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First name(s)

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Family name

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## Opportunity Class Placement Test

Reading Question Paper

**Sample test**

**30 minutes**

### INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Please read this page carefully.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS QUESTION PAPER UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**

A separate answer sheet is provided for this test. Please fill in the following information on your answer sheet and on this question paper:

- Student application number
- First name(s)
- Family name

There are **25** multiple-choice questions in this paper. For each question, choose the **one** correct answer and record your choice on the separate answer sheet. If you make a mistake, erase thoroughly and try again.

You will **not** lose marks for incorrect answers, so you should attempt **all 25** questions.

You must complete the answer sheet within the time limit. There will **not** be any extra time at the end of the exam to record your answers on the answer sheet.

You can use the question paper for notes, but no extra paper is allowed.

Please note that some words and phrases are **shaded** in the texts as they are referred to in some questions.

Dictionaries and calculators may **NOT** be used.



**Cambridge Assessment**  
**Admissions Testing**

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Read the text below then answer the questions.

## Nhamo goes for firewood

*Nhamo is a twelve-year-old girl who lives with her aunt and uncle in a remote village in East Africa.*

Most girls were afraid to gather firewood by themselves. The village was surrounded by a forest where almost anything might hide. Nhamo was afraid, too, but she had a compelling reason to venture out alone. She didn't expect to meet elephants – although they migrated to the river at certain times of the year. She wasn't likely to run into a buffalo – although someone had done so a few months earlier.

Her most persistent worry was leopards. She feared leopards with a terror so complete that she couldn't breathe when she thought of them. Her mother had been killed by one when Nhamo was only three. Nhamo couldn't remember the tragedy, yet somewhere inside her was a memory of flowing, spotted skin and terrible claws.

Now she followed a broad path from the village to the stream. There was an area of yellow sand where she could see the bottom clearly. No crocodile could creep up on her here. She waded across. The water came up to her shoulders.

She always experienced a moment of panic in the middle because she couldn't swim, but she planted her feet firmly in the coarse sand and struggled on. When she got to the other side, she scrambled up a rock and picked off a leech that had managed to fasten onto her ankle.

The wetness of her dress-cloth against her skin was very pleasant, but she couldn't waste time enjoying it. Aunt Chipu would be waiting for her firewood. Even more important, Nhamo had to return before dusk.

Dusk was when the leopards came out to hunt.

She followed an old, overgrown trail for a long time until she came out into a clearing. A few poles remained of the village that had once been there, and a few pumpkin mounds with vegetables gone wild. Nhamo wasn't sure who had lived here. Her own people no longer visited the site. Some said the place was haunted.

With a nervous look at the shadows under the trees, Nhamo quickly gathered firewood. That was the good thing about this place: the wood was easy to find. It took her far less time than Aunt Chipu suspected. She tied the wood into a bundle and deposited it by the trail.

She climbed a hill at the edge of the deserted village.

Now came the moment she was waiting for. She dragged aside a slab of stone from a hole in the rock. Inside were the treasures Nhamo had managed to collect. She removed pots, wooden spoons, a drinking gourd, an old cloth Aunt Chipu once used to cover her hair, and a

knife Uncle Kufa had hurled into a bush when the tip broke off. (He was even angrier when he couldn't find it again later.)

Reverently, Nhamo smoothed out the cloth and put the utensils on it. Last of all, she reached into a pot and removed – a roll of paper.

She weighted the edges down with stones. It was a picture torn out of a magazine.

Books were unheard of in Nhamo's village, but very occasionally a magazine found its way there. Only two men in the village could read. They retold the stories to everyone's enjoyment. The women studied the pictures of clothes and houses, gardens and cars with great interest. They tried to copy the hairstyles in the photographs. Eventually, the magazines fell apart and were used to light fires.

This picture had been on the cover, so it was of sturdier paper. The minute Nhamo had seen it, her heart beat so fast it hurt. The picture showed a beautiful woman with braided hair decorated with beads. She wore a flowered dress and a white, white apron. She was cutting a slice of white, white bread, and next to her was a block of yellow margarine.

The room behind the woman was full of wonderful things, but what interested Nhamo most was the little girl. She was wearing a blue dress, and her hair was gathered into two fat puffs over her ears. The woman smiled at her in the kindest way, and Nhamo knew the white bread and yellow margarine were meant for the little girl.

She thought the woman looked like Mother.

She couldn't remember Mother, and of course no one had a picture of her, but the way her spirit leapt when she saw that picture told her this was how Mother had looked.

Nhamo hadn't waited for the magazine to get old. Right away, when Aunt Chipo wasn't looking, she'd torn off the cover and hidden it. Aunt Chipo was terribly cross. She accused her sister of doing it, but it never crossed her mind that Nhamo was responsible.

Nhamo pretended to pour tea into the pots. She cut bread and covered it with margarine. 'I climbed the *mukuyu* tree and got so many figs, *Mai*,' she said. 'But they were full of worms. Then I saw a yellow bird – the kind that builds a basket over the water – and it ate the worms. Do you think they grow inside?'

Nhamo paused to let Mother answer.

Nhamo suddenly realized the light was going. *Maiwee!* She had been so absorbed, she had forgotten the time. Scrambling, she packed everything and dragged the lid over the hole. She slid down the hill and tied the firewood to her back.

In this light, the trail was almost invisible! The air was a strange, silvery colour. It was the moment when the day animals passed the night animals on their way to hunt. Leopards.

For questions 1 – 6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think best answers the question.

- 1 When the writer mentions elephants and buffalo, she is making the point that
- A they could possibly be a threat to Nhamo.
  - B Nhamo does not believe stories she has heard about them.
  - C the villagers are unaware of the danger in the forest.
  - D a girl on her own is more likely to be attacked by them.
- 2 When she crosses the stream, Nhamo is most worried by
- A the uneven river bed.
  - B the presence of leeches.
  - C the deep water.
  - D the risk of crocodiles.
- 3 One advantage of the deserted village for Nhamo is that
- A it is near to the river.
  - B no one else knows about it.
  - C she can find vegetables there.
  - D she can collect wood without any trouble.
- 4 The word 'reverently' tells us
- A that Nhamo believes the possessions have supernatural powers.
  - B how precious the articles hidden in the hole are to Nhamo.
  - C that Nhamo is careful in the way she handles the possessions of others.
  - D how valuable some everyday articles are in Nhamo's village.
- 5 When the writer tells us about how magazines are used in Nhamo's village, we learn that
- A most people are only interested in the pictures.
  - B they are a window to the world outside the village.
  - C most people laugh at the stories they contain.
  - D they are more valued as fuel than as reading matter.
- 6 The main reason why Nhamo is attracted to the magazine photograph is that
- A it is the only picture she has of her mother.
  - B it includes a child who looks just like her.
  - C it shows a loving relationship.
  - D it suggests a luxurious lifestyle.

Read the poem below by Les Murray then answer the questions.

## Observing the Mute Cat

Clean water in the house  
but the cat laps up clay water  
outside. Drinking the earth.

His pile, being perfect,  
ignores the misting rain.

A charcoal Russian  
he opens his mouth like other cats  
and mimes a greeting mew.

At one bound top-speed across  
the lawn and halfway up  
the zippy pear tree. Why? Branches?  
Stopping puzzles him.

Eloquent of purr  
or indignant tail  
he politely hates to be picked up.  
His human friend never does it.

He finds a voice  
in the flyscreen, rattling it,  
hanging cruciform on it,  
all to be let in  
to walk on his man.

He can fish food pellets  
out of the dispenser, but waits,  
preferring to be served.

A mouse he was playing  
on the grass ran in under him.  
Disconsolate, at last he wandered  
off – and drew and fired  
himself in one motion.

He is often above you  
and appears where you will go.  
He swallows his scent, and  
discreet with his few stained birds  
he carries them off to read.



For questions 7 – 11, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think best answers the question.

7 The title of the poem

- A hints that what follows will be from the cat's perspective.
- B encourages the reader to admire the cat.
- C is reflected in the senses that are described.
- D prepares the reader for a surprising event.

8 What do we learn about the person in the poem?

- A He prefers to spend time with the cat outdoors.
- B He respects the wishes of the cat.
- C He forgets to leave the cat enough food.
- D He is impressed by what the cat catches.

9 The cat makes a sound using

- A his tail.
- B the zippy pear tree.
- C the dispenser.
- D the flyscreen.

10 What does the cat take away?

- A birds
- B pellets
- C a mouse
- D a fish

11 The cat acts independently when he

- A rejects the food provided.
- B enters the house.
- C accesses drinking water.
- D finds shelter from the rain.

Read the text below then answer the questions.

Six sentences have been removed from the text. Choose from the sentences (A – G) the one which fits each gap (12 – 17). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

## Drumming Cockatoos

Whales and songbirds produce sounds resembling human music, and chimpanzees and crows use tools. But only one nonhuman animal is known to combine these two skills. According to new research, palm cockatoos<sup>1</sup> from northern Australia modify sticks and seed pods and use them to drum regular rhythms on tree branches. In most cases, males drop beats in the presence of females, suggesting they perform to show off to mates. The birds even have their own signature sequences, not unlike human musicians.



This example is the closest we have so far to musical instrument use in humans, said Robert Heinsohn, a professor of evolutionary and conservation biology at the Australian National University. A palm cockatoo drumming performance starts with instrument fashioning. **12** ..... . Often, as a female is watching, a male will ostentatiously break a hefty stick off a tree and trim it to about the length of a pencil.

Holding the stick, or occasionally a hard seed pod, with his left foot (parrots are typically left-footed), the male taps a beat on his tree perch. **13** ..... . Spreading his wings, he pirouettes and bobs his head deeply, like an expressive pianist, uncovering his red cheek patches – the only swaths of color on his otherwise black body.

Over seven years, Dr. Heinsohn and his collaborators collected audio and video recordings of 18 male palm cockatoos exhibiting such behaviors in Australia’s Cape York Peninsula. **14** ..... . Though palm cockatoos also live in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, they have been observed drumming only in Cape York Peninsula, which suggests the habit is cultural. ‘Presumably some bright spark of a male stumbled across this behavior, females

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<sup>1</sup> The palm cockatoo occurs across the country of many different indigenous groups on Cape York Peninsula. On the east of the cape the species is revered as a ‘spirit bird’ by members of the Uutaalnganu, Kanthanampu, and Kuuku Ya’u language groups in the Lockhart River region, many of whom tell cultural stories relating to the species and consider it bad luck to harm or injure the birds (Zdenek, pers comm., 2015). The palm cockatoo (Australian) occurs on the homeland (Ngaachi) of the Kuuku I’yu (northern Kaanju) indigenous peoples. The Kuuku I’yu people have important social, cultural, spiritual, historical and ecological connections to their homeland and they recognise the rich biodiversity it supports, including habitat for rare and threatened species such as this palm cockatoo (Kila) (Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation, 2010).



found it pleasing and it took off in the population,' Dr. Heinsohn said.

**15** ..... . Trekking through the dense rain forest, they painstakingly searched for palm cockatoos hidden away in hollow eucalyptus trees. Analyzing 131 drumming sequences, the scientists found that the birds produced regular, predictable rhythms, rather than random thumps. **16** ..... . One that the researchers named Ringo Starr liked to start with a rapid flourish, then settle into a consistent beat, occasionally going on for as long as 14 minutes. Nearly 70 per cent of the time, males drummed with a female present. Palm cockatoos are mostly monogamous, but males have to keep proving themselves to choosy females. On average, palm cockatoo pairs successfully fledge a chick only once every decade, so the stakes are high.

The researchers don't yet know whether females prefer certain rhythms over others. But if a male is delivering an effective performance, the female comes over and mirrors his movements. **17** ..... .

The findings make Dr. Heinsohn wonder whether human rhythm also originated as a courtship display. Maybe that's how it got started, he speculates, and then later evolved into the love of humans for group-based dancing and music.

- A** The researchers found palm cockatoos a difficult subject to study because they are very shy.
- B** And this suggested that actually they use their drumming, along with a complex array of calls and wing-flapping, to attract female birds.
- C** The birds here are considered vulnerable because of aluminum ore mining in the area.
- D** This is an opportunity to show off beak strength and cleverness – the birds are incredibly intelligent.
- E** The birds sway together and gently preen each other's feathers, an act of pair-bonding that helps them prepare for breeding.
- F** Occasionally he mixes in a whistle or other sounds from an impressive repertoire of around 20 syllables.
- G** Individual males differed significantly in percussive styles.

Read the four extracts below on the theme of the sea.

For questions **18 – 25**, choose the option (**A, B, C** or **D**) which you think best answers the question.

Which extract...

refers to a dangerous constituent of some seawater? **18** \_\_\_\_\_

says that the power of the sea should not be underestimated? **19** \_\_\_\_\_

suggests that newcomers are not always welcomed by veterans out on the water? **20** \_\_\_\_\_

suggests that the sea can be a rich food resource? **21** \_\_\_\_\_

explains the positive effect that the sea can have on one's mental outlook? **22** \_\_\_\_\_

reveals that the writer was out of place in a seaside environment? **23** \_\_\_\_\_

mentions some words of wisdom about the sea which proved helpful to the writer? **24** \_\_\_\_\_

mentions some specific jargon connected to being in the sea? **25** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Extract A**

There's something about going for an ocean swim that makes your problems shrink. I have often entered the biting cold water feeling weighed down by concerns that I can't seem to shake. It never ceases to amaze me that when I come out they somehow seem to occupy less headspace. You look out at the vastness all around you and realise that you are a tiny speck in a huge, swirling ocean.

When I first started open-water swimming, I spoke to an expert about getting over a fear of what might be in there with you. He said that it's a privilege to enter a space with wild creatures – just think how different our planet would be if they weren't there. While that may not be a comforting thought for everyone, it is for me.

Knowing your limits and being fully respectful of the ocean are paramount when you go swimming. I have turned back on occasion when the water looks too rough. You always have to remember this is not your habitat.

### **Extract B**

The Black Sea is the world's biggest single reservoir of hydrogen sulphide, or H<sub>2</sub>S, one of the deadliest substances in the natural world. Below a fluctuating depth of between 150 and 200 metres, there is no life. The water is anoxic, without dissolved oxygen, and impregnated with H<sub>2</sub>S; because much of the Black Sea is deep, this means that some 90 per cent of its volume is sterile.

And yet, until the last hundred years, the Black Sea has seemed to human beings a place of almost monstrous abundance. The poisonous darkness lay far below, unknown to anyone. Above the hundred-fathom line, the 'halocline' or 'oxycline' which marks the upper limit of anoxia, the water boiled with life. Salmon and huge sturgeon – the beluga can reach the weight of a small whale – crowded up the big rivers to spawn. Caviar was so plentiful that it was once given to the poor.

### **Extract C**

Between hurricane surf, rainy weather, and a cold, I've had some time on my hands to read. I picked up three surf books, naturally. My favourite, by far, was *Surf's Up: The Girl's Guide to Surfing*. Every night, for the past three weeks, my husband has found me in bed, nose in the book, memorising surfing vocabulary. He just laughs. You can't learn to surf from a book, but you can learn a lot of things that will help make surfing easier, and make interacting with other surfers easier. For example, knowing what the terms *rails*, *mushy*, *goofy*, *drop in*, etc. mean not only makes you seem like you know more about what you are doing, it also makes you less likely to incur the wrath of surfers. (From my limited experience, surfers don't really have wrath, unless you drop in on them during a really good wave.) Note – *dropping in* essentially means cutting off another surfer who has already started surfing a wave, effectively ending their ride. Not cool.

### **Extract D**

I confess I hope never to experience a full Australian summer again. I blame my childhood. I grew up in the Clare Valley of South Australia, where the closest natural body of water was a mostly dry creek. For a week a year our family would decamp to a holiday house by the beach in Adelaide, where we would live a lie, pretending to be proper outdoor-loving, sun-baking Australians rather than the white-skinned, red-nosed Irish-descended bunch we really were. My six brothers and sisters and I would spend all day in our bathers, attempt and mostly fail to bodysurf, build sandcastles and sand traps, get furiously sunburned and spend the final part of the holiday lying inside on the cool lino floor, watching TV and peeling patches of dead skin off each other's shoulders.

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