



Half Yearly Examinations
Maria Regina College

Scholastic Year 2015 / 2016

English Reading Comprehension

Total: 30 marks

Time: 50 minutes

Name:

Class:

School:

Total mark

The Fish Bowl *by Valentina Trimboli*

One day, Martin bought a beautiful gold-coloured fish and named him Billy. Then he bought a fish bowl to be the fish's *temporary home*, as the fish was going to be released into the sea sometime in the future. Martin raised his fish so that it developed several fears such as fear to swim free and fear to explore everything in the outside world.

On the 8th of August, Martin went to the beach with a group of members of the AHA (Animal Health Association) to free Billy because he was now an adult. When Billy found himself in such a big, open space, he didn't know what to do, where to go or how to react to common things, like boats and bigger fish.

One day, Billy was swimming at the bottom of the sea, when suddenly he saw sharks approaching him. Billy trembled with fear and the sharks could hear his teeth trembling. The two sharks looked at him, laughed and said, "Don't be scared little friend. We won't hurt you, but you have to be careful and eat something too, you are too skinny". Billy said sadly, "I know, but my owner raised me in a fish bowl, I didn't know what to do when he brought me back to the sea. I don't know what to eat or where to live. Can you help me?" The sharks said: "Sure, little one, come with us".

Nowadays, Billy is a strong and healthy gold-coloured fish, with a big smile that illuminates even the darkest of places, as he has a home and two shark friends that help him and are with him all the time.

<http://www.shortstories.net/for-children/sea-stories/>

Read the story on the opposite page. Now answer the questions below.

1. Underline the correct answer.

(2½ marks)

- (a) The colour of the fish was (reddish, greenish, golden, yellowish).
- (b) Billy was released (at the beach, in a lake, in a pond, near a waterfall).
- (c) Billy was (excited, upset, terrified, confused) when he saw the sharks.
- (d) When he met the sharks, Billy was (obese, chubby, thin, sick).
- (e) Nowadays Billy is (miserable, unhappy, curious, cheerful).

2. Read the following sentences. Write a T if the sentence is True, an F if it is False and an N if there is No Information Given. (1½ marks)

| | |
|--|--|
| (a) Martin's sister gave him the fish bowl for free. | |
| (b) The sharks were Great White Sharks. | |
| (c) Billy and the two sharks have become friends. | |

3. What do you understand by *'temporary home'*?

(1 mark)

Read the passage below, which is divided into two sections. Then, answer the questions that follow each section.

Desperate Journeys

*Hundreds of thousands of people are fleeing their homeland and **risking their lives** to get to Europe.*



Section 1

Some have walked more than 100 miles through foreign lands. Others have packed into **overcrowded**, **wobbly** boats to cross the Mediterranean Sea. *They've all left behind almost everything.*

They are refugees — people who have fled their home countries to find a safer, better life. So far this year, more than 450,000 refugees have fled to Europe from the Middle East and North Africa. Close to 3,000 have died on their dangerous journeys, most when the boats they were in sank. Nations in Europe are **struggling** with how to handle the arrival of so many refugees.

As a group, the refugees are also being called migrants, but this usually describes two different groups of people. In general, migrants are people who move to a new place to find work. Refugees are people escaping war, violence, or **persecution** by a government or group. Some people fleeing the Middle East and North Africa are trying to escape **poverty**, but most are running from war and violence.

Questions on Section 1

11 marks

1. Read the following sentences. Put a T if the sentence is True, an F if it is False and an N if there is No Information Given in Section 1. (2 ½ marks)

| | |
|--|--|
| (a) People are leaving their countries to get to Europe. | |
| (b) Only men and children are allowed on the boats. | |
| (c) Less than 450,000 people have fled to Europe. | |
| (d) The journeys to arrive to Europe are not safe. | |
| (e) People from the Middle East try to escape poverty. | |

2. Find *an adjective* to describe the journey. (1 mark)

3. Where are people fleeing from? (1 mark)

4. Mention 2 reasons why refugees are fleeing their countries. (1 mark)

5. Explain these words from the text:

(5 x ½ mark = 2½ marks)

overcrowded - _____

wobbly - _____

struggling - _____

poverty - _____

persecution - _____

6. ... “*and risking their lives* to get to Europe” ... What do you understand by the words in bold? (1 mark)

7. “*They’ve all left behind almost everything.*” ... What do you think these people leave behind? Give two answers. (2 marks)

Section 2

More refugees are from Syria than from any other country. This Middle Eastern nation is being ripped apart by a civil war. More than 4 million Syrians have left their homeland since the fighting started in 2011. Nearly all of them are in neighbouring nations, such as Turkey and Jordan, where many live in temporary refugee camps. Now a growing number of Syrian refugees are trying to permanently settle in Europe.

The 28 nations that make up the European Union (EU) have been responding to this emergency in different ways. Many have promised to take in some refugees. Germany has talked about accepting at least 800,000 people by the end of this year, which would be the most of any country.

However, the main land routes that refugees plan to follow to Germany and other European countries run through Hungary. Hungary's leaders say that they don't want refugees and migrants flooding into their country. To block their entrance, Hungary has built a barbed-wire fence along its southern border. Anyone who tries to cross its borders illegally risks going to jail.

But many European leaders say that more nations—in Europe and elsewhere—should agree to help the refugees.



<http://magazines.scholastic.com/news/2015/09/Desperate-Journeys>

Questions on Section 2**14 marks****1. Underline the correct word***(3 marks)*

- (a) The majority of refugees come from (Hungary, Syria, Germany, Peru).
- (b) The fighting in Syria started in (2007, 2009, 2011, 2013).
- (c) Most of the EU nations want to (assist, show aggression towards, disregard, make fun of) the refugees.
- (d) The barbed-wire fence in Hungary was built along the (eastern, southern, northern, western) border.
- (e) Anyone caught crossing illegally into Hungary may be (given a fine, sent to jail, sent back home, sent to Germany).
- (f) The country accepting the most refugees is (Germany, Hungary, Brazil, Jordan).

2. Read the following sentences. Put a T if the sentence is True, an F if it is False and an N if there is No Information Given in Section 2*(3 marks)*

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| a | There is a civil war going on in Syria. | |
| b | Some Syrian refugees want to go to America. | |
| c | A jail sentence in Hungary is 10 years long. | |
| d | Hungary's leaders are refusing refugees. | |
| e | Germany will accept 800,000 people by 2017. | |
| f | Hungary has built an electric-wire fence along its southern border. | |

3. Why is Syria being *ripped apart*?

(1 mark)

4. In which 2 neighbouring nations are Syrian people living?

(1 mark)

5. Explain the words in bold ... “*migrants flooding into their country*”.

(1 mark)

6. Explain the meaning of:

(2 marks)

• homeland - _____

• routes - _____

Questions on both passages

1. Mention *two ways* how you think you can help refugees. (2 marks)

a)

b)

2. If you had the opportunity to write a couple of sentences to a Syrian child your age, what would you tell him/her? (1 mark)

END OF READING COMPREHENSION PAPER