

**ICSE 2023 EXAMINATION**  
**SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER**  
**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**  
**(ENGLISH PAPER – 2)**

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*Maximum Marks: 80*

*Time allowed: Two hours*

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

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

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

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

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*The paper has four Sections.*

*Section A is compulsory – All questions in Section A must be answered.*

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

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

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**SECTION A**

*(Attempt all questions from this Section.)*

**Question 1**

Read the following questions and choose the most appropriate response from the choices given below (Please do not copy the question - simply write out in correct serial order the appropriate word or phrase.)

[16]

- (i) What did the Little Match girl see when she struck the second match?
- (a) A beautiful candle lit Christmas Tree
  - (b) Her grandmother who loved her dearly
  - (c) Bright stars shooting across the sky
  - (d) A stuffed goose waddling towards her
- (ii) What is the caged bird in Maya Angelou's poem blinded by?
- (a) Her narrow cage
  - (b) Her rage
  - (c) The sun's orange rays
  - (d) Her fears of the unknown

- (iii) In the poem that Margot wrote, (in Bradbury's story, 'All Summer in a Day'), she compares the sun to a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) penny
  - (b) clock
  - (c) flower
  - (d) lemon
- (iv) Which of the following statements is NOT true of Sibia?
- (a) She had long golden hair
  - (b) She had to work hard from her early years
  - (c) She was twelve years old
  - (d) She had no money to buy glass beads at the bazaar
- (v) Which of the following lines from the poem, 'Nine Gold Medals' tells us that the poem describes an international sporting event?
- (a) The athletes had come from so many countries
  - (b) And nine young athletes stood there determined
  - (c) The eight other athletes stopped in their tracks
  - (d) To run for the gold, for the silver and bronze
- (vi) Jesse Owens says that Hitler had kept him (Luz Long) 'under wraps'. What does the phrase 'under wraps' mean?
- (a) Wrapped in a blanket
  - (b) Gift wrapped
  - (c) A carefully concealed secret
  - (d) Beneath a wrapper
- (vii) What makes the central character in Browning's poem, 'The Patriot' feel sad and bitter?
- (a) The welcome he received
  - (b) The fickle mindedness of his followers
  - (c) Getting wet in the rain
  - (d) The flags on the church spire

(viii) Joe Thompson was a \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) barber
- (b) carpenter
- (c) gardener
- (d) wheelwright

(ix) What did Abou Ben Adhem see in his bedroom when he awoke one night?

- (a) A fairy writing in a book of gold
- (b) An angel sitting on his bed
- (c) A fairy sitting on his bed

(d) An angel writing in a book of gold

(x) What sight fills the poet Wordsworth's heart with joy?

- (a) A field of daffodils
- (b) The stars in the Milky Way
- (c) The dancing waves
- (d) The lonely cloud

(xi) When Shylock speaks of Jessica's elopement he exclaims, 'My own flesh and blood to rebel!' What feeling do his words convey?

- (a) pride
- (b) envy
- (c) betrayal
- (d) remorse

(xii) What rare quality of Bassanio's helps him choose the right casket?

- (a) His honesty and integrity
- (b) His desperate need for money
- (c) His dislike of gold and silver

(d) His ability to look beyond outward appearances

(xiii) "My deeds upon my head! I crave the law. The penalty and forfeit of my bond." Who says these words and to whom?

- (a) Portia to Antonio
- (b) Shylock to Portia
- (c) Bassanio to Portia
- (d) Antonio to Shylock

(xiv) Which of the following words best describes Antonio's attitude during the trial?

- (a) jealous
- (b) angry
- (c) generous
- (d) resigned

(xv) Why does a quarrel break out between Nerissa and Gratiano in the final Act of 'The Merchant of Venice'?

- (a) Gratiano admits that he had given away the ring which Nerissa had given to him.
- (b) Nerissa admits that she had accompanied Portia to Venice disguised as a lawyer's clerk.
- (c) Gratiano is annoyed with Nerissa for giving away his ring to a stranger in Venice.
- (d) Nerissa is angry with Gratiano for leaving for Venice on the very day they were married.

(xvi) How does Lorenzo recognize Portia even before he sees her when the two young women return from Venice?

- (a) by the clothes she wears.
- (b) by the sound of her voice.
- (c) by the perfume she uses.
- (d) by her touch.

## SECTION B

(Answer one or more questions from this Section.)

### DRAMA

(The Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare)

#### Question 2

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

**SHYLOCK:** *To bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies- and what's his reason? I am a Jew.*

- (i) Who is 'He'?  
What does Shylock want from him?  
What does Shylock mean by 'to bait fish withal' ? [3]
- (ii) Explain in your own words any three ways in which 'He' had wronged Shylock. [3]
- (iii) According to Shylock, in what ways did Jews resemble Christians? [3]
- (iv) How does Shylock use Christian example to justify his desire for revenge? [3]
- (v) The given extract reveals two distinct emotions that Shylock experiences. What are they? Give one reason to justify each of these emotions. [4]

#### Question 3

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

**Portia:** *The quality of mercy is not strained ;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath : it is twice blessed :  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes .  
Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown :*

- (i) Where does this scene take place? Why is Portia here? Why does Bassanio not recognise her? [3]

- (ii) To what is mercy compared in these lines? Why is mercy said to be 'twice blessed'? [3]
- (iii) Explain the lines: *'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown.'* [3]
- (iv) Later in her speech Portia mentions a sceptre. What is a sceptre? How, according to Portia, is mercy above the 'sceptred sway'? [3]
- (v) To whom are these words addressed? What does the person say in response to Portia's words? Portia is seen as the dramatic heroine of the play. Using references from the text mention any two aspects of her character that appeal to you most. [4]

### SECTION C

(Answer one or more questions from this Section.)

#### PROSE - SHORT STORIES

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

#### Question 4

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

*The girl standing in the open, held out her hand  
"Oh look, look," she said, trembling.  
They came slowly to look at her opened palm.  
In the center of it, cupped and huge, was a single raindrop. She began to cry,  
looking at it. They glanced quietly at the sun.  
"Oh. Oh"*

- (i) How old were 'they'? Where were they living? What had they been doing until the girl called their attention to the raindrop? [3]
- (ii) Mention any three ways in which their lives on this planet differed from life on earth. [3]
- (iii) Why does the girl begin to cry when she looks at the raindrop? [3]
- (iv) Describe the dramatic change in the weather immediately after the raindrop fell. [3]
- (v) What feelings do 'they' experience at the end of the story? What had they done earlier that made them feel this way? [4]

### Question 5

Read the following extract from Hans Christian Anderson's story, 'The Little Match Girl' and answer the questions given below:

*So the little girl walked about the streets on her naked feet, which were red and blue with cold. In her old apron she carried a great many matches and she had a packet of them in her hand as well.*

- (i) Who was 'she'? What can you conclude about her condition from the above description? [3]
- (ii) What time of the year was it? Why did she not want to go home? [3]
- (iii) What did she use the matches for? What happened when she lit the first match? [3]
- (iv) Whom did she love dearly? What did she say when this person appeared before her? [3]
- (v) What happened to the little girl at the end of the story? Would you consider this a happy ending or a sad one? Give one reason for your answer. [4]

### SECTION D

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

### POETRY

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

### Question 6

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

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

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

### Question 7

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

*And the banner above and nine smiling faces*

*Said more than these words ever will*

*Said more than these words ever will.*

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