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English: Main Test

Suggested time: 25 minutes. Answer questions 1-26.

Read this passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.

The Palm House

In this extract, the narrator, Hattie, is spending half-term helping her uncle, the head gardener at a large glasshouse full of tropical plants.

¹ Uncle Joe had been head gardener at the Palm House for twenty years, and in all that time, he told me, nothing had ever escaped. So when I arrived on the first morning of half-term and he handed me the keys to the marmoset enclosure, I felt very important indeed.

⁵ 'Feed them at nine,' he said. 'Lock the door behind you. Twice. They're small, but they're clever.'

Pygmy marmosets¹ are the smallest monkeys in the world. The two in the Palm House, Mango and Kiwi, were no bigger than my hand, with striped tails longer than their bodies and faces like wise old men. When I carried
¹⁰ in their bowl of fruit, they chattered at me from the branches, and Kiwi jumped onto my shoulder and stole a grape straight out of my fingers. I laughed so much that I nearly dropped the bowl.

I locked the door behind me. I am almost sure that I locked it.

The Palm House is a giant greenhouse made of glass and white iron, and
¹⁵ inside it is always hot and damp, like breathing inside a kettle. Palms as tall as houses brush the roof, and water drips from their leaves onto the paths below.

Butterflies drifted between the flowers, and somewhere high in the leaves a bird I could not see kept making a noise like a squeaky door. Visitors
²⁰ came in wearing their coats and went straight back out to take them off, because it was so hot.

By eleven o'clock the Palm House was full of visitors. I was helping Uncle Joe water the ferns when a woman screamed.

'Something ran over my foot!'

²⁵ Across the tiled path, between the pots of orchids, ran a line of muddy footprints. There were big ones, deep and square, from a pair of boots, and beside them, weaving in and out, were tiny prints no longer than my thumbnail, with five thin toes spread out like a hand.

Uncle Joe looked at the tiny prints. Then he looked at me.

³⁰ My stomach turned over. I thought of the door, and the grape, and how much I had been laughing. Had I turned the key twice? Had I turned it at all?

'Hattie,' said Uncle Joe quietly. 'The door.'

I wanted to say that I had locked it. The words were right there in my mouth, easy and ready. Nobody had seen me. Nobody would ever know. But the

35 little footprints kept on across the floor, and somewhere among the palms,
a monkey smaller than a teacup was lost among a hundred visitors.

'I'm not sure I locked it,' I said. My voice came out very small. 'I was
laughing at Kiwi. I'm sorry.'

40 Uncle Joe did not shout. He just nodded, as if I had given him the answer
he needed.

'Right,' he said. 'Then we know what we're looking for. Follow the little
prints, not the big ones. The big ones are mine. I walked through the wet
flower bed this morning.'

We followed the tiny trail between the palms, past the banana plants and
45 the pond where the fat goldfish lived. Every time a child shrieked, my
heart jumped, and every time a visitor stepped on the path, I was sure
they would squash the little prints. Near the cactus corner the tiles were
dry, and the trail faded away altogether. I nearly cried. Then I spotted a
chewed grape skin on the edge of a flowerpot, and another beyond it, like
50 a line of breadcrumbs. They led us to a pile of pots in the corner. Uncle
Joe knelt down and held out a piece of banana. Nothing happened. Then,
very slowly, a small striped face peered out from inside the biggest pot.

'Hello, Mango,' said Uncle Joe softly.

Kiwi, who had watched the whole search from the top of the enclosure, gave
55 a loud chirp, as if to say that she had known where he was all along.

Mango looked at the banana, looked at Uncle Joe, and then, to my
astonishment, leapt past him onto my arm, ran up to my shoulder and sat
there, holding my ear as if it were a handrail.

60 'Well,' said Uncle Joe, 'it seems he's forgiven you, even if I haven't
decided yet.'

He was smiling, though. When we had carried Mango back to the enclosure,
Uncle Joe showed me how to check a lock properly: turn the key, pull the
door, turn it again. Then he handed the keys back to me.

65 'You told the truth when it would have been easy not to,' he said. 'That's
worth more than a hundred locked doors.'

I checked that lock three times every day for the rest of the week.



¹ pygmy marmosets - tiny monkeys from the rainforests of South America

Please answer these questions. (Look at the passage again if you need to.) You should choose the best answer and mark its letter on your answer sheet.

- 1 Why did Hattie feel important on the first morning?
- A She was allowed to feed the goldfish.
 - B She spotted a monkey that had escaped.
 - C She was given the enclosure keys.
 - D She was made head gardener for the day.
 - E She was asked to show visitors round.
- 2 'with striped tails longer than their bodies and faces like wise old men.' (lines 8-9)
What does the comparison 'faces like wise old men' suggest about the marmosets?
- A They were very old and slow.
 - B They had grey beards and glasses.
 - C They were cleverer than the gardeners.
 - D They looked serious and thoughtful.
 - E They looked cross and unfriendly.
- 3 'I locked the door behind me. I am almost sure that I locked it.' (line 13)
What does the second sentence suggest?
- A Hattie is not completely sure.
 - B Hattie knows she locked the door.
 - C The lock on the door is broken.
 - D Uncle Joe locked the door for her.
 - E Hattie left the keys inside.
- 4 How did Hattie feel when Uncle Joe looked at her?
Choose TWO.
- 1 amused
 - 2 guilty
 - 3 proud
 - 4 bored
 - 5 anxious
- A 3 and 5
 - B 1 and 3
 - C 1 and 4
 - D 2 and 5
 - E 2 and 4

- 5 Whose were the big muddy footprints?
A the woman's who screamed
B Uncle Joe's
C a visitor's
D a thief's
E Hattie's
- 6 'I wanted to say that I had locked it. The words were right there in my mouth, easy and ready.' (lines 33-34)
What does this tell us?
A She had already told a lie.
B She could not remember the words.
C She felt too ill to speak.
D She wanted to call out for help.
E She was tempted to tell a lie.
- 7 'I checked that lock three times every day for the rest of the week.' (line 66)
Why does the writer end the story with this sentence?
A to show that the lock was still broken
B to show that Hattie has learned her lesson
C to show that Uncle Joe did not trust her
D to show that Mango escaped again
E to show that Hattie forgot the rule
- 8 Which of these best describes Uncle Joe?
A calm and fair
B strict and hard to please
C easy-going and forgetful
D quiet and disappointed
E nervous but kind
- 9 Why did Uncle Joe nod 'as if I had given him the answer he needed'?
A He had guessed that Hattie was lying.
B He planned to punish her later.
C Her answer explained the tiny footprints.
D He did not really believe her.
E He had already found the marmoset.
- 10 What lesson does this story teach?
A Animals are cleverer than we think.
B Careful checking prevents problems.
C Owning up to a mistake is right.
D Laughing can make you careless.
E Trust is very hard to win back.

Punctuation Exercise

Questions 15-20. In this exercise there are some mistakes with punctuation or use of capital letters. On each numbered line there is either one mistake or no mistake. Find the group of words with the mistake in it and mark its letter on your answer sheet. If there is no mistake, mark N.

15	It was raining hard we stayed	indoors all afternoon,	played Grandma's old board games	and ate far too many biscuits!
	A	B	C	D

N There is no mistake.



16	The school's new library,	which opened on Monday,	has comfy beanbags computers and	a big fish tank.
	A	B	C	D

N There is no mistake.



17	I looked everywhere for my trainers:	under the bed, in the hall	and behind the sofa,	but they werent anywhere.
	A	B	C	D

N There is no mistake.



Test 1 - Answers and explanations

Answers and Explanations

Practice Test 1

Practice Test answers

P1	A	P3	D		
P2	A	P4	C		

Main Test answers

1	C	10	C	19	B
2	D	11	E	20	D
3	A	12	B	21	N
4	D	13	D	22	C
5	B	14	B	23	D
6	E	15	A	24	A
7	B	16	C	25	B
8	A	17	D	26	D
9	C	18	C		

Practice Test explanations

P1 A

'We do the edges first of all'.

P2 A

A patient person is calm and willing to wait.

P3 D

'Swimming' doubles the 'm' before '-ing'.

P4 C

'I'll' is short for 'I will' and needs an apostrophe.

Main Test explanations

1 C (Comprehension)

Lines 3-4: 'he handed me the keys to the marmoset enclosure, I felt very important indeed'.

2 D (Comprehension)

Wise old men look serious and thoughtful; so do the marmosets' little faces.