

From *The Machine Gunners* by Robert Westall

Rudi wakened, stiff and cold. No matter how carefully he arranged them, the sacks fell off him during the night. His ankle was up like a pudding; he wouldn't be able to walk for a week.

He opened the hut door and looked out. The sky was grey. His watch had stopped and there was no way of telling the time. He was terribly hungry. Even the frosted brussel sprouts began to seem appetising. He spent an hour crawling over and gathering some. He had to suck the frost out of them before he could chew them. They were hard as bullets.

He wished he could surrender. But no one came. He fell asleep.

When he awakened again, the sky was still grey. He was beginning to lose feeling in his legs. When he finally got the circulation back, the pins and needles were awful.

He decided to crawl in and surrender. It seemed a hundred miles to the edge of the allotments. When he got to the fence and looked through a gap, there was only a cinder track, a disused gas-lamp and the high brick wall of some factory. It was getting dark and starting to snow, so he had to crawl all the way back. He became so confused he couldn't find his hut at first. He slept again.

It was the rabbits who saved him that week. Most of the huts contained a few. In their hutches he found food; crusts of toast, baked potato-peelings, bran-mash, drinkable water. In the beginning the beasts bolted when he opened their hutch-doors to steal their dinner; bundles of warm, panicky fur hurled themselves from one side to the other, pressing their panting sides into patterns against the hutch-wire. He contemplated killing one for the meat, but he wasn't desperate enough yet.

After five days the rabbits got used to him, and eyed him placidly. He spent hours in their company, giving them pet names - Birgit, Franz, Heinz. He talked to them, and they seemed to listen, drooping first one ear and then the other.

When were they fed? Why did he never see the owners? He couldn't tell. He contemplated sleeping with them, waiting to be captured. But he had an aversion to being taken in his sleep. Besides, a distrust of all humans was setting in. Not the fear of a prisoner-of-war for his enemies, but the distrust of a wild animal, daily growing wilder.

He only saw one other human being in all his time on the allotment - an old man picking brussels sprouts. It took Rudi a long time to pluck up courage to shout and wave. The old man gave one panicky look and ran. Rudi expected him back with the soldiers, but he didn't come. Perhaps the old man had been a thief and hadn't realised Rudi was a German.

Sixième Entry Test

Time: 2 hours

You must complete sections A, B and C. You should spend 45 minutes on Section A, 15 minutes on Section B and 45 minutes on Section C. Make sure that you write clearly and neatly.

Section A: Comprehension (20 marks)

Read the extract taken from *The Machine Gunners* by Robert Westall and answer the following questions. **You should write your answers in complete sentences using your own words.** Pay careful attention to punctuation, spelling and grammar.

You should spend 45 minutes on this section.

1. What does it mean in the text when it says 'His ankle was up like a pudding'? (1 mark)
2. Why are the brussel sprouts 'as hard as bullets'? (1 mark)
3. In your own words, what does Rudi eat to survive instead? (1 mark)
4. What season is this extract set in? Justify your answer with **at least two** specific details from the text. (3 marks)
5. From what you have read, what do you think has happened to Rudi? (2 marks)
6. Select two quotations about the rabbits' behaviour that suggests that they are frightened of Rudi at first? (2 marks)
7. Explain what the following quotation suggests: "It took Rudi a long time to pluck up the courage to shout and wave". (2 marks)
8. Do you think that Rudi wants to be captured? Justify your answer with details from the text. (2 marks)
9. Match the words on the left with their meanings on the right. Use the extract to help: find the words in the passage to help you understand them in context. Remember to copy your full answers onto your answer paper (6 marks)

Appetising	A strong dislike
Pins and needles	In a calm and peaceful way
Allotments	Thought about
Contemplated	A small piece of land rented for growing vegetables
Placidly	Good to eat
Aversion	A prickling, tingling sensation

Section B: Translate the following extract from the text above into French (5 marks)

He opened the hut door and looked out. The sky was grey. His watch had stopped and there was no way of telling the time. He was terribly hungry. Even the frosted brussel sprouts began to seem appetising. He spent an hour crawling over and gathering some. He had to suck the frost out of them before he could chew them. They were hard as bullets.

Section C: Creative Writing (20 marks)

You should aim to spend **45 minutes** on this section.

The hiding place

In the first paragraph write about where you are hiding: use your five senses to describe what you can see, hear, feel, smell and taste.

In the second paragraph describe what happens when an unexpected visitor visits your hiding place.

In the third paragraph write about what happens next.

Please follow these instructions:

- **Write in the first person (I).**
- **Write in paragraphs. Please leave a line between each paragraph.**
- **Include plenty of descriptions to add detail to your writing.**
- **Make your account original and interesting: use your imagination.**
- **Write as accurately as you can. Leave 5 minutes at the end of the test to check your work.**
- **You should aim to write *at least* 200 words (over half a side of A4)**

End of test.
