



Sample Answers to 11+ Comprehension Paper
Arrival in Corfu

1. Explanation: For 6 marks, this question is best answered with 2 PEEs, focusing on the language used by the author in the first paragraph, and on how it helps us imagine the scene he is describing. There is a lot of language to pick up on – just be sure the focus is on figurative language, and it's good to mention the technique in the answer.

Answer: The author uses metaphor to help us clearly imagine the disorganised arrangement of the houses. The text says, 'multi-coloured houses piled haphazardly'. This phrase suggests that the houses have been dropped in a pile in a random or careless way, and thus the metaphor helps us clearly picture in our minds the way their chaotic positioning.

The author also uses simile to help us imagine the placid sea. The text says, 'the bay, smooth as a plate'. This comparison of the ocean to a smooth platter shows how calm and tranquil the water of the bay is and helps us clearly imagine the peaceful view.

2. Explanation: these word definitions are only one mark each, so we don't need to spend a lot of time on each one. However, it's a good idea to try to express the meaning in at least a couple of ways, so that if one of your ideas is off, you can hopefully pick up the mark if the second if the other is closer. It's also best to answer in full sentences, unless instructed otherwise. (Tip: if you can't work out the meaning from the way the word is used in the referenced line, keep an eye out for it in other places in the text. For the first word, belligerence, the referenced line doesn't make it easy to work out, but the word also appears on line 68 in a different form, and in this case it's much easier to understand.)

Answers:

Belligerence: This means hostility or aggression.

Exuberant: This means excited or eager.

Galvanized: This means stirred up or excited into action.

Cleaving: This means clearing or cutting.

3. Explanation: Again, for 6 marks we need two PEEs, discussing words and phrases that give us an idea of the personality of these two characters. Be sure to take your answer from within the line range required, as you

likely won't receive marks for answers focusing text outside of these lines.

Answers: Larry is very impatient. In the text, Larry asks, "Well...What are we waiting for?" He very likely knows that the dog needs to go to the bathroom after a long trip, but he's not happy about the wait, and in fact seems annoyed about it, which suggests he's impatient.

Margo seems to be a stubborn character. In the text she says, "Whatever I mean, it's the same thing." She was just corrected about something she said, but rather than admit it and correct herself, she insists that what she said means the same thing, which tells us she's stubborn.

4. Explanation: As always, these paraphrasing questions are checking your understanding of the text, and sometimes vocabulary. We don't need to worry about rephrasing words like 'dog' as everyone knows what that means, but should definitely find synonyms for, or ways to re-state, the more complicated words. The marks often correspond to the number of key points you need to translate, but change everything you can, just to be safe.

Answer: The dogs, thinking that they were finally going to be able to deal with this girlish black dog who got around by taxi, swarmed around us in a thick, heavily breathing group.

5. Explanation: This question, as with some of the other so far, is best answered with 2 PEEs, focusing on the mother's personality. The mother is mentioned several times but coming up with two distinct points about her character can be a bit tricky.

Answers: The mother is extremely patient. In the text, she says, "Don't keep on, dear." Larry is complaining and whining about the situation, but instead of getting cross and scolding him, she tries to calm him down, which tells us she is patient

She is also very calm. In the text she says, 'Do be careful dear...you might hurt someone.' She has just nearly been hit with a whip and had her hat knocked off, but instead of being angry or upset, she just tells Larry in a relaxed manner to be careful, which suggests she is quite calm.