Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Time allowed: 30 minutes
Marks Available: 15 marks (1 mark per question unless otherwise indicated)

The Stampede

The sun had come out and it was very fine, as Christopher walked up the hill. Fine, at least, until the ground began to quake.

He was nearing the top of the slope with Goose at his heels, when she stopped short and gave an anxious whine. He bent to stroke her.
'What is, girl? Are you hurt?'

Then he heard it too: a rumbling, deep in the earth. He bent to touch the ground, and felt it shake under his palm. An earthquake? He looked up the hill; the trembling under his feet grew. Goose's hackles rose along her back and she began to bark in high, terrified yaps.

Then there was a great whinnying cry, and a huge green horse covered in shining scales thundered straight towards him. Christopher yelled. He tried to pull Goose, but she was rooted to the spot, flattened against the dirt, so he lifted her in his arms and ran.

She was heavy and **cumbersome**, but terror gave him speed; he darted behind an oak tree, his heart roaring, and crouched over Goose. The horse tore down the hill, its eyes wide and staring with distress. He could see the muscular gleam of its green-scaled flank as it came; he pressed himself against the tree.

It passed by so close that it kicked dirt up into his face. As he watched, the horse spread vast scaled wings, and took flight, flapping above the tree line.

And then came the stampede. Down the slope came a cascade of shrew-like creatures with canine fangs, soaking wet, a dozen of them, and then a great horde of what looked like large green-horned squirrels, wailing and crying out – 'Run! Run!' – as they went.

Goose struggled in his arms, but he held on to her. It was impossible. Wild **incredulity** rose in him. But the dog's tug against his hands was real, as were the scratches she gave to his chest as she reared, trying to run down the slope and away.

Before he could move there was a great whinnying, and down the hill came a horse with a horn of pure-bright silver. It went charging past him, eyes rolling with fear, hurtling down towards his grandfather's house. Its tail, white as moonlight, was tangled with weeds.

'A unicorn,' he breathed to Goose.

As fast as they had come, the creatures had gone, vanished into the trees below. Christopher's hands and feet were ice-cold despite the sun.

His first instinct was to sprint down the hill to tell his grandfather. But then from the top of the hill there came a noise: a high, peeping cry. It was a desperate, terrible noise: the noise of something struggling to live.

He hesitated only for a second; and then he sprinted, faster than he had ever run, up the forbidden hill. He could not have said what he expected to find – but it was not what he saw.

Reading questions:

Circle each correct answer. There is one correct answer per question.

1. What narrative perspective or point of view is this story told from?
   A) First-person, with Christopher narrating his own experiences
   B) Second-person, addressing the reader directly
   C) Third-person limited, focusing on Christopher's thoughts and feelings
   D) Third-person omniscient, revealing the thoughts and feelings of all characters
   E) Third-person objective, providing an unbiased account of events without inner thoughts

2. Who or what is Goose?
   A) Christopher's pet goose, who follows him everywhere
   B) Christopher's younger sibling, whom he carries to safety
   C) Christopher's cat, who remains calm despite the chaos
   D) Christopher's imaginary friend, helping him navigate the hill
   E) Christopher's dog, who reacts anxiously to the quaking ground

3. Look at the word 'cumbersome'. Based on how it is used in the text, what might this word mean?
   A) Easily manageable, light to carry
   B) Unusual, strange in appearance
   C) Heavy and difficult to carry
   D) Soft and comfortable to hold
   E) Dangerous and frightening to touch

4. How is the first horse that Christopher sees described?
   A) A blue horse with glittering scales, galloping leisurely down the hill
   B) A huge green horse covered in shining scales, thundering straight towards him
   C) A small brown horse with a single silver horn, prancing gracefully
   D) A white horse with a rainbow mane, flying above the tree line
   E) A giant black horse with fiery eyes, stomping the ground fiercely

5. How is the second horse that Christopher sees described?
   A) A winged horse with golden feathers, soaring in the sky
   B) A horse with a horn of pure-bright silver, charging past him
   C) A small pony with a multicolored mane, trotting happily
   D) A green horse with emerald scales, trotting alongside the other creatures
   E) A dark horse with no visible features, blending into the shadows

6. The author describes the second horse's tail as 'white as moonlight'. What effect does this description have on the reader?
   A) It emphasises the horse's magical and delicate appearance
   B) It makes the horse seem ordinary and real
   C) It suggests the horse is dangerous
   D) It highlights the horse's size and strength
   E) It indicates the horse is dirty or unkempt

7. Look at the word 'incredulity'. Based on how it is used in the text, what might this word mean?
   A) A feeling of great joy and happiness
   B) A state of confusion and disorientation
   C) A feeling of anger and resentment
   D) A state of disbelief and astonishment
   E) A sense of relief and calm

8. What clues are we given that this story takes place in a fantasy world?
   A) The mention of Christopher's grandfather living on a hill
   B) The description of normal animals behaving strangely
   C) The presence of scaled, flying horses and talking squirrels
   D) The detail of an earthquake occurring suddenly
   E) The depiction of a regular day turning into a chaotic scene

9. What impression are we given of the state of nature and the creatures described?
   A) Nature is calm and serene, with all creatures in harmony
   B) Nature is chaotic and filled with fear, with creatures fleeing in terror
   C) Nature is mysterious and enchanting, with magical creatures everywhere
   D) Nature is dark and ominous, with creatures lurking in shadows
   E) Nature is barren and lifeless, with very few creatures present

10. What does the green-scaled horse's movement suggest about its state of mind?
    A) It is attacking Christopher
    B) It is curious about Christopher but not scared
    C) It is playful and having fun
    D) It is calm and leisurely
    E) It is frightened and trying to escape

11. How does the author's description of Christopher's "hands and feet [being] ice-cold despite the sun" affect the reader?
    A) It shows he is calm and relaxed
    B) It helps the reader feel his fear and shock
    C) It suggests he is angry and frustrated
    D) It makes the scene humorous
    E) It indicates he is curious and excited

12. Which line best shows that Christopher realises the creatures are dangerous and unusual?
    A) "Then there was a great whinnying cry, and a huge green horse covered in shining scales thundered straight towards him."
    B) "He bent to stroke her."
    C) "His first instinct was to sprint down the hill to tell his grandfather."
    D) "She was heavy and cumbersome, but terror gave him speed; he darted behind an oak tree, his heart roaring, and crouched over Goose."
    E) "As fast as they had come, the creatures had gone, vanished into the trees below."

13. How does the description of Goose struggling in Christopher's arms build tension?
    A) It emphasises the danger and makes the reader worry for both of them
    B) It shows she is playful, making the situation light-hearted
    C) It makes the scene seem calm and ordinary
    D) It explains why Christopher is angry
    E) It distracts the reader from the main action

14. Why does the description of the hill and surroundings contribute to suspense?
    A) It creates a sense of calm and stability
    B) It emphasises danger coming from above and below
    C) It explains the creatures' magical origins

D) It makes the story humorous

E) It distracts the reader from the main action

15. When we are told that Christopher only hesitated for a second before running towards the cry at the top of the hill, how is the reader likely to respond to his actions?

A) They may see him as curious and cautious
B) They may admire his bravery and compassion
C) They may think he is reckless and thoughtless
D) They may feel he is determined but exhausted
E) They may see him as obedient but unsure