the dim mountains, and the radiant pointed face laughing down at her out of the empty sky.

She scuttled up the hill, in the window, plonked down the jug, and flew through the air like a bird into bed. She hugged herself and giggled. Like a river of joy her holiday spread before her.

In the morning Stephen rushed to her, shouting that "he" was gone and asking "where" and "how". Lifting her nose in the air she said superciliously, "Fairy godmother, I suppose?" and strolled away patting the palms of her hands.

The writer is a zoologist. He is studying the behaviour of monkeys in West Africa, including baboons, Drill monkeys, Putty-Nosed monkeys and Red-Eared Guenons.

One day a man walked into the camp, preceded on a length of rope by a three parts grown baboon. Young though the baboon was, he was at least three times as big as the largest Drill monkey. Apart from his great size he had a shaggy coat of yellowish fur, huge teeth, and a long sweeping, lion-like tail. I called this baboon George. He turned out to be gentle and kind to the other monkeys, without allowing them to take any liberties.

George, owing to the fact that he was so tame, was a great favourite with the staff, and spent much of his time in the kitchen. This, however, I had to put a stop to as he was used as an excuse for almost anything that happened: if dinner was late, George had upset the frying-pan; if something was missed there were always at least three witnesses to the fact that George had been seen with it last. So in the end George was tethered among the other monkeys and accepted the leadership without letting it go to his head. In this respect he was most unusual, for almost any monkey, if he sees that all the others respect and are afraid of him, will turn into the most disgusting bully. He also did something that astonished not only his fellow-monkeys, but the staff as well. Thinking that he would show the same respect for the lizards as the other monkeys did, I tied him with a fairly long leash, and his first action was to walk to the full extent of it, reach out a black paw, snatch a lizard off its branch, and proceed to eat it with every sign of enjoyment. I hastily shortened his leash.

The Red-eared Guenon was the most delightful of the monkeys. About the size of a small cat, she was a delicate green-yellow colour on her body, with yellow patches on her cheeks, a fringe of russet hair hiding her ears, and on her nose a large heart-shaped patch of red hair. Her limbs were slender, and she had great thin bony fingers, like a very old man's. Every day the monkeys had a handful of grasshoppers each, and the Red-eared Guenon, when she saw me coming, would stand up on her hind legs, uttering shrill bird-like twitterings, and holding out her long arms beseechingly, her thin fingers trembling. She would fill her mouth and both hands with grasshoppers, and when the last insect had been scrunched she would carefully examine the front and back of her hands to make sure she had not missed one, and then would search the ground all round, an intense expression in her light brown eyes. She was the most gentle monkey I had ever come across, and even her cries were this delicate bird-like twittering, and a long drawn-out "wheeeeeeeep" when she was trying to attract one's attention, so different from the belching grunts and loud, unruly screams of the Drill monkeys, or the tinny screech of the Putty-noses. George seemed to share my liking for this Guenon, and she seemed to find comfort in being near to his massive body. Peering from behind his shaggy shoulders she would even pluck up the courage to make faces at the Drills.

At night the monkeys were untied from their stakes, given a drink of milk with vitamins in it, and then tied inside a special small hut I had built for them, next door to my tent. The nearer they were to me at night the safer I felt, for I never knew when a local leopard might fancy monkey for his nightly feed, and tied out in the middle of the compound they would not stand a chance. So, each night the monkeys would be carried to their house, dripping milk, and screaming because they did not want to go to bed.

One night George revolted. After they had all been put to bed, and I had had my supper, I went down to a dance in the village. George must have watched me going through a crack in his bedroom wall, and he decided that if I could spend an evening out he would also. Very carefully he unpicked his tether and quietly eased his way through the palm-leaf wall. Then he slipped across the compound, and was just gaining the path when the night watchman saw him.

The night watchman uttered a wild cry, seized a banana and rushed forward to try and tempt him back. George paused and watched his approach. He let him get within a foot or so of his trailing leash, then he ran forward, bit the poor man in the calf of the leg, and fled down the path towards the village, leaving the night watchman standing on one leg and screaming. On reaching the village George was surprised to see so many people gathered around an oil lamp. Just as he arrived the band struck up, and the crowd broke into a shuffling, swaying dance.

George watched them for a moment, astonished, and then decided that this was a very superior game which had been arranged for his special benefit. Uttering a loud scream he rushed into the circle of dancers, his trailing rope tripping several couples up, and then he proceeded to leap and scream in the centre of the circle, occasionally making a rush at a passing dancer. Then he overturned the oil lamp which promptly went out. Scared of the dark and the pandemonium his sudden appearance had caused, he rushed to the nearest person and clung to his legs, screaming with all his might.

Eventually when the lamp was relit, George was chastised and seated on my knee, where he behaved very well, taking sips out of my glass when I wasn't looking, and watching the dancers with an absorbed expression. The dancers, keeping a wary eye on him, once more formed a circle. Presently I called for a small drum and, putting George on the ground, I gave the instrument to him. He had been watching the band with great attention and knew just what to do. He squatted there showing his great canines in a huge grin of delight, beating the drum with all his might. Unfortunately his sense of rhythm was not as good as the other drummers and his erratic playing threw the dancers into confusion once again, so I was forced to take the drum away from him and send him off to bed, protesting loudly all the way.