



Welcome to the HRM Secondary Academy English Department! This placement test is designed to help you find the best fit for your student in our English program. If you would like help evaluating any part of this test, please reach out to us at: [HRM English Department](#).

Read the following passage and then answer the questions.

The Mysterious Footprints

Lena relished exploring the dense forest behind her house. She was intimately familiar with every towering tree, jagged rock, and meandering stream. One afternoon, as she ambled along her favorite trail, she stumbled upon something peculiar—immense footprints embedded in the soft earth. They were far too large to belong to any creature she had ever encountered. A surge of excitement and curiosity coursed through her.

Kneeling, she scrutinized the prints. Their deep impressions suggested that whatever had left them was massive and heavy. Lena’s mind whirled with possibilities. Could it be a bear? A lost traveler? Or something even more unfathomable?

Determined to unravel the mystery, she traced the footprints deeper into the woods. The trail twisted and turned before leading her to a secluded clearing. Brushing past the last bush, Lena gasped as she saw a tall man with a sizable backpack studying the bark of a tree. Immediately, the man turned towards her, appearing equally surprised to see her in the depths of the woods.

“Oh! Hello there,” he greeted her warmly. “I didn’t mean to startle anyone. I’m a wildlife researcher studying animal tracks.”

Lena let out a breath of relief and chuckled. “For a moment, I thought I had discovered an undiscovered species!”

The man grinned. “That would be remarkable! But sometimes, reality is just as captivating as imagination.”

On the line, print in CAPITAL LETTERS the best answer for each question.

Comprehension

- _____ 1. Which of the following is true about Lena’s experience with this forest?
A. She has come here often. B. It is her first visit.
C. Her family owns it. D. She is on a school visit.
- _____ 2. What emotion does Lena experience when she first notices the footprints?
A. fear B. excitement C. indifference D. sadness
- _____ 3. Which detail from the story best supports the mood of mystery?
A. “ambled along her favorite trail”
B. “surge of excitement and curiosity”

- C. "The trail twisted and turned"
D. "a sizable backpack"
- _____ 4. Which of the following best describes Lena's character in the story?
A. timid and cautious B. adventurous and curious
C. reckless and impatient D. distracted and uninterested
- _____ 5. At the end of the passage, the researcher reveals that he
A. is studying mysterious creatures B. is lost in the woods
C. has been following Lena's footprints D. is conducting research
- _____ 6. What theme can be inferred from Lena's experience?
A. The unknown is always dangerous.
B. Reality can be just as fascinating as the imagination.
C. Curiosity often leads to trouble.
D. Science cannot explain everything.

Vocabulary

- _____ 6. What does the word **peculiar** most likely mean in the sentence: "...she stumbled upon something peculiar..."?
A. ordinary B. strange C. dangerous D. exciting
- _____ 7. What is the meaning of **scrutinized** in the sentence: "Kneeling, she scrutinized the prints"?
A. studied carefully B. glanced at quickly
C. ignored D. traced with her fingers
- _____ 8. What does **captivating** mean in the researcher's sentence: "But sometimes, reality is just as captivating as imagination"?
A. confusing B. frightening C. very interesting D. unrealistic

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

- _____ 9. Which sentence is grammatically correct?
A. Me and my friends went to the park.
B. My friends and I went to the park.
C. My friends and me went to the park.
D. I and my friends went to the park.
- _____ 10. Choose the sentence with correct subject-verb agreement.
A. The team of players are excited for the game.
B. The books on the shelf needs to be organized.
C. Neither of the students is late for class.
D. The dog and the cat's playing together.
- _____ 11. Which sentence correctly uses **their**, **there**, or **they're**?
A. Put your backpack over there.
B. The kids left they're toys outside.
C. Their going to the movies tonight.
D. There dog loves to play fetch.
- _____ 12. Which sentence correctly uses **its** or **it's**?
A. Its a beautiful day outside.
B. The dog wagged it's tail happily.
C. The bird flapped its' wings and flew away.

- D. It's important to study for the test.
- _____ 13. Which sentence is correctly punctuated?
- A. I bought apples oranges, and bananas.
 - B. She asked "Can you help me with my homework?"
 - C. After school, we went to the library, then we walked home.
 - D. My favorite colors are blue, green, and purple.
- _____ 14. Choose the sentence that is correctly capitalized.
- A. My aunt lives in chicago, illinois.
 - B. The Statue of Liberty is in New York.
 - C. we are going to visit grandma this weekend.
 - D. On friday, we will go to a museum.
- _____ 15. Which sentence correctly uses a semicolon?
- A. I love reading; it helps me relax.
 - B. I have a big test tomorrow; so I need to study.
 - C. My favorite animals are lions; tigers; and bears.
 - D. We went to the park, then we got ice cream.

Writing. Where would you like to spend a week in summer? In a paragraph of 5-7 sentences, describe your favorite place to go for a vacation. It may be somewhere you have been or somewhere you would like to go. Include descriptions of the place itself and the activities available.

Answer Key

1. A	6. B	11. A
2. B	7. A	12. D
3. C	8. C	13. D
4. B	9. B	14. B
5. D	10. C	15. A

Paragraph Rubric: Choose the score (1-5) that best describes your students' writing

5 points:

- Begins with a topic sentence that addresses the prompt
- Follows a logical order throughout
- Provides specific descriptive details
- Provides enough information to create a strong mental picture of the place
- Has few distracting usage/mechanical errors

4 points:

- Begins with a topic sentence that may not directly address the prompt
- Follows a logical order for most of the paragraph
- Provides some specific descriptive details
- Provides some information, but the mental picture is somewhat unclear or incomplete
- Has one or two distracting usage/mechanical errors

3 points:

- Begins with a topic sentence but does not address the prompt fully
- Follows a logical order for some of the paragraph
- Provides one or two specific descriptive details
- Provides information, but the mental picture is unclear or incomplete
- Has three or four distracting usage/mechanical errors

2 points:

- Has a weak topic sentence
- The structure is somewhat confusing
- Provides mostly vague descriptive details
- Provides little information to create a mental picture
- Has numerous distracting usage/mechanical errors

1 point:

- Has no topic sentence
- Has no sense of logical structure
- Descriptive details are lacking, unclear, or confusing
- Does not provide enough information to create a mental picture
- Has numerous distracting usage/mechanical errors

Recommended for Intermediate class: 15+/20 points