FRANK
NEW WAY TO SUCCESSFUL

ICSE ENGLISH LITERATURE PAPERS

Class X

For Examinations to be held in 2025

Model Test Papers
With
Detailed Solution to the Specimen Question Paper for Examination 2025

By

Aditi Chakraborty
Principal, St. Jude's High School, Kolkata

FRANKSONS

CONTENTS

PART I

Julius Caesar 3

A Collection of Poems 10

A Collection of Short Stories 19

PART II

DETAILED SOLUTION TO THE SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER FOR EXAMINATION 2025 31

SOLVED MODEL TEST PAPERS

Model Test Paper 1 40

Model Test Paper 2 50

Model Test Paper 3 60

Model Test Paper 4 67

Model Test Paper 5 74

Model Test Paper 6 82

Model Test Paper 7 91

Model Test Paper 8 98

UNSOLVED MODEL TEST PAPERS

Model Test Paper 9 105

Model Test Paper 10 110

Model Test Paper 11 115

Model Test Paper 12 120

Model Test Paper 13 125

Model Test Paper 14 129

Model Test Paper 15 133

PART I

- Julius Caesar
- A Collection of Poems
- A Collection of Short Stories

Julius Caesar

About the Author

William Shakespeare, a remarkable playwright crafted plays that cover a wide range of human experiences from comedy to tragedy. His famous works like *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Macbeth* are still popular and relevant today. Shakespeare also created many words and phrases that we still use. His influence extends beyond literature. His writings shaped English Language and celebrated both human nature and linguistic richness.

ACT THREE
Scene I

Sneak Peek

- Act III opens with growing tension building outside the Capital.
- Caesar's words sound triumphant, as if the soothsayer has been proven wrong. But actually the soothsayer's response suggests that Caesar was in danger.
- Caesar's seemingly noble refusal to prioritise his own welfare over that of others seals his fate.
- Cassius, one of the main leaders behind the plan to assassinate Caesar, urges him to enter the Capitol rather than receiving petitions in the street.

Summary of the Scene

Both the Soothsayer and Artemidorus try to warn Caesar outside the Capitol, but he refuses to listen to them. Once Caesar goes into the Capitol, the conspirators gather around him, pretending to plead a case. There was a heated debate between Caesar, Cassius and Mettellus Cimber over recalling the latter's brother, Publius. Caesar was given many warnings. The conspirators crowd around Caesar to support Metellus Cimber but he does not listen to the lowly couchings. The conspirators come closer to Caesar and suddenly Casca stabs him, and then the others follow him. Brutus plans to explain the reasons for the killing to the Roman people. Antony returns and pretends to be an ally to the conspirators. Secretly, however, he plans to strike back with the help from Octavius Caesar, who is now on his way to Rome. Antony plans a pitiless civil war.

Significance of the Scene

This scene reveals the maturity of Mark Antony's character. The plot swiftly establishes Mark Antony as a strong successor. Unlike Brutus, who appears egoistic and confused, Antony is practical and strategic. Despite being full of grief and rage at the sight of Caesar's corpse, Antony shakes hands with the conspirators to buy himself time. Only when he is alone with Caesar's body does his rage explode. Antony's fight is as much for the empire as it is for Caesar. We understand the difference between the characters of Mark Antony and Marcus Brutus. Antony infuriates the spirits of the Romans. When they think they have got 'Peace, Freedom, and Liberty', Antony the orator, waits for the opportunity to speak at Caesar's funeral and change their minds.

Scene II

Sneak Peek

- Brutus tries to justify the assassination of Caesar to the Roman public.
- Mark Antony pretends to support Brutus in order to be allowed to speak to the public.
- Octavia Caesar arrives in Rome and takes shelter with Mark Antony.

Summary of the Scene

Brutus speaks before a group of 'citizens,' or common people of Rome. He explains why Caesar had to be slain for the good of Rome. His speech was neither eloquent nor animated. Brutus's ego was revealed through his constant harping on 'I' and 'me' in his speech. Brutus explains clearly that they had to murder Caesar because of his overambitious nature. He convinces the Romans and then asks Antony to speak. Antony does not disregard the words of Brutus, but calls the conspirators, honourable men. Antony cleverly manages to turn the crowd against the conspirators by telling them about Caesar's good work. He highlights Caesar's concern for the people, as proved by the slain ruler's will. Caesar had left all his wealth to the people. Brutus and Cassius run away like madmen through the gates of Rome.

Significance of the Scene

This scene is all about Mark Antony's famous speech. Unlike Brutus, Antony does not underestimate the fickle mentality of the mob. He speaks to the public with passion. He slowly incites the crowd, with his rhetoric and dramatic actions like pulling out Caesar's will. His leadership skills emerge through this speech. His speech is a perfect foil to Brutus's egoistic speech which was devoid of empathy and passion. Brutus's supreme ego was revealed, through his constant harping on 'I' and 'me' in his speech.

Scene III

Sneak Peek

- This is a short scene about a poet Cinna who is mistaken as one of the conspirators.

Summary of the Scene

This scene involves a famous Roman poet named Cinna. (He is not the same Cinna who participated in the assassination) In this brief scene, Cinna, a poet becomes the victim of an angry mob's ire. Cinna has a bad dream and was roaming the streets aimlessly. The angry citizens seize him and ask him a number of questions. On protesting his innocence, he is still attacked and beaten to death.

Significance of the Scene

This brief scene is written like a comic interlude to break the tension. But this kind of comedy has shades of grey and definitely reinforces the mindless herd mentality. The mob are hellbent on destruction, so they get ready to kill anyone. It seems to be a short brutal scene.

ACT FOUR

Scene I

Sneak Peek

- In this scene, we see the consequences that followed Caesar's death.
- Brutus and Cassius have left Rome with their forces and followers and are at present in Greece.

Summary of the Scene

Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus meet to discuss who will be included on their list of people who will be executed. After Antony sends Lepidus on an errand to bring back Caesar's will, Antony explains to Octavius that Lepidus is useful only as a tool, someone to be used. Antony and Octavius decide to increase their preparation for the battle with the armies of Brutus and Cassius. Antony expresses his displeasure towards Lepidus and we understand that Lepidus' days are numbered.

Significance of the Scene

This Act reveals Mark Antony as a seasoned politician who is very much in control. Octavius is calm and observant. The drama helps us to understand the danger of new policies. We learn of the triumvirate and sense a dark political scene. Moral considerations appear negligible.

Scene II

Sneak Peek

- This scene opens to hostility between Brutus and Cassius.
- They are not a united front anymore and cracks have appeared in their bond.

Summary of the Scene

The scene is set up in Sardis. Brutus and Cassius are to meet Octavius and Antony. Titinius and Pindarus are informed by Brutus that he is less than happy with Cassius. We witness a quarrel between the brothers in law and the falling political leader. Their grievance is clearly understood. Brutus waits for Cassius at his military camp. Brutus expresses his belief that Cassius is not as friendly as he was before. When Cassius arrives, he begins to confront Brutus about the way Brutus has treated him. But Brutus insists that they discuss this inside his tent where the soldiers will not hear their argument.

Significance of the Scene

This scene reveals growing suspicion between Brutus and Cassius. Whereas in their earlier exchange, Cassius accused Brutus of being aloof and distant, now Brutus suspects Cassius's excessive politeness to be fake. The trust is clearly missing.

Scene III

Sneak Peek

- This scene covers the infamous quarrel between Brutus and Cassius. This scene, between the two characters reveals their conflicting views and different leadership styles.

Summary of the Scene

This is the quarrel scene inside Brutus's tent. Brutus and Cassius argue about the way each has treated the other. As their argument ends, a poet arrives to urge them to get along. Brutus, Cassius, Titinius, and Messala discuss the recent news of the enemy as well as the death of Portia. The men decide, at Brutus's urging, to meet the enemy army at Philippi. After the others leave, Caesar's ghost appears and promises to meet Brutus at Philippi.

Significance of the Scene

This is a great scene. It is dramatic and threatens to disrupt the unity of the republican forces during the time of need and danger. The basic difference in the temperaments of Brutus and Cassius is exposed. They shared the same view only about the murder of Caesar but they differed on every other point. While Brutus is idealistic and lofty, Cassius is pragmatic. Brutus' cool self-control is in direct contrast with Cassius's impatience. Shakespeare's writing style etches a beautiful portrait of Brutus's gentleness and inner conflict.

ACT FIVE

Scene I

Sneak Peek

- The army of Antony and Octavius and the army of Brutus and Cassius arrive at the field of battle. The four generals meet and exchange insults.
- After their meeting, Cassius mentions an omen that he interprets as predicting their loss.
- Brutus and Cassius discuss their plans if they were to lose and make their final farewells to each other.

Summary of the Scene

This scene opens on the plains of Philippi in Macedonia. Here, in reality two battles were fought but Shakespeare condenses them into one for the sake of dramatic effect. Before the fight takes place; there is a parley held between the leaders of the two opposing forces. The parley is marked by an exchange of taunting remarks and by challenges and counter-challenges. Each side then withdraws to prepare for battle. For the last time in life Brutus and Cassius are together. Cassius is somewhat depressed by certain evil omens but Brutus is calm and is ready to meet death whether by fighting, or by suicide if necessary. Then they bid each other a touching farewell and separate, to lead their respective forces. Octavius and Antony are on the plains of Philippi and await the arrival of their own forces.

Significance of the Scene

This scene prepares us for disaster. It has indeed been foolish for the republican generals to leave their ground on the hills and come down to fight in the plains of Philippi. There is excitement and the suspense of the confrontation of the two pairs of leaders.

Brutus still appears as an honourable philosopher but he is oppressed by a fatalist idea that his end is near. Stoicism does not help him and he is ready to commit suicide to save himself from the humiliation of being carried in chains through the streets of Rome. The touching scene of his farewell to Cassius shows us that in spite of the previous quarrel between them, his love for his friend has been genuine. Antony and Octavius are confident of victory while Brutus and Cassius are full of uncertainty.

Scene II

Sneak Peek

- This is a very short scene of about six lines.
- Brutus orders Messala to ask the forces to launch a sudden attack upon Octavius whose troops seem to be somewhat cold in their attitude.

Summary of the Scene

The plain of Philippi is alive with troop movements. The battle begins. Brutus, finding Octavius timid, gives order to attack with more effort. He sends a message to Cassius through Messala with this order. Brutus tells of immediate attack, he feels that a sudden attack will be enough to defeat them.

Significance of the Scene

The shortest scene in the play shows Brutus as an impatient general who is driven to his own defeat. His hasty action brings disaster. He is misled by the lukewarmness of Octavius and falls into the trap by giving the order too early. Brutus attacks to soon.

Scene III

Sneak Peek

- The forces of Cassius are attacked and surrounded by those of Antony.
- Cassius mistakenly thinks Titinius is dead and orders Pindarus to kill him.
- Brutus has triumphed over Octavius, but is shocked to find Cassius dead.

Summary of Scene

Antony's forces have defeated Cassius's army. Their battle plans are wrong. Cassius' forces are losing their battle. Cassius sends Titinius to get a closer look and come back to report on whether they are friends or enemies. Cassius believes that Titinius has been captured by the enemy, so he asks Pindarus to stab him. Cassius dies, and Pindarus runs away. Titinius returns with Messala. They find Cassius' body, and while Messala goes to notify Brutus, Titinius stabs himself. Messala returns with Brutus and others to find Cassius dead. They mourn over him briefly. Brutus orders his troops into battle. Although he is shown as a 'noble' man, ironically, he receives great respect after his death. Brutus addresses him as 'the last of all the Romans'.

Significance of the Scene

It is an irony that Cassius is defeated while the philosopher is successful. It seems fate is against them. The end of Cassius is really tragic. He is a better politician, has better judgement than that of Brutus but he has always accepted the latter's decision out of his genuine respect for him. His followers are devoted to him which is clear from Titinius' and Pindarus' attitude towards him. The fatal flaw in his character is impatience. He loses nerve times of crisis.

Scene IV

Sneak Peek

- Antony's soldiers capture Lucilius, thinking he is Brutus.
- When, however, the prisoner is brought to Antony, the error is discovered.
- Brutus desires Lucilius to be kept in safe custody instead of being killed.

Summary of the Scene

In this battle scene, young Cato is killed in battle, and Lucilius, pretending to be Brutus, is captured. Antony meets Lucilius and instructs his men to treat him with respect as an honourable prisoner, even though he is not really Brutus.

Significance of the Scene

This battle scene is inserted between the two tragic scenes of Cassius and Brutus. The devotion of Lucilius to Brutus is shown. He pretends to be Brutus and asks for immediate death at the hands of his captors. This gives Brutus an opportunity to escape. This is a rare example of self-sacrifice and loyalty. Fate seems to close on Brutus. Although Brutus lived to remove tyranny, but ironically, it leads to more ruthless tyranny in the hands of the Triumvirate.

Scene V

Sneak Peek

- Brutus finds that the day is lost.
- He requests his friends to stab him but they refuse.
- Antony and Octavius arrive and learn what has happened.
- Antony pays a glowing tribute to Brutus.

Summary of the Scene

Brutus tries, one by one, to persuade his companions to help him end his life, but each one refuses. The enemy's forces approach, so Brutus' friends must retreat. Brutus stays behind with Strato, who does help him kill himself. Strato tells all the Romans of Brutus' death. Lucilius knows Brutus is being true to himself. A man of perfection dies, and the tragedy ends when Caesar's death was avenged. Antony, Octavius, and others find Strato with the body of Brutus. Octavius takes Strato into his service. Antony eulogises Brutus as a noble Roman, and Octavius agrees to give him an honorable burial.

Significance of the Scene

The last scene presents the final catastrophe. The battle of Philippi is lost by the conspirators and won by the Triumvirs. Caesarism has conquered and prevailed. Octavius, the new Caesar, inherits the mantle of Julius. It is only proper that he should have the last word in the play and he has it.

The end of Brutus is very touching. Brutus falls onto the sword held by Strato. Brutus loved Caesar yet kills him out of loyalty to Rome. He kills himself because his honour is at stake. He has finished his life's work and prepares for the hour of his death. He dies without repenting.

A Collection of Poems

1. HAUNTED HOUSES

About the Poet

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807—1882) was an American poet and educator. His original works include poems like, *Paul Revere's Ride, The Song of Hiawatha,* and *Evangeline.* He was the first American to completely translate Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* and was part of the fireside poets group from New England. The great genius wrote all kinds of poems like descriptive, lyrical and narrative. His poems abound in kindness and didactic thoughts.

Summary

Haunted Houses is H W Longfellow's attempt at metaphorising a title, which at first glance, may conjure images of a fear-inducing location. As the poem unfolds, it becomes clear that the poet is referring to the term 'haunts' in the context of lingering memories and histories of the past lives rather than using it in its usual horror-filled sense. The house in the poem becomes a repository of persisting energies, experiences and legacies of the past. The speaker can hear the phantoms who are the earlier dwellers of this place. There is a certain significance to the title of this poem as it encourages the reader to explore profound existential themes such as life, death, the passage of time, the nature of existence and most importantly, the interplay between the physical and spiritual realms. The title *Haunted Houses* suggests a collision of the past and the present, thereby providing the readers with a rich metaphorical landscape for contemplation.

Explanation of the Poem

Stanza 1: All houses are frequented by ghosts of those who were born there, lived there and died there. They enter through open doors and do their work without making any noise. In those houses, phantoms roam about carrying on their business. They come and go without making any sound.

Stanza 2: These men feel the ghosts at different places in the house but to them, it just feels as if something is moving in the air. They are not visible anywhere.

Stanza 3: When there are parties the number of guests is more than originally invited because the uninvited guests are ghosts who are silent as the paintings on the walls.

Stanza 4: The guest cannot perceive their presence in a way the speaker can. It appears that the speaker who may be the poet is a ghost himself as he can see other ghosts in the house.

Stanza 5: The mortal beings do not have any 'title-deeds' because they are actually the original owners and they have handed the house over to the new generation—a claimant in the living generation.

Stanza 6: There is a feeling of tangible presence lingering in the atmosphere, an intangible sensation of movement and activity as the spirits float like earthly mists and dense vapours.

Stanza 7: The human lives are kept in equilibrium as the mortal beings have to learn to maintain a balance between the base instincts that seek material pleasure and noble instincts that aspire towards a bigger goal.

Stanza 8: The human life is full of desire to enjoy and achieve. This predicament gives a balance between input and output.

Stanza 9: The moonlight which travels from the moon to the earth is like a bridge that connects the real world.

Stanza 10: This moon light is a connection between the world of spirits and the world of the living. The bridge trembles and waivers and along with it, our thoughts also travel into mysterious regions.

Critical Comments

The poem's central theme revolves around the transient nature of life and the inevitable march of time. Longfellow reflects on the fleeting nature of human existence. The poet describes the ghosts as the rightful owners and the occupants of the house where they once lived and which they handed over to their next generation. The living world can also think that their beloved remains with them, maybe as ghosts. Perhaps, those whom we want to remain with us forever, remain with us as ghosts.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Which figure of speech is used in the title of the poem by H W Longfellow?**
   (a) personification (b) metaphor (c) simile (d) alliteration
2. **Which of the following is NOT true about the *Haunted Houses*?**
   (a) They are visited by spirits. (b) They are visited by guests.
   (c) They are deserted. (d) Strangers are entertained.
3. **Which of the following is NOT associated with the spirit in the poem?**
   (a) they glide (b) they throng (c) they waft (d) they wail
4. **Which of the following lines contains the same literary device as, 'From graves forgotten stretch their dusty hands'.**
   (a) Ten thousand saw I at a glance
   Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.
   (b) Last week in someone's place we saw
   A dozen eyeballs on the floor.
   (c) Lustrous tokens of radian lives
   For happy daughters and happy wives.
   (d) In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.

Ans. 1. (d) 2. (c) 3. (d) 4. (a)

2. THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS

About the Poet

James Henry Leigh Hunt (1784—1859) was an English essayist, writer, editor, critic, journalist, and poet. He and his brother founded the weekly, *Examiner*, which critiqued the prevailing policies. Hunt's poems, of which *Abou Ben Adhem* is probably best known, is a didactic poem.

Summary

The Glove and the Lions is a poem about a brave man who goes to extreme lengths to prove his love, but things do not go quite as expected. The poem starts in a king's court where everyone is watching a dangerous lion fight. Among the audience, there is a man named Count de Lorge who really likes his beloved. This woman knows that the Count likes her, so she thinks of a daring test for him to prove his love for her. This test involves her dropping her glove into the pit where the lions are fighting and expecting him to jump in and get it back for her. To her glee, Count de Lorge quickly jumps into the pit, grabs the glove, and hops back out before the lions can harm him. But instead of giving the glove back to the woman as a symbol of his love, he throws it at her face. The King, who's been watching all of this, thinks that what the Count did was right. He believes the woman was just showing off and that it was not fair to test love in such a dangerous way. The poem ends with the King saying that it was the woman's vanity, not true love, that made her drop the glove in the first place.

Explanation of the Poem

Stanza 1: The poem begins with the speaker describing the event that the royal court, and King Francis are attending. It is a fight between two lions and all are there to see it play out. The king is good-natured and loves a royal sport. He is amazed by the brutality of the fight and the fact that he is able to observe it from safety. He is also distracted by the beauty of a beautiful lady for whom he 'sighs.' She is the lover of another lord.

Stanza 2: This stanza explains the atmosphere of the fight. The lions begin to fight and tear into one another. Their 'blows' are strong like 'beams' and they roll around on the floor viciously. The king marvels at the fact that he is able to watch this bloody fight from the safety of his seat.

Stanza 3: Count de Lorge's beloved sees the king and is perhaps struck by his grandeur and strength. She realises that her charm attracted the king. She wants him to prove that he is 'brave as brave can be' and that he would 'do wondrous things to show his love.' She decides to drop her glove into the pit with the lions in the hope that De Lorge will rise to the occassion and retrieve it for her.

Stanza 4: The Lord jumps in quickly and the beasts are unable to touch him. He is back, regaining 'his place''but De Lorge was not amused by this gesture. Instead, he throws the glove at her face and states that he is 'rightly done' with her. He rises and leaves the arena. He understands that she did this as a way of getting attention and flaunt to her 'vanity'.

Critical Comments

The *Glove and the Lions* by Leigh Hunt, a four-stanza poem was first published in *The New Monthly Magazine*, in London. The poem revolves around a beautiful but foolish lover's vanity. The poem

is written in the form of a ballad. The speaker's voice through the poem is light-hearted and he tells the story of how one's need for attention, especially in love can go to extreme lengths. The king praises the lover and condemns the lady's pride and vanity.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Select the poetic device used in the phrase: 'horrid laughing jaws'.**

   (a) paradox (b) simile (c) metaphor (d) metonymy

2. **Which figure of speech is used in all the phrases given below?**

   Seemed the same; brave as brace; would do wondrous things; great glory will be mine.

   (a) simile (b) metaphor (c) paradox (d) alliteration

3. **Which of the following lines contain the same literary device as the following line?**

   'Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws.'

   (a) Last week in someone's place we saw
   A dozen eyeballs on the floor.

   (b) So be it when I shall grow old
   Or let me die!
   The Child is father of the Man

   (c) Tinkling, luminous, tender and clear,
   Like her bridal laughter and bridal tear.

   (d) And saw, within the moonlight in his room
   Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom.

Ans. 1. (a) 2. (d) 3. (b)

3. WHEN GREAT TREES FALL

About the Poet

Maya Angelou (1928—2014) a celebrated American poet, author, and civil rights activist, was born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri. Despite facing adversity, including racial discrimination and childhood trauma, Angelou found refuge in literature and education. She became a prominent voice for social justice, working alongside leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Angelou's autobiographical work, including *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, resonates for its candid exploration of race and identity. Alongside her literary achievements, she broke barriers in film and television, leaving behind an enduring legacy.

Summary

Maya Angelou's poem *When Great Trees Fall*, talks about what happens when important people in our lives pass away. At the start, the poet uses the imagery of huge trees falling down to show how unbearable and hard it is when these special people die. The world around them reacts strongly, just like how animals in a forest might act if a giant tree falls suddenly.

is written in the form of a ballad. The speaker's voice through the poem is light-hearted and he tells the story of how one's need for attention, especially in love can go to extreme lengths. The king praises the lover and condemns the lady's pride and vanity.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Select the poetic device used in the phrase: 'horrid laughing jaws'.**

   (a) paradox (b) simile (c) metaphor (d) metonymy

2. **Which figure of speech is used in all the phrases given below?**

   Seemed the same; brave as brace; would do wondrous things; great glory will be mine.

   (a) simile (b) metaphor (c) paradox (d) alliteration

3. **Which of the following lines contain the same literary device as the following line?**

   'Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws.'

   (a) Last week in someone's place we saw
   A dozen eyeballs on the floor.

   (b) So be it when I shall grow old
   Or let me die!
   The Child is father of the Man

   (c) Tinkling, luminous, tender and clear,
   Like her bridal laughter and bridal tear.

   (d) And saw, within the moonlight in his room
   Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom.

Ans. 1. (a) 2. (d) 3. (b)

3. WHEN GREAT TREES FALL

About the Poet

Maya Angelou (1928—2014) a celebrated American poet, author, and civil rights activist, was born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri. Despite facing adversity, including racial discrimination and childhood trauma, Angelou found refuge in literature and education. She became a prominent voice for social justice, working alongside leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Angelou's autobiographical work, including *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, resonates for its candid exploration of race and identity. Alongside her literary achievements, she broke barriers in film and television, leaving behind an enduring legacy.

Summary

Maya Angelou's poem *When Great Trees Fall*, talks about what happens when important people in our lives pass away. At the start, the poet uses the imagery of huge trees falling down to show how unbearable and hard it is when these special people die. The world around them reacts strongly, just like how animals in a forest might act if a giant tree falls suddenly.

Next, she talks about how we feel after someone important to us dies. The world seems different, and we might think about things we wish we had said or done with them. We might feel lost, like we're in a dark cave and do not know how to get out. Then, after some time has passed, she says we begin to feel peace again. Even though things will never be the same again, we start to remember the person who died and feel their presence in a different way. Although they are not here with us anymore, their existence left a mark upon us and that is all that matters.

Finally, the poem encourages us to keep living our lives, and to try to be better, because we had the chance to know these great people. Great people shed their radiance, the bereaved keep on leaving and makes the world a better place to live in spite of suffering and pain.

Explanation of the Poem

Stanza 1 and 2: In the first lines, the speaker begins by using an unlikely metaphor to describe a natural scene. She speaks about how rocks on the distant hill feels the vibrations and animals react when 'great trees fall'; lions crouch low and elephants move slowly. The loss causes some people to hide away to a safer place. The falling of great trees leaves its impact all around smaller creatures too.

Stanza 3 and 4: The poet moves on to directly speak about 'great souls' and how human beings react to their loss. The speaker opines that the bereaved find their senses overwhelmed by the loss of their loved ones. They feel like they cannot breathe. The speaker describes the way in which the air seems to become light and sterile. The speaker talks about how the mourners often experience a 'moment of hurtful clarity' where they realise just how valuable the soul that is lost was. These memories are a dagger to one's heart. The sense of loss does not make the speaker angry, rather, she goes through a despair. Mourning seems to intensify memory. This is how the poet feels about the death of her dear friend, James Baldwin.

Stanza 5: This final stanza of the poem offers hope to all mourners. After death, healing comes and time should be allowed for this. The speaker explains this when she says she is able to feel, 'peace bloom'. This means that she is able to push through the pain of loss and despair and begin to feel peace. Although the perception is not same as earlier, yet our sense are restored.

Critical Comments

When great people, heroes, brave warriors pass away, it creates both physical and psychological gaps yet to be filled. Maya Angelou wrote her poem *When Great Trees Fall* upon hearing about the death of James Baldwin (1987). The poet uses strong imagery and symbolism to analyse the affect that the passing of great souls have.

The poem's rhythm is natural and conversational engaging the thoughts of all types of human beings. The use of capital letter in the expression, 'Great souls die...' intensifies the grief and sorrow that one feels when important people in their lives die. The last three lines of the poems use Epizeuxis- 'They existed. They existed.' It is a poem about the loss of a loved one, the grief, sorrow and the acceptance of it. Great Souls died, but ideas make the world a better place to live in.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Which figure of speech is used in the line given below?**
   'the air around us becomes light, rare, sterile'.

   (a) asyndeton (b) anaphora (c) refrain (d) polyptoton

2. **Which figure of speech is used in the line given below?**
   'Our minds, formed and informed by their radiance,...'

   (a) alliteration (b) simile (c) metaphor (d) polyptoton

3. **Which of the following lines contains the same literary device as the one in the title, *When Great Trees Fall*?**

   (a) *Where gathered there for vengeance and I knew*
   That if I dipped my hand the spawn would clutch it.

   (b) *The woods decay, the woods decay and fall.*
   The vapours week their burden to the ground.

   (c) *Admit impediments, love is not love*
   Which alters when it alteration finds,
   Or bends with the remover to remove.

   (d) *In small towns by the river*
   We all want to walk with the gods.

Ans. 1. (a) 2. (d) 3. (b)

4. A CONSIDERABLE SPECK

About the Poet

Robert Frost, an influential American poet from (1874—1963) is celebrated for his realistic portrayal of rural New England life. His poetry, characterised by simple language and clear imagery, delves into complex themes of nature, humanity, and existence. Notable works such as *The Road Not Taken, Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,* and *Mending Wall* exemplify Frost's ability to capture universal experiences with depth and insight.

Summary

A Considerable Speck is a poem by Robert Frost about a small bug (a mite) that he notices on his piece of writing paper. At first, he thinks it is just a speck of dust, but then realises that it is a living creature. Frost watches as the little bug scurries across the paper, sometimes stopping as if it is scared of the pen. It even seems to drink or smell the wet ink on the paper before running away again. The bug seems really scared and tries to hide in the middle of the page.

The poet is surprised that the bug appears to display human tendencies like being able to think and use its intelligence to save itself. He feels a kind of connection with it, understanding that the bug does not want to die, just like any other living being. Instead of killing the bug, Frost decides to leave it as it is. He sees it as a small, simple creature with a mind of its own. He wants to highlight the importance of having one's own mind.

Explanation of the Poem

Lines 1 to 9: The subject of the poem seems is a mite. The poet is about to write something on a paper when he suddenly noticed a 'speck'. The 'speck' turns out to be a mite that scurries across the paper to save its life.

Lines 10 to 18: The writer shows great appreciation for the mind of an almost invisible insect precisely because his own mind does not seem to produce much. That is why he sees the mite on the page instead of going on to write. His attention is drawn towards the object which at first looks like a speck of dust flying across the page due to his breath. He gives a detailed description of what the mite did, along with an interpretation of his own.

Lines 19 to 29: The mite then ran for its life creeping, faltering, going on and hesitating. When the mite surrendered in fear, the mind of the writer was suddenly filled with several thoughts.

Lines 30 to 33: The poem ends with a quatrain and the poet is glad at the 'display of mind' on any sheet of paper. The poet allowed the mite to lie on the paper. The poet allowed the mite to lie on the paper till it slept.

Critical Comments

This poem explores a wide range of themes like the power of observation, the conflict of existence and even morality to an extent. This poem highlights the poet's character and reveals his fascination with the minutest form of life. It is a poem on individual thinking, imagination and creativity.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Which figure of speech is used in the line given below?**
   'I have none of the tenderer-than-thou.'

   (a) personification (b) metaphor

   (c) simile (d) alliteration

2. **According to the speaker, the modern world is swept by which of the following?**

   (a) individualism (b) collectivism

   (c) selfishness (d) none of the above

3. **The poem *A Considerable Speck*, captures _____.**

   (a) the journey of a mite across a sheet of paper

   (b) the poet's determination to kill the mite

   (c) the poet's encounter with a gigantic fly

   (d) the mite's attempt to escape from the fly

4. **In the poem *A Considerable Speck*, what does the poet ultimately decide to do with the creature?**

   (a) write a story about it

   (b) kill it with ink

   (c) let it be until it sleeps

   (d) capture it for observation

Ans. 1. (d) 2. (b) 3. (a) 4. (c)

5. THE POWER OF MUSIC

About the Poet

Sukumar Ray (1887—1923) was a Bengali writer and poet from India. His contributions to Bengali literature are indeed remarkable, particularly in the realm of children's literature. His pioneering efforts have left a lasting legacy, captivating generations of young readers with his humour and creativity.

'Abol Tabol' and 'HaJaBaRaLa' stand out as iconic works that showcase Ray's mastery of the nonsense verse and his ability to weave playful language into imaginative tales. Through his writings, he introduced readers to a world of absurdity, inviting them to explore the boundless possibilities of language and imagination.

Summary

The Power of Music is a funny poem about a man named Bhisma Lochan Sharma who sings very loudly. His singing is so loud that people can hear from all the way from Delhi to Burma (present-day Myanmar). His loud, bad singing causes chaos, like carts flipping over and fishes diving deep into the lake to escape the noise. The trees react by shaking and falling. The birds soaring high in the sky are badly affected by his singing and tumble around in a confused state. Although people around Bhisma beg him to stop singing because of the chaos it is causing, Bhisma turns a deaf ear towards them and continues with his loud singing. Bhisma Lochan's singing is finally put to an end when a billy goat decides to intervene. The billy goat, having had enough of Bhisma's singing, charges at him. He butts Bhisma Lochan Sharma to put an end to his singing. The poem ends with everyone enjoying the peaceful silence.

Explanation of the Poem

Lines 1 to 8: The poet exaggerates the reach of Bhisma Lochan Sharma's singing from 'Delhi down to Burma' (present-day Myanmar). The singer's music is not confined to a specific location rather it resonates across vast distances showcasing the universal appeal of music. Both humans and animal have to put up with his torturous cacophony.

Lines 9 to 16: The poet continues to describe the effect of his singing on animals, plants and even birds in the sky. Their behaviour has undergone a huge change because of Sharma's, relentless singing. Even the sky weeps and the mighty buildings collapse due to the screeching sound of his songs.

Lines 17 to 20: The people are unhappy as Bhisma Lochan continues to trouble them with his unpleasant singing. However, the billy goat that has been called 'sagacious' hits the singer with his strong horns and finally puts an end to Bhisma Lochan's singer altogether and grants the world 'the gift of silence'.

Critical Comments

The Power of Music is a poem from *The Weird and the Absurd* a collection of Bengali children's poems and rhymes composed by Sukumar Ray. This witty poem takes a humorous jab at the

loud and irritating singing of Bhisma Lochan Sharma. His music is not divine or full of melody. The poet creates humour around Bhisma Lochan's terrible singing voice by saying that one can hear his so-called music from Delhi to Burma (present-day Myanmar). His audience flees on hearing his voice, chaos ensues as trees fall, fish dive deep into the lake, horses run off causing a stampede and even birds flying in the sky overturn and stumble around in a dazed fashion! Only the arrival of a male goat and his subsequent butting made the singer quiet. The loud singing stopped and peace developed in the situation.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Which of the following did NOT happen when people heard Bhisma Lochan's singing?**

   (a) They got trampled.

   (b) They became pale and sick.

   (c) They were able to make him stop singing.

   (d) They got confused.

2. **What happens to the wretched brutes on hearing Bhisma Lochan's singing?**

   (a) They raise their feet in air.

   (b) They cry out in pain.

   (c) They wonder what is happening.

   (d) All of the above.

3. **Which of the following grants the golden gift of silence to the world?**

   (a) The wise man

   (b) The goat

   (c) Bhisma Lochan

   (d) None of the above.

4. **Which of the following lines contains the same literary device as the one in Sukumar Ray's, *'The welkin weeps to hear his screech...'*?**

   (a) *I learnt upon a coppice gate*
   When Frost was spectre-grey.

   (b) *...life is too much like a pathless wood*
   Where our face burns and tickles with cobwebs.

   (c) *To know I'm farther off from heaven than when I was a boy!*

   (d) *Beauty and Love are as body and soul.*
   Beauty is mine
   Love is the diamond.

Ans. 1. (c) 2. (d) 3. (b) 4. (a)

A Collection of Short Stories

1. WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER

About the Author

Stephen Leacock (1869—1944) was a Canadian teacher, political scientist, writer and humorist. He was best known for his satiric novel, *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* which is a satire on a fictional town called Maripisa, Ontario. He wrote 28 non-fiction books and 35 comedy books. The writer has written humorous fiction, literary essays and articles on social ironies, politics. economics, science and history.

Summary

The plot revolves around the narrator's desire to have his photograph taken to share with his family and friends after his death. Instead he has a very bitter experience with the photographer's processes. He is asked to wait for a really long time by a rather dull cold photographer. He reads the outdated magazines which have pictures of perfect models. These photographs makes him feel insecure about his physical self.

When the narrator is finally allowed into the studio, the photographer begins to position him, critiquing and adjusting his face and posture for the photograph. The photographer's constant dissatisfaction with the narrator's facial features and his insistence on adjusting them till they lose their authenticity, irritates the narrator. However, he tolerates it all until the photograph is taken, a moment captured just as the narrator, overcome with emotions, was about to leave the studio in indignation.

The story reaches its climax when the narrator returns to see the finished photograph. The photographer, instead of faithfully reproducing the narrator's likeness, has retouched, and altered the image to an extreme degree by removing or changing features to match his idealised conception of what a portrait should look like. The narrator, taken aback and offended by this total disregard for his actual appearance, delivers a passionate monologue about the importance of authenticity and how the photographer's alterations have robbed him of his identity in the image. In his final emotional outburst, he condemns the photographer for the artificiality produced by his methods.

In the end, the narrator leaves the studio in tears, leaving behind the picture – a mere 'bauble' - that bears no resemblance to his real self. The plot of *With the Photographer*, thus, provides a satirical commentary on society's obsession with idealised images. The blatant disregard of the narrator's identity is a reflection of our society's obsession with artificial perfection. The narrator left the studio with tears in his eyes.

Critical Comments

The short story highlights the most important theme of appearance versus reality. The humour of this poem is quite subdued. For example, when the narrator learns that the photographer can improve his face three quarters full, he reacts subtly. The author uses satire and irony to bring out the contrast between the narrator and the photographer. While the former is of a gentle polite nature, the latter is an egoist who is overtly proud of his professonal skills. Stephen Leacock has used irony to bring out the contrast.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Why did the photographer look at the narrator 'without enthusiasm'?**

   (a) He gave the photographer look. (b) He was an eccentric man.

   (c) He was an unprofessional man. (d) All of the above.

2. **What was the 'unwarrantable thing' done by the narrator?**

   (a) Breaking into the private space of the photographer.

   (b) Breaking into his studio without permission.

   (c) Interrupting him during the shoot.

   (d) None of the above.

3. **For which of the following did the narrator say that they were just like his?**

   (a) eyes (b) mouth (c) eyebrows (d) ears

4. **Choose the option that lists the sequence of events in the correct order.**

   1. 'Oh, there' nothing to see yet', he said, 'I have to develop the negative first'.

   2. When the photographer came out at last, he looked very grave and shook his head.

   3. The photographer had pulled a string. The photograph taken.

   4. 'Go on then with your brutal work.'

   (a) 4, 3, 2, 1 (b) 2, 3, 1, 4 (c) 2, 1, 3, 4 (d) 3, 4, 2, 1

5. **Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statements (1) and (2).**

   Statement 1: I wanted something that would depict my face as Heaven gave it to me, humble though the gift may have been.

   Statement 2: 'No', said the photographer, with a momentary glance at my face, 'the eyebrows are removed. We have a process now the Delphide for putting in new ones.'

   (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.

Ans. 1. (d) 2. (a) 3. (d) 4. (b) 5. (a)

2. THE ELEVATOR

About the Author

William Sleator (1945—2011) was an American science fiction author who wrote primarily young adult novels. His books typically deal with adolescents coming across a peculiar phenomenon related to an element of theoretical science, then trying to deal with the situation. The theme of family relationships, especially between siblings, is frequently intertwined with the science fiction plotline. Some of Sleator's other books include *The Duplicate* (1988), about what goes wrong when a boy clones himself; *Rewind* (1999), about a boy who gets to go back in time over and over in order to prevent his death; and *The Boy Who Couldn't Die* (2004), about a boy who sells his soul for immortality. He is known for his spare, stylish, comic prose and thrilling plots.

Summary

The Elevator is a short story that centres around Martin, a twelve-year-old boy who lives in an old apartment building with his father. The story starts with Martin being anxious about the building's old, unreliable elevator. The readers are informed that he had always experienced discomfort in elevators, fearing that they will breakdown, but he found this one to be particularly unpleasant.

One day when Martin decides to take the stairs in order to avoid the elevator, he finds it to be a scarier alternative due to the darkness of the stairway. To add onto this, the fact that it left him breathless makes him all the more nervous and frightened. His father, upon learning this, chastises Martin for his apparent cowardice, leading Martin to reluctantly continue using the elevator. The plot takes a turn when a fat lady enters the elevator one day. She stares at Martin intensely, unsettling him greatly. This experience is repeated over the next few days, with the lady appearing unexpectedly, and maintaining her unrelenting gaze on him, causing Martin's fear to escalate. In a desperate attempt to avoid another encounter with the lady, Martin tries to run down the stairs. However, in doing so, he falls and breaks his leg.

Now unable to take the stairs, he is forced to use the elevator with his father when returning from the hospital. When his father exits the elevator on a different floor, Martin is left alone in the elevator. To his horror, the elevator stops at the next floor where the fat lady enters, greeting Martin by name and pushing the stop button on the elevator panel, leaving the story on a cliff-hanger.

Critical Comments

The story is written from a third person' perspective and describes Martin's predicament regarding the elevator and the fat lady who appears to be ever present. The story turns surreal takes ends on a cliffhanger. The author has used this open ending as a way to leave the reader in suspense regarding what happened next. It shows how one should face fears and not run away from them. Once fear is confronted, the fear feeling vanishes.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **How did Martin's father feel when he (Martin) fell down and broke his leg?**

   (a) sympathy for Martin (b) angry and disappointed

   (c) silent and apathetic (d) none of the above

2. **Choose the option that lists the sequence of events in the correct order.**

   1. Martin watched the door slide open, revealing a green coat, a piggish face and the blue eyes which were already staring at him as if she knew he would be there.
   2. Martin stood there, unable to move, then backed away. As she saw him, her expression changed. She smiled as the door slammed.
   3. One morning the elevator stopped at the fourteenth floor, and a fat lady got on.
   4. The door closed and the elevator began to move. 'Hello, Martin,' she said and laughed and pushed the stop button.

   (a) 4, 2, 3, 1 (b) 3, 1, 2, 4 (c) 3, 2, 1, 4 (d) 4, 3, 2, 1

3. **Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statements (1) and (2) from *The Elevator*.**

   Statement 1: 'What am I going to do with you, Martin? Honestly, now you're afraid of some poor old lady.'

   Statement 2: Martin started running down the stairs. The stairs were dark and he fell.

   (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.

Ans. 1. (c) 2. (b) 3. (a)

3. THE GIRL WHO CAN

About the Author

Ama Ata Aidoo (1942—2023) is a Ghanaian author who writes about important social issues. Her work highlights the experiences of women in Africa, particularly the challenges they face in balancing tradition with personal goals.

Aidoo's novel *Changes: A Love Story* is a great story of a young woman who fights for her right to an education. She writes in an irritable style with eloquence. She probes deep to explore the concepts of love, marriage and relationships of African community.

Summary

The Girl Who Can is a short story by Ama Ata Aidoo that revolves around a young Ghanaian girl named Adjoa and her experiences within her family and community. Adjoa's grandmother, Nana, and her mother, Maami, have conflicting views about what is best for Adjoa.

The story starts with Adjoa's contemplation about her life in their village, Hasodzi, and her struggle to express her thoughts due to her young age. The narrative then introduces a recurring concern of Nana regarding Adjoa's legs, which she believes are too thin and long for a woman, based on her traditional views on womanhood. Nana holds the belief that a woman's worth is connected to her ability to bear children, which in turn is linked to having substantial hips supported by strong legs. These discussions often upset Maami, who disagrees with Nana's opinions. Nana does not consider education to be important, but Maami, on the contrary, supports Adjoa's education, seeing it as a way out of the limitations she herself faced due to a lack of formal learning.

The plot takes a turn when Adjoa is selected to participate in the district games for her school. Despite initial disbelief from Nana and Maami, they soon realise that Adjoa's thin legs are not a hindrance but an asset in the race. Adjoa wins every race she participates in along with the cup for the best all-round junior athlete, causing Nana to reconsider her views on the usefulness of Adjoa's legs.

In the end, Adjoa's achievement challenges the existing norms and perceptions about women's bodies in her community. This shift is symbolised by Nana's tears and words of recognition, acknowledging that thin legs can be useful and that the sole purpose of legs is not just for supporting child-bearing hips. Adjoa's victory opens up new possibilities for what girls and women can do, thus challenging the prevailing gender norms in their society.

Critical Comments

In the short story it is not only the protagonist Adjoa who breaks the stereotypes but also her grandmother Nana and her mother Maami undergo a transformation. The title is appropriate as it revolves around the seven-year-old Adjoa who keeps enduring a lot of societal constraints. Besides facing the problem of expressing her feelings, she is constantly reminded by her grandmother about her too long and thin legs that might come in her way during childbearing. Her victory not only opens up new opportunities but marks the beginning of a new phase in which a girl child is confined to a single role but rather bringing brilliance in multi-faceted fields. Thus, the three generation of women emerge as winners as they have accomplished what they could not think of especially coming from a small village called Hasodzi in the central region of Ghana in Africa. Although the story is narrated in the first person, yet the author has introduced in her narration an oral story telling method called the 'African Vernacular Style' to give a genuinely African flavour to Adjoa's speech 'They say I was 'born in Hasodzi...'.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Name the figure of speech in:**

   She carried the gleaming cup on her back. Like they do with babies, and other very precious things.

   (a) metaphor (b) simile (c) irony (d) alliteration

2. **Why did the narrator want to see the legs of other women who had children?**

   (a) To compare them with her own thin legs

   (b) To compare them with her grandmother's legs

(c) To compare them with her classmates' legs

(d) None of the above

3. **Choose the option that lists the sequence of events in the correct order.**

1. She carried the gleaming cup on her back.
2. When I went home to tell my mother and Nana, they had not believed it at first.
3. Nana would just laugh. 'Ah, may be with legs like hers, she might as well go to school.'
4. Each afternoon, she pulled one set of fresh old clothes from the big brass bowl to wear.

(a) 1, 2, 3, 4 (b) 3, 2, 4, 1 (c) 3, 1, 2, 4 (d) 2, 3, 1, 4

4. **Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statements (1) and (2).**

Statement 1: 'But Adjoa has legs', Nana would insist; 'except that they are too thin. And also too long for woman.'

Statement 2: Thin legs can also be useful... That 'even though some legs don't have much meat on them, to carry hips, they can run.'

(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.

Ans. 1. (b) 2. (a) 3. (b) 4. (d)

4. THE PEDESTRIAN

About the Poet

Ray Bradbury (1920—2012) was an American writer who wrote about the future, fantasy, and scary stuff. His most famous book, *Fahrenheit 451,* talks about a world where books are banned. He mostly wrote dystopian science fiction that explored themes like government control, the pressure to conform and the dangers of technological advancements. He also wrote, *The Martian Chronicles* and *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. Bradbury won lots of awards for his writing. He passed away in 2012.

Summary

The Pedestrian by Ray Bradbury is set in a dystopian future in November 2053. The plot revolves around Mister Leonard Mead, a writer, who enjoys taking long walks through the desolate city streets at night. This is something that is considered unusual in a society that spends its evenings indoors, engrossed in television.

The narrative begins with Mead embarking on his usual evening walk, describing the city as silent and empty, akin to a graveyard. The reader gets the sense that Mead is an anomaly in this world, preferring exploration and solitude over societal norms. Through his eyes, we witness a cityscape devoid of human interaction with an eerie sense of uniformity and solitude. While walking, Mead talks to the houses imagining their occupants' television-based activities. Mead's route takes him to a major intersection that is bustling during the day but is deserted at night, further emphasising the city's emptiness.

On his way back home, he is stopped by a robotic police car, the only police car left in a city of three million inhabitants. The car interrogates Mead, and he provides straightforward answers. However, his admission of being a writer and his act of walk for no specific purpose are misunderstood and deemed regressive by the car. It is revealed that as a result of society's devaluation of writing as a profession, the sales of books and magazines are stopped, replaced by television consumption. The police car unable to comprehend Mead's motivations or actions decides to take him to the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies, despite Mead's protest.

As Mead enters the vehicle the reader gets a clear understanding of the story's critique of a conformist and media dependent society that suppresses individuality, creativity and human connection. The car passes Mead's house, the only house in the city with all its lights on, representing Mead's individuality in a society of conformity. The story concludes with the police car leaving the desolate city, emphasising the chilling loneliness of the dystopian society.

Critical Comments

The Pedestrian is a science fiction short story by American writer Ray Bradbury. This story was originally published in the August 7, 1951 issue of *The Reporter* by The Fortnightly Publishing Company. *The Pedestrian* is a dystopian short story based on the theme of the dehumanising effect of technology on the people in an unnamed city. It describes one night in the life of Leonard Mead, resident of an unnamed city in the year 2053. Mr. Mead is different from the people with whom he shares the city. The inhabitants of the city are portrayed as being consumed by technology. But Mr. Mead is not and finds it normal to take walks in the city at night instead of being glued to the television.

Since the story takes place in Winter, nature is depicted as dormant. The simile comparing Mead's lungs to a Christmas tree is used to provide Mead's lonesome walks a spiritual connection by associating the simple act of breathing cold air with a festival. The author has used visual imagery to create a sad, lonely and dark atmosphere to portray Mead's lonesome walk on the road at night. There is use of personification in 'houses were gray and silent', 'The car hesitated'.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Identify the figure of speech in the line given below: 'he would stride off, sending patterns of frosty air before him like the smoke of a cigar.'**

   (a) metaphor (b) personification (c) simile (d) anaphora

2. **What does the author want to convey by referring to the people in their homes as 'gray phantoms'?**

   (a) They are old and haggard.

   (b) They are lifeless.

   (c) They have grey hairs.

   (d) They have no colours in their lives.

3. **Choose the option that lists the sequence of events in the correct order.**

1. He stood entranced, not unlike a night moth, stunned by the illumination and then drawn toward it.
2. He could not see the men in it for the bright light in his eyes.
3. He began his journey in a westerly direction, toward the hidden sea.
4. He stumbled over a particularly uneven section of sidewalk.

(a) 3, 4, 1, 2 (b) 1, 3, 2, 4 (c) 3, 1, 4, 2 (d) 2, 4, 1, 2

4. **Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statements (1) and (2).**

1. But this one particular house had all of its electric lights brightly lit, every window a loud yellow illumination, square and warm in the cool darkness.
2. And on his way he would see the cottages and homes with their dark windows, and it was not unequal to walking through a graveyard.

(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.

Ans. 1. (c) 2. (d) 3. (a) 4. (d)

5. THE LAST LESSON

About the Author

Alphonse Daudet (1840—1897) French novelist captured the essence of life in Provence, France. His short story *The Last Lesson* is a touching tale about a young boy's last day in school before a historical event, reminding readers of the importance of education and cultural heritage.

Summary

The Last Lesson by Alphonse Daudet is a poignant tale of cultural and linguistic loss, set against the backdrop of the Franco-Prussian War. The story begins with Franz, a young boy from Alsace, who is late for school and fears a scolding from M. Hamel, his teacher, especially as he is unprepared for the day's lesson on French participles. As he passes through the town, he notices the crowd in front of the town Hall's bulletin-board, which typically bears bad news. He hurries on without learning what the news is about. When Franz reaches the school, he finds it unusually quiet and notices M. Hamel wearing his formal attire, typically reserved for special occasions. Franz also observes villagers, who do not usually attend school, sitting on the back benches. He is perplexed by the entire scene.

The situation becomes clear when M. Hamel announces that this would be his last French lesson. He explains that an order from Berlin mandates only German to be taught in their schools henceforth. This sudden realisation shocks Franz and he regrets not paying attention to his French lessons earlier. Throughout the day, M. Hamel teaches passionately highlighting the beauty of the French language and its importance in their lives. Franz understands the lessons more clearly than ever before, appreciating the knowledge being imparted. The villagers also participate, echoing their regret and sharing the collective sorrow of losing their mother tongue.

M. Hamel is deeply saddened, having dedicated forty years of his life teaching in the same school, and now is to leave the following day. Yet, he courageously continues teaching till the end, underlining his dedication and love for the French language. In the end, M. Hamel choked with emotions, writes 'Vive la France!' on the blackboard, symbolising his deep-seated patriotism and his hope for the future of France. The school is then dismissed, concluding his emotional last French lesson. The story ends, living readers with a profound reflection on the significance of language and cultural identity.

Critical Comments

The plot of the story includes the exposition as it introduces the young boy Franz, also the protagonist of the story. The climax of the story is attained when M. Hamel announces that this would be his last lesson on French as the study of French is to be replaced with German language. The final resolution of the story comes when M. Hamel gets so emotional that he directly writes on the board what he feels choked and cannot articulate.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1. **Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statement (1) and (2).**

   Statement 1: Put up your hands

   Statement 2: Walking for air. Walking to see.

   (a) 1 is a contradiction of 2.

   (b) 1 is independent of 2.

   (c) 1 is the cause for 2.

   (d) 1 is an example of 2.

2. **In which month of the year is it set?**

   (a) November (b) January

   (c) December (d) September

3. **Which year of the future is the story set in?**

   (a) 2019 (b) 2035

   (c) 2053 (d) 2083

4. **Why had Mead worn sneakers while walking?**

   (a) They were smart.

   (b) He liked wearing them.

   (c) They were comfortable.

   (d) They would not make a noise and attract attention.

5. **List the sequence of events in the correct order.**

   1. The news M. Hamel gave the class seemed as a thunderclap to Franz.
   2. Franz thought of skipping class and spending the day outdoors.
   3. Franz saw the back benches in his class occupied by village people.
   4. In his school that day, everything was as quiet as Sunday morning.

   (a) 1, 2, 3, 4 (b) 4, 3, 2, 1

   (c) 2, 4, 1, 3 (d) 2, 4, 3, 1

6. **Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statement (1) and (2).**

   Statement 1: How is it, you pretend to be Frenchmen, and yet you can neither speak not write your own language?

   Statement 2: Oh, how sorry I was for not learning my lessons, for seeking bird's eggs or going sliding on the Saar!

   (a) 2 is the cause for 1.

   (b) 1 is an example of 2.

   (c) 1 is independent of 2.

   (d) 1 is a contradiction of 2.

7. **What was Franz's fear as he was going to school?**

   (a) fear of the bullies

   (b) scolding by M. Hamel

   (c) punishment for being late

   (d) none of the above

8. **What seemed to be tempting to Franz while going to school?**

   (a) playing with the village boys

   (b) swimming in the river

   (c) enjoying open nature and chirping of birds

   (d) going to a friend's house

9. **What came as a thunderclap to Franz?**

   (a) scolding by the teacher

   (b) Berlin order against teaching French

   (c) Franz's failure in the exams

   (d) defeat of French forces

10. **What was written in the new copies in the handwriting of M. Hamel?**

    (a) Country's slogan (b) France

    (c) Freedom (d) France, Alsace, France, Alsace

Ans. 1. (b) 2. (a) 3. (c) 4. (d) 5. (d)
6. (a) 7. (b) 8. (c) 9. (b) 10. (d)

PART II

- Detailed Solution to the Specimen Question Paper for Examination 2025
- Solved Model Test Papers
- Unsolved Model Test Papers

PART II

- Detailed Solution to the Specimen Question Paper for Examination 2025
- Solved Model Test Papers
- Unsolved Model Test Papers

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.

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 [ ].

Detailed Solution to the Specimen Question Paper

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) Where was Caesar put to death?

(a) on a street in Rome
(b) on the battleground of Philippi
(c) at the foot of Pompey's statue
(d) in Brutus' orchard **[Recall]**

Ans. (c) at the foot of Pompey's statue

(ii) Who asks permission to speak at Caesar's funeral?

(a) Brutus
(b) Antony
(c) Cassius
(d) Octavius **[Recall]**

Ans. (b) Antony

(iii) 'Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy...'
These lines tell us that Antony is _____.

(a) enraged
(b) sorrowful
(c) anxious
(d) frustrated **[Analysis]**

Ans. (a) enraged

(iv) When Antony says, 'This is a slight unmeritable man, / Meet to be sent on errands' he refers to _____.

(a) Lepidus
(b) Octavius
(c) Pindarus
(d) Lucilius **[Recall]**

Ans. (a) Lepidus

(v) What strategy does Cassius suggest that the conspirators follow?

(a) march towards Philippi
(b) remain where they are
(c) raise an army of foot soldiers
(d) set fire to the surrounding villages **[Understanding]**

Ans. (b) remain where they are

(vi) When Cassius says, 'My life is run his compass', he means that _____.

(a) it is the day on which Brutus was born

(b) his life had come full circle

(c) his life could be measured with a compass

(d) his life could be compared to a race **[Understanding]**

Ans. (b) his life had come full circle

(vii) Which of the given options contains the figure of speech that appears in the following line from Leigh Hunt's poem *The Glove and the Lions*: *Ramped and roared the lions*:

(a) 'Your eyes are like the diamond bright,'

(b) 'Suddenly the black night showed its teeth in a flash of lightning'.

(c) 'Rich gifts of raiment or grain or gold?'

(d) 'Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun.' **[Application]**

Ans. (c) 'Rich gifts of raiment or grain or gold?'

(viii) Which of the following is NOT an effect of Bhishma Lochan Sharma's powerful singing in Sukumar Ray's poem *The Power of Music*?

(a) 'The sky weeps tears' (b) 'The trees shake and crash'

(c) 'The people retire amazed' (d) 'The turtles whine and stare'

[Understanding]

Ans. (d) 'The turtles whine and stare'

(ix) Which of the following words does H.W. Longfellow use to describe the movement of the phantoms in his poem, *Haunted Houses*?

(a) slide (b) glide

(c) noiseless (d) invisible **[Recall]**

Ans. (b) glide

(x) The theme of Maya Angelou's poem *When Great Trees Fall* is _____.

(a) the impact of the death of a loved one on those left behind

(b) the effect of felling trees on the environment

(c) how the death of trees affects humanity

(d) the impact of natural calamities on a forest **[Analysis]**

Ans. (a) the impact of the death of a loved one on those left behind

(xi) The poem, *A Considerable Speck*, captures _____.

(a) the journey of a mite across a sheet of paper

(b) the poet's determination to kill the mite

(c) the poet's encounter with a gigantic fly

(d) the mite's attempt to escape from the fly **[Understanding]**

Ans. (a) the journey of a mite across a sheet of paper

(xii) In Stephen Leacock's *With the Photographer*, while waiting for the photographer, the narrator spent time _____.

(a) examining the studio (b) talking on his phone

(c) writing in his diary (d) reading magazines **[Recall]**

Ans. (d) reading magazines

(xiii) In Ama Ata Aidoo's short story, *The Girl Who Can*, Nana expressed her disapproval of Adjoa's legs because _____.

(a) they were slender

(b) they were muscular

(c) they were bent

(d) they were short

[Understanding]

Ans. (a) they were slender

(xiv) Choose the option that lists the sequence of events from Alphonse Daudet's short story, *The Last Lesson* in the correct order.

1. But, when he arrived at school, Franz was dismayed to find his classmates already seated quietly and solemnly in their places ... and shocked when M. Hamel simply urged him to take his place.
2. Franz hurried to school that morning. He was very late and dreaded being scolded by M. Hamel, the teacher.
3. After he had settled at his desk, he noticed something really odd: the back benches of the classroom were occupied by adults from the village!
4. He hoped to slip into the classroom unnoticed, under cover of the bustle and noise of a typical school day morning.

(a) 1, 3, 2, 4 (b) 2, 4, 1, 3

(c) 3, 1, 4, 2 (d) 4, 2, 3, 1 **[Understanding]**

Ans. (b) 2, 4, 1, 3

(xv) Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statements (1) and (2) from William Sleator's short story, *The Elevator*.

Statement 1: Terrified of the fat lady in the elevator, Martin ran down the dark stairs, fell and broke his leg.

Statement 2: Angry and disappointed that his son had behaved like a fool and a coward, Martin's father did not talk to him on the way to the hospital.

(a) (1) is true and (2) is false.

(b) (2) is true and (1) is false.

(c) (1) is the cause for (2).

(d) (1) and (2) are independent of each other.

[Analysis]

Ans. (c) (1) is the cause for (2).

(xvi) Ray Bradbury's short story, *The Pedestrian*, can be best described as _____.

(a) utopian

(b) dystopian

(c) humorous

(d) a fairy tale

[Evaluative]

Ans. (b) dystopian

SECTION B

(Answer one or more questions from this Section.)

DRAMA

(Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare)

QUESTION 2

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

Caesar: *Are we all ready? What is now amiss,*
That Caesar and his Senate must redress?

Metellus: *Most high, most mighty, and most puissant Caesar,*
Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
A humble heart, --- [He kneels]

(i) Where are the speakers?

What does 'puissant' mean? **[3]**

Explain: *'Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat a humble heart'.* **[Recall & Understanding]**

Ans. The speakers are in the Capitol/Senate/Rome.

The word 'puissant' means powerful.

In the given line, Metellus Cimber begs the mighty Caesar most humbly to listen to his plea.

(ii) At the beginning of the scene, Caesar says, *The Ides of March are come.* **[3]**

Why do you think Caesar said this?

What does the Soothsayer say in response? **[Recall & Understanding]**

Ans. Caesar had earlier been warned by the Soothsayer to beware of the Ides of March. So, Caesar reminds the Soothsayer that it had already arrived and yet nothing had happened to him.

The Soothsayer tells Caesar that though it had come, it had not yet gone.

(iii) What specific duties do the conspirators allot to Trebonius and Casca? **[3]**

Why does Cassius become nervous when Popilius Lena speaks to him as they enter? **[Recall & Understanding]**

Ans. They assign Trebonius with the task of taking Antony out of the way and ensure that he would not be near Caesar when the conspirators attacked Caesar.

Casca's duty was to be the first to attack Caesar.

Popilius Lena speaks to Cassius as they enter the Senate House and addresses him directly, wishing him success in his enterprise that day. This makes Cassius nervous as he thinks that their plot has been discovered.

(iv) What does Artemidorus want of Caesar? **[3]**

How does Caesar respond to his plea?

Ans. Artemidorus pleads that Caesar read the scroll that he had just given to him because it concerns him very closely.

Caesar responds by saying that whatever concerned him personally would be dealt with last.

(v) Shortly after this exchange, Caesar is stabbed to death by the conspirators. [4]
Whom do you sympathise with — Julius Caesar or the conspirators?
Give reasons for your choice. [Evaluative & Analysis]

Ans. Individual response: Accept either Julius Caesar or Conspirators.
Accept any three plausible reasons.

QUESTION 3

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

Brutus: *I did send to you*
For certain sums of gold, which you denied me;
For I can raise no money by vile means:
By heaven, I had rather coin my heart,
And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash
By any indirection.

(i) To whom are these words addressed? [3]
Why is Brutus angry with this person? [Recall & Understanding]

Ans. The aforementioned words are addressed to Cassius.
Brutus is angry because he had requested Cassius to send him money, but Cassius had refused to do so.

(ii) How does this person feel when he hears these words? [3]
What does he say to defend himself? [Analysis & Recall]

Ans. The person felt hurt/sad/grieved/betrayed.
To defend himself, Cassius' said that he had not refused money — the person who had given Brutus the message had made a mistake/miscommunicated the information sent.

(iii) Why did Brutus need 'certain sums of gold'? [3]
Why was he unable to raise these sums of money? [Understanding]

Ans. Brutus needed certain sums of gold to pay his legions.
He could not raise money by vile means because he could not force poor unwilling peasants to part with their money by dishonest methods. He would rather turn his heart into gold and his drops of blood into silver coins/drachmas than do such a thing.

(iv) Earlier in this scene, Brutus refers to Lucius Pella. [3]
What had he been accused of?
Who had supported him and how? [Recall]

Ans. Brutus had accused Lucius Pella of taking bribes from the Sardians which humiliated and disgraced him.
Cassius had written to Brutus pleading on behalf of Lucius Pella/ to excuse him his offences because he knew the man well.

(v) Mention any two aspects of Brutus' character that are revealed in the above extract.

What do you understand about the relationship between Brutus and the person he addresses? **[4]**

[Analysis]

Ans. Brutus, despite his self-righteous and idealistic nature, demonstrates unconscious hypocrisy by being willing to benefit from Cassius's ethically questionable fundraising, while refusing to use such methods himself.

The strain on Brutus and Cassius's relationship is becoming increasingly evident, as their differing personalities lead to arguments and highlight their incompatibility.

SECTION C

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

PROSE - SHORT STORIES

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

QUESTION 4

Read the following extract from Stephen Leacock's short story, 'With the Photographer' and answer the questions that follow:

'The photographer beckoned me in. I thought he seemed quieter and graver than before. I think, too, there was a certain pride in his manner.
He unfolded the proof of a large photograph, and we both looked at it in silence.
'Is it me?' I asked.
'Yes,' he said quietly, 'it is you, and we went on looking at it.'

(i) Where was the narrator?
Why had he gone there?
Why do you think that there was a certain pride in the photographer's manner? **[3]**

[Recall & Understanding]

Ans. The narrator was at the photography studio.

He had gone there to get his picture taken.

The photographer took pride in his work. Although he did not like the narrator's looks yet made sure that his photograph had turned out well.

(ii) What does the word 'proof' mean in this context? **[3]**

Why did the narrator ask, 'Is it me?' **[Understanding]**

Ans. In the given context, 'proof' refers to a trial/ sample impression of a print before final printing.

The narrator could not recognise himself in the photograph because everything had been altered. It did not look like him, it bore no resemblance to the narrator's face.

(iii) Which of the narrator's facial features had the photographer altered? **[3]**

[Recall]

Ans. The photographer altered the narrator's eyes, eyebrows, forehead, hairline, and mouth.

(iv) What was the only part of the narrator's face that seemed original in the photograph? **[3]**

How did the photographer plan to 'fix' this? **[Recall]**

Ans. The narrator's ears were the only part of the face that seemed original in the photograph.

The photographer planned to fix the photograph through a process called the Sulphide. He could remove the ears entirely and replace them.

(v) At the end of the story the narrator flies into a rage. **[4]**

What makes him angry? **[Understanding &**

How would you justify the narrator's angry outburst? **Analysis]**

Ans. The narrator was furious because the photograph had no original facial features/did not look like his face.

The narrator's angry outburst could be justified. His patience had been pushed to the extreme, and he felt offended and humiliated by the needless intervention. This attempt at body shaming likely hurt his sense of self-worth and self-image, causing him to lash out.

QUESTION 5

Read the following extract from Ray Bradbury's short story, 'The Pedestrian' and answer the questions that follow:

> *'He would stand upon the corner of an intersection and peer down long moonlit avenues of sidewalk in four directions, deciding which way to go, but it really made no difference;'*

(i) What was Leonard Mead's occupation? **[3]**

What did he love to do?

When is the story set? **[Recall, Understanding & Recall]**

Ans. Leonard Mead is a writer.

He loves to go out on long walks in the evening. He enjoyed the silence while he walked along the concrete sidewalks or grassy patches.

This story is set in A.D. 2053.

(ii) To what does Mead compare his walk through the empty streets? **[3]**

Mention two reasons he gives for making this comparison?

[Recall & Understanding]

Ans. He compares his walks through the empty streets to the shadow of a hawk in mid country.

Some of the reasons that led to him making this comparison are as follows:

- The roads were as deserted as the centre of a plain in the Arizona desert with no house in a thousand miles.
- He was as alone in the city, as a hawk in mid country with no habitation or people.

(iii) Why had Mead decided to change his footwear from hard-heeled shoes to sneakers? **[3]** **[Understanding]**

Ans. Mead intended to move silently through the night, the loud click of his hard-heeled shoes on the pavement alerted both the barking dogs on the streets and the people in the houses, who flicked on lights in response.

(iv) What happened quite suddenly as he was making his way home? [3]
What was Mead's immediate reaction? [Recall]

Ans. A lone car turned the corner. He was caught in its headlights.
He stood motionless/spellbound/fascinated/moved towards him.

(v) Why was Mead taken away by the police car? [4]
Would you call this a horror story or a piece of science fiction? [Understanding &
Give reasons for your answer. Analysis]

Ans. Mead was taken away for walking without a purpose.
Individual response.

SECTION D

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

POETRY

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

QUESTION 6

Read the following extract from H.W. Longfellow's poem, 'Haunted Houses' and answer the questions that follow:

'The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear;
He but perceives what is; while unto me
All that has been is visible and clear.'

(i) What makes the poet-narrator different from the stranger at his fireside? [3]
[Understanding]

Ans. He can see and hear what the stranger cannot see or hear. The stranger perceives "what is' (the present) while the narrator perceives all that 'has been' (the past).

(ii) What, according to the poet, turns a house into a 'haunted' house? [3]
[Understanding]

Ans. Houses where people have lived and died are revisited by the spirits of those who have passed on a haunted house.

(iii) Where is one likely to meet the 'phantoms' in a haunted house? [3]
[Recall]

Ans. One is likely to meet the 'phantoms' in the doorways, stairs, passageways, and halls on a haunted house.

(iv) What are the poet-narrator's views on owning property? [3]
[Recall & Understanding]

Ans. The living cannot claim ownership of houses/ lands that they occupy. Previous owners and occupants from long ago, now dead reach out from the graves to stake a claim.

(v) How do the poet's views of ghosts differ from the traditional perception of ghosts? How would you describe the mood that the poem evokes? Give one reason for your answer. [4]
[Understanding & Analysis]

Ans. This poem breaks away from the traditional perception of ghosts, which are typically portrayed as frightening, vengeful, and malevolent.

Instead, the poet presents the ghosts as comfortable, secure, and benign. This shift creates a mood of comfort and security in the poem, despite the subject matter.

QUESTION 7

Read the following extract from Maya Angelou's poem, 'When Great Trees Fall' and answer the questions that follow:

'When great trees fall
in forests,
small things recoil into silence,
their senses
eroded beyond fear.'

(i) What effect does the falling of a 'great tree' have on the creatures of the forest? **[3]**
[Recall & Understanding]

Ans. The fall of a 'great tree' sends shockwaves through the forest. Even the mightiest creatures, like lions, hunker down in fear. Larger animals, like elephants, are startled and move with a heavy lumber. The smallest creatures' recoil into silence, seeking refuge from the sudden disturbance.

(ii) How does the death of a great soul affect the lives of those left behind in the immediate aftermath of their passing? **[3]**
[Understanding]

Ans. In this moment, a suffocating weight descends, both literally and figuratively. The air thins, becoming rarefied and sterile, mirroring the way choking emotions constrict our breath. We see things with a hurtful clarity, the world stripped bare, and memories of unfulfilled promises surface, leaving a bitter taste of regret.

(iii) What long-term effect does the death of a 'great soul' have? **[3]**
[Understanding]

Ans. The death of a 'great soul' leaves a gaping hole. We are left disoriented, struggling to manage without their guidance. The emotional void is maddening, leaving some feeling unhinged and reduced to the unutterable ignorance of dark, cold caves.

(iv) What feeling is being expressed by the following lines/phrases? **[3]**
(a) small things recoil into silence (b) kind words/unsaid,
(c) Be and be/ better. For they existed **[Analysis]**

Ans. (a) The phrase 'small things recoil into silence' expresses shock/numbness.
(b) The phrase 'kind words/unsaid' expresses remorse/regret.
(c) The line 'Be and be/better. For they existed' expresses acceptance optimism/hope/joy.

(v) What is a 'great tree' a metaphor for?
What is the central message of Angelou's poem, 'When Great Trees Fall'? **[4]**
[Application & Analysis]

Ans. The 'great tree' is a metaphor for a great soul.
The loss of a loved one is traumatic yet inevitable.
The memory and influence of the great soul lingers and will continue to shape and affect our lives positively.
It brings hope and healing and inspires us to be better versions of ourselves.

Model Test Paper 1 (Solved)

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 metaphor does Antony use to describe Caesar's dead body?

(a) a fallen eagle (b) a dead lion

(c) a hunted deer (d) a slain tiger

Ans. (c) a hunted deer

(ii) Brutus: 'The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated' What does the phrase 'glory not extenuated' imply?

(a) Caesar's achievements were not belittled.

(b) Caesar's fame was not exaggerated.

(c) Caesar's pride was hurt.

(d) Caesar's legacy was tarnished due to his actions.

Ans. (a) Caesar's achievements were not belittled.

(iii) Why does Brutus accuse Cassius of having an 'itching palm'?

(a) Cassius was suspicious of Brutus' loyalty.

(b) Cassius accepted bribes.

(c) Cassius failed to distribute resources fairly among the troops.

(d) Cassius was excessively superstitious.

Ans. (b) Cassius accepted bribes.

(iv) How does Lucius respond when asked about his sleep disturbance?

(a) He admits to having a vivid dream involving Caesar's ghost.

(b) He denies crying out in his sleep or having any dreams.

(c) He confesses walking in his sleep.

(d) He claims to have heard strange noises but saw nothing.

Ans. (b) He denies crying out in his sleep or having any dreams.

Model Test Paper 1 (Solved)

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 metaphor does Antony use to describe Caesar's dead body?

(a) a fallen eagle (b) a dead lion

(c) a hunted deer (d) a slain tiger

Ans. (c) a hunted deer

(ii) Brutus: 'The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated' What does the phrase 'glory not extenuated' imply?

(a) Caesar's achievements were not belittled.

(b) Caesar's fame was not exaggerated.

(c) Caesar's pride was hurt.

(d) Caesar's legacy was tarnished due to his actions.

Ans. (a) Caesar's achievements were not belittled.

(iii) Why does Brutus accuse Cassius of having an 'itching palm'?

(a) Cassius was suspicious of Brutus' loyalty.

(b) Cassius accepted bribes.

(c) Cassius failed to distribute resources fairly among the troops.

(d) Cassius was excessively superstitious.

Ans. (b) Cassius accepted bribes.

(iv) How does Lucius respond when asked about his sleep disturbance?

(a) He admits to having a vivid dream involving Caesar's ghost.

(b) He denies crying out in his sleep or having any dreams.

(c) He confesses walking in his sleep.

(d) He claims to have heard strange noises but saw nothing.

Ans. (b) He denies crying out in his sleep or having any dreams.

(v) How does Titinius honour Cassius before taking his own life?

(a) by covering Cassius' body with a cloak

(b) by placing a laurel branch on Cassius's head

(c) by performing a ritual

(d) by crowning him with a wreath

Ans. (d) by crowning him with a wreath

(vi) What does Pindarus report back to Cassius from the hilltop?

(a) the capture of Antony

(b) encirclement of Titinius

(c) the discovery of a hidden path to safety

(d) Brutus's rallying cry to the troops

Ans. (b) encirclement of Titinius

(vii) Which of the following lines contains the same literary device as the one in H.W. Longfellow,

'Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,
As silent as the pictures on the wall.'

(a) 'The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear';

(b) 'Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By opposite attractions and desires';

(c) 'Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd
Into the realm of mystery and night,–'

(d) 'The spirit-world around this world of sense.
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere'

Ans. (d) 'The spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere and everywhere'

(viii) What happens to the pit during the lions' fight?

(a) It emanates a strong smell of rotten flesh.

(b) It shakes with thunderous applause.

(c) It gets covered in sand and mane.

(d) It darkens as the lions' shadows loom over it.

Ans. (c) It gets covered in sand and mane.

(ix) How does Angelou describe the air after the departure of great souls?

1. Sterile
2. Ominous
3. Light
4. Heavy

(a) 1 and 2 (b) 1 and 3

(c) 1 and 4 (d) 1 only

Ans. (b) 1 and 3

(v) How does Titinius honour Cassius before taking his own life?

(a) by covering Cassius' body with a cloak

(b) by placing a laurel branch on Cassius's head

(c) by performing a ritual

(d) by crowning him with a wreath

Ans. (d) by crowning him with a wreath

(vi) What does Pindarus report back to Cassius from the hilltop?

(a) the capture of Antony

(b) encirclement of Titinius

(c) the discovery of a hidden path to safety

(d) Brutus's rallying cry to the troops

Ans. (b) encirclement of Titinius

(vii) Which of the following lines contains the same literary device as the one in H.W. Longfellow,

'Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,
As silent as the pictures on the wall.'

(a) 'The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear';

(b) 'Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By opposite attractions and desires';

(c) 'Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd
Into the realm of mystery and night,–'

(d) 'The spirit-world around this world of sense.
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere'

Ans. (d) 'The spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere and everywhere'

(viii) What happens to the pit during the lions' fight?

(a) It emanates a strong smell of rotten flesh.

(b) It shakes with thunderous applause.

(c) It gets covered in sand and mane.

(d) It darkens as the lions' shadows loom over it.

Ans. (c) It gets covered in sand and mane.

(ix) How does Angelou describe the air after the departure of great souls?

1. Sterile
2. Ominous
3. Light
4. Heavy

(a) 1 and 2 (b) 1 and 3

(c) 1 and 4 (d) 1 only

Ans. (b) 1 and 3

(x) According to Frost, who can comprehend his joy in finding 'the least display of mind'?

(a) the mite
(b) those with similar intellect
(c) nobody
(d) those who know him personally

Ans. (c) nobody

(xi) Which of the following best describes Bhisma Lochan Sharma's attitude towards the chaos caused by his singing?

(a) He revels in the panic and disruption caused.
(b) He is indifferent and continues singing regardless.
(c) He wrestles with the joy of singing against the distressing chaos it causes.
(d) He regrets causing distress and tries to stop singing.

Ans. (b) He is indifferent and continues singing regardless.

(xii) Arrange the following events from the story in the correct sequence:

1. The photographer suggests using the delphide process to put in new eyebrows.
2. The photographer proposes capturing the photograph with the protagonist's face three-quarters full.
3. The photographer suggests using the sulphide process to remove the ears entirely in the print.
4. The photographer asks the protagonist to expand his lungs.

(a) 2, 4, 3, 1
(b) 2, 4, 1, 3
(c) 4, 2, 3, 1
(d) 4, 2, 1, 3

Ans. (b) 2, 4, 1, 3

(xiii) What is the primary challenge faced by Adjoa when communicating with Nana?

(a) Nana's inability to comprehend Adjoa's thoughts.
(b) Nana's reluctance to engage in conversations.
(c) Nana's initial distraction before listening to Adjoa.
(d) Adjoa's struggle to articulate her thoughts effectively.

Ans. (c) Nana's initial distraction before listening to Adjoa.

(xiv) What injury does Martin sustain in the short story *The Elevator*?

(a) broken leg
(b) broken arm
(c) sprained ankle
(d) bruised ribs

Ans. (a) broken leg

(xv) Select the option that shows the correct relationship between statements (1) and (2) from the short story *The Pedestrian*.

Statement 1: Crime was ebbing.

Statement 2: The force has been significantly reduced to one car.

(a) 1 is the cause for 2.
(b) 2 is the cause for 1.
(c) 1 is independent of 2.
(d) 1 is a contradiction of 2.

Ans. (a) 1 is the cause for 2.

(xvi) **Why was M. Hamel wearing his special attire during the lesson?**

(a) He had planned a special French lesson for the students and the villagers.

(b) He wore it as a mark of respect for the final French lesson.

(c) He was attending a special event on the importance of French later.

(d) He wanted to show how one's attire makes a statement about his nationality.

Ans. (b) He wore it as a mark of respect for the final French lesson.

SECTION B

(Answer one or more questions from this Section.)

DRAMA

(Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare)

QUESTION 2

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

Caesar: *These couchings and these lowly courtesies*
Might, fire the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
Into the law of children.

(The above extract is taken from Act III, Scene I)

(a) Who is the first one to approach Caesar with a petition and why? Where are they? **[3]**

Ans. Metellus Cimber was the first one to approach Caesar with a petition.

Metellus Cimber approaches Caesar with a petition to appeal for the reversal of his brother's banishment.

They are inside the Capitol.

(b) What does the phrase 'couchings and lowly courtesies' refer to in Caesar's speech? On whom might 'couchings and lowly courtesies' have an effect? **[3]**

Ans. Caesar uses the phrase to refer to the submissive bowings and humble salutations of Cimber. Such 'couchings and lowly courtesies' might influence ordinary or common individuals, particularly those who might be swayed by flattery or sweet words.

(c) What do Brutus and Cassius do in order to persuade Caesar? **[3]**

Ans. Brutus kissed Caesar's hand, while Cassius went further by expressing a willingness to humble himself even more, stating that he would fall as low as Caesar's foot to plead for Publius Cimber's enfranchisement.

(d) Explain the significance of the line 'I am constant as the northern star.' How does Caesar reveal his perception of himself compared to others in positions of power?[3]

Ans. Caesar compares himself to the northern star to emphasise his unyielding and unwavering nature. He asserts that, like the unchanging northern star in the sky, he remains resolute and firm in his decisions and principles. This aligns with his belief that he cannot be swayed or influenced by appeals, even as sincere as Cassius's plea for Publius Cimber's enfranchisement.

He compares himself to the unmovable northern star, suggesting that while others might be moved or influenced, he remains constant and unswayed by external appeals or prayers.

He also highlights his belief that among the numerous influential figures in the world, he stands alone in maintaining his position without wavering. He sees himself as the singular individual who remains unassailable, holding firmly to his rank without being shaken.

(e) Who was the first person to stab Caesar? What does Brutus' statement 'Ambition's debt is paid' imply? How do Casca's and Brutus suggestions to go to the pulpit reflect the conspirators' intentions after Caesar's assassination? [4]

Ans. The first person to stab Caesar was Casca.

Brutus's statement 'Ambition's debt is paid' implies that they have assassinated Caesar to stop what they perceived as his ambitious rise to power and control. It signifies that they have eliminated Caesar to balance or settle the perceived excess of ambition he held, in their eyes, restoring a perceived equilibrium to Rome.

Casca and Brutus intend to explain and justify their actions to the citizens of Rome, shaping the narrative in their favour. They aim to calm the public and prevent chaos or panic by addressing the crowd and ensuring that the citizens do not fear any immediate danger or upheaval after Caesar's death.

QUESTION 3

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

Brutus: *Be patient till the last.*
Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause,
and be silent, that you may hear. Believe me for mine
honor, and have respect to mine honor, that you may believe.
Censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses,
that you may the better judge.

(The above extract is taken from Act III, Scene II)

(a) What is the significance of 'Romans, countrymen, and lovers' in Brutus address? According to Brutus, what was his primary motivation for killing Caesar? [3]

Ans. By addressing the crowd as 'Romans, countrymen, and lovers,' Brutus aims to appeal to their patriotism, share identity as Romans, and establish emotional ties to Caesar as lovers of their country.

Brutus claims that his love for Rome exceeded his love for Caesar, justifying Caesar's assassination as a sacrifice for the greater good of Rome's freedom.

(b) What rhetorical questions does Brutus pose to the audience? What is his purpose? [3]

Ans. Brutus asks rhetorical questions challenging anyone who would prefer to live as slaves under a living Caesar than as free men after Caesar's death. These questions aim to highlight the value of freedom and the sacrifice made for the greater good.

(c) How does Brutus express his mixed feelings toward Caesar during his speech? [3]

Ans. Brutus expresses a mix of emotions: sorrow for Caesar's love, joy for his successes and honour for his bravery in battle. However, he justifies Caesar's assassination based on Caesar's perceived ambition.

(d) What instances does Antony present to challenge Brutus claim that Caesar was ambitious? **[3]**

Ans. Antony highlights the times when Caesar refused the crown three times during the Lupercal celebration. He emphasises this act as evidence against Caesar's ambition since it contradicts the idea that Caesar was power-hungry and desired kingship.

Antony brings attention to Caesar's acts of generosity, mentioning how he brought captives to Rome whose ransoms filled the general coffers.

Antony recalls moments when Caesar showed compassion by weeping for the plight of the poor. He implies that a truly ambitious person would not have shown such empathy but rather acted in a more self-serving manner.

(e) How does the crowd's reaction change throughout the speeches of Brutus and Antony? **[4]**

Ans. Initially, the crowd supports Brutus after his speech, but Antony's manipulation gradually turns their sentiments against the conspirators. They shift from agreement with Brutus to anger and a desire for revenge against Caesar's killers.

SECTION C

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

PROSE - SHORT STORIES

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

QUESTION 4

Read the following extract from William Sleator's short story, 'The Elevator' and answer the questions that follow:

> *'You're not only skinny and weak and bad at sports, his face seemed to say, but you are also a coward. After that, Martin always took the elevator. He would have to get used to it, he told himself, just like he got used to being bullied at school.'*

(a) Describe the strange woman in the elevator. **[3]**

Ans. The mysterious woman in the elevator wears an oversized, old green coat that billows around her, making her seem even larger in the confined space. Her prominent facial features—a lack of chin, fleshy cheeks, and a substantial neck—create an imposing presence. Despite her bulk, her sharp, piercing blue eyes stand out, fixing intensely on Martin, leaving him feeling deeply uncomfortable.

(b) How does Martin react after the strange woman exits the elevator? What prompts his reaction? **[3]**

Ans. After the strange woman exits the elevator, Martin reacts impulsively by running, nearly all the way to school, without caring about the woman's thoughts or perceptions. His reaction is prompted by a surge of fear, discomfort and a desperate need to escape the unsettling encounter with the strange woman in the elevator.

(c) What significance does the strange lady's change in behaviour regarding the elevator's floor destinations hold for Martin? **[3]**

Ans. Initially, the strange lady boarded the elevator at the fourteenth floor, but later, she enters on the third floor and chooses to go up to the eighteenth. This alteration in her usual pattern of floor selections disorients Martin, heightening his anxiety and adding to the unsettling nature of her presence.

(d) What does Martin desire to do to escape the unsettling situation? Why? Why was he unable to do so? **[3]**

Ans. Martin desires to press the seventh-floor button in the elevator to escape the unsettling situation and walk up the stairs. He wants to avoid the discomfort and fear associated with the mysterious woman and the slowed movement of the elevator.

However, he refrains from pressing the button because he cannot reach it without touching the woman. His reluctance to touch her stems from his discomfort and fear of her, which prevents him from taking the action he desires to escape the situation.

(e) Discuss the role of parental influence, with reference to Martin's father, in shaping Martin's responses to fear. **[4]**

Ans. Martin's father significantly impacts Martin's responses to fear. His lack of understanding and impatience worsens Martin's feelings of inadequacy, making him believe that fear signifies weakness. This influence shapes Martin's perception of himself, fostering shame and making it harder for him to confront his fears effectively. Consequently, Martin feels isolated and struggles to navigate his anxieties without proper support, impacting his ability to develop resilience and courage.

QUESTION 5

Read the following extract from Stephen Leacock's short story, 'With the Photographer' and answer the questions that follow:

> *'I waited an hour. I read the Ladies Companion for 1912, the Girls Magazine for 1902 and the Infants Journal for 1888. I began to see that I had done an unwarrantable thing in breaking in on the privacy of this man's scientific pursuits with a face like mine.'*

(a) How does the photographer initially respond to the narrator's request for a photograph? Describe the narrator's feelings during the waiting period at the photographer's studio. **[3]**

Ans. The photographer responds to the narrator's request for a photograph with disinterest and lack of enthusiasm.

During the waiting period at the photographer's studio, the narrator begins to realise the intrusion he has made into the photographer's scientific pursuits and starts to question whether his face is suitable for the photograph. The longer he waits, the more he becomes aware of his own perceived inadequacies and discomfort regarding interrupting the photographer's work.

(b) What does the photographer's behaviour reveal about his approach to his craft during the photoshoot? **[3]**

Ans. The photographer is meticulous, methodical and critical, focusing intensely on technical perfection rather than capturing the subject's authentic essence or personality.

(c) How does the narrator react to the photographer's relentless adjustments and alterations during the photoshoot? **[3]**

Ans. Initially, the protagonist tries to engage the photographer in a discussion about human aspects, but eventually feels increasingly frustrated, betrayed and dismayed by the photographer's relentless adjustments and alterations during the photoshoot.

The narrator reacts with a sense of emotional attachment and personal ownership towards his own appearance.

(d) What emotions does the narrator express when he sees the retouched photograph for the first time? **[3]**

Ans. The protagonist displays a mix of disappointment, indignation and sorrow at the drastic changes made to the photograph, feeling a profound sense of betrayal and loss of authenticity.

(e) What does the line 'I've learned to love it' mean when the narrator refers to his face? What does the photographer's behaviour reveal about societal standards of beauty and individuality? **[4]**

Ans. This phrase reflects the protagonist's journey towards self-acceptance and embracing his own unique features despite acknowledging societal norms or perceived flaws.

The photographer's relentless pursuit of perfection reflects societal pressures to conform to idealised standards of beauty, disregarding the uniqueness of an individual's features.

SECTION D

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

POETRY

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

QUESTION 6

Read the following extract from H.W. Longfellow's poem, 'Haunted Houses' and answer the questions that follow:

'Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide,
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.'

(a) Why does the poet describe every house where people have resided and died as 'haunted'? How does the label of 'harmless' contribute to the portrayal of the phantoms in the poem? **[3]**

Ans. The poet describes houses as 'haunted' to signify the lingering echoes of past lives and experiences. Labelling the phantoms as 'harmless' portrays them as benign remnants, aiming to alleviate fear and present a more peaceful coexistence between the physical and spiritual realms within these spaces.

(b) Where can the phantoms be encountered? What effect does the poet achieve by describing encounters with the phantoms at different locations within the house?[3]

Ans. The phantoms can be encountered in various locations within the house, such as doorways, staircases, and passages, as the poet mentions. Describing encounters with the

phantoms at different locations within the house creates a pervasive and all-encompassing atmosphere. It implies that these impressions or spirits are not confined to specific areas but rather permeate throughout the entirety of the dwellings.

(c) How does the poet describe the atmosphere within the illumined hall? **[3]**

Ans. The poet describes the atmosphere within the illumined hall as bustling with a multitude of quiet, inoffensive ghosts. These spectral entities create a serene and tranquil ambience, reminiscent of the peaceful stillness observed in the pictures hanging on the wall.

(d) How does the poet differentiate the perception of the stranger from his own perception? **[3]**

Ans. The poet differentiates the perception of the stranger from his own by stating that while the stranger perceives only the present reality, the poet himself is able to see and understand the vivid echoes of the past. The stranger cannot perceive the forms or hear the sounds that the poet does, indicating a limitation in the stranger's awareness of the historical layers within the shared space.

(e) What is the significance of the 'bridge of light'? Where does it descend from? Why is the bridge described as 'unsteady' and 'swaying'? **[4]**

Ans. The 'bridge of light' symbolises a connection between the spiritual and physical worlds, descending from the world of spirits to connect with the earthly realm.

It is described as 'unsteady' and 'swaying' to imply its instability, suggesting the precariousness of the link between these two realms.

QUESTION 7

Read the following extract from Sukumar Ray's poem, 'The Power of Music' and answer the questions that follow:

'He sings as though he's staked his life, he sings
as though he's hell-bent;
The people, dazed, retire amazed although they
know it's well-meant.'

(a) What does the phrase 'He sings as though he's staked his life, he sings as though he's hell-bent' suggest about Bhisma Lochan Sharma's attitude towards singing? **[3]**

Ans. This phrase implies that Bhisma Lochan Sharma sings with an intense passion and determination, as if his life depended on it. It underscores the fervour and unwavering commitment he has towards his singing, despite its chaotic consequences.

(b) What do the people think of Bhishm Lochan Sharma's intentions? How do the people react to Bhisma Lochan Sharma's singing despite understanding his intentions? **[3]**

Ans. The people, though aware of Bhisma Lochan Sharma's good intentions behind his singing, are nonetheless bewildered and astounded by the chaos it causes, leading them to be trampled in panic or suffer from sickness. They plead for him to stop singing, expressing the fear that they are nearing their end due to the havoc wreaked by his singing.

(c) Describe the impact of Bhisma Lochan Sharma's singing on animals and nature. [3]

Ans. The poem vividly portrays the havoc caused by Bhisma Lochan Sharma's singing on animals and nature. It describes how the animals react in frantic ways—bullock-carts overturn, horses panic and line the roadside, fishes dive deep into the lake in search of silence, and even the trees collapse and shake violently. The chaos extends to the sky, where birds lose control mid-flight.

(d) How does the billy goat bring an end to Bhisma Lochan Sharma's singing? [3]

Ans. A billy goat charges towards Bhisma Lochan, using its horns and bellowing to drown out the strains of his song, resulting in the golden gift of silence for the world.

(e) What does the phrase 'the golden gift of silence' signify in the context of the final stanza? Quote any two hyperbolic expressions from the poem. What role do these hyperbolic expressions play in the poem? [4]

Ans. The phrase 'the golden gift of silence' in the final stanza signifies the relief and tranquillity that follow the cessation of Bhisma Lochan Sharma's disruptive singing.

Two hyperbolic expressions in the poem are 'mighty mansions tumble' and 'The very trees collapse and shake.'

These hyperbolic expressions play a crucial role in creating humour and emphasising the exaggerated chaos caused by Bhisma Lochan Sharma's singing.