English Comprehension: Easy Practice Paper 3

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

My Early Home

by Anna Sewell

The opening chapter of Black Beauty (1877), the story of a horse's life told by the horse himself. Here he remembers the meadow where he was born, the advice his mother gave him while he was still a colt, and the master who owned them.

The first place that I can well remember was a large pleasant meadow with a pond of clear water in it. Some shady trees leaned over it, and rushes and water-lilies grew at the deep end. Over the hedge on one side we looked into a ploughed field, and on the other we looked over a gate at our master's house, which stood by the roadside; at the top of the meadow was a grove of fir trees, and at the bottom a running brook overhung by a steep bank.

While I was young I lived upon my mother's milk, as I could not eat grass. In the daytime I ran by her side, and at night I lay down close by her. When it was hot we used to stand by the pond in the shade of the trees, and when it was cold we had a nice warm shed near the grove.

As soon as I was old enough to eat grass my mother used to go out to work in the daytime, and come back in the evening.

There were six young colts in the meadow besides me; they were older than I was; some were nearly as large as grown-up horses. I used to run with them, and had great fun; we used to gallop all together round and round the field as hard as we could go. Sometimes we had rather rough play, for they would frequently bite and kick as well as gallop.

One day, when there was a good deal of kicking, my mother whinnied to me to come to her, and then she said:

"I wish you to pay attention to what I am going to say to you. The colts who live here are very good colts, but they are cart-horse colts, and of course they have not learned manners. You have been well-bred and well-born; your father has a great name in these parts, and your grandfather won the cup two years at the Newmarket races; your grandmother had the sweetest temper of any horse I ever

knew, and I think you have never seen me kick or bite. I hope you will grow up gentle and good, and never learn bad ways; do your work with a good will, lift your feet up well when you trot, and never bite or kick even in play."

I have never forgotten my mother's advice; I knew she was a wise old horse, and our master thought a great deal of her. Her name was Duchess, but he often called her Pet.

Our master was a good, kind man. He gave us good food, good lodging, and kind words; he spoke as kindly to us as he did to his little children. We were all fond of him, and my mother loved him very much. When she saw him at the gate she would neigh with joy, and trot up to him. He would pat and stroke her and say, "Well, old Pet, and how is your little Darkie?" I was a dull black, so he called me Darkie; then he would give me a piece of bread, which was very good, and sometimes he brought a carrot for my mother. All the horses would come to him, but I think we were his favourites. My mother always took him to the town on a market day in a light gig.

There was a ploughboy, Dick, who sometimes came into our field to pluck blackberries from the hedge. When he had eaten all he wanted he would have what he called fun with the colts, throwing stones and sticks at them to make them gallop. We did not much mind him, for we could gallop off; but sometimes a stone would hit and hurt us.

One day he was at this game, and did not know that the master was in the next field; but he was there, watching what was going on; over the hedge he jumped in a snap, and catching Dick by the arm, he gave him such a box on the ear as made him roar with the pain and surprise. As soon as we saw the master we trotted up nearer to see what went on.

"Bad boy!" he said, "bad boy! to chase the colts. This is not the first time, nor the second, but it shall be the last. There—take your money and go home; I shall not want you on my farm again." So we never saw Dick any more. Old Daniel, the man who looked after the horses, was just as gentle as our master, so we were well off.

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.

Q1. What is the first thing the horse says he can remember? (lines 1–2)

A. A large meadow with a pond of clear water

B. A stable with a warm shed in it

C. A ploughed field full of workers

D. The road that ran past his master's house

E. A grove of fir trees at the bottom of a hill

Q2. "a large pleasant meadow with a pond of clear water in it" (lines 1–2)

How many adjectives are there in this phrase?

A. one

B. two

C. three

D. four

E. five

Q3. "a ploughed field" (line 4)

What is a ploughed field?

A. a field that has been left to grow wild

B. a field with a pond in the middle of it

C. a field that is used for horse races

D. a field whose soil has been turned over ready for planting

E. a field that has been fenced in with a hedge

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Q4. What did the young horse live on before he was old enough to eat grass? (line 8)

A. hay from the warm shed

B. bread given to him by the master

C. carrots brought from the town

D. water from the pond in the meadow

E. his mother's milk

Q5. How many other young colts were in the meadow? (line 15)

A. three

B. four

C. five

D. six

E. seven

Q6. What does the narrator mean by "rather rough play"? (line 19)

A. The colts galloped further than he could manage.

B. The colts bit and kicked as well as galloping.

C. The colts played in the mud beside the pond.

D. The colts would not let him join in their games.

E. The colts were made to work too hard in the field.

Q7. What type of word is "frequently" (line 19)?

A. a noun

B. a verb

C. an adverb

D. an adjective

E. a pronoun

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Q8. Why did the narrator's mother whinny to him to come to her? (lines 21–22)

A. She wanted him to stop galloping and rest.

B. She was about to go out to work for the day.

C. The master had arrived at the gate with bread.

D. There was a great deal of kicking and she wanted to speak to him about it.

E. One of the older colts had hurt him with a stone.

Q9. "they have not learned manners" (line 25)

What does the mother mean by this?

A. The colts have never been taught how to behave well.

B. The colts are badly behaved on purpose.

C. The colts are too old to change their ways.

D. The colts have been treated cruelly by the master.

E. The colts do not understand what she says to them.

Q10. What did the narrator's grandfather do? (lines 27–28)

A. He pulled the master's gig to the town each market day.

B. He worked as a cart-horse in the next field.

C. He won the cup two years at the Newmarket races.

D. He had the sweetest temper of any horse.

E. He taught the young colts their manners.

Q11. Why does the mother tell her son about his father, his grandfather and his grandmother? (lines 26–29)

A. to explain why the other colts do not like him

B. to show him that his family is famous and he need not work

C. to warn him that he will be sent away if he behaves badly

D. to remind him that he comes from a fine family and should live up to it

E. to prove that she knows more about horses than he does

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Q12. What type of word is “gentle” (line 30)?

A. a noun

B. an adjective

C. an adverb

D. a verb

E. a conjunction

Q13. Which of these best sums up the mother’s advice? (lines 30–32)

A. Keep away from the cart-horse colts altogether.

B. Work willingly, trot well, and never bite or kick.

C. Always do as the master says, whatever he asks.

D. Never gallop about the field with the other colts.

E. Remember that you are better than the colts around you.

Q14. “old Pet” (line 40)

What does the master’s name for the mother tell us?

A. that she was too old to work any longer

B. that he was very fond of her

C. that he had forgotten her real name

D. that she belonged to his little children

E. that she was the smallest horse on the farm

Q15. “he spoke as kindly to us as he did to his little children” (lines 37–38)

What does this tell us about the master?

A. He had no time for his own children.

B. He thought the horses could understand every word.

C. He treated the horses as gently as he treated people.

D. He talked to the horses only when they had worked well.

E. He was stricter with the horses than with his family.

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Q16. Why did the master call the narrator "Darkie"? (line 41)

A. because he was born at night

B. because he liked to stand in the shade of the trees

C. because his mother was called Duchess

D. because he was a dull black colour

E. because he hid from the master at first

Q17. Why did Dick come into the field? (lines 46–47)

A. to pluck blackberries from the hedge

B. to look after the horses for the master

C. to fetch the mother for the journey to town

D. to mend the gate at the top of the meadow

E. to drive the colts into the warm shed

Q18. "what he called fun" (line 48)

Why does the narrator put it this way?

A. because he does not know the word for the game

B. because the colts enjoyed the game as much as Dick did

C. because Dick had made the word up himself

D. because it was fun for Dick but not for the colts

E. because the master had told them it was only a game

Q19. "he jumped in a snap" (line 53)

What does this mean?

A. He jumped over the hedge in an instant.

B. He jumped without making a sound.

C. He jumped and broke a branch as he went.

D. He jumped angrily at the boy.

E. He jumped down from his horse.

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Q20. Which of these would make the best alternative title for the passage?

A. The Race at Newmarket

B. A Day at the Market

C. The Colt Who Would Not Learn

D. A Young Horse and His First Home

E. The Boy Who Loved Blackberries

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