

LATE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS 2011

YEAR 3

ENGLISH

Time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Instructions:

- **Answer all the questions on the exam paper.**
- **Make sure you check your work carefully for errors in spelling, expression and grammar usage.**
- **Answer each question as clearly and as neatly as possible.**

GOOD LUCK!

Reading Comprehension: Passage One (25 marks)

This passage is about an unsuccessful expedition to the South Pole in 1914 when Ernest Shackleton's ship, "The Endurance" was destroyed by pack ice. He and his men had to make the dangerous journey home on a small ship called "The Caird". This is Shackleton's account.

Thirst took possession of us. I dared not permit the allowance of water to be increased since an unfavourable wind might drive us away from the island and lengthen our voyage by many days. Lack of water is always the most severe privation that men can be condemned to suffer, and we found, as during our earlier boat voyage, that the salt water in our clothing and the salt spray that lashed our faces made our thirst grow quickly to a burning pain. I had to be very firm in refusing to allow anyone to anticipate the morrow's allowance, which I was sometimes begged to do. We did the necessary work dully and hoped for the land. I had changed the course to the east so as to make sure of our striking the island, which would have been impossible to regain if we had run past the northern end. The course was laid on our scrap of chart for a point some thirty miles down the coast.

That day and the following day passed for us in a sort of nightmare. Our mouths were dry and our tongues were swollen. The wind was still strong and the heavy sea forced us to navigate carefully, but any thought of our danger from the waves was buried beneath our raging thirst. The bright moments were those when we each received our one mug of hot milk during the long, bitter watches of the night. Things were bad for us in those days, but the end was coming. The morning of May 8 broke thick and stormy, with the wind coming from the north-west. We searched the waters ahead for a sign of land, and though we could see nothing more than had met our eyes for many days, we were cheered by a sense that the goal was near at hand. About ten o'clock that morning we passed a little bit of sea kelp, a glad signal of the nearness of the land. An hour later we saw two shags sitting on a big mass of kelp, and knew then that we must be within ten or fifteen miles of the shore. These birds are as sure an indication of the nearness of land as a lighthouse is, for they never venture far to sea. We gazed ahead with increasing eagerness, and at 12:30 pm, through a break in the clouds, McCarthy caught a glimpse of the black cliffs of South Georgia, just fourteen days after our departure from Elephant Island. It was a glad moment. Thirst-ridden, chilled, and weak as we were, we were very happy. The job was nearly done.

We stood in towards the shore to look for a landing-place, and presently we could see the green grass on the ledges above the surf-beaten rocks. Ahead of us and to the south, blind rollers showed the presence of reefs along the coast. Here and there the hungry rocks were close to the surface, and over them the great waves broke, swirling viciously and spouting thirty and forty feet into the air. The rocky coast appeared to descend to the sea. Our need of water and rest was desperate, but to have attempted a landing at that time would have been suicidal. Night was drawing near, and the weather indications were not favourable. The hours passed slowly as we waited for the dawn which would bring, we hoped, the last stage of our journey. Our thirst was a torment and we could scarcely touch our food; the cold seemed to strike right through our weakened bodies. At 5 a.m. the wind shifted to the north-west and quickly increased to one of the worst hurricanes any of us had ever experienced. At 1 p.m. we realized that our position had become desperate.

"The Caird" was bumping heavily, and the water was pouring in everywhere. Just after 6 p.m. in the dark, the wind suddenly shifted and the gale stopped. We were thankful indeed.

We stood off shore again, tired almost to the point of apathy. Our water had long been finished. The pangs of thirst attacked us with redoubled intensity, and I felt that we must make a landing on the following day at almost any cost.

The night wore on. We were very tired. We longed for day. When at last the dawn came on the morning of May 10 there was practically no wind. We made slow progress towards the shore. About 8 a.m. the wind threatened another blow. We had seen in the meantime a large beach which I thought must be King Haakon Bay, and I decided that we must land there. Soon we had angry reefs on either side. Great glaciers came down to the sea and offered no landing- place. The sea crashed against the rocks and thundered against the shore....

I slipped on the wet rocks but a jagged piece of rock held me. In a few minutes we were all safe on the beach, with the boat floating in the surging water just off the shore. We heard a gurgling sound that was sweet music in our ears, and, peering around, found a stream of fresh water almost at our feet. A moment later we were down on our knees drinking the pure ice-cold water in long gulps that put new life into us. It was a splendid moment.

Answer all of the following questions as carefully as possible:

1. List three difficulties that the explorers had in the first paragraph (3 marks)

2. Look at the first paragraph; how does Shackleton describe the extreme thirst the sailors were feeling? Look closely at the choice of words that he uses. (4 marks)

3. Find two examples of personification (when an object is described as having human qualities) in the text. (2 marks)

4. Why are the sailors given a mug of hot milk? How do they react? (3 marks)

5. What happens to the wind in paragraph 3 and what does this mean for the sailors? (2 marks).

6. What do the sailors do when the gale stops in paragraph 4? (2 marks).

7. What happens to the sailors at the end of the passage? (4 marks).

8. Explain the following words as they are used in the passage (5 marks):

- Course (paragraph 1)
- Nightmare (paragraph 2)
- Raging thirst (paragraph 2)
- Jagged (paragraph 7)
- Unfavourable (paragraph 1)

Directed Writing: (15 marks) (Write between 150-200 words)

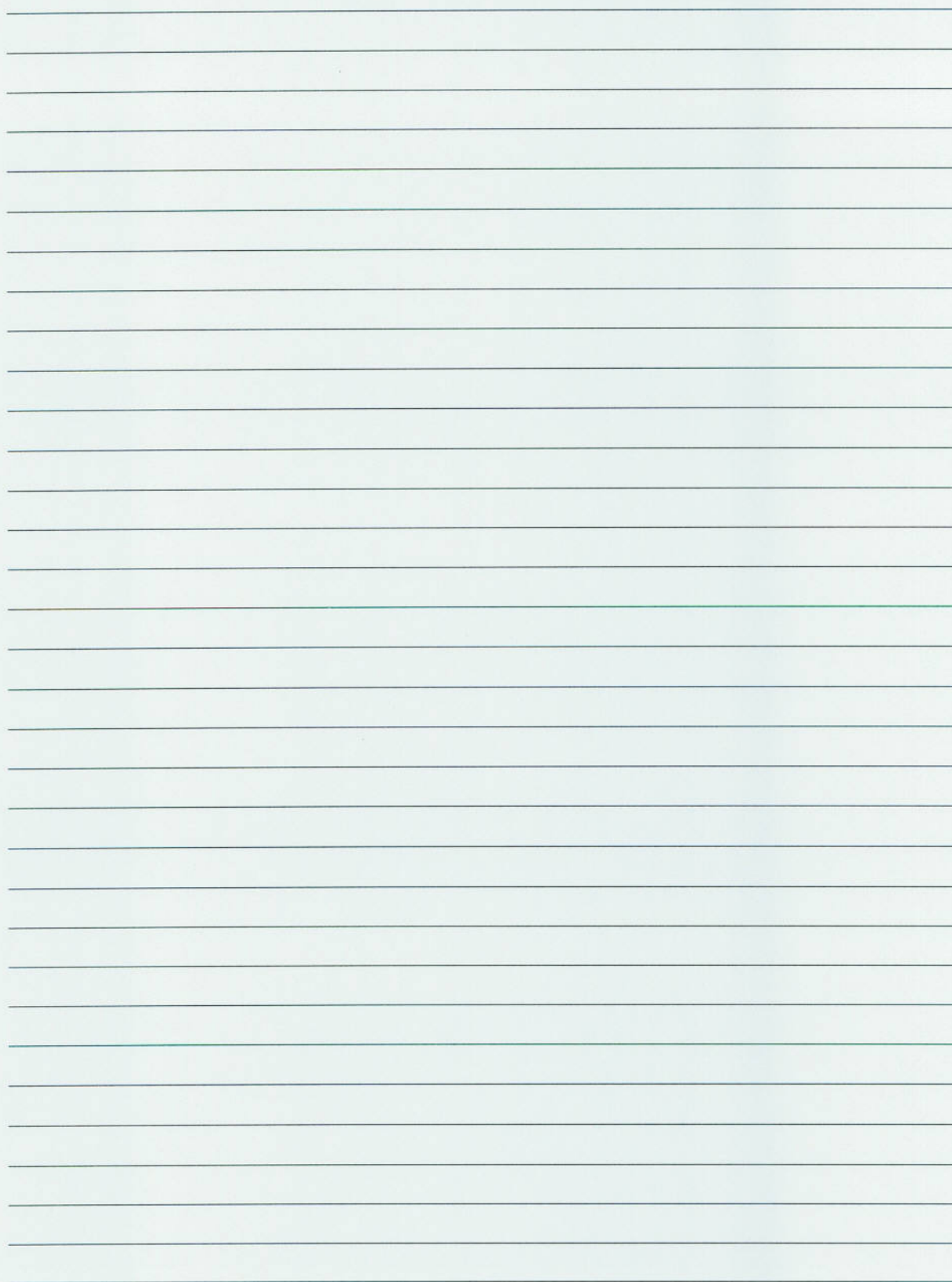
Based on "South" the passage you have just read write the following:

Shackleton and his crew have landed their boat, found water and set up camp.

Shackleton and two sailors decide to leave the crew and try to cross the island to get help. **You are one of the sailors. Write to a friend or a member of your family**

describing your journey. Think about:

- How would the sailor have felt emotionally and physically?
- What would the sailor have experienced?





Writing Task: (10 marks)

Write between 150-200 words on the following title.

1. Write about a time when you experienced fear. This could be fear of someone or something. Describe your feelings and your thoughts.

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