



CITY OF LONDON  
FREEMEN'S SCHOOL

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## SAMPLE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION PAPER

For pupils currently in Year 9

# ENGLISH

Time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

**Instructions:**

1. Answer both questions.
2. You will be given marks for accurate spelling, neat presentation and interesting vocabulary.
3. You have 90 minutes for the exam. Spend 45 minutes on Section A  
And 45 minutes on Section B.

**Read the following extract carefully, and then answer all the questions.**

*The writer and his dog, Spider, are staying overnight in a mysterious old house in a deserted part of England. No-one else is there. When the extract starts the writer has finished his work for the day and has just gone to bed.*

I think I must have fallen asleep only a few moments after putting the lamp out and slept quite deeply too, for when I awoke – or was awakened – very suddenly, I felt somewhat stunned, uncertain for a second or two where I was and why. I saw the moonlight coming in through the window, for I had left the rather heavy, thick-looking curtains undrawn and the window slightly ajar. The moon fell upon the embroidered counterpane and on the dark wood of wardrobe and chest and mirror with a cold but rather beautiful light, and I thought that I would get out of bed and look at the marshes and estuary from the window. 5

At first, all seemed very quiet, very still, and I wondered why I had awoken. Then, with a missed heart-beat, I realized that Spider was up and standing at the door. Every hair on her body was on end, her ears were pricked, her tail erect, the whole of her tense, as if ready to spring. And she was emitting a soft, low growl from deep in her throat. I sat up paralysed, frozen in the bed, conscious only of the dog and of the prickling of my own skin and of what suddenly seemed a different kind of silence, ominous and dreadful. And then, from somewhere in the depths of the house – but somewhere not very far from the room in which I was – I heard a noise. It was a faint noise, and, strain my ears as I might, I could not make out exactly what it was. It was a sound like a regular, yet intermittent bump or rumble. Nothing else happened. There were no footsteps, no creaking floorboards, the air was absolutely still, the wind did not moan through the casement. Only the muffled noise went on and the dog continued to stand, bristling at the door, now putting her nose to the gap at the bottom and snuffling along, now taking a pace backwards, head cocked, and, like me, listening, listening. And, every so often, she growled again. 10  
15  
20

In the end I suppose nothing else happened and because I did have the dog to take with me, I managed to get out of bed, though I was shaken and my heart beat uncomfortably fast within me. But it took some time for me to find sufficient reserves of courage to enable me to open the bedroom door and stand out in the dark corridor. The moment I did so, Spider shot ahead and I heard her padding about, sniffing intently at every closed door, still growling and grumbling down in her throat. 25

After a while I heard the odd sound again. It seemed to be coming from the passage to my left, at the far end. But it was still quite impossible to identify. Very cautiously, I ventured a few steps in that direction. Spider went ahead of me. The passage led only to three other bedrooms on either side and, one by one, regaining my nerve as I went, I opened them and looked inside each one. Nothing, only heavy old furniture and empty unmade beds and, in the rooms at the back of the house, moonlight. 30

And then I reached the door at the very end of the passage. Spider was there before me and her body, as she sniffed beneath it, went rigid, her growling grew louder. I put my hand on her collar, stroked the rough, short hair, as much for my own reassurance as for hers. I could feel the tension in her limbs and body and it answered to my own. 35

This was the door without a keyhole, which I had been unable to open on my first visit. I had no idea what was beyond it. Except the sound. It was coming from within that room. It was a sound of something bumping gently on the floor, in a rhythmic sort of way, a familiar sort of sound and yet one I still could not exactly place. 40

- 1
- (a) Why did the writer decide to get out of bed? (lines 6-7) [1]
- (b) In paragraph 2 Spider is alert, nervous and ready to attack. Give one word or phrase from the extract to illustrate each of these. [3]
- (c) Give the two reasons why the writer eventually managed to get out of bed. [2]
- (d) Re-read from the second sentence in paragraph 3 (beginning 'But it took some time...') to the end of the extract, and then write a summary of what the writer heard and saw after he got out of bed. (Write a paragraph of about 50-70 words.) [7]
- (e) What was unusual about the appearance of the door at the end of the passage? [1]
- (f) Re-read lines 8-16. Explain, using your own words, why the writer was so disturbed when he awoke. [4]
- (g) Re-read lines 35-37. Explain, using your own words, what the writer means by
- (i) 'stroked the rough, short hair, as much for my own reassurance as for hers' [2]
- (ii) 'the tension in her limbs and body and it answered to my own'. [2]
- (h) In line 2 why do you think the writer includes the words '– or was awakened –'? [2]
- (i) Re-read lines 16-21 and 39-41. Choose three words or phrases the writer uses to describe the noise and explain what each of these suggests about it. [6]

**[Total for Question 1: 30 marks]**

- 2
- Imagine that you are the man in the story. Write a letter to a friend explaining what happened later that night and how you felt the following day. In your letter include
- further description of the house you were staying in
  - what happened after you opened the mysterious door.

You should base your ideas on what you have read in the extract, but do not copy from it. You should write between 1 and 1 ½ sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting. (Up to ten marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to ten marks for the quality of your writing.)

**[Total for Question 2: 20 marks]**