

# ICSE Class 10 English Language Question Paper Solution 2016

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ENGLISH PAPER – 1

### Question 1

[25]

(Do not spend more than 35 minutes on this question.)

Write a composition (350 - 400 words) on any one of the following:

- (a) Write an original short story that begins with the words: “The day started off well enough, whoever thought it would .....
- (b) Narrate an incident from your own experience when you expected to do very well, but for some reason were unable to do so. Explain what happened and why it happened. What lesson did you learn from it?
- (c) “*The use of Mobile Phones must be allowed in schools.*” Express your views either for or against the statement.
- (d) You walk home from school one afternoon to find the door unlocked and on entering you are shocked to see the house in total disarray. You call out but get no answer. Describe in detail what you saw, the reason behind your house being in total disarray and how you found your family. Mention also how the experience ended and what impact it had on your life.
- (e) Study the picture given below. Write a story or a description or an account of what it suggests to you. Your composition may be about the subject of the picture or you may take suggestions from it; however, there must be clear connection between the picture and your composition.



## Comments of Examiners

- (a) The most common mistake that candidates made was not using the opening sentence in its entirety. Many of those who did were not able to 'link' the opening sentence with the rest of the story. There was no logical connection between the first sentence and the rest of the story. A serious issue that emerged was the large number of candidates who 'lifted' substantially from the ICSE text – Doctor's Journal Entry and Journey by Night.
- (b) This is a I Person account. Most candidates fared well, however, some of them failed to report incidents that were within the plausible experience of a 15-year-old. Strangely, a number of candidates from various centres described identical experiences (It was mainly attempts to find out important questions for an upcoming exam – candidate finds that none of the predicted questions feature in the actual exam).
- (c) A large number of candidates opted for this topic. Evidently this is something that has touched their lives. Candidates who scored averagely spoke in favour of banning mobile phones. However, candidates who fared well took a more liberal overview and spoke cogently on why mobile phones must be allowed. Some candidates strayed into the use of internet being allowed or disallowed in schools. As always there were several candidates who did not take a definite stand and therefore lost marks.
- (d) A popular choice, however, the emotions of fear and anxiety, the impact were not narrated. It was a mere description of events – largely burglary, kidnap, murder.
- (e) Those candidates who attempted the picture composition have either produced very perceptive and sensitively written pieces while a few were barely able to describe the picture at a very basic level.

### Suggestions for teachers

- ✓ Students must be taught the importance of writing original content.
- ✓ They must be cautioned on the dangers of plagiarism.
- ✓ Students must learn the constituents of a short story: plot, character, conversation, description. A regular practice from class VIII onwards must be ensured.
- ✓ Re-emphasise the difference between a short story and a I person account.
- ✓ Advise students to avoid the use of guide books and market notes.
- ✓ Conducting oral debates in class is very helpful for this exercise.
- ✓ Students should be advised to write logical points in favour for/ against the topic. This can be started as early as class VI.
- ✓ Students must be taught to address every part of the question and preferably follow the sequence as in the question.
- ✓ Picture compositions can be started at the primary level and encourage students to attempt this question.

## MARKING SCHEME

### Question 1.

(a)	The story must be original and must begin with the given sentence. The story may take any form but should convey the sequence of events where the day which started off well turned out to be either better or worse. There must be a clear difference between the beginning of the day and its close.
(b)	This is a first person account and the candidate must write from his/her own view point. The composition should express aspiration, hope followed by disappointment and failure. The composition should also explain the cause of the failure and what was the lesson learnt from it.
(c)	Views for or against the motion are to be accepted. The child should take a clear stand and give valid reasons for whatever stand he/she takes.
(d)	A clear description is essential with the sequence of events in proper order. The child should use his/her imagination to narrate the fear/confusion on finding the house in a mess. It is essential for the narrative to have a proper conclusion as to how the child survived the experience and its impact on the child.
(e)	Accept a broad interpretation but keep in mind that there must be a clear connection between the picture and the composition.

### Question 2

[10]

*(Do not spend more than 20 minutes on this question.)*

Select **any one** of the following:

- (a) Your class wants to visit a well-known historical monument in a nearby town. Write a letter to your Principal seeking permission and say why you would benefit from the visit.
- (b) Your school recently held a jubilee celebration. Write a letter to your friend who was unable to attend, giving details of the function and your role in it.

### Comments of Examiners

- (a) A majority of candidates are still not trained to write the correct format of letter writing. Common mistakes in format were: Respected Sir/ Yours obediently/ XYZ/ Principle (in place of Principal). Common mistakes in Body were: Candidates did not name the historical monument/ the town.
- (b) Most candidates are still not being taught the correct format of letter writing. Candidates did not mention which jubilee was being celebrated.

### Suggestions for teachers

- ✓ This must be done extensively as drill work. Since this format has remained unchanged for several decades, it should not be too difficult to reorient their lessons to include this.
- ✓ Train students to underline the salient points of what is being asked in the question.

## MARKING SCHEME

### Question 2.

#### **Formal Letter:**

From Address

Date

To Address

Salutation [Sir/ Madam/]

Subscription. Yours faithfully

Name + surname/initial

#### **Informal letter:**

Address (Home/school)

Date

Salutation- Dear/My dear [-name]/female relative

Subscription- Yours lovingly, /Yours affectionately, /Your loving, /affectionate...

First name

**Ensure that the format is correct and that the following points of each letter are clearly brought out:**

(a) **Formal Letter (format, content, expression)**

Name of historical building

Name of town

The benefit for visiting that monument

There must be a correlation between the essay grade and the letter expression.

(b) **Informal Letter (format, content, expression)**

Name of the jubilee celebration

Any two details e.g. function, date, time, chief guest, cultural event, competition, exhibition etc.

The candidate's role in the celebration *any two* e.g. announcing, decorating, taking part in the dance, play etc.

Expression

There must be a correlation between the essay grade and the letter expression.

### Question 3

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow:

For some time, Mother had greatly envied us our swimming, both in the daytime and at night, but as she pointed out when we suggested she join us, she was far too old for that sort of thing. Eventually, however, under constant pressure from us, Mother paid a visit into town and returned to the villa coyly bearing a mysterious parcel. Opening this she astonished us all by holding up an extraordinary shapeless garment of black cloth, covered from top to bottom with hundreds of frills and pleats and tucks.

‘Well, what do you think of it?’ Mother asked.

We stared at the odd garment and wondered what it was for.

‘What is it?’ asked Larry at length.

‘It’s a bathing-costume, of course,’ said Mother. ‘What on earth did you think it was?’

‘It looks to me like a badly-skinned whale,’ said Larry, *peering* at it closely.

‘You can’t *possibly* wear that, Mother,’ said Margo, horrified, ‘why, it looks as though it was made in nineteen-twenty.’

‘What are all those frills and things for?’ asked Larry with interest.

‘Decoration, of course,’ said Mother indignantly.

‘What a jolly idea! Don’t forget to shake the fish out of them when you come out of the water.’

‘Well, *I* like it, anyway,’ Mother said firmly, wrapping the monstrosity up again, ‘and I’m going to wear it.’

‘You’ll have to be careful you don’t get waterlogged, with all that cloth around you,’ said Leslie seriously.

‘Mother, it’s *awful*; you can’t wear it,’ said Margo. ‘Why on earth didn’t you get something more up to date?’

‘When you get to my age, dear, you can’t go around in a two-piece bathing suit... you don’t have the figure for it.’

‘I’d love to know what sort of figure that was designed for,’ remarked Larry.

‘You really are *hopeless*, Mother,’ said Margo despairingly.

‘But I *like* it... and I’m not asking you to wear it,’ Mother pointed out angrily.

‘That’s right, you do what you want to do,’ agreed Larry; ‘don’t be put off. It’ll probably suit you very well if you can grow another three or four legs to go with it.’

Mother snorted indignantly and swept upstairs to try on her costume. Presently she called to us to come and see the effect, and we all trooped up to the bedroom. Roger the dog, was the first to enter, and on being greeted by this strange apparition clad in its voluminous black costume rippling with frills, he retreated hurriedly through the door, backwards, barking *ferociously*. It was some time before we could persuade him

that it really was Mother, and even then he kept giving her vaguely uncertain looks from the corner of his eye. However, in spite of all opposition, Mother stuck to her tent-like bathing-suit, and in the end we gave up.

In order to celebrate her first entry into the sea we decided to have a moonlight picnic down at the bay, and sent an invitation to Theodore, who was the only stranger that Mother would tolerate on such a great occasion. The day for the great *immersion* arrived, food and wine were prepared, the boat was cleaned out and filled with cushions and everything was ready when Theodore turned up. 50

- (a) Give the meaning of the following words as used in the passage:  
One word answers or short phrases will be accepted.
- (i) peering (line 13)
  - (ii) ferociously (line 41)
  - (iii) immersion (line 49) [3]
- (b) Answer the following questions briefly in your own words.
- (i) Why did mother not join the swimming in the beginning? [2]
  - (ii) Briefly describe her swimming costume. [2]
  - (iii) What did Larry think it was? [2]
  - (iv) Which sentence tells you that Margo thought it was old fashioned? [2]
  - (v) What was Leslie's concern? [2]
  - (vi) Why did mother think it was suitable? [2]
- (c) (i) In not more than 60 words describe what happened after mother went upstairs to try on her costume. [8]
- (ii) Give a title to your summary in 3 (c) (i). Give a reason to justify your choice. [2]

### Comments of Examiners

- (a) Most candidates were unable to write the correct meaning of the words with only a few answering all correctly.
- (b) Questions (i), (ii), (iii), (v) and (vi) were easily understood and answers from the passage were correctly written. In Question 3(b) (iv) – many candidates lost 2 marks in this question as they paraphrased the text – a few quoted verbatim from the passage.
- (c) A majority of candidates did not keep to the word limit and hence were unable to answer this question correctly, however a few wrote creative or intuitive answers.

### Suggestions for teachers

- ✓ Students must be trained to draw the meaning from the context and be able to use the correct form in the answer word as in the question word. This can be solved to a large extent by putting the answer word into the blank created by the question word in the passage.
- ✓ Insist that students write in their own words, but also be able to differentiate when a question requires a direct quote from the passage.
- ✓ Drawing a grid with only one word per cell is a good practice for precis writing. Practice narrating an episode in correct sequential/ linear order. Rearranging jumbled sentences in a correct sequence at the middle school level would also encourage linear thinking.

### **MARKING SCHEME**

#### **Question 3.**

- (a) (i) **Peering:** looking closely, staring, looking with concentration, scrutinizing, examining closely.
- (ii) **Ferociously:** angrily, wildly, fiercely, viciously, violently
- (iii) **Immersion:** dip in water, soaking
- (b) (i) Mother pointed out that she was far too old / for that sort of thing.
- (ii) An extraordinary shapeless garment / black cloth / covered from top to bottom / hundreds, frills, pleats and tucks.
- (iii) It looked to him / badly skinned whale.
- (iv) Candidate must quote exactly ‘You can’t *possibly* wear that, Mother,’ said Margo, horrified, ‘why, it looks as though it was made in nineteen-twenty.’
- (v) Leslie was concerned that fish / would get trapped in it.
- (vi) Mother thought it was suitable because it went with her age / figure.

(c) (i) Points to look for:

1. Mother called us to come and see the effect.
2. We all trooped into the bedroom.
3. Roger the dog retreated hurriedly.
4. Went backwards barking ferociously.
5. Despite reassurance, kept giving her vague uncertain looks.
6. We gave up.

Expression

(ii) Any suitable title dealing only with the precis.

Reasonable justification.

#### Question 4

- (a) Fill in each of the numbered blanks with the correct form of the word given in brackets. Do not copy the passage, but write in correct serial order the word or phrase appropriate to the blank space.

**Example:**

(0) He had been (0) \_\_\_\_\_ (sit) on the bank of a small irrigation canal.

Answer: sitting

He was (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (gaze) at a couple of heron (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (fish) in the muddy water, when he (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (feel) something bump his elbow. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (look) around, he (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (find) at his side a little goat, jet black and soft as velvet with lovely grey eyes. Neither her owner nor her mother (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) around.

She continued to (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (nudge) Mukesh, so he (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (look) in his pocket for nourishment. [4]

- (b) Fill in each blank with an appropriate word:

- (i) There was a steep rise \_\_\_\_\_ onion prices.
- (ii) Air pollution is responsible for the spread \_\_\_\_\_ bronchitis.
- (iii) He was \_\_\_\_\_ pressure to complete the work.
- (iv) Joan jumped \_\_\_\_\_ the river to rescue the child.
- (v) His teacher is very pleased \_\_\_\_\_ him.
- (vi) Ali took \_\_\_\_\_ his cap and wiped his face.
- (vii) The old woman could not get \_\_\_\_\_ the shock.
- (viii) He should not get \_\_\_\_\_ with such rudeness.

[4]



(c) Join the following sentences to make one complete sentence **without using and, but** or **so**:

(i) My grandfather is very old. He is very active.

(ii) Mala is not in the classroom. Mala is not in the library.

(iii) She was so excited about her performance. She could not sleep at night.

(iv) Mumbai is densely populated. It is one of the major cities in the country.

[4]

(d) Re-write the following sentences according to the instructions given after each. Make other changes that may be necessary, but do not change the meaning of each sentence.

(i) The book was so interesting that I could not put it down.

(Begin: The book was too .....)

(ii) The Principal said, "All the prizes will be distributed tomorrow."

(Begin: The Principal said that .....)

(iii) Last night's dinner was cooked for us by father.

(Begin: Father .....)

(iv) If Mary catches the first bus, she will be on time for school.

(Begin: Unless .....)

(v) In spite of having high fever the girl came to school.

(Begin: Despite .....)

(vi) I prefer going out with friends to staying alone at home.

(Begin: I would rather .....)

(vii) Hardly had the teacher left the room, when all the children started making a noise.

(Begin: No sooner .....)

(viii) This is the funniest movie I have ever seen.

(Begin: Never .....)

[8]

### Comments of Examiners

- (a) Most candidates answered the question correctly.
- (b) Answered correctly by most candidates.
- (c) Most candidates answered correctly in (i), (ii) and (iii). However, they failed to score marks in (iv) because they saw 'Mumbai densely populated' and 'Major cities densely populated' as causally related.
- (d) Most candidates answered incorrectly. Areas to improve are Direct/ indirect; Active/passive and Degrees of comparison.

### Suggestions for teachers

- ✓ There must be insistence on developing listening and speaking skills at the Pre-Primary and Primary levels.
- ✓ Extensive drill work beginning at class VII level is the only solution.
- ✓ The grammar syllabus is concentric and spiralling, hence must be practiced extensively at initial levels that later needs to be reinforced.

### **MARKING SCHEME**

#### **Question 4**

**(a)**

- |           |            |          |            |
|-----------|------------|----------|------------|
| 1. gazing | 2. fishing | 3. felt  | 4. looking |
| 5. found  | 6. was     | 7. nudge | 8. looked  |

**(b)**

- (i) in      (ii) of      (iii) under      (iv) into  
(v) with      (vi) off      (vii) over      (viii) away

**(c)** (i) Although my grandfather is very old, he is very active.

(ii) Mala is neither in the classroom nor in the library.

(iii) She was so excited about her performance that she could not sleep at night.

(iv) Mumbai, which is densely populated, is one of the major cities in India.

**(d)** (i) The book was too interesting for me to put down.

(ii) The Principal said that all the prizes would be distributed the next day / the following day.

(iii) Father cooked last night's dinner for us.

(iv) Unless Mary catches the first bus she will not be on time for school / she will be late for school.

(v) Despite having high fever, the girl came to school.

(vi) I would rather go out with friends than stay alone at home.

(vii) No sooner had the teacher left the room than all the children started making a noise.

(viii) Never have I seen the funnier movie than this / Never have I seen a movie funnier than this.

### **Topics found difficult:**

- Candidates were unable to deal with the argumentative composition and were unable to express their thoughts convincingly.
- Candidates were unsure on the Precis Writing that showed a limited practice of the same.
- Poor reading is reflected in the comprehension passage where candidates are unable to comprehend unseen passages without a teacher's explanation.
- Grammar being a high scoring area witnessed candidates committing errors in the prepositions to be filled in the blanks and open ended sentences.

### **General Comments:**

Teachers and students should ensure the following at all levels.

1. Use of the school library / class library.
2. The creation of wall newspapers and bulletin boards.
3. Using music and singing as tools in language learning.
4. Morning assemblies must give opportunities to children for oratory and self-expression.
5. Intra and inter-class level story-telling, elocution, play-reading/ writing/ enacting and debating. activity will go a long way in developing listening and speaking skills.