

ENGLISH PAPER 1 (LANGUAGE)

Question 1

Write a composition (in approximately 450-500 words) on any one of the following subjects:		[30]
(You are reminded that you will be rewarded for orderly and coherent presentation of material, use of appropriate style and general accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar.)		
(a)	Describe any three important lessons that you have learnt through the course of your life. How did you learn these lessons and why do you think they are so important?	
(b)	Relate how the reading of literature has enriched and refined you.	
(c)	'Every cloud has a silver lining'. Express your views on the above statement.	
(d)	Deception.	
(e)	Argue for or against the statement: 'We live in deeds and not in years'.	
(f)	Write an original short story beginning with the following words: 'The voice was familiar but I could not recognise the face.....'	

Comments of Examiners

- (a) This was a descriptive topic and attempted by a majority of candidates. It consisted of three parts: (i) to describe three lessons; (ii) how they learnt the lessons; and (iii) why they think the lessons are important. Although most wrote good compositions, many candidates described the lessons but failed to write how they learnt them and why they are so important. A handful of candidates misinterpreted the lessons to mean chapters from their textbooks.
- (b) This was a narrative topic in which the candidates had to write how the reading of literature had (a) enriched them; and (b) refined them. Only a few candidates attempted this composition. A number of students interpreted 'Literature' as the texts that they studied in class.

Suggestions for teachers

- Students should be trained to read the topic carefully and touch upon all its aspects.
- Teachers should encourage students to read as much as possible so as to enable them to handle such topics properly. The narrative composition is supposed to be a first-person account and should be handled in that manner.
- Teachers can introduce common proverbs and sayings to students and get them to write compositions based on them. This will give them enough practice on elaborating on any idea with appropriate anecdotes and references.

- (c) Although only a few candidates attempted this topic, most wrote well and were able to get their ideas across very well. However, a small number did not understand the topic and handled it literally.
- (d) This topic was an expository or ‘one-word’ topic. It could be handled in any manner whatsoever. The candidates who attempted this topic mostly based their compositions on an incident that they had faced or heard of in life which taught them that man can be deceived in various ways. Some compositions were well-written.
- (e) There were few errors. Interpretation and treatment of the topic were good. Most compositions were realistic and candidates used well-known examples from history to prove their point.
- (f) This topic was a short story beginning with a given line. A large number of candidates attempted this topic and answered it well. Most candidates incorporated all parameters of a short story. However, a few centers showed that the students were not used to story-writing and had written narratives instead. Some candidates could not relate the given line to the rest of the story, while some failed to write original stories. Some were outright copies of stories from their Literature text books.

- Students must be told that single-word or expository topics may be treated in any way possible, even a short story. In such a case, it must follow all parameters of a short story.
- Teachers should encourage students to take a stand right from the beginning. They should be discouraged from ‘sitting on the fence’. Understanding the topic is very important. Anecdotes or examples are necessary to justify one’s stand. Students who are in the habit of reading or have a good general knowledge are at an advantage when writing an argumentative composition.
- Teachers must teach students how to write a short story with the essential components of a short story – plot, characters, dialogue, a proper beginning and a logical end. Proper training and practice too is essential on how to begin or end a story if the introductory or ending line is provided in the question, as it was in this particular question. In such a case, the line in question **MUST** be related to the story, not just tagged on at random. Most importantly, the stories **MUST** be original.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 1.

General Guidelines:

The quality of language employed, the range of appropriateness of vocabulary and sentence structure, syntax, the correctness of grammatical constructions, punctuation and spelling (mentioned in the scope of syllabus) decided the overall grade of the essay.

Marks were deducted for gross errors like – errors of agreement and number, serious tense errors, wrong verb form, elementary errors of sentence construction, misuse of vocabulary, errors in spellings, punctuation or lack of it. Marks were also deducted for use of incorrect or irrelevant idioms, misuse of pronouns, articles and preposition.

(a)	This was a descriptive topic. The candidate was required to describe three important lessons that he/she has learnt through the course of his/her life. He/she had to describe how he/she learnt these lessons and why they are so important.
(b)	This was a narrative topic. It called for a true account of a personal experience. Candidates needed to write about how the reading of literature has enriched and refined them.
(c)	This was a reflective topic. The candidates were required to write in some detail how every cloud has a silver lining (one incident/ example).
(d)	This was a one-word topic. The content had a wider range / scope. All relevant interpretations / approaches were accepted.
(e)	This was an argumentative topic. Candidates were required to take a definite stand and express it clearly. The stand had to be supported by effective argumentation. Candidates could NOT sit on the fence. Candidates were not to be penalized for holding a view different from that of the examiner.
(f)	Candidates were required to begin the story with the given words. The story had to be original and not plagiarised or lifted partly or wholly from any source. It needed to have necessary elements such as plot, characterisation and dialogue. It was not to be a mere narration of events. Originality of thought and a creative bent of mind was given credit.

Question 2

Imagine that you are the Head Boy/Head Girl of ABC Public School. You have to deliver a speech at the Farewell Party organized by your juniors. Prepare a suitable speech for the occasion using the notes given below: [20]

Years spent – early memories – association with juniors – skills acquired – values learnt – memorable moment – gratitude to teachers – message for juniors – future plans – thanks giving.

Comments of Examiners

This was an exercise in amplification. It had to be in the form of a speech to be given at the Farewell party. The question provided the information that the writer was ‘the Head Boy / Head Girl of ABC Public School’. This information was largely overlooked by most of the candidates. Proper amplification of points too was not done in some cases.

Although this was a scoring question, some common points missed out by many candidates were:

- Association with juniors (confused with message)
- Skills acquired (mixed-up and only values mentioned)
- Memorable moment (confused with early memories)

Suggestions for teachers

- Students must be taught to include in their amplification all given points. Mere mention is not enough. Training should be given in this.
- This is not a composition and practice must be given to students accordingly.
- Precision and clarity in language are essential for this exercise.
- Correct formats for reports must be taught in class.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 2

This was an exercise in amplification. There had to be effective linking of points. Candidates could use the points in any order they chose; however, all points had to be used. If there was no development of points, marks were deducted.

Question 3

Answer sections (a), (b) and (c).

- (a) In each of the following items, sentence **A** is complete, while sentence **B** is not. [10]
Complete sentence **B**, making it as similar as possible to sentence **A**. Write sentence **B** in each case.

Example:

- (0) (A) No sooner had the match finished than it began to rain.
(B) Hardly.....

Answer: (0) Hardly had the match finished when it began to rain.

- (1) (A) If he does not run fast, he will lose the race.
(B) Unless.....
- (2) (A) Nobody knew much about his plans for the future.
(B) Little.....

- (3) (A) On seeing the rat, she shrieked.
(B) As soon as
- (4) (A) You must never tell a lie.
(B) Under no circumstances
- (5) (A) The boss said, "What an extraordinary success!"
(B) The boss exclaimed.....
- (6) (A) It is too cold for me to step out without a shawl.
(B) It is so.....
- (7) (A) I play both tennis and squash.
(B) Not only.....
- (8) (A) The school team lost the cricket match although the captain scored a century.
(B) Despite the fact.....
- (9) (A) Charles Dickens is the most interesting writer.
(B) No other.....
- (10) (A) They had to shut down the computers before leaving the office.
(B) The computers

(b) Fill in each blank with a suitable word. (Do not write the sentence.)

[5]

- (1) After the argument, his friends turned _____ him.
- (2) Ramesh turned _____ his father for help.
- (3) The Headmaster will look _____ the cheating case.
- (4) I look _____ to my grandfather for what he has achieved.
- (5) She takes _____ her mother; she has her lovely green eyes.
- (6) Ramesh has taken _____ computers like a duck to water.
- (7) Will you entrust him _____ that message?
- (8) He is dishonest; you must not entrust any important job _____ him.
- (9) Do not put _____ till tomorrow what you can do today.
- (10) I put _____ at my friend's house for the night.

(c) Fill in the blanks in the passage given below with the appropriate form of the verb given in brackets. Do not write the passage, but write the verbs in the correct order.

[5]

I _____(1)(realise) that I _____(2)(know) one of the two men by sight, and I _____(3) (spend) a few seconds thinking why he _____(4)(seek) me out on a Sunday afternoon.

During this pause, three small boys _____(5)(walk) up the passage from the house behind me, _____(6)(thread) a way around me and the two men outside, and silently _____(7) (climb) like cats up into a tree in the middle of the lawn outside.

There, the three figures _____(8)(rest), _____(9)(become) immobile, _____(10)(lie) on their stomachs, deep in a secret game.

Comments of Examiners

- (a) Very few candidates scored full marks in this section. Common grammatical errors were made by most candidates. Punctuation marks omitted or used unnecessarily also caused the answers to be marked wrong. Contractions were used in abundance.
- (b) Most phrasal verbs were correct although there was confusion in some cases. There was a tendency by some candidates to write more than one answer.
- (c) There was confusion in tense. Many candidates made errors in the sequence of tenses.

Suggestions for teachers

- Ample practice must be given to students in the different kinds of transformation that may come in the paper. Grammatical rules and parameters have to be explained in detail.
- Only sufficient practice can help students improve their grades in this question. There is no other way to learn prepositions properly.
- Students must be instructed not to write two answers. They should be properly trained in the correct usage of tenses.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 3

(a)	The opening word of each answer (part B) had to be given as in the question paper. No other beginning was acceptable.		
	(1)	(B)	Unless he runs fast, he will lose the race.
	(2)	(B)	Little did anybody know about his plans for the future.
	(3)	(B)	As soon as she saw the rat, she shrieked.
	(4)	(B)	Under no circumstances must you tell a lie.
	(5)	(B)	The boss exclaimed that it was an extraordinary success/ that the success was extraordinary.
	(6)	(B)	It is so cold that I cannot step out without a shawl.
	(7)	(B)	Not only do I play tennis but also squash.

	(8)	(B)	Despite the fact that the captain scored a century, the school team lost the cricket match.
	(9)	(B)	No other writer is as interesting as Charles Dickens.
	(10)	(B)	The computers had to be shut down (by them) before leaving the office.
(b)	The candidates were advised not to copy the sentences (This was done with a view to save their time). However, the strict order had to be maintained.		
	(1)	against	
	(2)	to	
	(3)	into	
	(4)	up	
	(5)	after	
	(6)	to	
	(7)	with	
	(8)	to	
	(9)	off	
	(10)	up	
(c)	For every appropriate verb form marks were given. The candidates were advised not to copy the sentence.		
	(1)	realised	
	(2)	knew	
	(3)	spent	
	(4)	had sought/ was seeking	
	(5)	walked	
	(6)	threaded / threading	
	(7)	climbed	
	(8)	rested	
	(9)	becoming/ became	
	(10)	lying	

Question 4

Read the passage given below and answer the questions (a), (b) and (c) that follow:

- (1) Inside the cockpit of the World War II Mosquito plane, I could make out, against the light of the moon, the muffled head of its pilot and the twin circles of his goggles as he looked out of the side window towards me. Carefully he raised his right hand till

I could see it in the window, fingers straight, **palm** downwards. He jabbed the fingers forward and down, meaning that we were going to descend and that I should follow him.

- (2) I nodded and quickly brought up my own left hand so he could see it, first pointing forwards to my own control panel with one forefinger, and then holding up my five spread fingers. Finally I drew my hand across my throat. By common agreement this sign meant that I had only five minutes fuel left, and then my engine would cut ~~out~~. I saw the muffled, goggled, oxygen-masked head nod in understanding, and then we were heading downwards towards the sheet of fog.
- (3) My plane stopped trembling and plunged ahead of the Mosquito. I pulled back on the throttle, hearing the engine die to a low whistle, and the other pilot was back beside me. We were diving straight towards the shrouded **land**. I glanced at my altimeter: two thousand feet, still diving.
- (4) He pulled out at three hundred feet. The fog was still below us. Probably the fog bank was only from the ground to two hundred feet up, but that was more than enough to prevent a plane from landing without guidance. I could imagine the **stream** of instructions coming from the radar hut into the earphones of the man flying beside me, eighty feet away. I kept my eyes on him, following as closely as possible, afraid of losing sight for an instant, watching for his every hand-signal. Two minutes later he held up his clenched left fist in the window, then opened the fist to splay all five fingers against the glass, indicating that I should lower the undercarriage. I moved the lever downwards and felt the dull thunk as all three wheels went down, happily powered by hydraulic pressure and not dependent on the failed electrical system.
- (5) The pilot of the shepherd aircraft pointed down again, for another descent. I managed to flick a glance at my fuel gauge: it was on zero, flickering feebly. For God's sake, hurry up, I prayed, for if my fuel failed me now there would be no time to climb to the minimum five hundred feet needed for bailing out. A jet fighter at one hundred feet without an engine is a death-trap with no chances for survival.
- (6) For two or three minutes he seemed content to hold his position, while the ~~3~~ sweat broke out behind my neck and began to run in streams down my back, sticking the light nylon flying suit to my skin.
- (7) Quite suddenly he straightened out, so fast I almost lost him. I caught him a second later and saw his left hand flash the dive signal to me. Then he dipped towards the fog **bank**, I followed, and we were in it, a shallow, flat descent, but a descent nevertheless, and from a mere hundred feet, towards nothing.

Adapted from *The Shepherd* by Fredrick Forsyth

(a)	(i)	Given below are four words and phrases. Find the words which have a similar meaning in the passage:		[4]
		(1)	go down	
		(2)	covered	
		(3)	instrument	
		(4)	satisfied	
	(ii)	For each of the words given below, write a sentence of at least ten words using the same word unchanged in form, but with a different meaning from that which it carries in the passage:		[4]
		(1)	palm (<i>line 5</i>)	
		(2)	land (<i>line 17</i>)	
		(3)	stream (<i>line 21</i>)	
		(4)	bank (<i>line 41</i>)	
(b)	Answer the following questions in your own words as briefly as possible:			
	(i)	What was the first instruction of the pilot of the Mosquito plane?		[2]
	(ii)	What was the narrator’s reply?		[3]
	(iii)	How did the other pilot let the narrator know that the wheels had to be lowered?		[2]
	(iv)	Why did the narrator begin to pray towards the end?		[3]
(c)	Describe how the pilot of the Mosquito aircraft guided the narrator to land, in not more than 100 words (Paragraphs 3 to 7). Failure to keep within the word limit will be penalised. You will be required to:			
	(i)	List your ideas clearly in point form.		[6]
	(ii)	In about 100 words, write your points in the form of a connected passage.		[6]

Comments of Examiners

- (a) (i) Most of the candidates could not write the correct word for 'instrument'. However, they were able to answer the other three words correctly.
- (ii) Some candidates changed the form of the word.
- (b) Majority of the candidates attempted this part well. In some cases, key words were missing in the answers. Many candidates were found to have lifted the answers from the passage.
- (c) (i) Many candidates did not write the points in a list; instead, they wrote in paragraphs or a grid. Some even copied entire paragraphs as points. A number of candidates only wrote six points out of which some were incorrect.
- (ii) Most candidates wrote the precis in a grid but many overshot the word limit.

Suggestions for teachers

- Teachers should teach students that the tense of the word should be the same as in the passage. They must be told to replace the word in the passage with the word given in the question to see whether it fits exactly in tense and meaning. Then only will they be able to identify the correct word from the passage.
- Emphasis must be laid on not changing the form of the word. Basic syntactical rules must be taught to students. More practice in making sentences with homonyms should be given to make them perfect.
- Teachers must train the students to read the questions carefully, understand what is required, and then answer.
- Teachers must tell students to be careful with spelling and grammatical errors in part (c). The precis must not exceed the word limit.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 4

(a)	(i)	Candidates were instructed to find words, from the passage which had a similar meaning to those given in the question paper.	
		(1)	descend
		(2)	shrouded
		(3)	gauge
		(4)	content
	(ii)	The candidates were instructed to use the following words in sentences of their own but <u>with a different meaning from that used in the passage</u> . If the form of the word was changed, marks were deducted.	
		(1)	palm – (in the passage: palm of one's hand) a tree with a mass of long leaves at the top; to palm off something when it is not good enough/ date palm/ palm tree/ palm oil/ palm leaves
		(2)	land – (in the passage: surface of the earth) to land on the ground; country or region; to fall to the earth/ land in trouble/ land a job

	(3)	stream – (in the passage: a large amount of information), narrow river, continuous flow of liquid or gas, continuous flow of people; to pour out in a flow; to move freely in wind or water/ subject stream/ stream of consciousness.
	(4)	bank – (in the passage: mass) bank for money, place where something is stored; bank of a river; to bank money; to bank a plane (turn), to bank on something.
(b)	Candidates were required to answer the questions as briefly as possible and in their own words. Marks were deducted for excessive length and gross errors. Candidates had to draw their material only from the passage.	
	(i)	The pilot of the mosquito aircraft raised his right hand with the fingers straight and the palm downwards. He then jabbed his fingers forward and downwards, indicating that they were going to descend.
	(ii)	The narrator first pointed his left forefinger towards his own control panel, then held up his five spread fingers. He then drew his hand across his throat.
	(iii)	The other pilot held up his clenched left fist in the window and then spread his fingers against the glass.
	(iv)	The narrator began to pray because his fuel gauge was on zero. If his fuel failed him, there would be no time to climb to the minimum five hundred feet needed to bail out.
(c)	Summary: Special Instructions:	
	(i)	A minimum of six points were required. Marks were given for content. The following points could be combined into six.
	(ii)	Marks were awarded for expression and the candidate's ability to express the points clearly. Marks were deducted for linguistic errors.
	<u>Possible points:</u> • The pilot of the Mosquito aircraft indicated that they should dive. } (1) • They began to descend together. • The pilot pulled out at three hundred feet. (2) • The fog was still below them. (3) • After two minutes, the other pilot indicated that he should lower his under carriage. } (4) • The undercarriage lowered successfully. • The narrator's fuel gauge came down to zero. } • The other pilot held his position while the narrator became frightened. } (5) • The other pilot suddenly straightened and indicated once again that they should dive. } (6) • They made a shallow, flat descent into the fog.	

GENERAL COMMENTS

(a) Topics found difficult by candidates:

- Essay topics such as
 - ✓ How Literature has enriched and refined you.
 - ✓ Every cloud has a silver lining.
 - ✓ Original short story
- Some sentences in Q. 3 (a)

(b) Concepts in which candidates got confused:

- Question 2: Points such as association with juniors, skills and values, early memories and memorable moments.
- Narrative composition and short story.
- Some got confusion in Question 4.

(c) Suggestions for candidates:

- Practice English- I as a whole very seriously.
- Reading of books, newspapers and periodicals is a must.
- Regular practice in grammar and vocabulary must be done.
- Solve past years' question papers.
- The 15 minute reading time should be used judiciously.
- Read instructions carefully.
- Choose composition topic only after thinking and understanding it.
- Start the paper with Question 1; then go on to Question 2; and then do Question 4. Attempt the grammar question last.
- Do not give two answers anywhere in the answer script because only the first option will be considered.
- Read through the paper on completion to avoid mistakes.