

Owl Tutors 11 + Entrance Examination

English Paper 1 A (Comprehension)

Total marks: 27

Time allowed:
5 minutes reading, then 40 mins writing

Information for parents:

This sample paper has been created for children who are embarking on the 11+ exam. The questions within the paper follow Level 4-5 of the National Curriculum and cover the majority of the KS2 curriculum.

There is a big variation in the level of difficulty amongst different schools' 11+ papers and this paper is designed to reflect the standard level of entry at 11+.

Waterwitch - Chapter 1 - The Storm

The sixteen-ton boat surfed over the gigantic waves. Its metal hull the only strength that prevented the boat from breaking up, yet it was this steel that within minutes of flooding would sink to the ocean floor like a stone slung into a pond. This smallness in the immense ocean, the vulnerability of our situation, that was the major worry.

The Atlantic is a cold and lonely place in a gale.

Safety, the Portuguese coast, was twelve miles off, but it was becoming further away with each wave, we were being driven in the direction of America over three thousand miles to the west with only enough water for two days at the most. The Azores to the Southwest might as well have been the same distance. Both wind and wave drove our vessel westwards, the waves were in command, we had no control.

Clouds hung in stratus layers, rain fell at the wind's whimsy, drops angled to the back of the head or darting, diagonally, onto the deck as another wave of water crashed over the bow. Helplessly we bobbed into the shipping lanes. Waves, rising ten metres high, raised us above the blue boiling water below, we rested on the foaming crest, afforded a glimpse of a ship or a tanker or just grey cloud horizon, before plunging down, sliding along the wave into a deep trough where another wave would splash over the bow as our boat dipped its nose into the bubbling brine. In a heartbeat we were lifted up again on a swell, as it grew higher we floated up like a chair on a Ferris wheel.

Our boat was a heavy 52 foot sailing cruiser, a yacht designed for day sailing in safe seas with the occasional overnight anchorage. The boat was never designed to be buffeted by waves that swamped its own size. The sea rose and fell all around us, an inconstant billows, and we were dwarfed by the swirling swell.

Excerpt from *Waterwitch - Periplus* – by Michael Fitzalan

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Waterwitch-anniversary-Periplus-Michael-Fitzalan/dp/1471647307>

Questions

- 1) Where is the yacht? (1 mark)
- 2) Who do you think the narrator is? (1 mark)
- 3) What two elements are mentioned? (2 marks)
- 4) What is the Atlantic described as? (2 marks)
- 5) The author uses metaphors, alliteration and similes. Choose one example and say why it is effective. (2 marks)
- 6) Can you identify any use of personification in the text and comment on its use? (2 marks)
- 7) What phrase is used at the beginning of the text that makes you feel anxious for the crew? What technique is this? (2 marks)
- 8) Provide a synonym or explanation for the following:
plunging
buffeted
(2 marks)
- 9) How does the author use phrases to build up suspense in this text?
(3 marks)
- 10) Why is the boat unsuitable for being caught in a storm?
(3 marks)
- 11) Carry on the narrative using as much imagery as you can. (5 marks)

Answers

- 1) A settling question: The yacht is in the Atlantic Ocean. (1)
- 2) The narrator is M. Fitzalan or the narrator is one of the crew. (1)
- 3) The two elements that are mentioned are wind and water. (2)
- 4) The Atlantic Ocean is described as cold and lonely. (2)
- 5) Blue boiling water is effective because it makes the sea seem like a cauldron or saucepan; lifted up like a Ferris wheel is effective because it shows how the boat is rising on the waves. Any similar justified answer. (2)
- 6) The phrase 'dipping its nose into the water' makes the boat seem like a swimmer. The phrase 'the waves were in command' suggests that the boat is under the power of the sea. Accept any other phrase with an explanation. (2)
- 7) The phrase 'steel that within minutes of flooding would sink to the ocean floor like a stone slung into a pond' makes the reader feel anxious. This is foreshadowing – warning the reader something may happen, (2)
- 8) Use dictionary definitions or a thesaurus to find the meaning. (2)
- 9) Suspense is built up in the text by the following phrases: 'the vulnerability of situation', 'further away with each wave', 'the waves were in command', any phrases, which show that the boat is being driven further from land and the crew are not in control. (2)
- 10) The boat is unsuitable for being in this storm because: it was heavy; it was designed for day sailing; it was dwarfed by the swirling swell. Anything that refers to the design, size and weight. (3)
- 11) In the continuation award one mark for similes, alliteration, metaphors, senses, onomatopoeia and personification. (5)