



Student application number

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First name(s)

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Family name

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## Selective High School Placement Test

Reading Question Paper

2023

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.

Calculators and dictionaries are **NOT** allowed.



**Cambridge Assessment**  
Admissions Testing

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**Due to copyright restrictions, we are unable to publish the extract or questions 1-8 for Part 1 of this test.**

Read the poem 'The Curtain' (2012) below by Australian poet Judith Wright, then answer the questions.

## The Curtain

- 1 It was the curtain, softly rising and falling,  
reminded me you were home, who had been so long away;  
and when I went to wake you, I stood in silence watching  
your mouth softened in sleep, the lids where your eyes lay.
- 5 So grown you looked, in the same unaltered room,  
so much of your childhood you were already forgetting,  
while I remembered. Yet in the unforgetting dream  
you will come here all your life for renewal and meeting.
- 9 It was your breath, so softly rising and falling,  
that kept me silent. With your lids like buds unbroken  
you watched on their curtain your life, a stream of shadows moving.  
When I touched your shoulder, I too had a little dreamed and woken.

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

- 9 In the first verse, what effect does the curtain have on the narrator?
- A It lifts the narrator's dwindling spirits.
  - B It urges the narrator to rouse the sleeper.
  - C It inspires the narrator to go on a journey.
  - D It prompts the narrator to recall something.
- 10 When the narrator describes the sleeper in the first verse, we get the impression that
- A the narrator is upset with the sleeper for being a burden.
  - B the sleeper's face is familiar and dear to the narrator.
  - C the sleeper is peaceful but troubled by their dreams.
  - D the narrator's feelings about the sleeper are complicated.
- 11 In the second verse, what observation does the narrator make?
- A The sleeper has not changed very much as they've grown.
  - B Both the sleeper and the narrator have forgotten so much.
  - C In dreams, the sleeper will always remember their youth.
  - D In the future, the sleeper and the narrator will meet again.
- 12 Why are the sleeper's eyelids compared to 'buds' in line 10?
- A to show they are closed
  - B to imply immaturity
  - C to give the idea of new life
  - D to describe their colour and texture
- 13 What is the 'curtain' that is referred to in the final verse?
- A the wall of the bedroom
  - B the shadows around the bed
  - C the breaths taken by the sleeper
  - D the inside of the sleeper's eyelids
- 14 What is the most likely relationship between the poem's narrator and the sleeper?
- A romantic partners
  - B a parent and their adult child
  - C childhood best friends
  - D a grandparent and their small grandchild

**Due to copyright restrictions, we are unable to publish the extract or questions  
15-20 for Part 3 of this test.**

Read the four extracts below on the theme of communication.

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

Which writer...

- analyses what good communication is? 21 \_\_\_\_\_
- explains that those communicating have a special privilege? 22 \_\_\_\_\_
- describes communication using part of the body? 23 \_\_\_\_\_
- mentions a form of communication that is used to signal danger? 24 \_\_\_\_\_
- explains that a message may be communicated successfully but outcomes vary? 25 \_\_\_\_\_
- describes one type of organism carrying information to a different organism? 26 \_\_\_\_\_
- explains that when communication is unsuccessful, it can lead to conflict? 27 \_\_\_\_\_
- describes a form of communication that aims to cause damage? 28 \_\_\_\_\_
- describes a form of communication that is deliberately made visible? 29 \_\_\_\_\_
- mentions that one form of communication is more sophisticated than was previously believed? 30 \_\_\_\_\_

### Extract A

Aboriginal Message Sticks are a custom that dates back over 60,000 years. They were a means of communicating between different Aboriginal Nations, and were transported by a messenger travelling on foot. The sticks were often announcements about ceremonies, such as initiations or funerals (known as 'sorry business' in Aboriginal Communities). They could also be for establishing political partnerships, requesting emergency assistance, organising hunting, or trading vital resources.

Many of the signs on the stick had fixed meanings while others were intended to be decorative. Colours such as red ochre or white pipe-clay also added meaning, and even the type of timber had significance.

Messengers were often men but in some regions women were known to take on this role. Messengers would set out on foot, sometimes journeying for days or weeks on end. The mission was dangerous. There are over 500 Language Groups within Australia and crossing into foreign lands without permission could be a punishable offence. But envoys had diplomatic immunity and their message stick was like a passport in the modern sense. In order to show peaceful intentions, they displayed the message stick clearly from a safe distance. A common technique was to hang it from the tip of a spear or to tuck it into a headband.

## **Extract B**

Researchers have observed an interesting collaboration between the Coral grouper and other predatory marine species. Groupers will try and grab a bite on their own but sometimes their prey will dive into the cracks of the coral reef where the groupers can't reach them. So they will wait around for another fish to come along – specifically either a Napoleon wrasse or a Moray eel – and ask for help hunting down dinner. Basically, the grouper will point its nose at the hidden fish and shake from side to side signalling the presence of prey. Then, either the wrasse will smash into the reef to get to the prey or the eel will creep into the gaps and try to grab it. Sometimes the wrasse or the eel catch the prey and get a meal for themselves. That's just bad luck for the grouper. But other times, the prey tries to escape by fleeing the reef, giving the grouper another shot at nabbing its dinner.

## **Extract C**

When you communicate, as well as being able to clearly convey a message, you need to also listen in a way that gains the full meaning of what's being said and makes the other person feel heard and understood. Effective communication sounds like it should be instinctive. But all too often, when we try to communicate with others something goes astray. We say one thing, the other person hears something else, and misunderstandings and frustrations ensue. This can cause problems in your home, school, and with friendships.

When communicating with others, we often focus on what we should say. However, effective communication is less about talking and more about listening. Listening well means not just understanding the words or the information being communicated, but also understanding the emotions the speaker is trying to convey. There's a big difference between engaged listening and simply hearing. When you really listen – when you're engaged with what's being said – you'll hear the subtle intonations in someone's voice that tell you how that person is feeling and the emotions they're trying to communicate.

## **Extract D**

Trees may look like solitary individuals but the ground beneath our feet tells a different story. Trees are secretly talking, trading and waging war on one another. They do this by using a network of fungi that grow around and inside their roots. The fungi provide the trees with nutrients such as phosphates and nitrates and in return they receive sugars. But scientists have found this connection runs far deeper than first thought. By plugging into the fungal network, trees can share resources with each other. The system has been nicknamed the Wood Wide Web.

Plants also use fungi to send messages to one another. If they are attacked they can release chemicals through their roots which can warn their neighbours to raise their defences.

But like our internet, the Wood Wide Web has its dark side too. Some orchids hack the system to steal resources from nearby trees, and other species, like the Black Walnut, spread toxic chemicals through the network to sabotage their rivals. Arboreal cybercrime aside, scientists are still debating why plants seem to behave in such an altruistic way.

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