

Primary 4 · English · P4 Advanced Papers

English practice 1

Time **60 min** Marks **40** Questions **30**

Answers are printed in red after each question, with the working where it matters. Marks in brackets show how a marker would split them.

Section A: Grammar cloze

5 marks

Fill in each blank with the correct form of the word in brackets. Questions 1 to 5 carry 1 mark each.

The kite that would not fly

When the three boys agreed to spend the afternoon at the field, Ravi made a bold suggestion.

"Let's fly the giant kite with no practice runs. Each of us can just grab whatever he (1) ¹ brings (bring) along," he said. "It will be easy."

By three o'clock, Aunt Lila had dropped the boys at the grassy slope behind the library. They walked to the spot where Dev's uncle had flown kites before. While the boys (2) ² were tying (tie) the string to the frame, they noticed that the tail was far too short.

Both Dev and Arun had brought rolls of ribbon. Ravi realised that he (3) ³ had forgotten (forget) the spare roll at home. The boys took out the kite and the reel. Since nobody remembered to bring a longer tail, they had to make do with what they had.

"I (4) ⁴ have been running (run) up and down this slope for the last ten minutes and it still will not lift," Dev groaned. Ravi looked at the reel and said, "You (5) ⁵ have tangled (tangle) the string completely. There is a knot halfway along it." Everyone burst out laughing.

1-5 Write your answers in the blanks in the passage above.

[5]

Blank 1 is present simple after 'whatever he'. Blank 2 is past continuous (an action in progress). Blank 3 is past perfect (the forgetting happened before they realised). Blank 4 is present perfect continuous (it started ten minutes ago and is still going on). Blank 5 is present perfect (the result is visible now). Accept 'has been running' only if the subject is changed to match; do not accept 'ran' for blank 4.

Section B: Comprehension cloze

15 marks

Fill in each blank with one suitable word. Questions 6 to 20 carry 1 mark each.

An afternoon in a hardware shop

Adapted from a short article

Time spent in a hardware shop can be surprisingly pleasant, whether you are there to mend something or simply to look. You may even have stepped inside just to find (6) ⁶ **shade** from a sudden downpour. Whatever the reason, you can soon become quite unaware (7) ⁷ **of** your surroundings once you have picked up a tool. It is hard to (8) ⁸ **resist** the urge to handle a hammer with a polished handle. (9) ⁹ **However**, choosing by looks alone is unwise, since you might leave with something useless. If you have found the right tool, you are likely to become absorbed (10) ¹⁰ **in** your browsing. Often it is only much later that you realise you have spent far too much (11) ¹¹ **time** there and must hurry off to an appointment you had forgotten.

This chance to (12) ¹² **escape** from ordinary chores into a world of nails, hinges and paint is the real pull of such a shop. There are not many places where that happens. In a good one, no assistant will (13) ¹³ **ask** you the usual "Can I help you?" the moment you enter. In a shop that treats its (14) ¹⁴ **customers** well, an assistant should stay in the background until you have finished looking. Only then should he (15) ¹⁵ **offer** his help. You may want to know (16) ¹⁶ **where** a certain aisle is, but once he has shown you, he should leave you to it.

Some shopkeepers go further. There was a young apprentice who needed a manual that was far too (17) ¹⁷ **costly** for him to buy. The library did not have it, and the only copy he could find was in the hardware shop near his workshop. Every afternoon he would go there and read a few pages. This (18) ¹⁸ **went** on for several weeks. One day he found the book missing from its (19) ¹⁹ **usual** shelf. He was about to give up when the owner beckoned to him. Expecting to be sent away, he walked over.

To his surprise, the owner pointed to the book, which was hidden (20) ²⁰ **away** on a low shelf behind the counter. "I put it there so nobody would buy it," he said. Smiling, he left the delighted apprentice to carry on reading.

6-20 Write your answers in the blanks in the passage above.

[15]

Accept close synonyms that keep the grammar: 6 shelter or cover, 8 fight, 12 get away (two words, not accepted), 14 visitors, 15 give, 17 expensive or dear, 19 proper or usual, 20 aside. Blank 7 must be 'of' (unaware of). Blank 9 must be a contrast word such as However or Yet, with a capital. Blank 20 completes 'tucked away'.

Section C: Comprehension

20 marks

Read the passage and answer the questions in complete sentences. Questions 21 to 30 carry 20 marks.

The paper boats

Adapted from a children's story

- ① Mira slumped across two chairs outside the art room, sent there for talking through assembly. After three minutes she was restless. She had tried humming (and was told off by Miss Chan). She had tried drumming on the chair legs (and was told off by Mr Goh). She had even tried making the chair squeak (and was told off by Mrs Leong).
- ② They had left her with nothing to do. They could not expect her to sit there all afternoon doing nothing. When the next teacher came out, she would give it a go.
- ③ The next teacher was Mr De Souza. As he passed, Mira quietly slid one foot back and used her heel to stop the door from shutting properly.
- ④ It was their fault. Why had they picked on her in assembly? They should not have made her sit outside a door, which left her so bored that she ended up hearing what they were saying. They should have left her alone while she was quietly humming, drumming and squeaking.
- ⑤ Mira settled in to listen. If she turned her head as if she were looking down the corridor, she could see a thin slice of the art room. Across it, Mr Barrett, or Old Barrel as the pupils called him, was making one of his great fusses.
- ⑥ "I don't believe this," Mr Barrett was booming. "Are you telling me that this river project of yours is six sheets of plain paper folded into little boats? And you mean to hand one of these paper boats to each of the rascals in my class for the fair?"
- ⑦ "Not hand, Eric. Lend," corrected Dr Menon, who ran the art department.
- ⑧ "Hand. Lend." Mira caught a glimpse of Mr Barrett's arms thrown up. "With that lot, what difference does it make? No one in 4B could look after a pencil without snapping it. You can't expect paper boats to survive! There are twenty pupils in 4B this term. Twenty times six is a hundred and twenty sheets!" he growled.
- ⑨ With all this talk of numbers, Mira's attention was slipping. She was about to move her foot and let the door close when another slice of Mr Barrett swung into view.
- ⑩ "It's over a hundred sheets of paper ending up soggy in my classroom!"
- ⑪ Out in the corridor, a look of pure delight spread over Mira's face. Could she be hearing right? A hundred sheets, all turned to pulp? In the classroom? Oh, what joy. Worth coming back for. Worth all the long afternoons spent hunched over a desk, being scolded, and drooping with boredom.
- ⑫ A hundred sheets of paper. Splash! She could see it now. Drifts of it. Waves of it. The room would be ankle-deep. It would rain paper. Paper would puff out of the windows.

- ⑬ The picture was so bright and perfect that Mira's ears were blocked by it, and she completely missed Dr Menon's attempt to explain the project to his colleague.
- ⑭ "You've got it wrong, Eric. It's the dye pots that spill, not the boats. The boats are a simple project about caring for something. Each pupil looks after one boat for three weeks and keeps a diary of what goes wrong. It's quite interesting what comes out. It's fascinating what they learn about themselves and about looking after things. It's a very worthwhile project. You wait and see."
- ⑮ Mira caught only the last words, "Wait and see." But she was seeing it already. Splash! And then a soggy cloud of paper settling over the hated classroom.

21 State two things Mira did to keep herself occupied while she was being punished. [2]

- **She tried to hum.**
- **She tried to drum on the chair legs.**

Accept any two of humming, drumming on the chair legs, and making the chair squeak.

22 What does "it" in paragraph 2 refer to? ("When the next teacher came out, she would give it a go.") [1]

ANSWER **It refers to Mira using her heel to stop the door from closing properly.**

The following paragraph shows what she actually does. Do not accept 'listening to the teachers'.

23 Quote the sentence that tells us Mira was not good with numbers. [1]

ANSWER **"With all this talk of numbers, Mira's attention was slipping."**

24 From the paragraph beginning "Out in the corridor", give two pieces of evidence that Mira did not enjoy school. [2]

- **She spent long afternoons hunched over a desk.**
- **She was scolded and drooped with boredom.**

Both points must come from that paragraph. Accept 'being scolded' and 'drooping with boredom' as the two pieces.

25 Explain in your own words why Mira completely missed Dr Menon's explanation of the project. [2]

ANSWER

She was too busy imagining the paper boats turning to pulp and splashing everywhere to hear what he was saying.

The answer must be in the pupil's own words, not a copy of the sentence about her ears being blocked.

- 26** Mira, Mr Barrett and Dr Menon each saw the paper boat project differently. Fill in the table with a complete sentence for each blank. [4]

Character	What he or she thought of the project	Why he or she thought that
Mira	She thought the boats would turn to pulp and it would be great fun.	She imagined the classroom ankle-deep in soggy paper.
Mr Barrett	He thought the pupils could not be trusted with paper boats.	He believed no one in 4B could look after even a pencil.
Dr Menon	He thought it was a worthwhile project.	He believed the pupils would learn about looking after something.

- 27** Write T for True or F for False, and give evidence from the passage. [2]

Statement	T/F	Evidence
Mira was punished for misbehaving in assembly.	T	She had been sent to sit outside the art room for talking all through assembly.
The paper boats were meant to be used in a mathematics lesson.	F	They were for the fair, as a project about caring for something.

- 28** Which word best describes Mira's attitude in this passage: arrogant, defiant or dishonest? Give a reason for your choice. [2]

ANSWER

Defiant. She was not sorry for her behaviour and she disobeyed the teachers by stopping the door with her heel.

Award 1 mark for 'defiant' and 1 mark for a reason that shows she would not do as she was told. 'Arrogant' and 'dishonest' are not supported.

- 29** Number these steps 1, 2 and 3 in the order the pupils had to follow. [2]

- (a) The pupils would keep a diary of the problems they met while looking after the boat.
 (b) The pupils would learn about themselves and about looking after things.
 (c) The pupils would each be lent a paper boat to care for.

ANSWER **(a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 1**

They are lent the boat first, keep the diary during the three weeks, and learn from it at the end.

- 30** Find a word from the passage that means the same as each of these. [2]
- (a) secretly
(b) extreme delight

ANSWER **(a) quietly (b) delight**

(a) The passage word is 'quietly', from 'Mira quietly slid one foot back'. (b) The passage word is 'delight', from 'a look of pure delight'. Do not accept a word that is not in the passage.

Marking notes

- Section A: one mark per blank. The verb form must be exact, including the auxiliary.
- Section B: one mark per blank. Spelling must be correct.
- Section C: award marks for the point, not for copying the passage word for word, except where the question asks for a quotation.

END OF PAPER