

English Paper 2

Stage 6



Section A: Reading

Read this passage from *Anne of Green Gables* by L. M. Montgomery and then answer the questions in the question paper.

When Matthew reached Bright River there was no sign of any train; he thought he was too early, so tied his horse in front of the Bright River hotel and went over to the station house. The long platform was almost deserted. The only living creature in sight was a girl who was sitting at the far end. Matthew, barely noting that it was a girl, sidled past her as quickly as possible without looking. Had he looked, he could hardly have failed to notice the tense expression of expectation on her face. She was sitting there waiting for something or somebody and, since sitting and waiting was the only thing to do just then, she sat and waited with all her might.

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Matthew found the station master locking up the ticket office, and asked him if the five-thirty train would soon be along.

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‘The five-thirty train has been in and gone half an hour ago,’ answered the impatient official. ‘But there was a passenger dropped off for you – a little girl. She’s sitting out there. I asked her to go to the ladies’ waiting room, but she informed me gravely that she preferred to stay outside as there was more scope for the imagination. She’s a case, I should say.’

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‘I’m not expecting a girl,’ said Matthew blankly. ‘It’s a boy I’ve come for. He should be here.’

The station master whistled. ‘Guess there’s some mistake,’ he said. ‘Mrs Spence came off the train with that girl and gave her into my charge. Said you and your sister were adopting her from an orphanage.’

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‘I don’t understand,’ said Matthew, helplessly.

‘Well, you’d better ask the girl,’ said the station master casually. ‘I dare say she’ll be able to explain. She’s got a tongue of her own, that’s for certain!’

The station master walked away, cheerfully, leaving Matthew to speak to the girl – something he was feeling very uncomfortable about. Matthew groaned as he turned around and shuffled gently down the platform towards her.

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She had been watching him ever since he had passed her. However, Matthew was not looking at her. If he had been, he would have seen this: a child of about eleven, dressed in a very short, very tight, very ugly dress of yellowish white cloth. She wore a faded brown sailor hat, and beneath the hat, extending down her back, were two braids* of very thick red hair. Her face was small, white and thin, also much freckled; her mouth was large and so were her eyes, which looked green in some lights and moods, and grey in others.

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Most people would also notice that her chin was very pointed and pronounced; that the big eyes were full of spirit and vivacity; that the mouth was sweet-lipped and expressive; that the forehead was broad and full. In short, most people could see that she was just an ordinary child. But shy, uneasy Matthew Cuthbert saw none of this. Fortunately, for him, he was spared the ordeal of having to speak first.

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‘I suppose you are Mr Matthew Cuthbert of Green Gables?’ she said in a peculiarly clear, sweet voice. ‘I’m very glad to see you. I was beginning to be afraid you weren’t coming for me.’

* braids: plaits

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