

WITHINGTON GIRLS'
SCHOOL

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION
2024

ENGLISH COMPREHENSION

This is an extract from H.G. Wells' ghost story 'The Red Room'. In this passage, the narrator discusses his plans to spend the night in the Red Room.

"I can assure you," said I, "that it will take a very tangible ghost to frighten me." And I stood up before the fire with my glass in my hand.

"It is your own choosing," said the man with the withered arm, and glanced at me askance.

"Eight-and-twenty years," said I, "I have lived, and never a ghost have I seen as yet."

- 5 The old woman sat staring hard into the fire, her pale eyes wide open. "Ay," she broke in; "and eight-and-twenty years you have lived and never seen the likes of this house, I reckon. There's a many things to see, when one's still but eight-and-twenty." She swayed her head slowly from side to side. "A many things to see and sorrow for."

- 10 I half suspected the old people were trying to enhance the spiritual terrors of their house by their droning insistence. I put down my empty glass on the table and looked about the room, and caught a glimpse of myself, abbreviated and broadened to an impossible sturdiness, in the queer old mirror at the end of the room. "Well," I said, "if I see anything to-night, I shall be so much the wiser. For I come to the business with an open mind."

"It's your own choosing," said the man with the withered arm once more.

- 15 I heard the faint sound of a stick and a shambling step on the flags in the passage outside. The door creaked on its hinges as a second old man entered, more bent, more wrinkled, more aged even than the first. He supported himself by the help of a crutch, his eyes were covered by a shade, and his lower lip, half averted, hung pale and pink from his decaying yellow teeth. He made straight for an armchair on the opposite side of the table, sat down clumsily, and began to cough. The man with the
20 withered hand gave the newcomer a short glance of positive dislike; the old woman took no notice of his arrival but remained with her eyes fixed steadily on the fire.

"I said—it's your own choosing," said the man with the withered hand, when the coughing had ceased for a while.

"It's my own choosing," I answered.

- 25 The man with the shade became aware of my presence for the first time, and threw his head back for a moment, and sidewise, to see me. I caught a momentary glimpse of his eyes, small and bright and inflamed. Then he began to cough and splutter again.

- "Why don't you drink?" said the man with the withered arm, pushing the beer toward him. The man with the shade poured out a glassful with a shaking hand, that splashed half as much again on the
30 deal table. A monstrous shadow of him crouched upon the wall, and mocked his action as he poured and drank.

Comprehension

Spend about 40 minutes on this section

Please circle the correct answer. If you change your mind, put a clear cross (X) through the wrong answer and circle your new choice.

1. In line 1, how does the narrator feel about spending a night in the Red Room? **(1 mark)**
 - a. Frightened
 - b. Excited
 - c. Unconcerned
 - d. Confused

2. What does “tangible” mean in line 1? **(1 mark)**
 - a. Invisible
 - b. Touchable
 - c. Happy
 - d. Bright

3. Where is the narrator standing in the first paragraph? **(1 mark)**
 - a. Outside
 - b. At the table
 - c. In front of the fire
 - d. We are not told

4. How old is the narrator? **(1 mark)**
 - a. 82
 - b. 28
 - c. We are not told
 - d. 20

5. What is the old woman’s warning to the narrator on lines 5-8? **(1 mark)**
 - a. To leave the house immediately
 - b. That there are things that he is too young to understand
 - c. That he will see a ghost
 - d. That he shouldn’t have come to the house

6. Which quote best suggests that the old woman disapproves of the narrator’s behaviour on lines 5-8? **(1 mark)**
 - a. “staring hard into the fire”
 - b. “There’s many things to see”
 - c. “she swayed her head slowly from side to side”
 - d. “one’s still but eight-and-twenty”

7. What does the narrator “half suspect” the “old people” of on line 9? **(1 mark)**
 - a. Lying to him
 - b. Exaggerating the ghost
 - c. Delaying him leaving
 - d. Talking too much

8. What does the narrator mean when he says he has been “abbreviated” on line 11? **(1 mark)**
 - a. He has been interrupted
 - b. The mirror has shrunk his reflection
 - c. He looks taller
 - d. He is bending down

9. What does the word “withered” mean on lines 3 and 14? **(1 mark)**
- shrivelled
 - pale
 - small
 - strong
10. What type of word is “shambling” on line 15? **(1 mark)**
- verb
 - noun
 - adverb
 - adjective
11. What does the word “even” in lines 16-17 (“more bent, more wrinkled, more aged even than the first”) suggest to you about the first old man? **(1 mark)**
- He is friends with the second old man
 - He is the same age as the first old man
 - He is so old it is surprising that the second old man is older
 - The second old man is younger than him
12. What type of word is “clumsily” on line 19? **(1 mark)**
- adjective
 - verb
 - adverb
 - preposition
13. What does the phrase “positive dislike” on line 20 suggest? **(1 mark)**
- That he feels happy
 - That he really doesn’t like the second old man
 - That he likes the second old man
 - That he is feeling a lot of different emotions
14. What type of word is “choosing” on line 24? **(1 mark)**
- preposition
 - noun
 - adjective
 - adverb
15. What technique is used to describe the man’s eyes as “inflamed” on line 27? **(1 mark)**
- simile
 - onomatopoeia
 - alliteration
 - metaphor
16. What type of word is “then” on line 27? **(1 mark)**
- adjective
 - verb
 - connective/conjunction
 - noun

17. What tense is the story written in? **(1 mark)**

- a. past
- b. present
- c. future
- d. the tense changes during the story

18. What does the word “monstrous” suggest about the shadow on line 30? **(1 mark)**

- a. It is a ghost
- b. It is very big
- c. It is very small
- d. It looks like a dragon

19. What atmosphere is being created in the story? **(1 mark)**

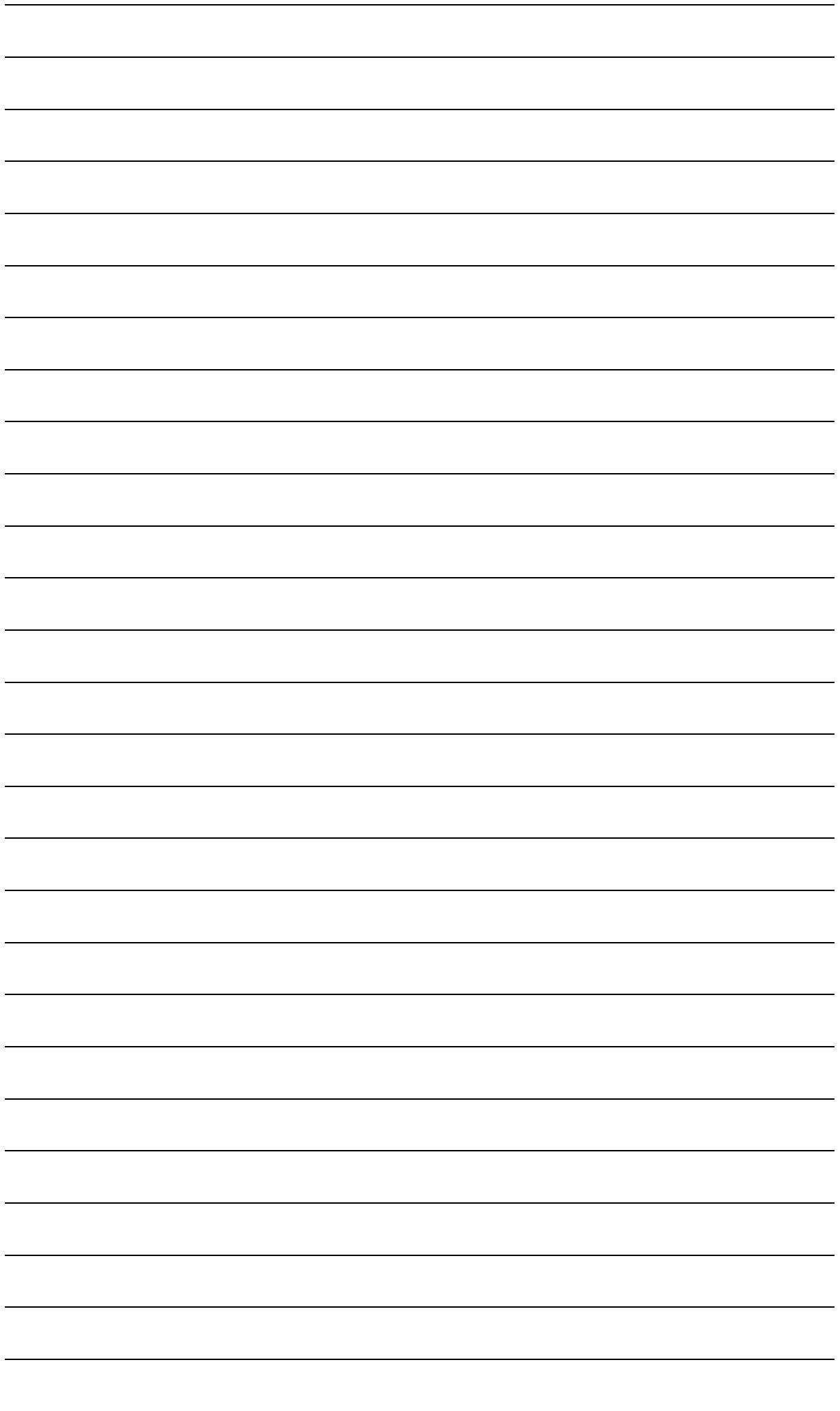
- a. a tense atmosphere
- b. a positive atmosphere
- c. a humorous atmosphere
- d. there is no atmosphere in the story

20. What do you think will happen next in the story? **(1 mark)**

- a. The narrator will leave the house and go home
- b. The narrator will stay the night and see a ghost
- c. The narrator will sit down for dinner with the old man and woman
- d. The narrator will get sick

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FOR MARKER'S USE ONLY

Accurate punctuation	/5
Accurate spelling	/5
Ambitious vocabulary	/5
Flair, imagination and ambition	/10