

Multiple Choice Questions

1) The best title for the extract is:

- a) 'The Distant Summit'

The content of the passage makes it clear that the group is journeying towards a particular destination. Of the choices available, b) 'The Amazing View' is hard to apply to an 'indistinct brown pyramid' and perhaps better describes the meadow they halt in. c) 'The Monster Mountain Range' is vague, as is d) 'Climbing for victory', especially as we aren't told *why* the group is heading for the mountain. E) 'A long day's walk' has some merit, but it lacks the sense of 'destination' or 'target' provided by 'The Distant Summit'.

2) The three adjectives which best describe the reactions of the people in the village are:

- c) Uncertain, curious, hospitable.

The lack of greeting and the gradual appearance of the villagers suggests uncertainty, but curiosity eventually draws them out. Hospitality is evident through the provision of food and the warm welcome between Abdul Ghiyas and Abdul Rahim. There is no evidence that the villagers are 'angry, fearful or aggressive' (a); but nor are they 'happy, joyous and welcoming' (b). The delay and the small welcoming committee makes 'curious, confident and friendly' implausible. Some argument might be made for 'watchful, uncertain, cool' – were it not for the aforementioned evidence of hospitality.

3) The metaphor which best sums up the first stage of the expedition is:

- c) Uphill struggle.

The passage emphasises the difficulty of the climb, so a) 'A walk in the park' is inappropriate. d) 'As easy as pie' is equally inappropriate; and it is a simile, not a metaphor. b) 'A leap of faith' suggests a sense of blindly facing the unknown, which is not evident in the passage. E) 'The light at the end of the tunnel' has a sense of revelation, which could be applied to the first view of the mountain ('at the end of a long straight valley') but it's hard to apply this to the hardship of the climb itself.

4) In the fifth paragraph, (We went on our way, Abdul Rahim accompanying us...) the strongest effect created by the contrast between Abdul Rahim and the rest of the expedition is:

- b) Abdul Rahim is sure footed, like a goat, whilst the rest of the group are clumsy and unsure, like pigs or hippos.**

The key word here is 'contrast'. The passage makes it clear that Abdul Rahim is comfortable in the mountainous terrain as he 'picked his way easily' far ahead of the others, whereas the rest of the group 'wallowed and hesitated' and the horses 'slithered'. The animal comparisons pick up on the verbs: pigs and hippos both 'wallow' and goats are nimble and sure footed.

A), 'The entire group is suffering, because of the heat and terrain', is true to a point, but Abdul Rahim is quite happy in his surroundings. C) 'Abdul Rahim is confident, but the horses are finding it difficult...' contrasts Abdul Rahim to the horses rather than the human members of the group. D) 'Abdul Rahim is familiar with the trails, the rest of the group is not', is an accurate straightforward statement, but with no particular emphasis. E) 'Abdul Rahim ate sensibly, the rest of the group are suffering from indigestion' is a valid contrast, but there is no direct evidence to support it. Indigestion is only one of the things which the group endures. (The passage states that 'all of us had eaten and drunk unwisely'.)

5) The slabs of rock can 'slither downhill like a toboggan'. This most strongly suggests:

- d) The rocks can slide downhill at a rapid pace, as if on snow.**

The correct answer needs to capture the sense of movement and show an awareness of the 'toboggan' simile. Therefore, a) 'The rocks are shaped like sledges' picks up on the shape of the rocks, but not the movement; b) 'the rocks are not solid, so it is not safe underfoot', is an accurate statement, but it doesn't address the quotation. C) 'The group is high up the mountain' bears no relation to the quotation. E) 'The rocks enjoys its fast downhill journey' captures some sense of movement, but it doesn't address the 'toboggan' and 'snow' elements of the quotation.

- 6) The mountain, Mir Samir, is described as ‘an indistinct pyramid, flecked with white, veiled in haze’. This creates a vivid impression of:**
- e) An enigmatic, brooding presence.**

The answer picks up on the mystery of the description: the ‘indistinct’ and ‘veiled’ shape is enigmatic because it can’t be seen clearly. If candidates check the context of this, the sentence continues with ‘its base in deep shadow’, further adding to the sense of a mysterious presence. The mountain is also described as ‘enormous’ a few lines previously; it clearly dominates the landscape.

There is no suggestion that Mir Samir is ‘a piece of the landscape is out of place’ (a), nor does it have ‘its head in the clouds’ (d). It is ‘A distant mountain covered in snow’, but this is hardly ‘vivid’ and while ‘a colossal chunk of rock’ (c) provides a sense of size, the mountain is brown and white – hardly colourful.

- 7) The writer implies that the meadow would make a good ‘Base Camp’ because: (list all which apply)**
- b) The ground is relatively flat.**
- d) The meadow is between the village and the mountain.**
- e) There is water and shade.**

This question requires the candidate to think about the qualities a good base camp would need for a group of men and their animals: the meadow is described as ‘level’ (b) and it is undoubtedly between the village and the mountain. (d). There are numerous mentions of water or watercourses and the large rock at the end of the meadow/valley provides shade. ‘Beauty’ (a) is not a necessity and ‘lots of animals’ (c) could be a hindrance or hazard.

- 8) In the final paragraph, the ‘petrified cascade’ creates the image of:**
- b) A frozen waterfall of stone.**

The answer is a literal alternative to the quotation, but it may require some inference on the part of the candidate. The first part of the sentence in the text ‘... the moraine... that poured into the meadow’ has a strong reference to water (poured), hence ‘cascade’ or ‘waterfall’. ‘Stone’ picks up on the definition of ‘moraine’, as does ‘frozen’ – the stone isn’t going anywhere.

‘A frightening pile of rock’ (a) responds the incorrect interpretation of ‘petrified’ – the passage makes it clear that there is nothing frightening here. Nor is there any mention of land movement (‘landslide’ c) or a ‘cliff’ (d). ‘A stream of pebbles’ is more accurate, but it lacks the sense of vertical movement associated with ‘poured’ and ‘cascade’.

9) The writer's attitude to the expedition is best described as:

- a) **Resigned, but determined.**

The passage makes it clear that the journey so far has been a slog and there still a way to go. He is 'excited' by his first view of the mountain – but it is still six miles off. The contrast between the meadow and the journey is highlighted by 'it was a place to linger, making the programme ahead seem even more unappealing than usual.'

There is no element of fear (b) nor is he particularly frustrated (d) or fed-up (e). 'Tired but persistent (c) is plausible through inference at the end of the passage, but harder to apply to the passage as a whole.

10) Throughout the passage, the writer demonstrates that he: (list all that apply)

- b) **Has an understanding of other cultures.**
c) **Has an appreciation of the natural world.**
d) **Is willing to experience new things.**

The writer's interactions with local people makes it clear that he respects there ways and that is willing to follow the lead of his guides. (a) By extension, he is willing to experience new things: the journey, the food, the people. (d). The lyrical description of the meadow makes it clear that he appreciates the natural world (c).

The opening to the passage (waiting for the villagers) makes it clear that this an unfamiliar environment and that his friend Hugh is more experienced; thus making a) 'Is an experienced traveller' (a) unlikely. The passage emphasises the difficulties of the journey, calling into question his 'physical fitness' (e).