**Extract 7**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 12345678910111213141516 | Joan Goodwin gets to the Johnson Space Center well before nine, and Houston is already airless and muggy. Joan can feel the sweat collecting along her hairline as she walks across the campus to the Mission Control building. She knows it’s the heat. But she also knows that’s not all it is. Her job today is one of her favourite parts of being an astronaut. She is CAPCOM on the Orion Flight Team for STS-LR9, the third flight of the shuttle Navigator. The role of CAPCOM – the only person in Mission Control who speaks directly to the crew on the shuttle – is one of many that astronauts fill when they aren’t on a mission. This is something Joan often has to explain to people at the rare party she agrees to go to. That astronauts train to go up into space, yes. But they also help design the tools and experiments, test out food, prep the shuttle, educate students on what NASA can do, advocate for space travel in Washington, talk to the press, and more. It’s an exhausting list. Being an astronaut is not just about getting up there. It is about being a member of the team that gets the crew up there. ***Atmosphere***, by Taylor Jenkins Reid |

**Line 2**  Identify the two words that suggest the weather is unpleasant

**Line 4** What else is making Joan sweat?

**Lines 7-8** Explain why additional information is enclosed within the dashes

**Line 12** What is ‘prep’ an abbreviation of?

**Lines 14** Explain what makes the list ‘exhausting’ to Joan

**All Lines** Choose three words to describe the speaker

**150 Words** Write from the perspective of an astronaut as the countdown begins

**Extract 8**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1234567891011121314151617181920 | I ran. I ran in the mornings and in the afternoons, and I ran at night. I ran on the dirt roads through Palo Duro Canyon, in the Panhandle of Texas, where I grew up, jumping over the cattle guards and dodging rattlesnakes, to the pasture where the horses roamed free. With no one around, I felt free too, like I’d arrived at a place where nobody could touch me. You could see for miles out to the walls of the canyon in the distance. I loved being in motion, and I was proud of the mechanics of my body. The sun would set over the mesa, turning the sky golden, then blue. The fireflies would come out. Bullfrogs croaked in the distance. And I ran. I ran at summer camp and around the track at a high school in Oklahoma when I visited my grandparents for Thanksgiving. I ran in college, on the lawn, up the rotunda steps, and in and out of the serpentine garden pathways. I ran in New York City, where I moved after school, along the West Side Highway at night, although I knew it was dangerous. After I was married, I ran in Central Park nearly every morning, while the world was still asleep, dawn just breaking over the tree line. Everyone else who was running in the park at that hour had the same furious intensity as I did. We were the dedicated ones, the ones who would make it out for a run under any circumstances, no matter how hard it was raining or snowing. ***The Tell***, by Amy Griffin |

**Line 1**  Provide a reason why the word ‘ran’ is repeated so often

**Lines 1-6** Choose two images that convey a sense of calmness

**Line 7**  What does the word ‘motion’ mean?

**Line 13** Identify the word that means ‘winding’ or ‘twisted’

**All Lines** Explain what the speaker enjoys about running

**150 Words** Describe your street in the early morning when hardly anyone is up

**Extract 9**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1234567891011121314151617 | Later, when the storm has passed, everyone will talk about the destruction it left behind, though no one, not even the king himself, will remember that it all began with a single raindrop. It is an early-summer afternoon in Nineveh, the sky swollen with impending rain. A strange, sullen silence has settled on the city: the birds have not sung since the dawn; the butterflies and dragon-flies have gone into hiding; the frogs have abandoned their breeding grounds; the geese have fallen quiet, sensing danger. Even the sheep have been muted, urinating frequently, overcome by fear. The air smells different – a sharp, salty scent. All day, dark shadows have been amassing on the horizon, like an enemy army that has set up camp, gathering force. They look remarkably still and calm from a distance, but that is an optical illusion, a trick of the eye: the clouds are rolling steadily closer, propelled by a forceful wind, determined to drench the world and shape it anew. In this region where the summers are long and scorching, the rivers mercurial and unforgiving, and the memory of the last flood not yet washed away, water is both the harbinger of life and the messenger of death. ***There are Rivers in the Sky***, by Elif Shafak |

**Line 4**  Identify the phrase that suggests a storm is coming

**Line 5** What does the phrase ‘sullen silence’ suggest about the mood in the city?

**Lines 5-8** Explain why the animals have ‘fallen quiet’

**Line 10** What are the ‘dark shadows’ in the sky?

**Lines 10-11** Explain what the simile ‘an enemy army that has set up camp’ suggests

**Lines 14-17** Identify the words that mean ‘hot’, ‘changeable’ and ‘messenger’

**All Lines** Identify three ways the writer builds tension in the extract

**150 Words** Write about the moments immediately after the first drops of rain fall

**Extract 10**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 12345678910111213141516171819 | Collum punched the other knight in the face with the pommel of his sword gripped in his gauntleted fist, so hard the dark inlaid metal dimpled under his knuckles, but his opponent showed absolutely no sign of falling over or surrendering to him. He swore under his breath and followed it up with a kick to the ankle but missed and almost fell down, and the other knight spun gracefully and clouted him smartly in the head so his ears rang. He would’ve given a thousand pounds to be able to wipe the sweat out of his eyes, not that he had a thousand pounds. He had exactly three shillings and two silver pennies to his name. The two men backed off and circled each other, big swords held up at stiff angles, shifting from guard to guard, heavy shards of bright sunlight glancing and glaring off the blades. They’d dropped their shields after the tilt to have both hands free. No mistakes now, Collum thought. Circles not lines, Marshal Aucassin whispered in his mind. Watch the body not the blade. He threw a diagonal cut that glanced harmlessly off the other knight’s shoulder. The inside of his helmet was a furnace, sharp smells of hay and sweat and raw leather. He’d come here to test himself against the flower of British chivalry, the greatest knights in the world, and by God he was getting what he came for. He was getting the stuffing beaten out of him. ***The Bright Sword***, by Lev Grossman |

**Lines 1-3** How does the writer show that Collum has punched the knight hard?

**Line 4** Provide a reason why Collum swears

**Line 6**  Identify the word that means ‘hit’ or ‘strike’

**Lines 13** Explain why it’s important that Collum doesn’t make a mistake

**Lines 16** What does the image of a ‘furnace’ suggest?

**All Lines** Choose three details that show the other fighter is stronger than Collum

**150 Words** Rewrite the text from the perspective of the other fighter

**Extract 11**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1234567891011 | They’d rung the doorbell unannounced on a chilly Friday night. The strangers on Eve Palmer’s doorstep seemed harmless enough. Yet Eve, ever cautious, peered through the blinds and debated whether to open the door. It was a family of five, middle-class, wrapped in sturdy winter jackets. The parents were in their early forties, Eve guessed. A tall father with broad shoulders and a square jaw. A petite blond mother with cold blue eyes and a silver cross necklace. Between them, three kids lined up by height – one girl, two boys. All in all, they seemed the kind of brood that would cap a Sunday-morning sermon with brunch at Applebee’s. Eve was more than a little familiar with this crowd. Concluding they were no serious threat, she opened the door. ***We Used to Live Here***, by Marcus Kliewer |

**Line 1** What word helps to create a slight sense of unease?

**Line 2** What word implies that Eve might have misjudged the strangers?

**Line 3**  Identify the word that means ‘careful’

**Line 8** Identify the word that means 'family group’

**All Lines** Choose three details make the family seem unthreatening

**150 Words** Write about what happens immediately after Eve opens the door

**Extract 12**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 123456789101112 | I dreamed that I dreamed about the musty grey soil of the island and the sweet perfume it emits after rainfall, a double remove from a place I will never visit again. My mother explained to me once that the fragrance comes from a combination of chemicals and bacteria in the earth which form filaments when wet, sending spores of aromatic vapour into the air. We find the scent comforting, she told me, because we want to believe there’ll be a welcoming place for us one day, when we’re buried deep inside it. I’ve been awake for almost an hour when my phone lights up with a message. I ignore it until another arrives a few moments later. Lifting it from its charger, I see that it’s from Robbie, as I knew it would be. I read the first one: Counting on you today, bro. Don’t let me down. And then the second: Delete that, yeah? ***Earth***, by John Boyne |

**Line 2**  Identify the word that means ‘produces’

**Lines 2-5** Explain in your own words how the ‘sweet perfume’ is formed

**Line 6**  Identify the word that means ‘hit’ or ‘strike’

**Line 8** Identify the shift in focus

**Line 9** Why does the speaker eventually check his phone?

**Line 11** How do we know that the speaker and Robbie are friends?

**All Lines** Choose two details that suggest the speaker is in a thoughtful mood

**150 Words** Write the next paragraph of the story