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Class:

You are going to read an extract from a novel about a little girl called Pixie. For questions 23-30 choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Her father had been a big handsome man with a fine head of hair, a paintbrush in his hand, paint threading along the canvas making a bird look like an angel. He was the famous James Harley Savage, son of Harley Talbot Savage, brother of Norman Backhouse Savage. It was an illustrious family.

From when she was old enough to hold a pencil, the little girl Pixie Harley Savage had been taught about vanishing points in pictures, and was made to work out at the start where the horizon was going to be, and how to make things at the front bigger than things at the back. No matter how young, she had never been allowed to scribble with a pencil or crayon. Nor had she been allowed to do stick people like every other child, or square houses with symmetrical windows and a carefully curving path to the front door with a round tree on one side. It was unacceptable to do drawings like that.

line 9 Her father's hands skimmed across the paper and out of the end of his pencil came a bird, a twig for it to perch on, behind it a branch. 'See?' he said. 'Like that.'

It was a gifted family, but it seemed that the gift had passed Pixie by. Even after so many patient lessons, from the end of her pencil came only hard ugly lines, and a bird that looked like a surprised fish.

She was ashamed of her own big muscly legs and her round face. But the shame of showing this ugly bird to her father and the rest of her family was unendurable.

She heard the silence and saw the ring of shocked faces among her family.

'Oh, but you are very artistic and terribly creative,' her mother said quickly, with something like fear in her voice.

There was a moment's silence.

'In your own way, of course.'

Someone cleared their throat.

'And you never know, these things blossom later on sometimes.'

At school they had known she was a Savage, and hoped for wonders. Her teacher, Miss McGovern, was even willing to see them when there were none. It had taken a long time, but finally she had come to expect no more wonders.

'Use your imaginations, girls,' Miss McGovern would say, but what Pixie drew was never what she meant by *imagination*. Pixie was interested in the veins of the leaf, how photosynthesis worked and why they turned brown or orange in the autumn.

'You make a plant look like a machine,' Miss McGovern accused.

line 34 Pixie's sister, Celeste, had always been a proper Savage. Celeste had known about things at the back of a picture being smaller than things at the front without ever having to be told. She had a way of being dreamy, slightly untidy but lovely, even in her old pink pyjamas, thinking interesting thoughts behind her lovely green eyes. Celeste's birds made Father laugh with surprise and pleasure in a way Pixie's never did. Celeste had a knack for other things, too; she was always catching Pixie in moments when she would rather have been alone. Celeste's reflection would join Pixie's frowning into the mirror. 'That lipstick, Pix,' she would say in her sophisticated way, 'it makes you look like a clown.' She was not the older sister, but acted as though she was, not showing Pixie the respect she might have received from a less critical younger sister.

'Why did you call me Pixie?' she asked her mother once, when puberty was making her look into mirrors. 'You were such a beautiful baby,' her mother said, and smiled into the air at the memory of that beautiful baby, not at the face of her plain daughter.

Pixie decided she looked interesting. But later she realised she was simply ordinary: ordinary brown eyes, ordinary brown hair. An ordinary small nose, an ordinary mouth. No one would ever find her fascinating across a crowded room. 'So like your grandmother,' her mother had sighed.

As a child, she could not do much, but she could refuse to answer to the name of the beautiful baby who had turned into herself. 'Harley,' she insisted. 'My name is Harley.'

23 When Pixie was young, her parents thought that she should

- A get pleasure out of being creative.
- B try not to copy other people's drawings.
- C be shown how to draw properly.
- D be allowed to use her own imagination.

24 In line 9, 'that' refers to drawings which

- A were lacking in originality.
- B were very similar to each other.
- C were done with a pencil or crayon.
- D were of everyday objects.

25 When Pixie drew the bird,

- A she didn't need to put much effort into it.
- B she was trying to please her father.
- C she didn't care what it looked like.
- D she was determined to make it look unusual.

26 What did Pixie's family think of her artistic ability?

- A They were convinced that she would be a good artist one day.
- B They didn't agree on whether she was artistic or not.
- C They found it hard to admit that she had no talent.
- D They were sorry she wouldn't listen to their opinions.

27 What was Miss McGovern's attitude towards Pixie?

- A She was pleased Pixie was showing an interest in science.
- B She continued to hope that Pixie would display her family's creativity.
- C She realised that Pixie was using her imagination in a different way.
- D She tried at first to convince herself that Pixie was typical of her family.

28 What does 'knack' mean in line 34?

- A an ability to do something
- B an ambition to be the best
- C a desire to be noticed
- D a need to be certain about something

29 What do we find out about Celeste?

- A She tried to help Pixie.
- B She worked hard to understand things.
- C She took trouble with her looks.
- D She looked down on Pixie.

30 Pixie decided to be called Harley because she

- A wanted to make her mother annoyed.
- B knew she had not turned out as expected.
- C felt a need to change her appearance.
- D wanted to be more like her father.