

Highgate School



Entrance examination for entry into Year 7 (11+)

Example Questions

English

You should read each question very carefully before attempting to answer it. Remember to show clearly all your working.

You should write your answers in the boxes given.

To Meet an Angel

The following passage is the beginning of a novel about a teenage girl who believes in angels.

Freya Harrison had always wanted to be an angel. Ever since she could remember she'd wanted wings instead of arms and a halo instead of toys. And perhaps dreams came true, because when she was barely eight years old an angel paid her a fleeting visit.

It was at least seven feet tall, with creamy-white skin: shining, fully-robed, its halo like a mane of golden sunshine. 5

And male. Definitely a man. Or was it? Freya had to look twice to be sure.

The visitation took place on a warm spring night. Freya had been fast asleep in her open-windowed bedroom when the curtains slowly swirled and there he was, like the perfection of a dream – a glorious angel in the dead of night. He was huge. He seemed too big for her room, or any room for that matter. Despite which, awakening, she hadn't been alarmed, not afraid at all. 10

An angel. An actual angel.

To gaze in wonder on such a thing.

She fell in love with his wings at once. Supple feathers. Tips as smooth as the afterglow of sunsets. Just seeing them had made Freya hunger for wide spaces. And when she reached out to touch them it was like dipping her fingers inside light itself. 15

And perhaps if the angel had just flown away then, done nothing else, Freya might have been able to forget him. She might have been able to convince herself that his visit was merely the product of an overactive imagination or a peculiarly vivid dream. But how could she have dreamed up what happened next? For the angel had knelt – actually knelt – before her, lowered his proud, beautiful head to the level of her heart and peered inside there. The gaze was direct, the way a knife is direct. Those eyes: eyes, she realized afterwards, that might have beheld God. 20 25

A gentle kiss on the forehead, and he was gone.

She'd rushed to the window, of course, to see him fly, but he was already out of sight, those wings too fast for her.

Freya had waited for him to come back. She still remembered the exact spot under the window where she'd knelt down, her toes digging into the carpet. But as the hours lengthened, and there was no sign of him, a new worry had crept into her mind. It was dark out there. Maybe he was lost. Did angels have special eyes to see at night? All night she waited there, scrunched up inside her quilt, a cold little girl calling softly and forlornly into an empty sky. 30 35

from *Angel* by Cliff McNish

Questions

- Give the meanings of the following words from the passage:
supple (line 15)
overactive (line 21)
forlornly (line 35) [3]
- In the fourth paragraph, the author describes the arrival of the angel, and makes the event seem special. Explain how each of these phrases helps to make the description effective:
 a) *there he was, like the perfection of a dream*
 b) *a glorious angel in the dead of night* [4]
- From the fourth and fifth paragraphs, find and write down two things which Freya finds confusing about the angel. [2]
- In the seventh paragraph, the writer uses comparisons to describe the angel and Freya's responses to it. Complete the grid below, to show what thing is being compared in each case.

Thing being compared	What it is being compared to
	the afterglow of sunsets
	dipping your fingers into light itself

[2]

- 'She might have been able to convince herself that his visit was merely the product of an overactive imagination' (lines 20 – 21)
 Explain in your own words what this means. [1]
- In the last paragraph, how does the writer show how upset Freya is by the angel leaving her? Explain your answer. [2]
- The statements below are all about the angel and Freya's reactions to it. For each one, circle whether it is definitely true, possibly true, or false.

The angel is nearly seven feet tall.

Definitely True Possibly True False

The angel is male.

Definitely True Possibly True False

Freya is scared when the angel appears in her room.

Definitely True Possibly True False

Angels have special eyes to see at night.

Definitely True Possibly True False

[2]

8. What impressions do you get of the angel from the different ways it is described and behaves in the passage? In your answer, think about:
- what the angel looks like;
 - how the angel behaves towards Freya;
 - how the angel makes Freya feel.
- [4]

9. In the passage, Freya is woken up when an angel appears in her room. **Write the opening for a story in which a child is woken up by something mysterious or incredible happening outside.** You can use ideas from the passage or ideas of your own.
- [10]

[Total marks: 30]