

**ICSE 2024 EXAMINATION**  
**SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER**  
**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**  
**(ENGLISH PAPER – 2)**

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*Maximum Marks: 80*

*Time allowed: 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.*

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*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 for questions or parts of questions are given in brackets [ ].*

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**SECTION A**

*(Attempt **all** questions from this Section.)*

**Question 1**

Choose the correct answers to the questions from the given options.

(Do not copy the question, write the correct answers only.)

[16]

- (i) What does Shylock demand from Antonio?
- (a) A pound of flesh
  - (b) Six thousand ducats
  - (c) An apology
  - (d) compassion
- (ii) What does Portia ask for when Bassanio steps up to take the casket test?
- (a) A banquet
  - (b) Music to be played
  - (c) A garland
  - (d) Applause

- (iii) What does Portia mean when she tells Bassanio, ‘... I am lock’d in one of them:’?
- (a) That she was locked in a cell and unable to escape.
  - (b) That she was a prisoner in her father’s house.
  - (c) That her portrait lay hidden in one of the caskets.
  - (d) That she was bound firmly by her promise to her father.
- (iv) Portia: There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper...  
What does the ‘paper’ in this extract refer to?
- (a) Portia’s letter to Bellario
  - (b) Bellario’s letter to the Duke
  - (c) Bassanio’s letter to Antonio
  - (d) Antonio’s letter to Bassanio
- (v) Why does a quarrel break out between Nerissa and Gratiano in the final Act of ‘The Merchant of Venice’?
- (a) Gratiano admits that he had given away the ring which Nerissa had given to him.
  - (b) Nerissa admits that she had accompanied Portia to Venice disguised as a lawyer’s clerk.
  - (c) Gratiano is annoyed with Nerissa for giving away his ring to a stranger in Venice.
  - (d) Nerissa is angry with Gratiano for leaving for Venice on the very day they were married.
- (vi) How does Lorenzo recognize Portia even before he sees her when the two young women return from Venice?
- (a) by the clothes she wears
  - (b) by the sound of her voice
  - (c) by the perfume she wears
  - (d) by her touch
- (vii) Which of the following statements is NOT true of Sibia?
- (a) She had long golden hair
  - (b) She had to work hard from her early years
  - (c) She was twelve years old
  - (d) She had no money to buy glass beads at the bazaar

- (viii) What had the little match girl's grandmother told her about falling stars?
- (a) When a star falls, a soul goes up to God.
  - (b) If she made a wish when she saw a star fall, her wish would come true.
  - (c) A falling star meant that it would be a cold winter.
  - (d) When a star falls, an angel dies.
- (ix) Choose the option that lists the sequence of events in the correct order.
- 1. Joe sighed in relief - he realised that this meant his wife no longer resented Maggie's presence.
  - 2. After supper, Joe went to the bedroom where Maggie lay waiting.
  - 3. Joe looked in through the window and saw Maggie in conversation with his wife Jane.
  - 4. He entered the house noisily and Jane hurried into the kitchen to make him his supper.
- (a) 1, 2, 3, 4
  - (b) 2, 4, 1, 3
  - (c) 1, 3, 2, 4
  - (d) 3, 1, 4, 2
- (x) Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statements (1) and (2) from *All Summer in a Day*.
- 1. One day, while in the school shower room, Margot had clutched her hands to her ears and covered her head, screaming and refusing to let the water touch her.
  - 2. Margot realised that she was different from the others and that the children knew this difference and stayed away.
- (a) 1 is the cause for 2
  - (b) 1 is an example of 2
  - (c) 1 is independent of 2
  - (d) 1 is a contradiction of 2
- (xi) At the running broad jump trials Jesse Owens exclaims, "Did I come 3000 miles for this?" Which of the following words best describes Jesse's mood?
- (a) envious
  - (b) frustrated
  - (c) confused
  - (d) thwarted

- (xii) The fickle-mindedness of his followers made the central character in Browning's poem *The Patriot* feel \_\_\_\_\_ .
1. ambitious
  2. disillusioned
  3. bitter
  4. optimistic
- (a) 1 and 2  
(b) 2 and 3  
(c) 3 and 4  
(d) 1 and 1
- (xiii) What is the caged bird in Maya Angelou's poem, 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings' blinded by?
- (a) Her narrow cage
  - (b) Her rage
  - (c) The sun's orange rays
  - (d) Her fears of the unknown
- (xiv) What was Abou Ben Adhem doing when the angel appeared in his room one night?
- (a) writing in a book of gold
  - (b) sleeping soundly
  - (c) walking in the moonlight
  - (d) asking questions
- (xv) What special human quality does the poem 'Nine Gold Medals' celebrate?
- (a) rivalry
  - (b) jealousy
  - (c) empathy
  - (d) selfishness
- (xvi) Which of the following lines contains the same literary device as the one in Wordsworth, "Ten thousand saw I at a glance,"
- (a) A hundred years should go to praise  
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze;
  - (b) A fair breeze blow, the white foam flew  
The furrow followed free,
  - (c) Frail as a dragon-fly's wing
  - (d) Because I could not stop for Death –  
He kindly stopped for me —

## SECTION B

(Answer **one or more** questions from this Section.)

### DRAMA

#### (The Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare)

##### Question 2

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

**Bassanio:** *A gentle scroll. — Fair lady, by your leave; [Kissing her]  
I come by note, to give and to receive.  
Like one of two contending in a prize,  
That thinks he has done well in people's eyes  
Hearing applause and universal shout  
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt  
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;*

- (i) Where did Bassanio find the 'gentle scroll'?  
What 'prize' had Bassanio just won? [3]
- (ii) Explain why Bassanio said he felt 'Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt'. [3]
- (iii) Soon thereafter, Portia gives Bassanio a ring as a token of her love. What does this gift symbolise? [3]
- (iv) What assurance does Bassanio give her while accepting this gift? [3]
- (v) What does Portia urge Bassanio to do when she learns that his friend Antonio is in trouble? What aspect of her character do her words reveal? [4]

##### Question 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 cut taken at thy peril, Jew.*

- (i) What is the 'forfeiture' Portia mentions?  
How will it prove perilous for Shylock? [3]
- (ii) What does Portia go on to tell Shylock about the laws of Venice, as applicable for a foreigner? [3]
- (iii) How does Gratiano mock Shylock at this point? [3]

(iv) What ‘mercy’ does the Duke now offer to Shylock? [3]

(v) How does Shylock react to the Duke’s decision on his punishment?  
What are your feelings for Shylock at this point in the play? Give reasons. [4]

### SECTION C

(Answer **one or more** questions from this Section.)

#### PROSE - SHORT STORIES

##### (Treasure Trove – A Collection of ICSE Poems and Short Stories)

#### Question 4

Read the extract from Ray Bradbury’s short story, ‘All Summer in a Day’ given below and answer the questions that follow:

*The girl standing in the open, held out her hand*

*“Oh look, look,” she said, trembling.*

*They came slowly to look at her opened palm.*

*In the center of it, cupped and huge, was a single raindrop. She began to cry, looking at it. They glanced quietly at the sun.*

*“Oh. Oh”*

(i) How old were ‘they’? Where were they living? What had they been doing until the girl called their attention to the raindrop? [3]

(ii) Mention any three ways in which their lives on this planet differed from life on earth. [3]

(iii) Why does the girl begin to cry when she looks at the raindrop? [3]

(iv) Describe the dramatic change in the weather immediately after the raindrop fell. [3]

(v) What feelings do ‘they’ experience at the end of the story? What had they done earlier that made them feel this way? [4]

#### Question 5

Read the following extract by Jesse Owens from ‘My Greatest Olympic Prize’, and answer the questions that follow:

*An angry athlete is an athlete who will make mistakes, as any coach will tell you. I was no exception. On the first of my three qualifying jumps, I leaped from several inches beyond the take-off board for a foul.*

(i) When and where is this story set?

What reason does the narrator, Jesse Owens, give for the heightened nationalistic feelings at this time? [3]

- (ii) In which event had Owens been confident of winning a gold medal? Why? [3]
- (iii) What had made Owens angry enough to make mistakes? [3]
- (iv) Name Owens' rival who approached him at this point? [3]
- (v) How did the two athletes perform in the finals?  
What does Jesse Owens consider his 'Greatest Olympic Prize'? Why? [4]

## SECTION D

(Answer **one or more** questions from this Section.)

### POETRY

#### (Treasure Trove – A Collection of ICSE Poems and Short Stories)

#### Question 6

Read the following extract from the poem 'Abou Ben Adhem' by Leigh Hunt and answer the questions that follow:

*Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,*

- (i) What did Abou Ben Adhem see when woke from a deep sleep one night? [3]
- (ii) What did Abou Ben Adhem ask the angel? What was the angel's response? [3]
- (iii) What did Abou request the angel to do when he learnt that his name did not appear among the names of those who loved the Lord? What does this reveal to us of Abou Ben Adhem's character? [3]
- (iv) When and how did the angel appear to Abou Ben Adhem again? What did the angel show Abou this time? [3]
- (v) What does the poet mean by 'May his tribe increase!'? Why do you think he says this? What is the central message of the poem? [4]

#### Question 7

Read the extract from David Roth's poem, 'Nine Gold Medals' given below and answer the questions that follow:

*And the banner above and nine smiling faces  
Said more than these words ever will  
Said more than these words ever will.*

- (i) What was 'special' about the athletes who were participating in this Sports Meet?  
What special quality of theirs does the poem celebrate? [3]
- (ii) Which race was the highlight of the day? What was the signal that the athletes waited for? How many athletes participated in this race? [3]
- (iii) How does the poet describe the state of mind of the athletes as they lined up for the race? Who won the race? [3]
- (iv) If you had to give this poem an alternate title, what would you call it? Give reasons for your answer. [3]
- (v) Give a brief account of what happened after the youngest athlete fell to the ground. Why do you think the author use the word 'strange' to describe the behaviour of the athletes? [4]