Name:	Age:

Leicester High School for Girls

Specimen Entrance Examination

English for Year 9 Entry

Time: 1 hour

Write your answers in the spaces provided

There are two sections: Section A Reading Task
Section B Writing Task

Spend 30 minutes on each.

Marks will be given for presentation, spelling and punctuation so check your work carefully.

Section A: Reading Task

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions fully, in complete sentences, referring to the text whenever possible.

The Leopard

Juanita Carbery spent her childhood in Africa, on a coffee farm in Kenya. Here she writes about a terrifying experience.

When I was on my own with my stepmother, I would sleep, not in my usual room at the nursery end of the house, where the windows had wire mesh across them, but in one of the bedrooms close to the drawing-room which looked out on to the veranda. Because of my African childhood I am not afraid of much in the natural world. But I am afraid of leopards. Even when I see one in a zoo and our eyes meet, I can feel the hairs on the back of my neck prickle. It is a well-founded terror. The leopard is a dangerous, unpredictable animal who, unlike most of the other cats, is not afraid of man. Leopards roamed Kenya in fairly substantial numbers. I would often lie awake in bed in the pitch dark and imagine that a leopard was crouched outside, waiting to spring in through my window. I was not allowed to have a light on, even though I was always frightened of the dark and I was obliged to leave my window open because the adults thought fresh air was healthy. This may seem odd, in view of the presence of leopards, but though leopards had been known to take dogs off the veranda, it was unusual for them to come into a house.

That night, as I lay in bed, I heard a rustling on the veranda. I switched on my light and looked out of the window, my heart thudding. Crouched under the ping-pong table immediately outside, ready to spring, was the embodiment of all my terrors. The leopard's eyes reflected the light in my bedroom like the fluorescent green hands of a luminous clock. His gaze held me and paralysed me. Leopards do this. I have seen one walk up to an antelope and kill it without encountering any resistance. I stood mesmerised, looking into its lit-up eyes. Then suddenly I snapped to. I gave a blood-curdling scream and rushed out of my bedroom door into the passageway. Still screaming my head off, I headed for my stepmother's room. As I ran I tried to slam the door behind me but, as happens in nightmares, I didn't have any shove and it didn't shut. As I hammered in panic on the door of my stepmother's room, I knew the leopard must be close behind me and turned, sobbing to face it. But it wasn't a leopard. It was Gatimu who, hearing my screams, had rushed in from the courtyard to protect me. I gasped out 'Chui! Chui!' which means leopard in Swahili. Gatimu ran off into the dining-room, took out a gun from the cupboard and went after the leopard, which by now was running away across the lawn. It had been a close call.

Source: adapted from Juantia Carberry*, Child of Happy Valley*

25 marks

1. Explain the meaning of the following phrases as they are used in the passage: (4)

- "well-founded terror" (line 7)

- "without encountering any resistance" (line 24)

- "mesmerised" (line 25)

- "a close call" (line 36)

2. What details does the writer give us about the habits of leopards? (3)

3. How do we know that this passage is written about a child's experiences? What do we also learn about the reactions of Juanita Carberry as an adult? (4)

4. Select and quote a simile from the second paragraph which you think is interesting and imaginative. Explain <u>fully</u> why the comparison is effective and informative at that point in the passage. (4)

5. Write a detailed paragraph in which you explain how the writer uses language to explore the writer's reactions and feelings in this episode. Select words and phrases from the passage to support your answer. (10)

Section B: Writing Task

Either:

“”This House believes that honesty is always the best policy.”

You have been asked to give a speech about honesty to a group of Year 9 students.

Write out your speech in full. You can decide whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

Remember to use persuasive language to make your speech effective.

You should begin: “Fellow students, I wish to talk to you today about whether honesty is always the best policy.”

Or:

Write about an occasion when it was better to be seen, but not heard!

25 marks