

The Rowing Boat

Challenging Multiple-Choice English

*This paper contains a multiple-choice comprehension (**Section A**) and a set of cloze questions (**Section B**), to test language skills.*

For the multiple-choice questions in this paper, you must always choose the answer which is most likely.

Section A: Comprehension

One summer evening (led by her*) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.

*her: Nature

- 5 Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
- 10 Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
- 15 The horizon's utmost boundary; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace*; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
- 20 Went heaving through the water like a swan;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct,
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
- 25 And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,

*pinnace: a small boat

For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
30 And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,
And through the meadows homeward went, in grave
And serious mood; but after I had seen
35 That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
40 Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

From *The Prelude* by William Wordsworth

1. Which of the following options best describes the beginning of the poem?
 - A The narrator takes a boat from the cave where his family keeps it, but has some trouble getting it into the water.
 - B The narrator finds a boat he has never seen before, tied to a willow tree that is normally in that place, and borrows it sneakily but with a feeling of guilt.
 - C The narrator is led by a friend to where she has found a boat. She encourages him to take it out onto the lake in secret, which he does.
 - D The narrator finds a boat in a cave, where he knows that it usually lives, and borrows it sneakily.

Answer:

2.

nor without the voice

Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on (lines 6-7)

Which of the following options best matches the meaning of these lines?

- A My boat moved across the lake, surrounded by noises of things happening on the mountains.
- B The sounds of my boat echoed back from the mountain-sides.
- C I could not have rowed my boat into the lake if it hadn't been for the echoes from the hillsides.
- D On the other hand, my boat moved across the lake without causing any mountain echoes.

Answer:

3.

I fixed my view

Upon the summit of a craggy ridge (lines 13-14)

Why does the narrator do this?

- A Because he is interested in the 'unswerving line' along the top of the ridge.
- B Because the beauty of the landscape captivates him.
- C For no particular reason.
- D To help him row in a straight line.

Answer:

4. (a) *And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice* (line 6)

Where *DUM* means a strong syllable and *duh* a weak one, which of the options below best describes the rhythm of line 6?

- A *duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM*
- B *DUM-duh-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM*
- C *DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh*
- D *duh-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM-DUM-DUM-duh-DUM*
- E *duh-DUM-duh-DUM-DUM-DUM-duh-DUM-duh-DUM*

Answer:

- (b) *The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge* (line 22)

Which of the options from part (a) best describes the rhythm of line 22?

Answer:

5. Why do you think the poet compares his boat to 'a swan' (line 20)?

- A It cuts through the water easily and quickly.
- B It moves so smoothly that it seems to be flying above the water.
- C It moves clumsily, with considerable effort – like a bird which would rather be in the air.
- D It moves smoothly, but requiring strength to push itself through the water.

Answer:

6. *a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct,
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars* (lines 22-26)

Which of the following techniques does the poet **NOT** use in this section?

- A Onomoatopeia
- B Personification
- C Metaphor
- D Alliteration

Answer:

7. *There in her mooring-place I left my bark* (line 32)

Which of the following options best explains the poet's use of a hyphen ('-') in line 32?

- A It shows that 'mooring' and 'place' have equal importance.
- B It makes clear that 'place' is a verb.
- C It shows that the word 'mooring' describes the kind of 'place'.
- D It marks a slight pause in the line, as though for a quick breath.

Answer:

8. *And measured motion like a living thing* (line 28)

Which of these options best explains the meaning of the word ‘measured’ in line 28?

- A accelerating
- B intimidating
- C metric
- D steady

Answer:

9. *The horizon's bound* (line 22)

What is the function of the apostrophe in line 22?

- A It replaces the word ‘is’.
- B It shows that the ‘bound’ is part of the ‘horizon’.
- C It makes clear that the ‘horizon’ is being held in place (‘bound’).
- D It shows us that there is only one ‘horizon’.

Answer:

10. Why does the poet use the word ‘stole’ in line 30?

- A Here, ‘stole’ means the same as the past tense of ‘I sneak’.
- B It describes the action of moving in a stolen object (the boat).
- C It reminds us that the poet is rowing across somebody else’s lake, which means that he has in effect ‘stolen’ their route.
- D It is an old-fashioned verb meaning ‘to navigate by the stars’.

Answer:

11. What is meant by 'covert' in line 31?
- A It is an adjective meaning 'hiding place'.
 - B It is an adjective meaning 'secret'.
 - C It is a noun meaning 'secret'.
 - D It is a noun meaning 'hiding place'.
- Answer:
12. (a) According to lines 39 to 41, what could the poet not think about for several days after his experience on the lake?
- A Colours
 - B Large, grand shapes
 - C Beautiful things in nature
 - D Pheasants
- Answer:
- (b) What effect did the 'huge and mighty forms' (line 43) have on the poet?
- A They meant that he daydreamed all day and caused him to dream at night.
 - B They lurked obsessively in the background of his waking thoughts and turned up unsettlingly in his dreams.
 - C They gave him vivid daydreams, but stopped him dreaming at night.
 - D They did not exist like real people.

Answer:

13. Which of these lines contains at least one adjective and at least one adverb?

- A line 3
- B line 9
- C line 28
- D line 42

Answer:

14. Which of these lines does NOT contain a verb?

- A line 3
- B line 10
- C line 16
- D line 40

Answer:

15. *She was an elfin pinnace* (line 17)

What does 'elfin' mean in line 17?

- A Shaped like an elf
- B The poet is being rude about the boat
- C Healthy
- D Like something used by an elf

Answer:

16. What do you understand by the word 'voluntary' in line 23?

- A Offering to do something it doesn't have to
- B As though in battle
- C Having a will of its own
- D Trying to help

Answer:

17. Which explanation goes best with 'I rose upon the stroke' (line 19)?

- A Rowing felt to the poet like stroking a beautiful flower.
- B The poet had to lift his body with each stroke of the oars, to raise them out of the water.
- C As the oars dipped into the water and the poet pulled back, he had to sit up tall in his seat.
- D The poet stood up in the boat.

Answer:

18. Which of the following options best summarises the poem as a whole?
- A A boy takes a boat at night and rows across a lake. As he moves towards the high mountains opposite, it seems to him that one stands up and begins to chase him. He quickly rows to the far side of the lake, but the alarming memory dominates his thoughts for many days.
 - B A boy takes a boat at night and rows across a lake. As he moves further from the mountains, it seems to him that one stands up and begins to chase him. He quickly rows to the far side of the lake, but the alarming memory dominates his thoughts for many days.
 - C A boy takes a boat at night and rows across a lake. As he moves further from the mountains, it seems to him that one stands up and begins to chase him. He returns the boat to where he found it, as quickly as possible, but the alarming memory dominates his thoughts for many days.
 - D A boy takes a boat at night and rows across a lake. As he moves towards the high mountains opposite, it seems to him that one stands up and begins to chase him. He returns the boat to where he found it, as quickly as possible, but the alarming memory dominates his thoughts for many days.

Answer:

[Section A total: 20 marks]

Section B: Cloze

In this section, choose the answer which goes best in the gap ('[...]') and write its letter (A, B, C or D) in the answer space.

19. Why [.....] Tom like maths?

- A don't
- B don't
- C does'nt
- D doesn't

Answer:

20. Is [.....] order ready yet?

- A their
- B they're
- C hour
- D there

Answer:

21. [.....] not too late.

- A Its
- B It's
- C It isn't
- D Itsn't

Answer:

22. I'm fine, [.....] .

- A thank's
- B thank you
- C grateful
- D thankyou

Answer:

23. I don't know [.....] to go or not.

- A if
- B either
- C weather
- D whether

Answer:

24. It won't be [.....], but I appreciate the thought.

- A neccessary
- B neccesary
- C necessary
- D neccessarie

Answer:

25. It goes from A [.....] Z.

- A through
- B two
- C too
- D to

Answer:

26. Keep going! Be [.....] !

- A persistent
- B persistant
- C presistent
- D persisting

Answer:

27. One of Ivan's favourite [.....] was a scraggy old toy cat called Odipodes.

- A possesions
- B posessions
- C possessions
- D posesions

Answer:

28. The name's Bond. I work for the [.....].

- A guverment
- B government
- C goverment
- D govement

Answer:

29. The list, which wasn't as long as it might have been[...] was still too long for my sheet of paper.

- A ,
- B :
- C ;
- D no punctuation needed

Answer:

30. That was the answer[...] I needed to cheat.

- A ,
- B :
- C ;
- D "

Answer:

31. I'm sorry to disturb you, Dad. It's just that I've been wondering whether you've checked my room yet[...] I tidied it like you asked.

- A ?
- B .
- C no punctuation needed
- D ,

Answer:

32. Isn't one[...]s own room sacred these days?

- A no punctuation needed
- B -
- C '
- D ''

Answer:

33. I ate two apples[...] and a pear.

- A no punctuation needed
- B -
- C ,
- D ...

Answer:

[Section B total: 15 marks]

[TOTAL FOR PAPER: 35 MARKS]
