

ICSE Class 10 English Literature Sample Paper 2021

ICSE SPECIMEN PAPER 2021

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

ENGLISH Paper – 2

(Two hours)

Answers to this Paper must be written on the paper provided separately.

*You will **not** be allowed to write during the first 15 minutes.*

This time is to be spent in reading the question paper.

The time given at the head of this paper is the time allowed for writing the answers.

*Attempt **five** questions in all.*

*You must attempt at least **one** question from each of the **Sections A, B and C.***

*You may attempt the remaining **two** questions from any section(s) of your choice.*

The intended marks for questions or parts of questions are given in brackets [].

SECTION A – DRAMA

*Answer at least **one** question from this Section.*

The Merchant of Venice: Shakespeare

Question 1.

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

MOROCCO: Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun,
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath feared the valiant. By my love I swear

The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have loved it too. I would not change this hue
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

PORTIA: In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes.
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing.

- (i) Where is this scene set? Account for Morocco's presence in this place. [3]
- (ii) What can you assess of Morocco's appearance and character based on the given extract? [3]
- (iii) Mention any three actions that Morocco says he would be happy to perform in order to win Portia. [3]
- (iv) What does Morocco have to swear before he makes his 'hazard'? [3]
- (v) Portia speaks of 'the lottery of my destiny'. What exactly is she referring to? What in your opinion are Portia's feelings regarding this matter? [4]

Question 2.

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

SHYLOCK: Shall I not receive my principal?

PORTIA: Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be taken at thy peril, Jew.

- (i) Explain what Portia means by the above words. [3]
- (ii) How does Shylock respond to her words? [3]
- (iii) What more does Portia tell Shylock about the Laws of Venice as applicable to an 'alien' (foreigner)? [3]
- (iv) What does Antonio propose to do with his share of Shylock's goods? [3]
- (v) What role does Portia play in this scene? What does this reveal of her character? [4]

Question 3.

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

Antonio: But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such misery doth she cut me off.

- (i) Where is this scene set? To whom are these words addressed? To what question does Antonio respond with the words, '*But little:*'? [3]
- (ii) What does Antonio mean when he says, "*Grieve not that I have fallen to this for you*"? [3]
- (iii) What does Antonio instruct Bassanio to do immediately after speaking these lines? [3]
- (iv) What is Bassanio's response to this speech? [3]
- (v) On what note does Antonio conclude his speech? What does this reveal of Antonio's attitude to life and death? [4]

SECTION B – POETRY

Answer at least **one** question from this Section.

A Collection of Poems

Question 4.

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

And then the old man shook his head,

And with a natural sigh –

“’Tis some poor fellow’s skull,” said he,

“Who fell in the great victory.”

(*After Blenheim*, Robert Southey)

- (i) Who is the old man? What causes him to sigh? [3]
- (ii) What incident prompted the old man to give an account of the Battle of Blenheim? [3]
- (iii) How did the battle affect the old man’s family? [3]
- (iv) Name the two countries that fought each other in the battle. Which army won? [3]
What reason does the old man give for the victory?
- (v) Point out the refrain in the poem. What effect does the refrain have on the reader? What do you think is the poet’s attitude to war? [4]

Question 5.

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

‘All right!’ you’ll cry. ‘All right!’ you’ll say,

‘But if we take the set away,

What shall we do to entertain

Our darling children? Please explain!’

(*Television*, Roald Dahl)

- (i) What important lesson does the poet say he has learnt at the start of the poem? [3]
- (ii) Describe some of the scenes that the poet says he has seen in houses which have televisions. [3]
- (iii) List the ways in which television viewing affects the mind of a 'beloved tot'. [3]
- (iv) What other activity does the poet recommend to entertain children? Mention two ways in which this activity would benefit them. [3]
- (v) What does the poet advise readers to do at the end of the poem? What does he assure them will happen if they followed his suggestion? What would you say is the central idea in this poem? [4]

Question 6.

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

Their logs held tight in death's still hands

Was proof of human sin.

They didn't die from the cold without

They died from the cold within.

- (i) What was the weather like when the six people found themselves together? [3]
- (ii) Why wouldn't the third man put his piece of log in the dying fire? [3]
- (iii) What did the black man see in his piece of wood? Give an instance from the poem to show that his feelings were somewhat justified. [3]
- (iv) Who among the gathering was an opportunist? How can you say so? [3]
- (v) Would you say that 'The Cold Within' is an apt title for this poem? Give reasons for your answer. [4]

SECTION C – PROSE

Answer at least **one** question from this Section.

A Collection of Short Stories

Question 7.

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

He gave her a shove. But she did not move, rather she let herself be moved only by him and nothing else. They edged away from her; they would not look at her. She felt them go away.

- (i) Who is 'she'? Describe her. [3]
- (ii) Where is this story set? Mention any two ways in which the way of life on their planet differs from life on earth. [3]
- (iii) To what does she compare the sun? What does this tell us about her? [3]
- (iv) Why did the other children not come to her aid when William shoved her? [3]
- (v) How does her behaviour set her apart from the others? Why do you suppose the other children treat her the way they do? [4]

Question 8.

Answer the following questions with reference to R.K. Narayan's short story entitled 'A Horse and Two Goats':

The foreigner followed his look and decided that it would be a sound policy to show an interest in the old man's pets. He went up casually to them and stroked their backs with every show of courteous attention. Now the truth dawned on Muni. His dream of a lifetime was about to be realised.

- (i) What did Muni often dream of? [3]
- (ii) How was the foreigner dressed? Why did Muni feel the urge to run when he first laid eyes on him? What stopped him from doing so? [3]
- (iii) Muni assumed that a recent incident had brought this visitor to his village. Give details of this incident. [3]

- (iv) What was the visitor actually interested in? What did he offer Muni soon after they met? Why did the offer surprise Muni? [3]
- (v) Which part of the story do you find most amusing? Give reasons for your answer. [4]

Question 9.

Answer the following questions with reference to Ernest Hemmingway's short story, 'The Old Man at the Bridge',

- (a) Explain why the narrator takes so much time to converse with the old man. Use details from the story to support your answer. [4]
- (b) What statements from the story suggest that the old man is about to give up on life? Quote specific statements to back your answer. [4]
- (c) How does Hemingway show that war disrupts the lives of ordinary people? Is this portrayal realistic? Explain why you think so. [8]