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First name(s)

Family name

Selective High School Placement Test

Reading Question Paper

March 2022

40 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Please read this page carefully.

DO NOT OPEN THIS QUESTION PAPER UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.

A separate answer sheet is provided for this test. Please fill in the following information on your answer sheet and on this question paper:

- Student application number
- First name(s)
- Family name

There are **30** multiple-choice questions in this paper. For each question, choose the **one** correct answer and record your choice on the separate answer sheet. If you make a mistake, erase thoroughly and try again.

You will **not** lose marks for incorrect answers, so you should attempt **all 30** questions.

You must complete the answer sheet within the time limit. There will **not** be any extra time at the end of the exam to record your answers on the answer sheet.

You can use the question paper for notes, but no extra paper is allowed.

Please note that some words and phrases are **shaded** in the texts as they are referred to in some questions.

Calculators and dictionaries are **NOT** allowed.



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Read the two extracts on the theme of dogs and their relationship with humans, then answer the questions.

Text A

From *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London (1903)

Buck the dog enjoys his new freedom after being rescued by John Thornton – a kind new master – having pulled a sled for thousands of miles.

Lying by the river bank through the long spring days, watching the running water, listening to the songs of birds and the hum of nature, Buck slowly won back his strength. It must be confessed that Buck waxed lazy as his wounds healed, his muscles swelled out, and the flesh came back to cover his bones. For that matter, they were all loafing – Buck, John Thornton, and Skeet – waiting for the raft to come that was to carry them down to Dawson. Skeet was a little Irish setter who early made friends with Buck, who, in a dying condition, was unable to resent her first advances. She had the doctor trait which some dogs possess, washing and cleansing Buck's wounds. Regularly, each morning, after he had finished his breakfast, she performed her self-appointed task, till he came to look for her ministrations as much as he did for Thornton's.

To Buck's surprise, Skeet manifested no jealousy towards him. She seemed to share the kindliness and largeness of John Thornton. As Buck grew stronger she enticed him into all sorts of ridiculous games, in which Thornton himself could not forbear to join; and in this fashion Buck romped through his convalescence and into a new existence.

Thornton was the ideal master. He never forgot a kindly greeting or a cheering word, and to sit down for a long talk with them was as much his delight as theirs. He had a way of taking Buck's head roughly between his hands, and resting his own head upon Buck's, the while calling him names that to Buck were love names. Buck knew no greater joy than that rough embrace and the sound of murmured oaths. With his mouth laughing, his eyes eloquent, his throat vibrant with unuttered sounds, John Thornton would reverently exclaim: 'God, you can all but speak!'

Buck had a trick of love expression that was akin to hurt. He would often seize Thornton's hand in his mouth and close so fiercely that the flesh bore impress of his teeth for some time afterwards. And as Buck understood the oaths to be love words, so the man understood this feigned bite for a caress.

For the most part, however, Buck's love was expressed in adoration. While he went wild with happiness when Thornton touched him or spoke to him, he did not seek these tokens. Unlike Skeet, who was wont to shove her nose under Thornton's hand and nudge till petted, Buck was content to adore at a distance. He would lie by the hour, eager, alert, at Thornton's feet, looking up into his face, studying it, following with keenest interest each fleeting expression, every movement or change of feature.

For a long time after his rescue, Buck did not like Thornton to get out of his sight. From the moment he left the tent to when he entered it again, Buck would follow at his heels. His transient masters since he had come into the Northland had bred in him a fear that no master could be permanent. Even in the night, in his dreams, he was haunted by this fear.

Text B

From *The effect of pets on humans* by Marie Carter (2016)

Anyone who has ever owned a pet knows they have the capacity for the kind of unconditional love that is seen otherwise only between a human and its offspring. The gentle nudge of a wet nose or a lick on the hand comes unbidden when we're upset or feeling down. The bounding dash to the door to greet us is also a demonstrable sign of the strength of the human–canine bond, in particular.

Dogs can be trained to recognise words through commands. Scientists agree that they can't actually 'understand' the words; what they hear is the emotion of the voice.

Studies have also shown that looking a dog in the eyes can boost levels of oxytocin (a hormone involved in social bonding), in both the person and the dog. From the dog's perspective, it's not just 'cupboard love' triggered by a hungry belly. There is in fact nothing artificial that could ever replace that sheer authenticity of feeling. Dogs are the only species that, like a human child, will run to their human when frightened, anxious or just pleased to see them.

They are also the only animal, aside from other humans, that actively seek out eye contact with people, and truly want to be with us. Cats too come to us when we are down and will show they are pleased to see us with a lick on the hand or a gentle purr to express their own feelings of contentment.

Pets give people so much in terms of love and emotional support. Simply stroking a dog, for example, can lead to lower blood pressure and can combat stress. The feelings are reciprocated, as our touch can have therapeutic effects for our pets, particularly if they are feeling out of sorts.

For questions 1 – 8, choose the option (A, B, C or D) which you think best answers the question.

- 1 What theme is dealt with in both extracts?
- A the owner sensing that the dog is ill at ease
 - B the mutual affection between dog and human
 - C the jealousy dogs have of each other or other pets
 - D the dog trying to warn its owner about something
- 2 What idea about dog behaviour present in Text B is also in Text A?
- A the way a dog communicates its support in a physical way
 - B the pleasure of a dog on its owner's return
 - C the beneficial effect of a dog on its owner's health
 - D the way a dog may seek its owner's protection

- 3 What idea about communication is present in both extracts?
- A Humans sometimes call dogs names that they regret.
 - B Dogs recognise the feeling behind their owners' words.
 - C Dogs occasionally find it hard to hide their aggressive instincts.
 - D Humans are amazed at how many orders a dog can follow.
- 4 The phrase 'For that matter' in Text A is used to
- A introduce a contrast.
 - B intensify a positive description.
 - C widen out a criticism.
 - D give a reason for particular behaviour.
- 5 In Text A, what are we told about Buck and the female dog, Skeet?
- A Skeet was initially wary of approaching Buck.
 - B Buck was initially irritated by Skeet.
 - C Buck eventually appreciated Skeet's affection.
 - D Skeet eventually tired of Buck.
- 6 In comparison with Skeet's, the expression of Buck's love for Thornton was
- A more impulsive.
 - B less complicated.
 - C more erratic.
 - D less needy.
- 7 According to the last paragraph, Buck was haunted by the thought that
- A his captors would return to claim him.
 - B he might never see the wild again.
 - C he would lose his way in this new land.
 - D his present owner would disappear from his life.
- 8 What does the writer of Text B say about the stare a dog gives its owner?
- A It is entirely genuine and earnest.
 - B It is something that parents will understand.
 - C It is motivated by a desire for food.
 - D It is shared in the animal kingdom only by cats.

Questions 9 – 14 refer to the poem *From The Wave* by Thom Gunn.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are unable to publish the poem as part of this question paper. We include the questions here, however, so that candidates sourcing the poem independently can attempt them.

For questions 9 – 14, choose the option (A, B, C or D) which you think best answers the question.

- 9 The idea in the title of the poem is developed by the description of
- A the growing size of the wave.
 - B the surfers' first appearance.
 - C the way the wave is advancing.
 - D the surfers' distance from the shore.
- 10 In the poem, the description of the surfers shifts
- A from a sense of collaboration to one of self-reliance.
 - B from a feeling of apprehension to one of achievement.
 - C from an impression of immobility to one of rapid movement.
 - D from a state of relaxed indifference to one of active participation.
- 11 The word 'grafted' in the fourth verse suggests that the surfers are
- A acting in unison.
 - B now part of the wave.
 - C struggling with their boards.
 - D at the wave's highest point.
- 12 Unlike in the rest of the poem, in the last verse the surfers
- A are shown to be surprisingly cautious.
 - B appear unconcerned with looking impressive.
 - C are described as behaving like ordinary people.
 - D seem to be sensing a big opportunity.
- 13 In which verse does the climax of the poem occur?
- A verse 5 beginning 'Late as they can...'
 - B verse 6 beginning 'The mindless heave...'
 - C verse 7 beginning 'Clear, the sheathed bodies...'
 - D verse 8 beginning 'They paddle in the shallows...'
- 14 What is the main idea developed in this poem?
- A the effort involved in developing a physical skill
 - B the sense of let-down after a major achievement
 - C the achievements possible when people work together
 - D the mastery of humans over the power of nature

Read the text below, which consists of six paragraphs (questions 15 – 20).

For questions 15 – 20, choose the option (A – G) which best summarises each paragraph. There is one extra option which you do not need to use.

- A Mars entering twentieth-century popular culture
- B how new technology facilitated the earliest scientific observations of Mars
- C recent evidence for the presence of water on Mars
- D the idea that there are different perceptions of the planet Mars
- E the reason why Mars began to be portrayed more realistically in movies and books
- F an assumption about a geographical feature on Mars that was inaccurate
- G the significance of Mars to earlier human societies

Our Fascination with Mars

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Mars, the fourth most distant planet from the sun in our solar system, is actually more than one place. There's the Mars that scientists study through telescopes and with robotic satellites and rovers, the destination in our solar system that astronauts will someday visit and colonise. There are also other versions of Mars, which have come from our imagination, throughout the course of history.



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Mars is one of five planets which are visible to the unaided eye. Its reddish-orange hue inspired some civilisations in the past to imagine it as a symbol of war and violence. The ancient Mesopotamians linked Mars to Nergal, a god who was the symbol of hunting, and sometimes led the other gods into battle. In their city of Nineveh, they erected the Nergal Gate to show their reverence. The ancient Greeks associated the red planet with Ares, the warrior god who was the son of Zeus and his wife Hera. In Roman mythology, Ares became the war god Mars, who was so important to them that they dedicated March, the first month in their calendar year, to him.

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Eventually, people started shifting from thinking of Mars as a mystical place to seeing it as a planet that was somewhat like their own. The development of telescopes in the 1600s enabled humans to see Mars and some of the details of its surface clearly for the first time. In 1659, the Dutch astronomer Christian Huygens drew one of the first accurate maps of the red planet, and figured out that it rotated in the same way that Earth did.

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In 1877, the Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli observed lines in the planet's equatorial region, a phenomenon that also was noted by the American astronomer Percival Lowell. The term that Schiaparelli used – *canali* – sounded a lot like the English word canal, and that led some to mistakenly think that the red planet had waterways built by an alien civilisation.

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Even after other scientists concluded that Mars' surface was probably not capable of supporting life, the idea of life on Mars fascinated people's imaginations. Writers of the new genre of science fiction and fantasy began to write about it in their stories. British author H.G. Wells' pioneering novel 'The War of the Worlds' depicted Mars as a dying planet whose technologically-advanced civilisation wanted to conquer Earth. It caused a sensation when adapted for a radio broadcast in 1938. 'The Martian Chronicles', Ray Bradbury's 1950 collection of stories, presented a planet filled with empty cities from a fallen civilisation. For Hollywood filmmakers, Mars also became a convenient setting for movies full of malevolent Martians and monsters, such as the 1960 film 'The Angry Red Planet'. There was even a television sitcom, 'My Favorite Martian', which featured a sarcastic secret visitor from Mars who pretended to be human.

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All these sci-fi fantasies of Mars were dashed by the close-up images transmitted by the Mariner 4 unmanned space probe in 1964, which revealed it to be a cratered, moonlike planet, lacking in seas or vegetation. Those and later scientific discoveries about Mars seem to have influenced writers and filmmakers to change their depictions of the red planet – not as home to an alien civilisation, but a distant world that humans will someday visit and colonise. In more recent movies such as 1990's 'Total Recall' and 'The Martian' in 2015, Mars is depicted as a rugged, barren, dry planet with a thin atmosphere, where space colonists have to live in well-protected bases and wear spacesuits to survive.

Read the four extracts below on the theme of heroes.

For questions 21 – 30, choose the option (A, B, C or D) which you think best answers the question.

Which writer ...

is a research scientist? 21 _____

gives an indication that they know the hero mentioned? 22 _____

is of the opinion that we are wrong to see certain people as heroes? 23 _____

refers to a heroic act to illustrate a particular interpretation of what heroism is? 24 _____

observes a connection between a past hero and our human capabilities today? 25 _____

mentions something a hero does which suddenly lightens the writer's mood? 26 _____

refers to an attempt to help ordinary people act in a more selfless way? 27 _____

uses mocking humour when giving a view about today's heroes? 28 _____

invites readers to think about a common example of society putting great value on heroes? 29 _____

provides a detail which is a reminder of the hero's wider struggle? 30 _____

Extract A

It took less than 50 seconds; 49.11 seconds to be exact, for Cathy Freeman to run into immortality. 49.11 seconds and 200 years. I was there in the Sydney Olympic Stadium on that cool evening, September 25, 2000. Me and 112,000 others, watching this one slight girl carry the hopes of an entire nation. I so wanted to feel what others were feeling, but something inside felt so empty. I knew for a fact that there was the same aching in Cathy's own soul. The same feeling of being Australian yet knowing the full cost of that allegiance. We had never talked about it – we had no need. It is something we share, Aboriginal people: an unspoken bond; the memories of lives on the outside looking in.

This moment was bigger than sport. This was about history; about healing; about reconciliation. But no, I wanted Cathy to run for all of our people who had never had a chance, for all of those who were still outside looking in.

As she took her victory lap, Cathy ran with two flags: the Australian flag with its debt to Britain and the red, black and yellow Aboriginal flag that honours the earth and the sun and the people. And there in that moment I could let go; I could be Australian and stand with other Australians. But you cannot erase two centuries in 49.11 seconds. When Cathy Freeman stood smiling on the medal dais, an Aboriginal expo outside the stadium told the story of the ongoing battle for justice.

Extract B

Just look at the plethora of heroes in movies these days and you can see how much we all love heroes. What makes certain people take heroic actions in the face of great danger? 'I don't feel like I did something spectacular; I just saw someone who needed help. I did what I felt was right,' Wesley Autrey told U.S. journalists after an incident in which he rescued a man who had fallen onto a train track.

'True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost,' said Arthur Ashe, a professional tennis player.

According to the Heroic Imagination Project, a non-profit organization that focuses on teaching people to become heroes in their everyday lives, heroism involves a behavior or action on behalf of another person or for a moral cause.

Extract C

These days many people look up to celebrities like actors, sports stars or musicians as their heroes and role models. We now have the means to follow their lives and thoughts on social media – and this is serious. In fact, to my mind, one of the most horrific developments of our century has been the widespread acceptance of the notion that if someone is good at acting / sports / pop music this means the rest of us should listen to their opinions on climate change or politics.

If I hear an actor critiquing a film or a play or telling me why a certain script is a work of genius, of course I'm interested. I might learn something. As it happens, I care about animal rights. But I'm not sure why I am supposed to find the plight of animals any more or less poignant just because a movie star has given them a voice.

Of course, many of these stars would say this is terribly mean-spirited. That they're just getting 'the message' out to a public who lack awareness. That they're using their platforms to do some good. I sort of get this, but I don't really buy it.

Extract D

I loved the 'Thundercats' superheroes cartoon as a child, watching cat-like humanoids fighting the forces of evil. Whenever their leader was in trouble, he'd unleash the Sword of Omens to gain 'sight beyond sight,' the ability to see events happening at faraway places, or bellow 'Thunder, Thunder, Thunder, Thundercats, Hooo!' to instantaneously summon his allies to his location. What kid didn't want those superpowers?

A few months ago, my childhood dreams were at once destroyed and fulfilled. Standing in a line, I noticed that everyone was focused on their smartphones' screens. Suddenly it hit me: I already had Sword of Omens superpowers. With my smartphone, I can see video of faraway events and text my friends to meet up. Billions of people now have what used to be considered superpowers.

The physical superpowers may not be too far behind: I'm working on them in The Center for Rehabilitation Engineering & Assistive Technology at Vanderbilt University. Humanity has begun to enter the age of wearable exoskeletons and exosuits that offer support and strength to the bodies of those who have been weakened.

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