



2008 English

Intermediate 1 – Close Reading

Finalised Marking Instructions

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English – Intermediate 1
Close Reading
Marking Key

1. Explain why “the Flannan Islands have a good claim to be the most deserted place in Britain” (lines 2 – 3). **2 U**
- They are remote (gloss of “30 miles off the west coast of Lewis”);(1)*
They are barren (gloss of “lumps of rock”);(1)
They are uninhabited (gloss of “The only inhabitants ...”) (1)
- Use your own words as far as possible**
- Any expanded comment on **one** of above = 2*
2. What is surprising about the expression “delighted terror” (line 5)? **1 A**
- The words contradict each other/are unusual with each other/are paradoxical/are an oxymoron.*
3. Why is the word “preyed” (line 9) appropriate here? **2 A**
- It continues (1)*
the idea/metaphor/image/personification of “(Seven) Hunters” (1)
OR
the idea/metaphor/image/personification of “(Seven) Hunters” (1)
is connected with the losses of shipping (1)
4. Look at lines 15 – 21 and explain **in your own words** what the “mystery” (line 21) was. **2 U**
- The lighthouse keepers had vanished (1)*
Suddenly or for no obvious reason (1)
- The men’s lives had been disrupted (generalisation or paraphrase of example) = 1*

5. Look at lines 24 – 27.

Explain why any **one** example of the writer’s **word choice** effectively makes it clear that the climb up to the lighthouse was a difficult one.

2 E

*Steps being “worn away” (1)
(clearly) showing the danger/perilousness of the ascent (1);*

*“All that remains...are...posts” (1)
(clearly) shows there was nothing to hold on to (1);*

*“(We had to time our jump to the height of) the 5 ft swell” (1)
(clearly) shows the (extent of the) danger/how testing it was (1);*

*“cling” (1)
(clearly) shows how dangerous/taxing it was (1);*

*“cling to the seaweed” (1)
(clearly) shows the lack of stable/firm handholds (1);*

*“(We crawled” (1)
(clearly) shows the slowness of progress OR how it was impossible to stand upright (1);*

*“80 ft” (1)
(clearly) shows the length/extent of the task (1);*

*“scramble” (1)
(clearly) shows the climb to be strenuous/demanding OR the shifting nature of the ground (1);*

*One mark for correct choice, one for comment
Evaluation may be taken as implicit*

*NB “difficulty” is in the question; **nature** of difficulty must be identified.*

6. Look at the words “formal evening wear” (line 28).

Explain why this expression may seem **either** surprising **or** appropriate here.

2 A

*Surprising: it (usually) refers to human clothes (1)
and here applies to the birds (1)
OR
It is associated with (elegant) special occasions (1)
and the setting is in the wilds (1)*

*Appropriate: it is black and white (1)
which is the birds’ feather colouring (1)
OR
The areas of black and white (1)
look like a jacket and shirt (1)
OR
The expression reflects/repeats (1)
idea of or tone of “reception committee” (1)*

7. Choose an expression from lines 30 – 33, and show how it helps us to understand the meaning of “rugged” as it is used here. **2 U**
- “The last keepers departed”*
OR the island is “in perfect human isolation”
OR “the helicopter (that) lands once a year” (1)
- And so any visitor would have to be hardy/self-sufficient/resilient/strong/robust/able to look after him or herself (1)*
8. The writer tells us “The sense of solitude was as penetrating as the mist” (line 34).
- (i) What does the writer mean by a “sense of solitude”? **1 U**
- Feeling of loneliness/being alone/seclusion*
- (ii) Why is this an effective comparison or simile? **2 E**
- Just as the mist was unignorable/intrusive (1)*
So the feeling (of loneliness) was strong/unsettling/inescapable (1)
9. Why does the writer use inverted commas round “chapel” (line 36)? **1 A**
- To show the vagueness or inappropriateness of the term/it’s not really a chapel*

10. Show how **one** example of the writer’s **word choice** in lines 38 – 40 effectively conveys the hardships of the lighthouse keepers’ lives. **2 E**

“Cooped up” (1)
(clearly) conveys the crampedness (1)

“in a brick tube” (1)
(clearly) conveys the crampedness (1)
OR the spartan nature of the accommodation (1);

“for months” (1)
(clearly) conveys the long time they had to spend there (1);

“battered” (1)
(clearly) conveys the harshness/severity of the weather (1);

“wind, rain and waves”
(clearly) conveys the multiplicity/variety of hostile elements (1)

One mark for correct choice, one for comment
Evaluation may be taken as implicit

NB “hard” is in the question; **nature** of hardship/privation must be identified.

11. What do lines 43 – 44 tell us about the way Muirhead approached his task? **1 U**

He was thorough/painstaking/professional/scientific

12. Look at the sentence “A man of the modern age, an engineer, Muirhead was plunged into a world of ancient superstitions” (lines 45 – 46).
How does one feature of the **imagery** help to suggest something about Muirhead’s task? **2 A**

“(Muirhead was) plunged” (1)

*suggests the suddenness/(figurative) depth/overwhelming nature of his task
OR his unpreparedness
OR the (implied) contrast with his usual life (1);*

“world (of ancient superstitions)” (1)

*suggests the size/complexity/range of the old beliefs he came across
OR the (implied) contrast with his usual life (1);*

13. Write down an expression from the next paragraph which continues the idea introduced by “superstitions” (line 46). 1 U

“(devoured by) sea monsters”
OR *“spirited away”*
OR *“(the angry) spirit (of Flannan)”*
OR *“ghostly”*
OR *“turned into...birds”*

14. Show how the meaning of “luridly speculated” (line 50) is made clear in the rest of the paragraph. 2 A

There are a number (1) of melodramatic/exaggerated/sensational guesses/ideas/possibilities advanced (1)
OR
One example from madness/suicide/drink/murder/freak wave (1)
and comment on the fantastic/macabre/grotesque nature of that example (1)
OR
Quotation of “rumoured” (1)
and comment on the sensationalism/non-factual nature of eg murder/suicide (1)

There must be an understanding of luridness or speculation shown (1)
by quotation from/reference to elsewhere in the paragraph (1)

15. Look at lines 57 – 68.
Identify **two** of the “aspects” of the events which “do not...add up”.
Use your own words as far as possible. 2 U

<i>Originals</i>	<i>References/paraphrases</i>
<i>the wind was westerly that night</i>	<i>direction of the wind</i>
<i>The railings...had been wrenched out of shape OR ironwork – “displaced and twisted”</i>	<i>Severity/extent of the damage to the iron railings</i>
<i>One of the men left...in his shirtsleeves</i>	<i>One man left without putting on a coat</i>
<i>Bolt the entrance gate</i>	<i>The gate was locked</i>
<i>No body was found</i>	<i>No corpses were washed up (despite direction of tide)</i>

Any two, (1) each; some attempt at paraphrasing must be made.

16. Identify one feature of **sentence structure** in lines 69 – 72 which is appropriate for this story of mystery. **1 A**

*(Frequent) use of (unanswered) questions.
Use of semi-colon*

17. Explain why any feature of the last paragraph (lines 75 – 77) helps to make these sentences a satisfying conclusion to the passage. **2 E**

*The facts (about big waves) (1) solve the mystery (1)
OR
the mention of rogue waves (1) recaps an idea previously mentioned (the “Fist of God”) (1)
OR
“folklore” (1) recaps the idea of superstition previously mentioned (1)
OR
the **alliteration** of “fact” and “folklore”/the **balance/contrast** of the two phrases “scientific fact” and “maritime folklore” (1) is neat in its own right (1)
OR
“he was probably right” (1) briefly/neatly sums up OR provides a comforting tone (1)
OR
The contrast between short and long sentences (1) is neat/elegant (1)*

[U = 11; A = 11; E = 8]

Total 30 marks

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]