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GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION, SPORT, YOUTH
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
DEPARTMENT OF EXAMINATIONS

Qualifying Examination for the Post of Security Guard in the Malta Public Service

Subject: English

Date: Thursday, 4th April 2024

Time: 10:45 – 12:15 (One and a half hours)

This examination paper consists of THREE sections. Candidates are requested to attempt ALL sections and to read carefully the instructions within each section.

Section A is to be written on the booklet provided.

Sections B and C are to be written on the examination paper.

Section A: Composition**(40 marks)****Write 200 words on ONE of the titles below.**

- a) The theme of this year's story writing competition is 'Home'. Write your story entitled 'Home is where the heart is'.
- b) The local council is putting together a book of mystery stories which happened in the village. Write your story which starts with the following sentence: "I turned and looked past the neighbourhood children: they'd seen it too."
- c) Your friend Carmen is exemplary and deserves 'The Voluntary Worker of the Year Award'. Describe your friend's good qualities to the judges in detail and explain why she should win the award.
- d) You would like to sell an unwanted gift you received. Write a detailed description of this object to post on a retail website.

Section B: Comprehension**(40 marks)****Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions set below.**

JULIE MCSORLEY, AS TOLD TO EMILY LANDAU

Updated: Sep 28, 2022 11:57:21 IST

I live with my husband close to the beach. Occasionally, whales come into the bay while they're migrating. In 2020, we took out our kayak, saw a pod of dolphins and 20 whales feeding on silverfish. Graceful and majestic, the whales sprayed through their blowholes and when they turned their fins, it looked like they were waving at us.

- 5 At the time, my friend Liz was staying with us and the following day, I invited her to go out on the kayak to share this magnificent experience with me. She was terrified it would overturn. I reassured her that the craft was stable and after some cajoling, she agreed.

10 We set out the next morning, and initially, we saw nothing. Then I spotted two whales swimming toward us. We were in awe: it's amazing to see a whale up-close.

When whales dive underwater, they leave an oily slick on the surface. I figured if we paddled toward that, we'd be safe. We followed the whales at a distance of 18 metres although the recommended distance is 90 metres.

- 15 Suddenly, a swarm of mackerel started jumping out of the water into our kayak. Their movement sounded like crackling glass and that's when I knew we were too close. Now terrified, I felt the kayak lift and tip back into the water. I thought the whale was going to drag us underwater.

20 What I hadn't realised was that we were in the whale's mouth. It had engulfed my body except for my arm. Liz, meanwhile, was looking directly into its jaw which resembled a big white wall. Still worried about being sucked down, I thought, 'I've got to fight this.'

I didn't know that whales have enormous mouths but tiny throats. Anything they can't swallow, they spit out. We were wearing life jackets, and luckily, we popped up out of the water.

25 Later, I realised what a close shave we'd had. I became more appreciative of life after that. There's no way I'm getting that close to whales again. I want to respect their space. And I believe that luck was on our side.

Adapted from www.readersdigest.co.uk

1. Underline the best title.

- a. An adventure at the beach
- b. An incredible survival story
- c. An unlucky encounter

2. Underline the correct answer.

- a. The aim of the article is to (recount, persuade, advise).
- b. The article was published a couple of (days, months, years) after the incident took place.

3a. Was it the first time that whales came into the bay? _____
b. In your own words, give a reason for your answer.

4. In line 6, Julie describes seeing the whales as a magnificent experience. In your own words, describe what she saw.

5. Underline the correct answer.

- a. Liz was (enthusiastic, indifferent, reluctant) to go out on the kayak.
- b. Copy a sentence from the text to support your answer.

6. Between lines 5 and 9, find another word for kayak. _____

7. Why did the two friends paddle towards the oil slick?

8. What was the first sign of danger, according to the Julie?

9. Underline the correct answer.

- a. **Their movement** in lines 14 -15 refers to a group of (silverfish, dolphins, mackerel).
- b. Julie (remembers the moment she entered, found herself in, saw her friend entering) the whale's mouth.

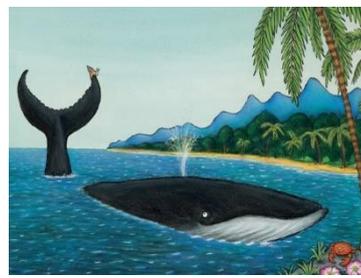
10. According to Julie, what was the reason they escaped?

11. Explain what is meant by **a close shave** in line 24.

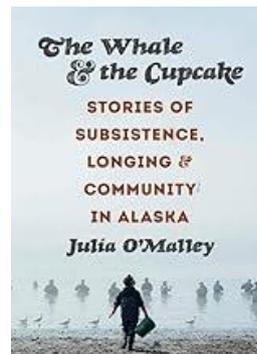
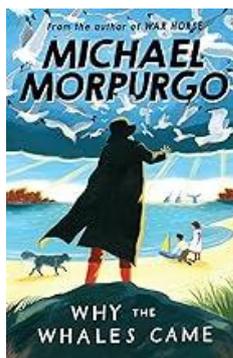
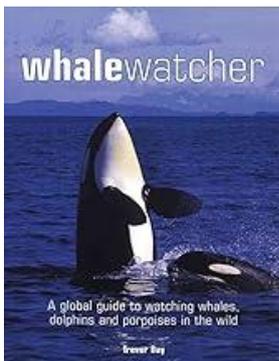
12. In your own words, explain how Julie's attitude to life changed after this experience.

13. Tick (✓) the correct answer below.

a. Which of the following would fit the text?



b. Which book would Liz gift Julie?



14. Underline the correct answer.

Who would you recommend this text to?

- a. Teens looking for a deep-sea diving course.
- b. Campaigners working to prevent animal extinction.
- c. Friends interested in inspiring stories of bravery.

15. Underline the correct answer.

Which caption best describes this picture of the two friends taken after the incident?



- a. Together again at last!
- b. Glad to tell the tale!
- c. Let's do it again!

Section C: Language

(20 marks)

1. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in brackets. The first one has been done for you.

Last month, my cousin Amy got wonderful exam results, so now everyone (0.) is (be) curious about which course she will be taking at university. She (a) _____ (always want) to become a famous scientist. Every time I ask her if she is still interested in pursuing this dream, she enthusiastically (b) _____ (explain) how currently, the field of science (c) _____ (make) significant strides in addressing pressing global issues, such as climate change and public health. She also describes how nowadays, scientists (d) _____ (explore) new technologies that will revolutionise various industries. Amy (e) _____ (want) to further her knowledge in this area so that she can make a change in the world. And indeed, she (f) _____ (just enrol) in a course in environmental research. Before she finished college, Amy (g) _____ (already take) part in various environmental projects which she really enjoyed doing. In fact, she now (h) _____ (wish) to join a research company abroad to further her work in this area. In the weeks before she sat for her last exams, her father (i) _____ (encourage) her to aim high and keep on working hard. As for her mother, she (j) _____ (still try) to get used to the idea that Amy will be leaving home in the very near future.

(10 marks)

2. Choose the correct article (a, an, or the) to complete the following passage. The first one has been done for you.

Astronaut Jamie Stone is floating freely in space. She gazes out at (0) the breathtaking galaxies that stretch far into (a) _____ distance. Suddenly, (b) _____ mesmerising cloud of gas appears with its vibrant colours painting (c) _____ beautiful picture in (d) _____ cosmos. As Stone continues her exploration, she stumbles upon (e) _____ enigmatic object. This mysterious encounter fills her with awe and wonder, reminding her of (f) _____ countless mysteries that remain unsolved in this magical place. Stone has always felt (g) _____ intense connection with space, and while floating weightlessly, she realises what (h) _____ honour it is for her to explore it. She is aware that even though humans seem insignificant to all this vastness, we still play (i) _____ significant role within it. In this moment of reflection, Stone understands that venturing into (j) _____ unknown carries responsibilities which will affect generations to come.

(10 marks)

Total: 100 marks

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