

13+ English

Practice Examination Paper 1



Time Allowed: 1 hour

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Your answers to this examination should be **written on lined paper**.

Make sure that **your name** and **your teacher's initials** are on ***all*** the pieces of paper you use.

This examination consists of:

- **Section A:** A reading passage with comprehension questions;
- **Section B:** A transactional writing section.

You must complete **both** Section A and Section B

Passage B: Unicorns and Yetis

This passage from a website describes the history of two creatures generally believed to be mythical.

1 The historical existence of the unicorn is an idea which is easy to accept. Its resemblance to actual animals, such as horses and antelopes, gives it an almost common-sense appeal, and the creature exerts a powerful attraction in numerous popular cultures. The first reports of the unicorn were found in works of ancient Greek history from 2,400 years ago, while eastern cultures recorded details of one-horned animals during the era of Genghis Khan.

6 Thorough research into contemporary wildlife has not supported the possibility of creatures with the characteristics of a unicorn, but to the present day, sightings of unicorns are reported from Mount Kilimanjaro in Kenya. In 1987, Robert Vavra took an expedition there to find the mythical beast and became famous when he published his sensational diary, complete with photographs, claiming that with the help of Masai warriors he had tracked it down. Many people want to believe him.

11 The other well-known mythical creature is the yeti. For fifty years the snowy wastes of the Himalayas have beckoned intrepid explorers in search of the mysterious animal also known as ‘the abominable snowman’. Occasional sightings of large hairy creatures walking on two legs across the snows or in the forested valleys of Nepal and Tibet have kept the legend alive. Conclusive evidence of the creature’s existence has proven elusive, however. The picture of a large, wide footprint, taken by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1951 while climbing Mount Everest, proves nothing.

17 Since that time a number of yeti ‘relics’ have turned up. In 1960, western visitors to a Nepalese monastery were astonished to find monks using a ‘yeti scalp’ in some of their rituals. Analysis of the red hairs, however, showed that they had originated from a mountain goat. A different monastery presented a severed hand, obviously from a primate, as evidence that some kind of ape man was still wandering the mountain fortresses of the Himalayas. The hand could, of course, have come from anywhere – and it vanished in 1991. Finally, there have been rumours, started by travellers, of huge mummified bodies of yeti preserved in even more remote monasteries. These turned out to be fakes, or were no longer where they were supposed to be. However, belief in the existence of the ‘wild man of the snows’ is still real enough among the locals. What could account for this?

26 A popular theory among zoologists is that the idea of the yeti is based upon handed-down memories of apes, possibly orang-utans, which may have lived in the mountain forests of this region in the distant past. Some argue that a few of these apes still survive in small numbers, just occasionally spotted crossing a snowfield from one valley to another. Reinhold Messner, one of the world’s foremost mountaineers, believes that the legend is based upon a real but little-known animal that inhabited the forests of eastern Tibet. This was the area the Sherpas once lived in before migrating to present-day Nepal, so they may have taken with them their traditional stories.

33 Messner decided to investigate the yeti for himself, so in 1986 he retraced the Sherpas’ migratory route in eastern Tibet. In his book he describes a terrifying night hiking through the forest, haunted by the strange whistling cries of a creature he was later to see. Several times a tall biped with long arms ran across his path. Eventually the creature stood in front of him, raising itself to full height before running off on all fours at incredible speed into the woods. When Messner reached a settlement, he was told by the villagers that he had seen a ‘chemo’, a Tibetan name for a yeti. This encounter took place in the heart of the area from which the Sherpas had brought their yeti stories, so the large, hairy, ape-like man may just be a Tibetan bear, transformed by Sherpa legend into something more.

Section A: Comprehension Questions

(Total: 20 marks)

1. In lines 1-10, choose **three** facts, words or phrases that show a belief in unicorns is easy to have. *You can write this as bullet point answers.*

(3 marks)

2. Reread lines 34-51. Explain how the author's **disbelief** of the yeti is presented. *Support your answer with brief quotations.*

(5 marks)

3. Using quotations from anywhere in the text, explore how the writer creates a sense of **possibility and hope**.

You may want to consider:

- Key vocabulary used by the author
- Paragraph and sentence length or punctuation used by the author

(12 marks)

Section B: Transactional Writing

(Total: 30 marks)

Marks will be awarded for thoughtful, descriptive pieces, which have accurate and varied paragraphs and sentence structures, as well as accurate spelling and punctuation.

Write a news paper article for your school magazine with the headline: 'Amazing New Discovery'.

You may want to consider:

- What has been discovered, where and by whom (this could be real or imagined; it could be based on something in any subject you enjoy e.g. new fossils or new cures in medicine ...)
- Why it is 'amazing' and some of the details of its impacts.
- What the benefits and drawbacks of this discovery are for society, pupils ...