

Selective High School Placement Test

Reading

Explained answers for Practice Test 3

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[Task 1]

1 The correct answer is **‘the mutual affection between dog and human’**. Both extracts focus on the strong bond and mutual affection between dogs and their owners. In Text A, Buck shows deep love and devotion to John Thornton, while in Text B, the author describes how dogs demonstrate their affection through physical gestures like a lick on the hand.

2 The correct answer is **‘the pleasure of a dog on its owner’s return’**. In both texts, dogs communicate their support and affection physically. In Text A, Skeet cleans Buck's wounds, while in Text B, a dog offers a gentle nudge or lick when their owner is upset, showing how dogs express care through touch.

3 The correct answer is **‘Dogs recognise the feeling behind their owners’ words.’** Both texts highlight how dogs respond to the emotions behind their owners' words rather than the specific words themselves. In Text A, Buck understands Thornton's "murmured oaths" as expressions of love, while Text B explains that dogs interpret the emotions in their owners' voices.

4 The correct answer is **‘widen out a criticism.’** The phrase “For that matter” in Text A is used to expand on the idea that Buck, John Thornton, and Skeet are all relaxing and "loafing", suggesting that the entire group is taking a break and not just Buck.

5 The correct answer is **‘Buck eventually appreciated Skeet’s affection.’** Buck eventually comes to appreciate Skeet's affection, looking forward to her care each morning. Initially, Buck was too weak to respond, but he grows to enjoy her attention, and then goes on to enjoy “ridiculous games” with her.

6 The correct answer is **‘less needy.’** Compared to Skeet, who seeks out Thornton's attention by pushing her nose under his hand, Buck's love for Thornton is expressed more passively. Buck is content to adore Thornton from a distance, without demanding constant physical contact, making his expression of love less needy.

7 The correct answer is **‘his present owner would disappear from his life.’** In the last paragraph of Text A, Buck is haunted by the fear that his current owner, John Thornton, might leave him, as his experience with masters in the past is that they have been “transient”, rather than “permanent”.

8 The correct answer is **‘It is entirely genuine and earnest.’** Text B states that dogs are the only animal to “seek out eye contact”, and describes the stare a dog gives its owner as entirely genuine, using the word “truly” to emphasise the authenticity of a dog's feelings towards its owners.

[Task 2]

9 The correct answer is **‘It prompts the narrator to recall something.’** In the first verse, the curtain’s movement reminds the narrator that someone is home, suggesting it prompts a memory or recognition of the sleeper’s presence.

10 The correct answer is **‘the sleeper’s face is familiar and dear to the narrator.’** The narrator watches the sleeper with affection, describing their face as "softened in sleep", showing both their familiarity and warmth, and the untroubled nature of the sleep.

11 The correct answer is **'In dreams, the sleeper will always remember their youth.'** In the second verse, the narrator reflects that while the sleeper is forgetting their childhood, they will always return to it in dreams. The narrator on the other hand, says that they remember the sleeper's childhood.

12 The correct answer is **'to show they are closed'**. The comparison of the sleeper's eyelids to "buds" primarily emphasises that they are closed, as buds are flowers that have not yet opened.

13 The correct answer is **'the inside of the sleeper's eyelids'**. The phrase "their curtain" refers back to the eyelids, which are previously described as "buds unbroken". The narrator imagines the sleeper watching images of their life in their dreams on the inside of their closed eyelids.

14 The correct answer is **'a parent and their adult child'**. The narrator has memories of the sleeper's childhood in the past, while saying that the sleeper is already losing those memories. The narrator considers the sleeper's growth and changes over time in the manner of a parent..

[Task 3/ Q15]

Gap A The correct answer is **'the idea that there are different perceptions of the planet Mars'**. This paragraph explains that there are multiple ways people perceive Mars: as a scientific object of study, a future destination for astronauts, and as a product of human imagination.

Gap B The correct answer is **'the significance of Mars to earlier human societies'**. The paragraph describes how ancient civilizations, like the Mesopotamians, Greeks, and Romans, saw Mars as a symbol of war and violence, linking the planet to important gods in their cultures.

Gap C The correct answer is **'how new technology facilitated the earliest scientific observations of Mars'**. This paragraph discusses how the invention of telescopes in the 1600s allowed scientists to observe Mars more closely, leading to the creation of accurate maps and the discovery of its rotation.

Gap D The correct answer is **'an assumption about a geographical feature on Mars that was inaccurate'**. The paragraph explains how the Italian astronomer Schiaparelli's use of the word "canali" led people to mistakenly believe that Mars had artificial waterways.

Gap E The correct answer is **'Mars entering twentieth-century popular culture'**. The paragraph talks about how the idea of life on Mars entered popular culture, inspiring science fiction stories and films that portrayed Mars as a planet with an alien civilisation.

Gap F The correct answer is **'the reason why Mars began to be portrayed more realistically in movies and books'**. This paragraph explains how the realistic images of Mars sent back by the Mariner 4 space probe changed how writers and filmmakers depicted Mars, leading to more realistic portrayals in movies and books.

[Task 4/Q16]

Which writer is a research scientist?

The correct answer is **D**. In Extract D, the writer mentions working at "The Center for Rehabilitation Engineering & Assistive Technology at Vanderbilt University," which indicates that they are a research scientist.

Which writer gives an indication that they know the hero mentioned?

The correct answer is **A**. In Extract A, the writer mentions a shared social understanding with Cathy Freeman, as they are both Aboriginal. The author states "We had never talked about it", indicating that they knew each other enough to potentially talk about it if they had wanted to.

Which writer is of the opinion that we are wrong to see certain people as heroes?

The correct answer is **C**. Extract C discusses how many people view celebrities as heroes and role models, but the writer argues that we are mistaken in putting so much value on their opinions about non-expertise topics like politics or climate change.

Which writer refers to a heroic act to illustrate a particular interpretation of what heroism is?

The correct answer is **B**. In Extract B, the writer uses the example of Wesley Autrey rescuing a man on a train track to illustrate the idea that true heroism is about serving others at any cost, not seeking glory.

Which writer observes a connection between a past hero and our human capabilities today?

The correct answer is **D**. In Extract D, the writer reflects on how modern technology, such as smartphones, gives us abilities similar to those of superheroes, connecting this to the broader human capacity for innovation and technological advancement.

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

The correct answer is **A**. In Extract A, the writer describes how Cathy Freeman's victory lap with the Aboriginal and Australian flags brought a sense of relief and unity, which lightened their mood and allowed them to "let go".

Which writer refers to an attempt to help ordinary people act in a more selfless way?

The correct answer is **B**. Extract B mentions the Heroic Imagination Project, an organisation dedicated to helping people become heroes in their daily lives, which is an effort to encourage selfless behaviour in ordinary people.

Which writer uses mocking humour when giving a view about today's heroes?

The correct answer is **C**. Extract C uses a mocking tone to discuss how society wrongly elevates celebrities to the status of heroes, especially when they voice opinions on topics outside their expertise.

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

The correct answer is **B**. Extract B references the large number of heroes in modern movies as an example of how much value people place on the idea of heroes.

Which writer provides a detail which is a reminder of the hero's wider struggle?

The correct answer is **A**. In Extract A, the writer mentions the Aboriginal expo outside the stadium that reminded them of the broader struggle for justice, a detail that connects Cathy Freeman's victory to the ongoing fight for equality.