



Aldenham School

11+ Sample Paper

Subject: English

Time allowed: 60 mins (+ 15 mins Extra Time)

Instructions:

1. Please write **all answers** in the lined paper provided.
2. There are 2 sections to do – A & B – try and spend around 30 minutes on each section.

Mark: _____ / 40

?: _____

English Comprehension

Read the following extract carefully.

Answer the comprehension questions which follow.

Francis Hodgson Burnett's ***The Secret Garden*** is a much-loved classic story. Mary Lennox arrives from India to live with her uncle in Yorkshire; she is lonely and unwanted and so left to herself she has little to do apart from explore the house and its surroundings. The extract comes from the section of the text where she first discovers the secret garden.

Mistress Mary felt a little awkward as she went out of the room. Yorkshire people seemed strange, and Martha was always rather a puzzle to her. At first she had disliked her very much, but now she did not. The skipping-rope was a wonderful thing. She counted and skipped, and skipped and counted, until her cheeks were quite red, and she was more interested than she had ever been since she was born. The sun was shining and a little wind was blowing—not a rough wind, but one which came in delightful little gusts and brought a fresh scent of newly turned earth with it. She skipped round the fountain garden, and up one walk and down another. She skipped at last into the kitchen-garden and saw Ben Weatherstaff digging and talking to his robin, which was hopping about him. She skipped down the walk toward him and he lifted his head and looked at her with a curious expression. She had wondered if he would notice her. She wanted him to see her skip.

Mary skipped round all the gardens and round the orchard, resting every few minutes. At length she went to her own special walk and made up her mind to try if she could skip the whole length of it. It was a good long skip and she began slowly, but before she had gone half-way down the path she was so hot and breathless that she was obliged to stop. She did not mind much, because she had already counted up to thirty. She stopped with a little laugh of pleasure, and there, lo and behold, was the robin swaying on a long branch of ivy. He had followed her and he greeted her with a chirp. As Mary had skipped toward him she felt something heavy in her pocket strike against her at each jump, and when she saw the robin she laughed again.

“You showed me where the key was yesterday,” she said. “You ought to show me the door today; but I don’t believe you know!”

The robin flew from his swinging spray of ivy on to the top of the wall and he opened his beak and sang a loud, lovely **trill**, merely to show off. Nothing in the world is quite as adorably lovely as a robin when he shows off—and they are nearly always doing it.

Mary Lennox had heard a great deal about Magic in her Ayah’s stories, and she always said that what happened almost at that moment was Magic.

One of the nice little gusts of wind rushed down the walk, and it was a stronger one than the rest. It was strong enough to wave the branches of the trees, and it was more than strong enough to sway the trailing sprays of **untrimmed** ivy hanging from the wall. Mary had stepped close to the robin, and suddenly the gust of wind swung aside some loose ivy trails, and more suddenly still she jumped toward it and caught it in her hand. This she did because she had seen something under it—a round knob which had been covered by the leaves hanging over it. It was the knob of a door.

She put her hands under the leaves and began to pull and push them aside. Thick as the ivy hung, it nearly all was a loose and swinging curtain, though some had crept over wood and iron. Mary’s heart began to thump and her hands to shake a little in her delight and excitement. The robin kept singing and **twittering** away and tilting his head on one side, as if he were as excited as she was. What was this under her hands which was square and made of iron and which her fingers found a hole in?

It was the lock of the door which had been closed ten years and she put her hand in her pocket, drew out the key and found it fitted the keyhole. She put the key in and turned it. It took two hands to do it, but it did turn.

And then she took a long breath and looked behind her up the long walk to see if anyone was coming. No one was coming. No one ever did come, it seemed, and she took another long breath, because she could not help it, and she held back the swinging curtain of ivy and pushed back the door which opened slowly—slowly.

Then she slipped through it, and shut it behind her, and stood with her back against it, looking about her and breathing quite fast with excitement, and wonder, and delight.

She was standing *inside* the secret garden.

Section A Comprehension

You should spend about 30 minutes of your time on this section.

Refer to the text to support your answers.

- 1) How is Mary described at the start of the passage? (1 mark)
- 2) What was Mary's initial reaction to Martha and how has this changed? (2marks)
- 3) How do we know from the first paragraph that Martha enjoys skipping? (2 marks)
- 4) *'She put her hands under the leaves and began to pull and push them aside. Thick as the ivy hung, it nearly all was a loose and swinging curtain, though some had crept over wood and iron. Mary's heart began to thump and her hands to shake a little in her delight and excitement. The robin kept singing and twittering away and tilting his head on one side, as if he were as excited as she was.'*

How does the writer create a sense of excitement in this passage? (3 marks)

- 5) Using the text to help you, write in your own words the meaning of the following words (also **highlighted, underlined and in bold** in the text). (3 marks)

- trill
- untrimmed
- twittering

6) Looking at the passage:

'The sun was shining and a little wind was blowing—not a rough wind, but one which came in delightful little gusts and brought a fresh scent of newly turned earth with it. She skipped round the fountain garden, and up one walk and down another. She skipped at last into the kitchen-garden and saw Ben Weatherstaff digging and talking to his robin, which was hopping about him. She skipped down the walk toward him and he lifted his head and looked at her with a curious expression. She had wondered if he would notice her. She wanted him to see her skip.'

Explain how the writer conveys a sense of happiness as well as highlighting that Mary wants to be noticed and is desperate for some attention. (4 marks)

7) In the last section of the passage from: 'Mary Lennox had heard a great deal about magic' to the end of the extract, 'She was standing *inside* in the secret garden' how does the writer use language and structure to create tension, wonder and excitement. You should consider how the author makes readers view the events from a child's point of view in your response. (5 marks)

Total 20 marks

Section B: Composition

You should spend about 30 minutes on this section.

Choose ONE of the following creative writing tasks. You should spend a few minutes planning your work and leave time to proof-read.

You should check that you have:

- Punctuated correctly
- Used different and interesting verbs, adverbs and adjectives
- Included a variety of sentence structures
- Varied the length of your sentences
- Organised your writing into paragraphs
- Checked spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Used descriptive techniques such as similes and metaphors

EITHER

Write a story which uses the phrase 'The hidden treasure was the secret garden'

OR

Describe a visit to a beautiful natural location.

Total: 20 marks