



Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint

ENGLISH

1111/02

Paper 2 Fiction

April 2020

INSERT

1 hour 10 minutes

INFORMATION

- This insert contains the reading passage.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.



This document has **4** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

Text for Section A, an extract from 'The boy who drew the future' by Rhian Ivory

Noah is a boy with an unusual ability – he draws pictures of what will happen in the future, and can't stop himself from doing it. His family have just moved to a village called Sible Hedingham.

Prologue*

A twitching thing, it moves as if it were still alive. But it can't be. The hand isn't attached to anything. Sinews, veins and skin dried up, discoloured, dead on the page. Yet it moves as if no one has told it.

The boy draws it with his pen, line after line, unravelling the story that pulls him, down into dark water.

A hand forces itself up to the surface in his drawing, beckoning him* or warning him, he can't quite tell yet. And no matter how hard he tries not to, he keeps drawing it.

Twitching and twisting, he draws, as the tide waits patiently, ready to turn.

Chapter 1: Noah

The barber* doesn't try to engage me in awkward conversation as he cuts off my hair. I'm relieved he's a whistler not a talker as I try to make a different face look back at me in the mirror. He brushes the hair off the back of my neck and I attempt a scowl, narrowing my brown eyes, but it looks wonky. As I get up, I look down at the floor covered in light brown and blond hair. A haircut feels a good place to start.

Being the new boy again means I get to reinvent myself, I decide, as Mum buys me a new uniform at Fords' department store. I try on more black trousers as she picks up a three-pack of white shirts, laughing with the saleswoman about my growth spurt. They talk as if I am not there. Mum keeps touching the back of my now naked neck as if she hasn't seen it in years. She hands me a red and grey striped tie and two V-neck jumpers. They are itchy, not that I'll be wearing them in this heat. I wonder why she's buying them – *it is so hot*.

We moved to Sible Hedingham three days ago. Unpacking all our stuff into the plain, empty, rented house only took a day or two, and now I've ticked the last two items off my list I'm out of things to do. I leave Mum paying for my clothes and go outside. I walk around looking for something to fill the weekend quiet with. *Anything*. I mentally list all the things this new place has as I pass them: a butcher's, baker's, a DIY shop, a grocer's and a library next to a large primary school. It's a new place but still has the same 'Please drive carefully through our village' signs.

Another wilderness of normality, but this village has a feel about it. A prickling tingles in my fingers as I enter Broaks Woods. Something wants to be uncovered – I can smell it coming off the river. There is something lurking here, whistling under the cover of the shady ash trees, hidden for now.

I sigh and shake it off. I don't want there to be any room or time for these feelings.

When we drive into the grey school car park on Monday morning, I wish I'd insisted on turning up on my own. I watch all the other students dragging themselves into school and realise that it's going to take more than a new haircut. They all look like they fit, like they know where they are going. I, on the other hand, have no idea, despite the *déjà vu** of Mum's monologue:

'I've explained about Dad's work and said that's why we've moved again. There's no need to go into details about why you left your last school, OK? This is another chance for you, Noah, a fresh start for all of us. Just *try* this time, sweetheart, please?' She switches the engine off, unclips her seatbelt and reaches across to squeeze my arm. Her bangles clang and clank in the silence. I have nothing to say so she carries on in a bright singsong voice. 'We're staying put this time, aren't we?' She tries to make it sound like a statement or order, but it comes out more like a question. I nod and she sighs.

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She tries to smile as she applies more lipstick, checking her reflection again in the mirror. I wish it were a real smile. I want to do more than just nod. She needs me to make her a promise, but I can't tell her a lie. I've tried before but I've never been very good at it.

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Glossary

prologue: an introduction to a story

beckoning him: waving at him to come closer

The barber: the hairdresser

déjà vu: a feeling of familiarity / having heard something before

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