Read the following passage carefully

Christopher was ready to give up and go home for the night when he first noticed the strange throbbing. Since twilight the fifteen-year-old naturalist had been hiding motionless against a tree-stump deep in Noakey Wood, hoping to see the family of badgers emerge from their sett, but after watching for two or three fruitless hours he was cold and cramped and had grown thoroughly sick of the whole thing. The wretched badgers must have given him the slip. They were probably miles away by now, foraging in the distant meadows beneath the moon. Well, there was no point in waiting beside an empty burrow. Stiffly he got to his feet. It was while he was making his way to the bush in which he had left his bicycle that the throbbing attracted his attention.

He paused and listened. Just a plane droning by, that was all. And yet the noise wasn't overhead, was it? It seemed to be coming from underneath the ground.

Christopher began to feel uneasy. Not a breath of wind was stirring, yet every tree in the clearing had started to rustle. Birds roosting in the big old oaks were twittering in alarm and quitting their perches. There was certainly something down there. He could sense the vibrations himself, pounding up through the earth.

Whatever was coming, it seemed a good idea to be as far away as possible when it broke surface. He made a dash for his bicycle, but already it was too late to escape. Before he could reach the bush a violent tremor of the earth flung him to his feet.

As the frightened Christopher picked himself out of the bracken he saw the ground tremble as if a giant fist were pummelling it from below. Cracks and fissures appeared around him. He clutched at an oak for support, and felt the sturdy trunk shudder at its roots. Was this an earthquake? Surely not - not in safe, settled England?

The oak creaked, and lurched to one side. There was a colossal eruption of soil followed by a boom like the bellow of a genie set free. A streamlined metal mass the size of a house heaved up out of the ground.

Stones, severed branches and clouds of clay thudded across the clearing. Ten, twenty, thirty feet into the air rose the spinning pillar, thrusting conical shoulders between the trees until its smoking point slowed to a halt high above the woodland floor. Its revolutions ceased, and the clearing settled into a deep hush broken only by the sizzle of damp leaves brushing the hot hull.

Christopher gazed awestruck at the enormous machine. Glittering in the moonlight, it loomed over him like a beckoning steel finger. He stared at the crater of churned clay

and his eyes travelled up the dirt-streaked flanks to the flanged tip, which was still smouldering a dull red from the friction of its hurtling passage through the earth. Goodness knows what it was, or how much of it was still below the ground.

Seconds passed. He watched crusts of scorched soil fall from its sides and listened to the slow tick of cooling metal. Nothing happened, and gradually his fear ebbed away. He came out from behind the oak and was tiptoeing forward for a closer look when suddenly a hatchway opened its round black mouth.

From the cylinder's dark interior issued a hollow sigh. Moments later a howling currrent of air sprang up, snatching at every loose leaf, twig and acorn within the clearing. Christopher tried to scramble for cover in the undergrowth but he too was whisked up like a feather beneath a vacuum cleaner and sucked into the mysterious machine.

Inside, his body landed on something soft. The hail of woodland debris continued, stinging his face and his bare hands. Then the suction was cut off, the howling died away and the hatchway doors rolled together. He was trapped in the belly of the cylinder.

The terrified youngster jumped to his feet. The darkness and silence were absolute. From the popping in his ears and the queasiness of his stomach he realised that the machine was once more on the move, but this time in reverse. Like a modern Jonah swallowed by a steel whale, he was being carried rapidly down into the depths.

TIM STOUT

Answer all the questions in complete sentences.

Do not spend too long on one question; you can always have another go at the end.

1. Circle the best answer.
   Christopher has been in the wood since

a. first thing in the morning
b. it began to get dark
c. he finished school
d. midnight

2 marks

2. What is it that comes up through the ground?

_____
_

3 marks

3. Explain why Christopher is fed up waiting for the family of badgers.

_____
__
_____
_____
_____
_____

3 marks

4. What three things make Christopher feel that he should get away from the noise?

_____

_

_____

_

_____

_____

__

3 marks

5. In lines 20 to 21 the writer makes the machine sound as if it were a person: 'he saw the ground tremble as if a giant fist were pummelling it from below'.
Write out three other examples from anywhere else in the passage where the writer does this.

1_____

2_____

3_____

3 marks

6. Find **three** examples where the writer makes you realise that the machine is massive.

1_____

2_____

3_____

3 marks

7. Why is Christopher 'awestruck' (line 32) after the machine appears?

_____

_

_____

_

_____

_____

__

5 marks

8. Look again at lines 41 to 53. Explain why Christopher is so terrified.

_____

_____

_

_____

_

_____

_____

__

_____

__

10 marks

9. The writer uses comparisons to convince the reader that events are mysterious and convincing. Explain as fully as you can what he is suggesting when he writes:

a. [the machine made] 'a boom like the bellow of a genie set free' (line 24-5)

_____

_____

_____

__

3 marks

b. [Christopher was] 'Like a modern Jonah swallowed by a steel whale' (lines 51-2).

_____

_

_____

_____

__

3 marks

c. Ring the right answer. The name for these kind of comparisons is a

i. metaphor

ii. personification

iii simile

iv. adjective

2 marks

.

10. Give meanings for the following words as used in the passage:

fruitless (line 4) _____

foraging (line 7) _____

pummelling (line 21)_____

conical

(line28)_____

queasiness (line

50)_____

10 marks

11. 'Before he could <u>reach</u> the bush a <u>violent</u> tremor of the <u>earth</u> flung him to his feet' (line 19)

In this sentence, what part of speech are the words underlined?
Underline the correct answer.

a. <u>reach</u>

noun	verb	adjective	preposition
adverb	pronoun	conjunction	

2 marks

b. violent

noun	verb	adjective	preposition
adverb	pronoun	conjunction	

2 marks

c. earth

noun	verb	adjective	preposition
adverb	pronoun	conjunction	

2 marks

12. The passage printed here is the beginning of a story called 'The Specimen'. Why do you think the story is called this?

_____

_____

4 marks

Now check through your answers carefully.