



11+

ENGLISH

Practice Papers

FOR A RANGE OF 11+ ENTRANCE EXAMS

DESIGNED & CREATED BY

Syed Aashir Raza



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Author's NOTE



Dear Student,

If you're holding this book, it means you're already taking a brave step towards something important, and that alone is something to be proud of.

Preparing for the 11+ can sometimes feel challenging, and there may be moments when things don't come easily. That's completely normal. Every strong learner you admire once felt the same way. What matters is not getting everything right straight away, but continuing to try, to think, and to grow.

This book has been created to guide you through your journey, step by step. Take your time with each question. Think carefully, learn from your mistakes, and most importantly, believe in your ability to improve.

You don't need to be perfect. You just need to keep going.

Wishing you every success,

Aashir Raza
Founder, 11+ with Aashir
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Paper 1

The Hidden Tunnel

Read this passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.



This story is told by Sami, who lives in a quiet town and spends most of his time with his best friend, Adam. What begins as an ordinary afternoon slowly becomes something unforgettable.

- 1 The sky had been heavy and grey all morning, pressing down on the town like an unseen weight. Rain fell in a steady, unbroken rhythm, tapping against windows and rooftops as though it had no intention of stopping. By afternoon, however, the clouds began to loosen their grip. A pale beam of sunlight broke through, hesitant at first, then gradually strengthening, until the world
- 5 seemed washed clean and new. When Adam and I stepped outside, breathing in the cool, rain-washed air, it felt as though everything had been **reborn**.

- We had been trapped indoors for hours, restless and increasingly **irritable**, pacing from room to room with nothing to occupy our minds. The moment the rain stopped, we ran outside without a word, our shoes splashing through shallow puddles that mirrored the brightening sky. The air
- 10 smelled of damp earth and leaves, sharp and alive, as though the world itself had awakened.

"Let's go to the old railway," Adam said suddenly, his eyes gleaming with quiet **mischief**.

- I hesitated. The railway had been abandoned for years, its tracks rusting and slowly disappearing beneath thick, untamed weeds. Rumours among children painted it as unsafe; a place where the ground gave way without warning and where hidden dangers lingered just out
- 15 of sight. Yet Adam had already begun walking, and, as always, I followed.

The further we went, the quieter it became. The familiar sounds of the town faded until all that remained was the soft crunch of gravel beneath our feet. The tracks stretched ahead, crooked

and uneven, swallowed by nature. Tall grass brushed against our legs, and twisted branches seemed to reach out like silent warnings, as though urging us to turn back.

20 Then Adam stopped abruptly. "Look," he whispered.

I followed his gaze and felt a sudden chill run through me. Half-hidden beneath a thick curtain of ivy was a narrow opening in the ground. It was barely visible unless you were searching for it. The darkness within seemed endless, as though it swallowed the light around it.

My heart began to pound. "Do you think it's safe?" I asked quietly.

25 Adam did not reply immediately. Instead, he crouched down, examining the opening with intense curiosity. "Only one way to find out," he said at last.

We found a long stick nearby and carefully pushed it into the opening. It slid forward easily, then suddenly vanished from sight, as though the tunnel stretched far beyond what we could see.

30 "It's deep," I said, my voice unsteady. Adam grinned. "Exactly."

Before I could reconsider, he lowered himself down and disappeared into the darkness. For a moment, I stood frozen. Every instinct urged me to retreat, to return to the safety of home. But the thought of Adam going alone unsettled me even more. Taking a deep breath, I followed.

35 The tunnel was narrow and damp, the air thick with an earthy smell. Water dripped steadily from above, each drop echoing around us like a slow, relentless clock. The walls were rough beneath my hands, cold and uneven, and the darkness pressed in from all sides, making it difficult to tell how far we had come.

"Keep going," Adam called softly from ahead.

40 We moved cautiously, step by step, until gradually the tunnel began to widen. The ceiling rose above us, and faint light filtered through cracks in the rock. When we finally stood upright again, I realised we had entered something entirely unexpected.

The walls shimmered faintly, as though scattered with tiny stars. Thin streams of water ran down the stone, catching the light and glimmering like silver threads. Towering formations rose from the ground, smooth and pale, like silent guardians of a forgotten world.

45 "It's... incredible," I whispered.

Adam turned slowly, taking everything in. "We found it," he said, his voice filled with quiet triumph.

In that moment, something shifted within me. The fear that had gripped me earlier seemed distant now, replaced by a deep sense of **accomplishment**. We had stepped into the unknown and emerged stronger.

As we made our way back, the tunnel no longer felt threatening. Instead, it felt like a path we had claimed; a secret that belonged to us. And though the world outside remained unchanged, I knew that something within me had altered forever.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.

For each question, choose the best answer and mark its letter on your answer sheet.

1. What was the weather like at the beginning of the passage?

- A. rainy
- B. windy
- C. sunny
- D. snowy
- E. foggy

2. What is the effect of describing the sky as "pressing down on the town"?

- A. It suggests the town is crowded
- B. It creates a sense of discomfort
- C. It shows the town is small
- D. It suggests movement in the sky
- E. It creates excitement

3. How long had the railway been abandoned?

- A. a few days
- B. a few weeks
- C. many years
- D. one day
- E. unknown

4. In the phrase "eyes gleaming with mischief", what does the word "mischief" most nearly mean?

- A. sadness
- B. anger
- C. confusion
- D. fear
- E. playful trouble

5. What did the boys use to test the tunnel?

- A. a torch
- B. a rope
- C. a stick
- D. a stone
- E. their hands

6. Why does the narrator feel uneasy near the railway?

- A. It seems mysterious
- B. It is crowded
- C. It is noisy
- D. It is too bright
- E. It is too far away

7. What does the word "reborn" most nearly mean?

- A. destroyed
- B. fresh
- C. forgotten
- D. broken
- E. hidden

8. What does the silence as the boys walk suggest?

- A. excitement
- B. calmness
- C. happiness
- D. nervousness
- E. confusion

9. Who is telling the story?

- A. Adam
- B. Sameer
- C. a teacher
- D. Sami
- E. an unknown narrator

10. What does the stick "vanishing" suggest about the tunnel?

- A. It is deep
- B. It is blocked
- C. It is narrow
- D. It is bright
- E. It is shallow

11. What is the meaning of the word "echoing"?

- A. stopping
- B. shaking
- C. becoming louder once
- D. disappearing
- E. repeating a sound

12. Why is the tunnel described as "swallowing light"?

- A. It is bright
- B. It is dark
- C. It is small
- D. It is warm
- E. It is empty

13. What change occurs when the boys reach the cave?

- A. It becomes more dangerous
- B. It becomes noisy
- C. It becomes smaller
- D. It becomes brighter
- E. It disappears

14. What does the word "irritable" suggest?

- A. calm
- B. confused
- C. excited
- D. sleepy
- E. annoyed

15. How does the narrator's attitude change during the passage?

- A. from excitement to boredom
- B. from fear to confidence
- C. from anger to happiness
- D. from confusion to anger
- E. from curiosity to fear

16. What is the effect of "echoing... like a slow, relentless clock"?

- A. It creates silence
- B. It shows the boys are relaxed
- C. It suggests time is moving quickly
- D. It builds tension and unease
- E. It creates warmth

17. What is the main purpose of paragraph 4?

- A. To describe the weather
- B. To explain the railway's history
- C. To build uncertainty
- D. To introduce a new character
- E. To show the boys are lost

18. How is the tunnel first described?

- A. narrow and damp
- B. wide and bright
- C. warm and dry
- D. crowded
- E. noisy

19. What does the word “accomplishment” most nearly suggest?

- A. relief from danger
- B. overcoming a challenge
- C. fear of the tunnel
- D. anger at Adam
- E. confusion

20. Why does the writer describe the world as “reborn”?

- A. The town has physically changed
- B. The rain has destroyed everything
- C. A shift in weather brings new energy
- D. The narrator has moved house
- E. The day has ended

21. “Twisted branches seemed to reach out like silent warnings” is an example of:

- A. simile
- B. metaphor
- C. personification
- D. exaggeration
- E. alliteration

22. Why is the cave described in detail?

- A. To slow the story
- B. To introduce danger
- C. To confuse the reader
- D. To describe the weather
- E. To contrast fear with beauty

23. The phrase “like silent guardians of a forgotten world” suggests that the cave appears:

- A. ancient and protected
- B. still and watchful
- C. isolated and dirty
- D. quiet and lifeless
- E. hidden and unstable

24. What does the final paragraph suggest?

- A. Nothing has changed
- B. The narrator regrets the journey
- C. The tunnel disappeared
- D. The narrator has changed internally
- E. The boys became lost

25. What does the phrase "eyes gleaming with mischief" suggest about Adam?

- A. He is feeling slightly nervous but excited
- B. He is planning something playful but risky
- C. He is confused by what is happening
- D. He is hiding his nervousness
- E. He is distracted and not paying attention

26. What type of word is "irritable"?

- A. noun
- B. verb
- C. adjective
- D. adverb
- E. preposition

27. What type of words are: steadily, gradually, cautiously?

- A. nouns
- B. verbs
- C. adjectives
- D. adverbs
- E. prepositions

Rearrange the words to form the longest correct sentence.

One word in each line is unnecessary or incorrect. Write the correct sentence and underline the word that is not needed.

28.

activity is river an rafting exciting relaxing

29.

colourful were inside the swimming fish aquarium there inside several

30.

placed the inside boots muddy cupboard we storage carefully into

31.

cake celebration was there large at out a the birthday

32.

capital France the Berlin city is Paris of

33.

after spring covered oak with the was tree leaves arrived cactus

Choose the word that means the opposite of the word given.

34. **reluctant**

- A. eager
- B. unwilling
- C. doubtful
- D. uncertain
- E. hesitant

35. **fragile**

- A. delicate
- B. weak
- C. thin
- D. careful
- E. strong

36. **generous**

- A. kind
- B. selfish
- C. thoughtful
- D. giving
- E. friendly

37. ancient

- A. old
- B. traditional
- C. historic
- D. modern
- E. worn

38. expand

- A. grow
- B. increase
- C. reduce
- D. develop
- E. stretch

39. visible

- A. clear
- B. bright
- C. obvious
- D. hidden
- E. noticeable

40. rarely

- A. often
- B. never
- C. seldom
- D. occasionally
- E. hardly

In each sentence below, there is either one spelling mistake or no mistake.

Choose the group (A, B, C or D) that contains the mistake.

If there is no mistake, choose N.

41. The children enjoyed exploring the anceint castle during their holiday.

- A. children enjoyed
- B. exploring the
- C. anceint castle
- D. during their holiday
- N. no mistake

42. She recieved a thoughtful gift from her friend on her birthday.

- A. she recieved
- B. a thoughtful
- C. gift from
- D. her friend
- N. no mistake

43. The teacher explained the lesson clearly so that everyone could understand.

- A. the teacher
- B. explained the
- C. lesson clearly
- D. so that everyone
- N. no mistake

44. The scientist conducted several experiments to test the theory properly.

- A. scientist conducted
- B. several experiments
- C. to test the
- D. theory properly
- N. no mistake

45. He was surprised by how quickly the results appeared on the screen.

- A. he was
- B. surprised by
- C. how quickly
- D. the results
- N. no mistake

46. The team worked together to complete the difficult challenge successfully.

- A. team worked
- B. together to
- C. complete the
- D. difficult challenge
- N. no mistake

47. Her writing was neat and easy to read during the exam.

- A. writing was
- B. neat organised
- C. and easy
- D. to read
- N. no mistake

48. The weather became colder as the evening approached and the sun set.

- A. weather became
- B. colder as
- C. the evening
- D. approached and
- N. no mistake

**In the passage below, there is either one punctuation mistake in each line or no mistake.
Choose the group (A, B, C or D) that contains the mistake. If there is no mistake, choose N.**

49. Many people believe dolphins are friendly animals, however they can also be highly intelligent hunters.

- A. Many people believe
- B. dolphins are friendly animals,
- C. however they can also
- D. be highly intelligent hunters
- N. no mistake

50. "They communicate using sounds, clicks, and body movements to interact with one another".

- A. "They communicate
- B. using sounds, clicks
- C. and body movements
- D. to interact with one another".
- N. no mistake

51. Dolphins often travel in groups called pods where they cooperate, when hunting for food.

- A. Dolphins often travel
- B. in groups called pods
- C. where they cooperate,
- D. when hunting for food
- N. no mistake

52. Their ability to solve problems has fascinated scientists for many years

- A. Their ability to
- B. solve problems has
- C. fascinated scientists
- D. for many years
- N. no mistake

53. Although they appear playful, dolphins are powerful swimmers capable of great speed !

- A. Although they appear playful,
- B. dolphins are powerful
- C. swimmers capable of
- D. great speed !
- N. no mistake

Choose the most suitable word or phrase to complete each sentence.

54. Standing on the stage, the students felt increasingly _____ as the audience grew silent.

- A. excite
- B. exciting
- C. excited
- D. excitement
- E. excites

55. All of _____ classmates had gathered to watch the performance.

- A. there
- B. they're
- C. them
- D. those
- E. their

56. What they were about to present was not something people would normally _____.

- A. expect
- B. expected
- C. expecting
- D. expects
- E. expectation

57. One of the lights suddenly _____, causing a brief moment of confusion.

- A. flicker
- B. flickering
- C. flickered
- D. flickers
- E. had flicker

58. The sound of applause grew _____ as the performance continued.

- A. loud
- B. louder
- C. loudest
- D. loudly
- E. loudness

Paper 2

The Boxes Upstairs

Read this passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.



Daniel lives with his mother in a small flat above a row of shops. One evening, he notices something unusual.

- 1** I noticed the first box when I went upstairs to retrieve my charger. It was positioned just inside Mum's room, partially concealed behind the door, as though it had been placed there with deliberate care yet wished to remain unnoticed. At first, I dismissed it. There were always things scattered about the flat: shopping bags, washing, half-finished tasks awaiting attention; but
- 5** something about this felt different. More intentional. More final.
- I stepped inside. The room carried a faint scent of washing powder, mingled with something sharper, like the stale chill of air after a window has been left ajar for too long. On the bed were several more boxes, not arranged haphazardly but aligned in a neat, almost methodical row. That was what made me hesitate. Mum never organised things with such precision unless it
- 10** truly mattered.
- I moved closer, my footsteps unusually subdued, as though the room itself were silently observing me. One of the boxes was open. Inside were neatly folded clothes—not discarded garments, but ones she wore regularly, the sort she reached for instinctively.
- I frowned. "Mum?" I called.
- 15** No reply.
- I could hear her downstairs in the kitchen, moving about, but she did not answer. That alone felt distinctly uncharacteristic. She always answered.
- My gaze drifted back to the boxes. Another one held books; not all of them, only a carefully selected few from the shelf by her bed, the ones she relied on most.
- 20** A strange uneasiness crept over me, slow and insidious, difficult to articulate. I picked up one of the books, then returned it carefully to its exact position, as though disturbing it might somehow alter what was happening.

"Mum?" I called again, more insistently this time.

"I'm here," she replied, her voice drifting up the stairs.

25 I hesitated before heading back down.

She was standing by the sink, her back turned, rinsing a mug that clearly did not require rinsing. The water ran longer than necessary, filling the silence with a steady, almost oppressive sound.

"What are the boxes for?" I asked.

30 She turned off the tap but did not face me immediately. Instead, she dried her hands slowly, as if she were deliberately postponing something.

"Oh," she said lightly. "Just sorting things out."

"Sorting what?"

"Stuff."

That word again; vague, incomplete, almost evasive.

35 I leaned against the doorframe. "Why are they in your room?"

She finally turned to look at me. "Where else would they be?" she said, with a faint smile that failed to reach her eyes.

I did not smile back. "You're packing," I said.

The words came out more certain than I felt.

40 For a moment she remained silent. Then she exhaled quietly and sat down at the table. "I was going to tell you."

"When?"

"Soon."

That was not an answer.

45 I stepped further into the kitchen. "Tell me what?"

She looked at me carefully, as though weighing her words. "I've been offered a job," she said. "A new one." I waited. "It's in a different town."

The words settled between us, heavier than their simplicity suggested.

"How different?" I asked.

50 "About an hour away."

I imagined roads stretching endlessly, places becoming distant simply because they were unfamiliar. "What does that mean?" I said.

"It means..." She paused. "It means we'd move."

We.

55 The word felt unfamiliar, as though it belonged to a future I had not yet accepted.

"You've already decided?" I asked.

"No," she said quickly. "Not completely. I just... I needed to be prepared."

Prepared.

60 I thought of the boxes upstairs, arranged with quiet certainty, and it seemed to me that the decision had already been made in gradual, unseen stages long before this conversation.

"Why didn't you tell me?" I asked.

"I didn't want to worry you before I knew for sure."

"But you are worrying me."

This time, she did not argue.

65 The kitchen felt suddenly confined, the silence pressing inwards.

"I don't want to leave," I said.

She nodded slowly. "I know."

"It's not just the flat," I added. "It's everything—my friends, school, everything familiar."

She folded her hands together. For a moment, she looked tired in a deeper, more enduring way.

70 "I understand," she said quietly.

"Do you?"

"Yes."

There was something in her voice that made me pause.

"I'm nervous too," she admitted. "I don't know what it'll be like."

75 I had not expected that. Until now, it had felt like something happening to me.

"You're nervous?" I repeated.

She gave a small, genuine smile. "Of course."

Something shifted inside me.

The boxes upstairs were not just about leaving.

80 They were about beginning again—for both of us.

"When would we go?" I asked.

"In a few weeks," she said.

That soon.

I sat down opposite her, the reality settling in. Everything suddenly felt temporary—the table, the chairs, even the walls.

85 "I wish things could just stay the same," I said.

She looked at me for a moment, then reached across the table and placed her hand over mine.

"So do I," she said.

Her hand was warm and steady.

90 I did not pull away.

Instead, I held on.

And for the first time since I had seen the boxes, the feeling inside me shifted—not gone, but softened. Still uncertain. Still unfamiliar. But no longer something I was facing alone.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.

1. How does Daniel first notice that something is unusual upstairs? (1 mark)

- A. The room is empty
- B. There is a strange smell in the room
- C. He finds a box behind the door
- D. The lights are switched off
- E. He hears a loud noise

2. Why does Daniel initially ignore the box? (1 mark)

.....

3. Which word best describes how the boxes are arranged? (1 mark)

- A. Carelessly
- B. Messily
- C. Deliberately
- D. Randomly
- E. Hurriedly

4. Why does Daniel move quietly in the room? (2 marks)

.....

5. In one sentence, explain why Daniel becomes suspicious of the boxes. (2 marks)

.....

6. Why is Daniel surprised that his mother does not answer him? (1 mark)

.....

7. Look at the paragraph beginning "She was standing by the sink..."

(a) What is unusual about Mum's behaviour? (1 mark)

.....

(b) Give two details that show she is avoiding the question. (2 marks)

(i)

(ii)

8. What does the word "vague" suggest about Mum's reply? (1 mark)

- A. Clear
- B. Humorous
- C. Angry
- D. Excited
- E. Confusing

9. In the phrase "like a sentence that didn't want to be completed", what is the effect? (1 mark)

- A. It suggests something is being deliberately hidden
- B. It shows that the speaker is annoyed and frustrated
- C. It creates a slightly unusual comparison
- D. It describes something that has ended
- E. It adds a light and humorous tone

10. What does Daniel mean when he says, "That wasn't an answer"? (2 marks)

.....

11. Look at the sentence: "The words seemed to settle into the space between us."

What is the effect of this description? (1 mark)

- A. The words are forgotten quickly
- B. The room is crowded
- C. The conversation is unimportant
- D. The moment feels awkward
- E. The characters are relaxed

12. Why does Daniel say, "You've already decided?" (1 mark)

- A. He is confused
- B. He feels excluded
- C. He wants more information
- D. He is excited
- E. He does not understand

13. Give two pieces of evidence that suggest the move has already been partly decided. (2 marks)

(i)

(ii)

14. What is the significance of the word "We"? (1 mark)

.....

15. Look at the sentence beginning "The kitchen felt suddenly confined..." (Line 65)

How does the writer create tension? (2 marks) Tick two boxes.

- A. Using short sentences
- B. Using humour
- C. Introducing a new character
- D. Describing space as smaller
- E. Focusing on Daniel's emotions

16. What does the word "temporary" suggest about Daniel's feelings? (1 mark)

- A. He feels excited
- B. Everything will stay the same
- C. Everything may soon change
- D. He is confused about time
- E. Nothing matters

17. Explain why Daniel is surprised when his mother says she is nervous. (2 marks)

.....

18. How does Daniel's attitude change by the end of the passage? (3 marks)

.....

.....

19. In the final paragraph, what does "not something I was facing alone" suggest? (1 mark)

- A. Daniel wants to leave
- B. Daniel feels independent
- C. Daniel feels supported by someone else
- D. Daniel realises his mother shares the experience
- E. Daniel wants to avoid dealing with it

20. What deeper idea is suggested by: "The boxes upstairs were not just about leaving"? (2 marks)

.....

21. Select from the passage ONE WORD which most closely matches each word below. (5 marks)

- A. Hidden → _____
 B. Purposeful → _____
 C. Difficult to explain → _____
 D. Avoiding the truth → _____
 E. Carefully chosen → _____

22. What does the word "insidious" suggest in the passage? (1 mark)

- A. Gradual and harmful
 B. Quiet and harmless
 C. Sudden and noticeable
 D. Hidden but harmless

23. Complete the sentences using words from the passage. (2 marks)

Daniel's uneasiness grows in a slow and _____ way.
 His mother's answers seem deliberately _____.

24. Write your own sentence using the word "deliberate". (1 mark)

.....

25. Complete the sentence as a metaphor: (1 mark)

The boxes were _____

26. Explain what is suggested by the phrase: (1 mark)

"the feeling inside me.....softened"

.....

27. Rewrite the sentence with correct punctuation and grammar: (5 marks)

daniel doesnt want to leave but he begins to understand his mothers feelings

.....

Paper 3

The Night the Stars Blinked Back

Read this passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.



Sam is used to the quiet routine of watching the night sky. One night, however, something behaves in a way he cannot easily explain.

- 1** The first time it happened, nobody believed Sam. He had been standing at his bedroom window, following his usual nightly routine of staring up at the sky before bed. It was a quiet habit, one he never really questioned. But that evening, something had disrupted the stillness. One of the stars had not simply flickered—it had vanished completely, as if switched off, before reappearing
- 5** with deliberate precision. Sam felt an immediate certainty that what he had seen was not random.

When he told Leena, she barely reacted. She muttered something about him being tired and returned to her phone without even looking up. Her indifference irritated him, but it also unsettled him. If she had seen it herself, she would not have dismissed it so easily. That night,

- 10** Sam lay awake longer than usual, replaying the moment in his mind. The more he thought about it, the more convinced he became that it had meant something.

The next evening, he prepared. Instead of glancing briefly at the sky, he stood at the window well before night had fully settled. He watched with sharp, silent attention, forcing himself not to blink too often, afraid he might miss it. Minutes passed, stretching uncomfortably, and doubt

- 15** began to creep in. Perhaps it had been nothing after all. Just as he started to turn away, it happened again.

This time, it was not just one star. Three points of light dimmed in sequence—left, right, then centre—before returning just as sharply. The pattern repeated, identical each time. Sam froze, his chest tightening as he realised this could not be coincidence. It was structured. He grabbed

- 20** a notebook and began recording everything he saw, his handwriting growing messier as the signals continued.

- The flashes became more complex. Some were brief; others lasted longer, followed by pauses that seemed carefully measured. It was no longer subtle. Whatever was happening felt deliberate. When Leena wandered into his room later, ready to tease him again, she stopped when she saw the pages filled with patterns. Slowly, her expression changed.
- 25 She crouched beside him and studied the sequences. At first, she said nothing. Then, more cautiously, she admitted it looked like coded, calculated communication. The atmosphere in the room shifted instantly. What had seemed ridiculous now felt possible. Together, they began
- 30 trying to interpret the signals, testing different ideas until something began to fit. "It's like Morse code," Leena said quietly.
- They worked through it step by step, translating each pattern carefully. The process was slow, and several times they had to start again, correcting small mistakes. Eventually, however, the message became clear.
- 35 Sam read it aloud. "Are you there?"
- The words hung in the air, heavier than they should have been. It was such a simple question, yet it carried an unsettling implication. Something out there was not only present—it was aware. Before Leena could object, Sam grabbed his torch. His hands trembled slightly as he aimed it
- 40 out of the window. He copied the same pattern they had seen, sending the signal back into the darkness. For a few seconds, nothing happened. The sky remained still. Leena exhaled, almost ready to dismiss it again.
- Then the lights returned. This time, they flashed more rapidly, as if responding without hesitation. Leena reached for the
- 45 notebook and began translating again, her movements quicker now, more focused. "They said... hello," she whispered.
- Neither of them spoke for a moment. The word was simple, almost ordinary, yet it made everything feel different. The blinking resumed, but now it felt closer, more urgent. One of the lights did not return to its original position. Instead, it shifted.
- 50 Slowly at first. Then unmistakably.
- Sam leaned forward, his breath shallow. The point of light was moving across the sky, separating itself from the others. It grew brighter as it descended, no longer resembling a distant star. It was approaching.
- 55 "Leena..." he said. She didn't reply. She was staring at it too.
- The light continued downward until it hovered far lower than any star should. The blinking resumed again, sharper this time, almost insistent. It no longer felt like a distant signal. It felt directed.
- 60 Then, without warning, everything went dark.

The room, the street below, even the faint glow from nearby buildings—gone. The sudden blackout was complete and unnatural. For a moment, Sam couldn't see anything at all.

His heart pounded as he stood frozen, listening to the silence.

Then, from beyond the window, a final light appeared.

65 It flickered once.

Paused.

And flashed again.

Short. Clear.

Unmistakable.

70 "Look up."

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Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.

1. Why does Sam feel certain about what he saw? (1 mark)

- A) He has seen it many times before
- B) The movement seemed intentional
- C) Leena confirmed it
- D) He was dreaming

2. What best describes Leena's attitude at the beginning? (1 mark)

- A) Curious
- B) Worried
- C) Dismissive
- D) Excited

3. Why does Sam write the patterns down? (1 mark)

- A) To show his teacher
- B) To prove Leena wrong
- C) To remember the time
- D) To understand the sequence

4. What word from the text is closest in meaning to carefully planned? (1 mark)

.....

5. Why does Sam begin to doubt himself while waiting? (2 marks)

.....

.....

6. Find and copy a phrase that shows the pattern remains the same. (2 marks)

.....

7. Which phrase in the text shows a change in the flashes? (1 mark)

.....

.....

8. What word from the text could replace: (3 marks)

- a) intentional → _____
b) confusing → _____
c) clearly noticeable → _____

9. What changes when the light begins to move? (1 mark)

- A) It becomes dimmer
B) It seems less noticeable
C) It feels closer and more real
D) It stops blinking and disappears

10. Why is the message "Are you there?" described as unsettling? (2 marks)

.....
.....

11. Find one word that suggests Sam is nervous or tense. (1 mark)

.....

12. Match the technique with an example from the text: (3 marks)

A metaphor

.....

Alliteration

.....

Short sentence for effect

.....

13. How does Leena's reaction change, and why? (3 marks)

.....

.....

14. Give one reason why the signals feel “deliberate”. (2 marks)

.....

.....

15. Look at the ending of the passage.

Why does the writer use very short sentences? (2 marks)

.....

.....

16. How does the writer build tension in the passage? (3 marks)

You may refer to:

- events
- description
- sentence length

.....

.....

.....

.....

17. Choose the most suitable word for each gap. (6 marks)

Sam stood at the window, watching the sky with intense concentration. The lights had returned, but this time they moved more _____ (**slow / slowly / slower**), as if they were testing whether he was still paying attention. He picked up his notebook and began to write, careful not to miss _____ (**any / some / few**) of the patterns.

Leena, who had once ignored him, now stood beside him in complete _____ (**silence / silent / silently**). Neither of them wanted to interrupt the moment. The signals became more complex, and Sam struggled to keep _____ (**up / on / over**) with them.

Suddenly, one light moved sharply across the sky. It did not fade or flicker—it remained bright and steady, almost as though it _____ (**was coming / comes / came**) closer. Sam felt a strange mix of fear and curiosity. He knew that whatever this was, it was not _____ (**usual / usually / usualness**).

Circle the word closest in meaning to the opposite of the word given. (6 marks)

18. unmistakable

- A) obvious
- B) clear
- C) uncertain
- D) definite

19. dismissive

- A) interested
- B) careless
- C) rude
- D) distant

20. complex

- A) confusing
- B) simple
- C) detailed
- D) difficult

21. tension

- A) pressure
- B) fear
- C) calm
- D) danger

22. urgent

- A) important
- B) immediate
- C) necessary
- D) delayed

23. visible

- A) clear
- B) hidden
- C) bright
- D) near

Choose the correct spelling to complete each sentence. (6 marks)

24. Sam could not bel__ve what he was seeing.

- A) ie
- B) ei

25. The signal was rec__ved late at night.

- A) ie
- B) ei

26. Leena tried to ach__ve a clear translation of the code.

- A) ie
- B) ei

27. The pattern seemed w__rd and unnatural.

- A) ie
- B) ei

28. Sam wanted to br__f his notes before showing Leena.

- A) ie
- B) ei

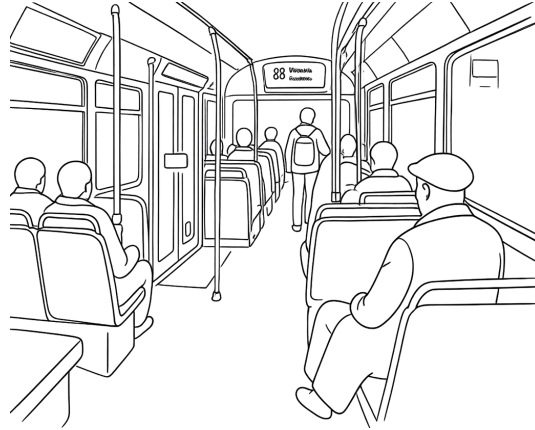
29. The lights appeared to dec__ve him at first.

- A) ie
- B) ei

Paper 4

The Last Seat on the Bus

Read this passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.



Ayaan takes the same bus every day, quietly noticing the people and patterns around him.

- 1** Ayaan had never intended to notice the man.

At first, the bus journey was nothing more than a way of getting home; a familiar stretch of time that required little attention. He would board, sit wherever there was space, and let the streets pass in a blur of repetition. Yet, over time, something shifted. Not suddenly, but gradually, as

- 5** though his attention had been trained without his consent.

It was the repetition that revealed it.

The same stops. The same passengers. And, always, the same man in the last seat of the bus.

He was easy to recognise. He wore a long coat, regardless of the weather, and carried a worn leather bag that he placed carefully beside him before sitting down. His movements were

10 precise and unhurried: a slight nod to the driver, a steady walk to the back, then stillness. He faced the window, but not entirely. Every now and then, his gaze would return to the bus door, lingering there as though he expected something – or someone.

Ayaan began, without quite admitting it to himself, to look for him.

It became a quiet habit; a glance to the back before sitting down. If the man was there, the

- 15** journey felt complete.

Until one afternoon, he wasn't.

At first, Ayaan thought he had simply missed him. He walked further down the aisle than usual, his eyes searching quickly, then again more carefully. The last seat stood empty; not casually unoccupied, but distinctly so, as though something that belonged there had failed to arrive.

- 20** By the time he reached it, someone else had taken the place. A younger boy leaned back carelessly, his headphones on, unaware of what he had replaced. The seat, once marked by quiet stillness, now felt ordinary.

Ayaan sat a few rows ahead, but the absence stayed with him. The bus moved as it always did, stopping and starting, yet something felt unsettled, as though a pattern had been quietly broken.

25

At the next stop, an older woman boarded. She moved slowly, holding onto the rail, and paused for a moment as she stepped inside. Her eyes drifted towards the last seat before she chose a place near the front.

The hesitation was slight, but it was enough.

30 After a moment, Ayaan stood and approached her.

"Excuse me," he said quietly. "Do you know the man who usually sits at the back?"

She looked at him carefully.

"The man in the coat?" she asked.

Ayaan nodded.

35 "I've seen him for years," she said. "Always that same seat. Same time every day."

There was a pause, but it felt deliberate.

"He didn't always sit alone," she continued. "He used to come with his son. They would sit together after school, right at the back."

Ayaan frowned. "I've never seen him with anyone."

40 "No," she said softly. "You wouldn't have."

Her eyes moved briefly towards the empty seat.

"He lost his son," she said. "An accident. Ten years ago."

The bus carried on moving.

"And he still came?" Ayaan asked.

45 "Every day," she replied.

Ayaan hesitated. "But... he knew his son wasn't coming."

The woman gave a small, distant smile.

"Knowing isn't always the same as stopping," she said.

The words lingered.

50 "He used to look at the door," she added. "Every stop. Every time it opened."

Ayaan glanced back.

"As if," she said quietly, "the next person might be him."

Neither of them spoke after that.

When the bus reached the next stop, Ayaan moved towards the driver.

55 "Do you know the man who sits at the back?" he asked.

The driver nodded. "Of course. Same stop every day."

A brief pause followed.

"He passed away last night."

The answer was simple.

60 It ended the conversation.

Ayaan returned to his seat, but the journey no longer felt the same. Everything continued as usual – the stops, the movement, the quiet conversations – yet something had shifted.

When the bus reached his stop, Ayaan stood, then hesitated.

Instead of getting off, he walked to the back.

65 He sat in the last seat.

For a moment, he did nothing.

Then he placed his hand lightly on the seat beside him, as though testing something that could not be seen.

He looked out of the window; at the same view the man had watched.

70 Then his eyes moved to the door.

It opened.

People stepped on.

People stepped off.

Ayaan kept looking.

75 As though the old man might still walk in.

For a moment, the seat did not feel empty.

Then the doors closed again.

And still, he watched.

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Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.

1. What does the man carry with him every day? (1 mark)

.....

2. What happened to the man's son? (1 mark)

.....

3. What impression does the writer create of the man through his behaviour? Give two ideas. (2 marks)

.....
.....

4. Why does the empty seat feel unusual to Ayaan? (2 marks)

.....
.....

5. What is suggested by the description of the boy who takes the seat? (2 marks)

.....
.....

6. What two details show that the older woman recognises the man well? (2 marks)

i)

ii)

7. What is implied about the man's behaviour after his son's death? (3 marks)

.....
.....
.....

8. For each of the following words, find one word in the passage which has the closest meaning.

(5 marks)

- a) slowly _____
- b) careful _____
- c) expected _____
- d) empty _____
- e) uneasy _____

9. What does the word "lingering" tell us about the man's gaze? (2 marks)

.....

.....

.....

10. Explain the meaning of the phrase: "a blur of repetition" (2 marks)

.....

.....

11. The phrase "a blur of repetition" is an example of: (1 mark)

- A. simile
- B. metaphor
- C. personification
- D. exaggeration

12. Explain the effect of the sentence: "something that belonged there had failed to arrive." (2 marks)

.....

.....

13. What does the woman mean by the phrase: "Knowing isn't always the same as stopping"? (3 marks)

.....

.....

.....

14. Explain the effect of the short sentences at the end of the passage (e.g. "It opened. People stepped on."). (3 marks)

.....

.....

15. Why does Ayaan place his hand on the seat beside him? (2 marks)

.....

.....

**16. What impression does the reader gain of Ayaan by the end of the passage?
Support your answer with evidence from the text. (6 marks)**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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Check Your Answers

To check your answers and access the full marking scheme for this book, please visit the website below and follow the instructions provided.

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ENGLISH

“Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it.”

- Maya Angelou



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