

ICSE Solved Paper 2023

English Paper-2 (Literature)

Class-X

(Maximum Marks : 80)

(Time allowed : Two hour)

Attempt all seven questions.

The paper has four Sections.

Section A is compulsory - All questions in Section A must be answered.

You must attempt one question from each of the Sections B, C and D and one other question from any Section of your choice.

The intended marks or question or parts of question are given in brackets []

SECTION A

(16 Marks)

(Attempt all questions from this Section)

1. Choose the correct answers to the questions from the given options. [16]
(Do not copy the questions, write the correct answers only.)
- (i) What was the blue bead?
- (a) A piece of perforated glass
 - (b) A round blue pebble
 - (c) A blue marble
 - (d) A blue river rock
- (ii) In H.C. Anderson's story, what forces the Little Match Girl to go about selling matches on the street?
- (a) Poverty
 - (b) Greed
 - (c) The weather
 - (d) Desire for wealth.
- (iii) When Luz Long said, 'something must be eating you' he meant that Jesse Owens must be _____.
- (a) hungry for something
 - (b) troubled by something
 - (c) amused by something
 - (d) ashamed of something
- (iv) "We'll keep her a day or two longer; she is so weak and helpless."
Who said these words? To whom?
- (a) Joe Thompson to his wife
 - (b) Jane Thompson to her husband
 - (c) William to his fellow 'rocket-children'
 - (d) The people who saw the Little Match Girl sheltering from the cold.
- (v) What was the very first thing that the children noticed when it stopped raining on Venus in Ray Bradbury's story, 'All Summer in a Day'?
- (a) The blazing blue sky
 - (b) The smell of the vegetation
 - (c) The silence
 - (d) The brilliant sunshine
- (vi) Which of the following lines tells us that the poet Wordsworth carried a mental picture of the daffodils?
- (a) 'Ten thousand saw I at a glance'
 - (b) 'They flash upon that inward eye'
 - (c) 'I gazed - and gazed - but little thought'
 - (d) 'Fluttering and dancing in the breeze'
- (vii) Why, according to Maya Angelou, does the caged bird sing?
- (a) To pass the time
 - (b) Because he is hungry for 'fat worms'
 - (c) To voice his protest
 - (d) To communicate with the free bird
- (viii) The line 'The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,' in Browning's poem 'The Patriot' means _____.
- (a) 'The roofs of the houses were swaying in the wind.'
 - (b) 'The roofs were so crowded with people that they appeared to be heaving and swaying.'
 - (c) 'The house-roofs were lifted off due to an earthquake.'
 - (d) 'The roofs of houses were blown away in the heavy rain and strong wind.'
- (ix) Identify the list in which AbouBen Adhem's name appeared right at the top.
- (a) Those who love God.

- (b) Those who love their fellow human beings.
 (c) Those who were blessed by the love of God.
 (d) Those who were considered saints on earth.
- (x) **What special human quality does the poem 'Nine Gold Medals' celebrate?**
 (a) empathy
 (b) jealousy
 (c) rivalry
 (d) selfishness
- (xi) **To whom does Portia compare Bassanio as he steps forward to take the casket test?**
 (a) Midas
 (b) Mercury
 (c) Hesion
 (d) Hercules
- (xii) _____ was Portia's faithful servant.
 (a) Bellario
 (b) Balthazar
 (c) Launcelot
 (d) Stephano
- (xiii) **Why does Portia ask Shylock if he had arranged for a surgeon to be present at Antonio's trial?**
 (a) She wanted to make sure that Antonio would not bleed to death.
 (b) It was mentioned in the bond.
 (c) She wanted to stop Bassanio from harming Shylock.
 (d) She was afraid she would faint at the sight of blood.
- (xiv) **According to Lorenzo, a man who is unmoved by music is _____ .**
 (a) tone-deaf. (b) not to be trusted.
 (c) self-absorbed. (d) not fit to live.

- (xv) **"A Daniel come to judgement! Yea a Daniel" Who is being described in these words? By whom?**
 (a) Shylock, by Portia
 (b) Bassanio, by Gratiano
 (c) Antonio, by Portia
 (d) Portia, by Shylock
- (xvi) **What reason does Portia give for refusing the Duke's invitation to dinner?**
 (a) She had to hurry back to Belmont before Bassanio's return.
 (b) She already felt rewarded and satisfied at having saved Antonio.
 (c) She was afraid of being found out.
 (d) She had to return to Padua that night.

- Ans. (i) Option (a) is correct.
 (ii) Option (a) is correct.
 (iii) Option (b) is correct.
 (iv) Option (b) is correct.
 (v) Option (d) is correct.
 (vi) Option (b) is correct.
 (vii) Option (c) is correct.
 (viii) Option (b) is correct.
 (ix) Option (c) is correct.
 (x) Option (a) is correct.
 (xi) Option (d) is correct.
 (xii) Option (b) is correct.
 (xiii) Option (a) is correct.
 (xiv) Option (b) is correct.
 (xv) Option (d) is correct.
 (xvi) Option (d) is correct.

SECTION B

(Answer one or more questions from this Section)

DRAMA

(The Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare)

- 2. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:**

PORTIA:

*Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
 The husbandry and manage of my house
 Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
 I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
 To live in prayer and contemplation,
 Only attended by Nerissa here,
 Until her husband and my lord's return:*

- (i) Who does Portia refer to as 'my lord'? [3]

- (ii) Where is her lord? Why had he left in such haste? [3]
- (iii) Explain in your own words, the 'secret vow' that Portia speaks of. [3]
- (iv) What does Portia ask Lorenzo to do? Why does she make this request? What instructions does Portia give to her servant, a little later in the scene? [3]
- (v) What do we learn of Portia's real intention from her conversation with Nerissa? Which Portia do you prefer the modest Portia of the Casket scene or the - businesslike Portia we meet in this scene? Give one reason for your response. [4]

Ans. (i) Portia refers to Bassanio as 'my lord'.

(ii) Her lord, Bassanio, is in Venice. Bassanio had left in such a haste because his friend Antonio had been arrested and he had to return to Venice to rescue him.

(iii) The 'secret vow' that Portia talks means that she is going to live a life of prayer and contemplation until her husband comes back from Venice and for this purpose, she will stay in a monastery.

(iv) Portia asked Lorenzo to manage her household until her husband returns. She makes this request because she, accompanied by Nerissa, will stay in a monastery, a life of prayer and contemplation till their husbands return. A little later, Portia instructs her servant Balthazar to take the letter which she has given him and give it to her cousin, Doctor Bellario. Balthazar should also bring the notes and clothes that Doctor Bellario gives and take them to Venice as soon as possible.

(v) From Portia's conversation with Nerissa we learn that they both will dress up as men. The reference to notes and clothes indicate that Portia and Nerissa will dress up as lawyers fight the legal battle for Antonio against Shylock in the court.

I prefer the businesslike Portia that we meet in this scene because this Portia is more confident and independent enough to get things done when her husband is not around.

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

SHYLOCK: Shall I not have barely my principal?

PORTIA: Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,

To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

- (i)** What is the 'principal' that Shylock asks for? [3]
Why does Portia refuse to give it to him?
- (ii)** What is the 'forfeiture' they are referring to? [3]
What danger ('peril') would Shylock be in if he took the forfeiture?
- (iii)** What further hold does the law of Venice have on Shylock? [3]

(iv) What concession does Antonio offer to Shylock? [3]

On what condition does he make this offer?

(v) Why is Shylock in a hurry to leave the courtroom after the trial?"

How far can Shylock be blamed for the outcome of the trial?

Give one reason for your response. [4]

Ans. (i) 'Principal' is the amount of money, 3000 ducats, that Shylock gave to Antonio.

Portia refuses to give the principal amount to Shylock as according to the agreement, he can only receive the penalty and not the principal amount.

(ii) The forfeiture is the penalty, i.e. a pound of flesh from near Antonio's heart.

According to the agreement, Shylock could only take 'a pound of flesh' from near Antonio's heart assuring that not a single drop of blood is dropped from his body. If Shylock took the forfeiture, he will surely drop Antonio's blood and then he will be sentenced to death.

(iii) The law of Venice also states that if a foreigner tries to kill a citizen, that citizen will take half of his goods and the other half will be confiscated by the state. The life of this foreigner will be at the mercy of the duke.

(iv) Antonio offers Shylock his share of half of the goods owed to him.

He makes this offer on the basis of two conditions, first that Shylock converts to Christianity and second that after his death, he will give everything to his daughter and son-in-law, Lorenzo.

(v) Shylock was in a hurry to leave the courtroom after the trial because he was not feeling well after hearing the proceedings in the court.

Shylock can be blamed much for what happened in the court as he could have easily shown mercy and forgiven Antonio. He could also have taken 6000 ducats instead of 3000 ducats. But he chose not to show mercy and did not forgive Antonio.

SECTION C

*(Answer one or more questions from this Section.)***PROSE-SHORT STORIES****(Treasure Trove - A Collection of Poems and Short Stories)**

4. Read the following extract from T.S. Arthur's short story, 'An Angel in Disguise' and answer the questions that follow:

"What is to be done with the children?" That was the chief question now. The dead mother would go underground, and be forever beyond all care or concern of the villagers. But the children must not be left to starve.

- (i) Describe the way in which the children's mother died. What are the factors that led to her death? [3]
- (ii) How do the people of the village treat the woman before her death? How does their manner change after she dies? What does their behaviour tell us about human nature? [3]
- (iii) Name the woman's three children. State one fact about each of them that the author mentions at the very beginning of the story. [3]
- (iv) What happens to each of the children after the mother's funeral? [3]
- (v) Which of the three children can be considered the 'Angel in Disguise'? What does the term 'disguise' refer to in the context of this story? How does the child's arrival transform the home she enters? [4]

- Ans. (i)** The children's mother was an excessive alcoholic person who died at the threshold of her house. Due to excessive drinking, the mother had a drunken fit and died.
- (ii)** The people of village treated the woman differently. The woman is 'scoffed at' and is 'angrily denounced' by everyone in the village. And so she has no friends or family. After the woman died, the anger of the people is replaced by pity and 'denunciation' by 'sorrow'. This tells us that people can change and get emotionally attached to others. Though the people of the village did not like the woman, after her death they planned a modest funeral for her and also looked after her children.
- (iii)** The names of the three children are John, Kate, and Maggie. John is a 'stout lad', Kate is a 'bright and active girl', and Maggie is 'hopelessly diseased'.
- (iv)** After the mother's death, farmer Jones takes John so that he could help him with farming. Mrs Ellis takes Kate as she wanted a bound girl. Initially, nobody wanted to take Maggie

and it was decided that she would be left in the poorhouse. But later, Mr Joe Thompson showed pity and took her to his house.

- (v) Maggie can be considered as the 'Angel in Disguise'. Maggie turns out to be a blessing in the Thompson home. Initially, he states the fact that he plans on taking her to the poorhouse possibly the next day. She agrees somehow, but after spending a day and night with the small child, with every moment Mrs. Thompson's heart grows compassionate tending to the small orphan girl. Not having a child of her own or any interests or things to take care of, had led her to become less compassionate. Caring for the child gives her a sense of purpose and meaning in her otherwise dull housewife's life. Thus, the little girl not only changed her attitude towards them but also brought light and joy into their home. She becomes extra careful for Maggie and gives up the idea of sending her to the poorhouse. She accepts her as her child and carries her in her heart as well as arms. From a rude, ill-tempered and selfish lady, Mrs. Thompson becomes a living and compassionate person. Thompson house is filled with boundless joy which they had never experienced before. Thus Maggie, becomes an 'Angel in disguise' for the Thompsens.
5. Read the following extract from Ray Bradbury's short story, 'All Summer in a Day' and answer the questions that follow:
- "Margot"*
- They stood as if someone had driven them like so many stakes into the floor. They looked at each other and then looked away. They glanced out at the world that was raining now and raining and raining steadily. They could not meet each other's glances. Their faces were solemn and pale. They looked at their hands and feet, their faces down.*
- (i) Who is Margot?
How does the author describe her? [3]
- (ii) Who are "They"?
Where do they live?
Mention any one reality of the planet on which they live. [3]
- (iii) What two words would you use to describe what the children were experiencing in the above extract?
Why does the mention of Margot's name affect them in this way? [3]
- (iv) What event had the children awaited eagerly that day?
What made this event special?
Why did this event mean so much to Margot in particular? [3]

- (v) What is the central theme of Bradbury’s story, ‘All Summer in a Day’? What important lesson have the children learnt from this experience? Why do you suppose the story is said to end on a note of hope? [4]

Ans. (i) Margot is a nine year old girl whose family had moved from Earth to Venus when she was four years old.

The author describes Margot as a ‘very frail girl’ who looked as if she had been lost in the rain for years. She looked very pale as if the rain had taken the ‘blue from her eyes’, the red from her mouth, and the yellow from her hair. The author also describes her as an ‘old photograph’.

- (ii) ‘They’ are the classmates of Margot. These children live on planet Venus. One fact about planet Venus is that it rains heavily throughout and the sun can only be seen once in seven years.

- (iii) The two words that describe what the children were experiencing is remorse and guilty.

The mention of Margot’s name affect them because they had locked her in the closet and so she could not see the sun.

- (iv) The children had eagerly waited to see the sun that day. This event was special because on planet Venus it always rained and only after seven years sun could be seen. That day was the day when the sun would appear for two hours.

This event meant so much to Margot in particular because she remembers the warmth of the sun and she has tried to explain to other children what sun was like and what sunshine was. But the children hardly believed her. So now when the sun would appear the children will agree that whatever Margot had told them about the sun was true.

- (v) The central theme of the story “All Summer in a Day” is jealousy, bullying, and isolation. The story is about a group of children ostracizing and bullying a child who doesn’t fit in. Margot, who moved to Venus from Earth several years

before, has real memories of the sun, unlike her classmates who have seen only constant rain. As sunlight is the experience that the children on Venus cherish the most, Margot becomes a scapegoat for the children’s frustration and longing. Their jealousy of her experiences leads them to a profound act of cruelty, which suggests that jealousy and deprivation, rather than outright hatred, are the engines of bullying. The children are jealous of Margot because, while they can only speculate about what sunlight is like, Margot spent her early childhood on Earth. As the classroom prepares for Venus’ short period of sunlight, Margot writes a clever poem about the sun. Because only Margot remembers the sun. The children who inflict great harm on Margot do so not because they personally hate her, but because of a very real sense of deprivation. Margot is unjustly tormented for having seen the sun, but the children are also intensely aware that she has access to the thing that is most scarce and desirable to them. Ultimately, the story shows that even extremely cruel bullying is driven by more complicated motives than hatred alone.

Since the children had always treated Margot badly, they must have felt ashamed. The only grounds of discrimination were because Margot had actually seen the sun and the other children hadn’t. Now, that they too had seen the sun, they must have realised why Margot remained sad and cut off from them. They must have regretted locking her in the closet and must have felt guilty that she alone had missed witnessing the sun. The realisation that Margot had always been right and they had been wrongly mistreating her must be very strong among them.

The story is said to end on a note of hope because the children towards the end realise that they have treated Margot wrongly and bullied her. There is a possibility that the children will become friends with Margot and treat her well.

SECTION D

(Answer one or more questions from this Section.)

POETRY

(Treasure Trove - A Collection of Poems and Short Stories)

6. Read the following extract from William Wordsworth’s poem, ‘Daffodils’ and answer the questions that follow:

*When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,*

Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

- (i) Wordsworth uses the words, ‘wandered’ and ‘lonely’ to describe himself in the opening lines of the poem.

What mood do these words convey?

What led to a change in his mood? [3]

- (ii) How does Wordsworth describe the sight that met his eyes?

Give a brief description of what the poet saw. [3]

- (iii) To what does the poet compare this sight?

How is this comparison appropriate? [3]

- (iv) What does the poet mean when he says, 'Ten thousand saw I at a glance'?

Find two other words in the given extract that create the impression of large numbers. [3]

- (v) What immediate effect did this sight have on Wordsworth?

How did it affect him in the long-term? What does this poem tell us about Wordsworth's attitude to Nature? [4]

Ans. (i) These words create a melancholic mood. It shows that the poet is wandering aimlessly and is lonely.

On seeing the daffodils 'fluttering and dancing' in the field, the mood of the poet changes.

- (ii) The poet says that when he was wandering lonely over valleys and hills, he suddenly saw a 'crowd' of golden daffodils. These daffodils were 'fluttering and dancing' on a breezy day by the lake. It looked as if the daffodils were dancing and inviting the poet to join and enjoy the breeze flowing in the fields.

- (iii) The poet compares this sight to the numerous stars that 'twinkle on the milky way'. The shine of the daffodils is compared to the twinkling of the stars. The poet seems to be profoundly charmed by the swaying movement of the flowers due to the breeze and he remarks that the flowers seem to dance in exuberance.

- (iv) The poet in the line 'Ten thousand saw I at a glance' means that at one look he could see innumerable daffodils as if there were ten thousand of them. Two other words that create the impression of large numbers are 'crowd' and 'host'.

- (v) The sight of the daffodils being present in large numbers along the shore of the lake, spellbinds the poet and he, in a quick glance guesses them to be 'ten thousand'.

The poet could not help to be happy in such a joyful company of flowers. He says that he stared and stared, but did not realise what wealth the scene would bring him. For now, whenever he feels "vacant" or "pensive", the memory strikes "that inward eye" that is "the bliss of solitude" and his heart fills with pleasure, "and dances with the daffodils."

This tells us that Wordsworth is very much attached to the nature and that nature is an important part of his life. When the poet's mind is unrestrained by the disturbing elements

of the real world, he revives the pleasant and soothing memory of the daffodils which becomes a source of joy and inspiration for him, and he feels his heart filled with pleasure and dancing with the daffodils. So, the nature helps him cope with the solitude in his life.

7. Read the following extract from Maya Angelou's poem, 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings' and answer the questions that follow:

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams

his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream

his wings are clipped and his feet are tied

so he opens his throat to sing.

- (i) How does Angelou describe the state of the free bird in the opening lines of the poem? [3]

- (ii) Give a brief description of the caged bird's physical and mental condition. [3]

- (iii) Explain the phrase, 'grave of dreams' in your own words.

What does the caged bird sing about? [3]

- (iv) The 'free bird' and the 'caged bird' in the poem represent different groups of people. Name them.

Name any one group of people that you would call 'caged birds' in today's world. [3]

- (v) What does the title of poem, 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings', tell us about Maya Angelou's life?

Mention two ways in which the world of the caged bird differs from that of the free bird. [4]

- Ans. (i)** The opening lines of the poem describe the actions of a free bird. It takes a jump and hovers itself over the wind and travels along with the current, relishing in the sea of orange sunlight and proclaiming its freedom. Here, the 'free bird' refers to the people who enjoy the right to take their decision in life independently and enjoy the bliss of freedom.

- (ii) The poem highlights the plight of the caged bird for whom freedom is a mere dream. He has lost the hope of flying freely in the sky with his wings wide open because his wings are clipped and feet are tied. He is forced to live in a confined space and peep between the bars to have a glimpse of the outside world. He is deprived of the joy of freedom. The only thing he can do is to open his mouth and sing. Here, Maya Angelou shares her frustration of being restricted to enjoy the freedom which should have been her right as a human being.

- (iii) The phrase 'grave of dreams' means that the caged bird who is a captive, knows that his

desire and dream to be free is futile. And so his dreams culminate into nightmares. To sing, is the only freedom available to the caged bird. Though his heart is fearful and unmet, the bird continues to sing of liberty, something he does not have. The caged bird's song is not of sadness but of inspiration and hope.

- (iv) The 'free bird' represents the white people and the 'caged bird' represents the people of the black community.

According to me, in today's world, the people of Afghanistan are the caged birds who are struggling for their freedom against the Talibans.

(This is a sample response. Accept all relevant answer.)

- (v) The poem 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings' reveals Maya Angelou's feelings about her own dreams. She has so many dreams that have died because she was never given the freedom

to achieve all that her white counterparts were able to achieve. Discrimination and racism made up her cage, and although she sang, she felt her voice was not heard in the wide world, but only by those nearest to her cage.

The poem is a contrast between a 'free bird' and a 'caged bird'. The caged bird possesses its own limitations. His wings are clipped and feet are tied.

He hardly even gets a chance to see the sky. He has been placed in a cage that prevents it from flying.

Despite its fear, the cage bird continues to sing for freedom. The bird opens his mouth to sing because his desire for freedom and his desire to express himself cannot be controlled. Whereas a free bird thinks of another breeze so that he can enjoy the "sighing trees" i.e., it is free from all worries and sufferings.

