

Screening TEST for the International Section (2nde)

Part 1: Reading Comprehension

Read the text below and answer the questions on a separate piece of paper.

The Tell Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe

The Tell Heart is the story of a murder written in 1843. The main character kills another man and hides the body. The extract below follows from this point on in the story.

There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbour during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.

I smiled, --for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search --search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct. It continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness --until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

Paragraph 4

No doubt I now grew very pale; --but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased --and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound --much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath --and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly --more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men --but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed --I raved --I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder --louder --louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! --no, no! They heard! --they suspected! --they knew! --they were making a mockery of my horror!--this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! and now --again! --hark! louder! louder! louder! louder!

"Villains!" I shrieked, "dissemble no more! I admit the deed! --tear up the planks! here, here! --It is the beating of his hideous heart!"

1. Why did the Police arrive at the house? 1pt

2. What explanation did the man give for the 'shriek' that was heard? 1pt

3. Where is the victim? Justify with evidence from the text. 2 pts

4. The man, though guilty, does not fear the police search. Pick out the words and phrases that show he is unafraid. 2pts

5. 'I was singularly at ease'.

In this sentence the word 'ease' is closest in meaning to: 1pt

- a) calm
- b) ready
- c) impatient
- d) anxious

6. Explain what the 'the ringing' in his ears is? 1pt

7. Find three elements that show the man's feelings towards the police have changed in paragraph 4? 3pts

8. Decide which of these statements are true and which are false. 2pts

	TRUE	FALSE
a) The murderer nearly got away with the crime		
b) Only the murderer could hear the beating heart		
c) The murderer thought the		

police were making a joke by pretending not to hear the sound		
d) The murderer never admitted to the crime		

9. What is the sound compared to in paragraph 4? How appropriate is the comparison? 2pts

10. Explain how the writer creates suspense and tension. Justify with words and phrases from the text. 5 pts

Total : /20

Part 2 Writing

10pts

Choose **ONE** of the questions. Write 150 – 200 words.

1. Write what happens next in the story *The Tell Tale Heart*.

OR

2. Imagine you are one of the Police Officers. Write a report of the incident.

OR

3. Write about a time when you felt under pressure.