

ICSE Board
Class X English Language
Sample Paper – 1
Solution

*Attempt **all** questions from this section*

Question 1

(a)

It was another boring morning and my mother was shouting from the kitchen, asking me to hurry up or I would miss my school bus. It being a lousy Monday, I was not even interested in wearing my school uniform, leave alone walking out of the house to catch my school bus.

As mummy had anticipated, I did miss my school bus and had to walk to school that morning. I lived in an isolated colony and hence, had no company if I had to walk to school. It was not very far way, but I had to cross a big junction and that is the reason why my mother insisted that I don't miss the school bus. Usually she would accompany me if I missed the bus, but today she had to take grandpa to the doctor and father was out on a business trip.

As I stood at the junction wondering when the traffic lights would signal me to cross the road, a rickshaw puller asked me if I wanted a ride to school. Mother had asked me to ignore strangers, so I ignored his call and kept looking at the traffic signal.

"Curiosity is not a sin.... But we should exercise caution with our curiosity... yes, indeed," the man said. As he uttered these words, I was surprised to hear a rickshaw puller speaking English so well. I turned towards him and noticed that he was an old man, someone whom I may have seen near my school occasionally. I looked at my watch and decided that if I didn't take the rickshaw, I would be late for school for the third time this week and the prefect would take me to the principal for sure. So I hopped into the rickshaw and told him to take me to Sacred Heart Boys School down on the other side of the junction.

"Looks like you got up late again today. I have seen you get down from the school bus," he started talking to me.

"I don't like waking up early in the morning on a Monday," I sulked.

Suddenly, the rickshaw halted abruptly with a big jerk.

"What happened," I asked the old man.

“I think there is a nail in the wheel. I will need to remove it before we can go ahead,” the man said.

“Really? You know I am already late and you now want me to wait till you remove this nail so that we can go ahead? I don’t think so. Here, take this money and repair your rickshaw. I will walk to school.”

I jumped off the rickshaw and started walking towards the school.

“Wait young man! Words are our most inexhaustible source of magic. You should learn to be polite to people older to you. Would you allow your sick grandfather to repair anything all by himself? I guess no. So why don’t you come here and help me set this wheel right?”

I do not know why I turned back to him and started helping him. There was something magnetic about the way he spoke, almost hypnotically charming. I tried hard to remove the nail from the wheel but it was taking forever and I almost cut my hand in the process. The old man suddenly rose and started throwing random words in the air, with agitated movements. I was beginning to get worried that he might collapse in the middle of the road due to exertion. However, surprisingly, the nail in the wheel fell off the next instant.

“Let’s go! Or you will be at the principal’s office today for sure,” he said.

“Are you a mind reader? Who are you? You even know about my grandfather!”

The man said nothing. I didn’t ask again either, because now I was really beginning to get anxious about reaching at least the school gates in time. In addition, I had soiled my shirt and hurt my hand. I would surely be punished for coming to school dressed untidily, because I am sure the teacher wouldn’t notice my injured hand and lend some sympathy.

As the rickshaw entered the lane of my school, I heard the first bell.

“Hurry up!” I yelled at him. “I wish all this was a dream, that I hadn’t got late and missed my bus and met you and spent time in repairing your old cart!” I was almost in tears now, not knowing what and how words were flowing out of my cerebral filter.

“Of course it is happening inside your head, my boy, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?”

The rickshaw came to a halt and the last bell rang. I jumped out of the rickshaw and ran like a maniac before the guard closed the gates. I passed through the gates and ran to the assembly hall. I entered the hall and found a spot for me just before we began our prayers. I was gasping for breath after climbing three floors and wanted the assembly to get over sooner so that I could have some water. But of course, it was inspection day and after the

prayers there would be a through checking of the uniforms. Damn! I had almost forgotten for a while about my soiled uniform. As I looked at my shirt, I noticed that it was spotlessly clean. “Didn’t I soil it? Or was it behind and not in the front? Of course, the teacher will know as I parade in front of her,” I thought sadly. What a way to begin my week, thanks to you old man!

I passed the teachers inspecting the uniforms and none of them asked me why my uniform was dirty. I was still thinking what had happened and how the stains disappeared when my friend called out informing me that our class teacher was absent that day and that we had the first period free. We both happily went to our classroom and I told him about my morning misadventure.

“It is happening inside your head, you know,” he chuckled, “Why would we have rickshaw pullers here? They aren’t allowed within the city limits.”

“I am not bluffing. He stopped at the junction and asked me to hop in.”

“Looks like you have been imagining a lot of things of late. Tomorrow you will tell me that you discovered that the old man is a wizard who is in search of Harry Potter!” and my friend punched me naughtily while he laughed to his heart’s content.

“Harry who?” I asked him, bewildered.

“Harry Potter. He is an orphan who is actually a wizard and is rescued by Professor Dumbledore and Rubeus Hagrid from the clutches of Voldemort, who killed Harry’s parents.’ My friend shared his wisdom with me.

Later during the day, we had a library period. I was curious about this boy Harry Potter and went to the fantasy section to read about the characters my friend spoke about. As I flipped through the pages, the words I read sounded strangely familiar. It was as if I had heard them all before. But where? Then I suddenly came across Professor’s Dumbeldore’s welcoming address to the new students at Hogwarts. I read those meaningless syllables over and over again because they too sounded familiar.

Nitwit! Blubber! Oddment! Tweak!

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Nitwit! Blubber! Oddment! Tweak!

These were the words uttered by the old man just before the nail came off the wheel I the morning! Oh my god! I went to the computer and searched for Professor Dumbledore in Google images. As the images loaded, I realized that there was a striking similarity between

the rickshaw puller whom I met in the morning and this professor at Hogwarts. But how could it be possible? Did I say nasty things to Professor Dumbledore in the morning? Was God playing a prank on me? Before I could find an answer to my questions, the library period ended. However, I was able to issue the book I was reading and take it home.

I walked my way back home in a hope that I would meet him again. But there was no sign of any hand-pulled rickshaws, as my friend pointed out in the morning. It was a well-read old man, and not a professor from Hogwarts; I said to myself and forgot about him as I walked home.

Later at night, I continued to read about Harry Potter when a strong gust of wind opened the windows of my room. I jumped out of my bed to quickly close the windows or else I would freeze in the December cold. As I held on to the window to close it, I saw a rickshaw outside the gates of my house. I peered closer and the next moment a figure covered in rags turned behind.

Gasp! It was Professor Dumbledore, I mean it was the old man again. He looked at me, smiled mysteriously, and cycled away into the darkness.

I decided not to think or talk about this to anyone, not even my mother. As I closed the book I was reading, a quote by Professor Dumbledore caught my attention, and left an everlasting impression on my mind. It read: I don't need a cloak to become invisible.

(b)

The commercialisation of festivals has eroded their real significance

For the topic

Lokmanya Tilak transformed the household worshipping of Ganesha into a public event in 1984, and that is how people started celebrating Ganesh festival in every neighbourhood irrespective of their religion, caste, or occupation. However, the recent commercialisation of the festival has robbed it of its humility and glory and turned it into a platform to show off how much money a particular Ganpati Mandal has.

When Lokmanya Tilak started the festival as a public event during the pre-independence era, the celebrations included processions, music and food. Students would often celebrate national glory, address political issues and patronise Swadeshi goods. Over the years, as the festival changed hands from one generation to another, the public event has been somehow patronised by political parties for campaigning. Nowadays, it is all about which Ganpati pandal has the most expensive decoration. In a country where a significant amount of population has no access to electricity, it is a pity that such pandals misuse electricity. Millions are wasted on preparing huge sets that are gaudily illuminated and have little or no relevance to Lord Ganesha.

In the earlier times, the idols were made of clay, so that they would dissolve as soon as immersed into water. Nowadays, most of the idols are made from Plaster of Paris and have a greater demand due to their durability and variety. PoP idols are easier to decorate which is why big pandals demand PoP idols. Heavily decorated idols attract more devotees which in turn attracts more funds in the form of donation. However, these idols take anywhere between several months to years to fully dissolve as opposed to their clay counterparts. Moreover, as the PoP idols dissolve, they dispose lead and mercury into the water bodies polluting the surroundings and endangering species. Pandals, in a race to have better idols than each other going beyond limits to commercialise the festivals but are neglecting the environment.

A great deal of money is spent in the security at the famous pandals or at those that are owned by high-profile political leaders. In Mumbai, for instance, Lalbagcha Raja sees over 1.5 million devotees during the 10-day festivities. There are different queues depending on the kind of blessings you want to receive. There is a separate line for people who want to go to the stage and touch the feet of the Lalbagcha Raja and a separate line for those who just wish to see the face of the idol from a distance. Around 400 people are employed at the pandal to organise the event. However, there have been many instances of the security guards manhandling the devotees. This is the story of many other pandals across Mumbai and Maharashtra. People are inconvenienced, security staff misbehaves, and even after waiting for several hours in a queue, all that a devotee gets is a two-second glimpse of his favourite God before he or she is rudely shoved aside by guards.

The last day immersion processions are accompanied by high decibel bands playing tasteless music. The so called disciples are drunk and oblivious to the emotions attached with bidding good bye to our favourite Lord.

The commercialization of the Ganesh festival and many other festivals has indeed eroded their real significance. Today, public festivals have just become an opportunity for politicians to put billboards and take advantage of the festival.

Against the topic

Lokmanya Tilak transformed the household worshipping of Ganesha into a public event in 1984, and that is how people started celebrating Ganesh festival in every neighbourhood irrespective of their religion, caste, or occupation. The recent commercialisation of the festival and many other festivals may have robbed the true significance of the celebrations, but some families and pandals still celebrate festivals in the traditional manner.

Big pandals in Mumbai and the other cities no doubt use festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi as a platform to show off. However, some traditional families do celebrate the festivals keeping in mind the rituals and the traditional significance each of the 11 days hold. A family somewhere in Gujarat makes Ganesh idol out of edible items. The idol is not

immersed in water on Anant Chathurdashi but the items are distributed among the poor and the needy. In many of the small houses of South Mumbai around Girgaum, every house that brings Ganesha doesn't indulge in expensive and gaudy decorations. One of the homes made copies of handwriting Ganapati aartis and bhajans and used that as a decoration. They say that the people who came home to seek blessings were very happy to read the holy chants. They said it was better than the tasteless decorations splashed across around the city.

In regard to the big and famous pandals, the GSB Seva Mandal Ganpati at Kings Circle, Mumbai, decided to do away with its usual gold ornaments decoration in 2015. The pandal is famous for adorning the idol with real gold. Instead, it was decided that the money collected would be donated to the drought-stricken farmers in Maharashtra.

The commercialization of the Ganesh festival and many other festivals has indeed eroded their real significance. Today, public festivals have just become an opportunity for politicians to put billboards and take advantage of the festival.

(c)

A month ago I started my Master of Science in Education at the Johns Hopkins University in the US. The university is in Baltimore, the largest city in the US. Although I couldn't get any accommodation in Hopkins, I managed to find a place to stay in the neighbouring Charles Village, thanks to my aunt who stays in the US. It took me almost a month to settle down with my college and neighbourhood. At first, I felt terribly abandoned and missed my home back in Mumbai. But as I got comfortable with my new lifestyle, I came across a lot of differences between the two cities.

Baltimore is densely populated like Mumbai. There are many similarities between the two cityscapes, and I thought that I shouldn't feel uncomfortable while getting accustomed to living in and around Baltimore. I see people rushing to work and students to college just as I used to see crowds on the streets of Mumbai every morning. However, I noticed that Mumbaikars are always rushing; they rush to work in the morning and they rush home in the evening. It was difficult for me to get to my junior college from my home, as it took about 4 hours of my time every day. But here in Baltimore, I don't have to worry about how I am going to reach my college from where I am put up. I live in Charles Village and there are shuttle services from the Village to Hopkins.

Although I always read and heard about how one can enjoy in Mumbai, I never managed to wade past crowded trains and chaotic streets. I tried spending a night at the Abdul Rehman Street during the month of Ramadan as I had heard about the delicious iftar food served there. But the place was so crowded and unhygienic that I couldn't get past a few shops. I literally turned back and went home. On the other hand, even street food is served in places that don't suffocate you of nausea and heat. I love going to two places – Papermoon Diner

and Jong Kak. The former is known for its eccentric menu which I liked to try once in a while. The latter, a Korean restaurant, is open until 4 am. I love to spend weekends there with my college friends and enjoy delicious tofu and rice cakes.

I have been to the Taraporwala Aquarium in Mumbai. While they have tried their best to renovate the place, the attempts to civilize visitors have not been successful. I saw teenagers hitting against the glass of the tanks, shouting and laughing out loud, and not paying attention to the aquarium guide. Last weekend I went to the National Aquarium in Baltimore. There they allow you to have one-to-one encounters in touchpools. This means that you can touch animals such as Atlantic stingray, Moon jelly and Horseshoe crab. Educational interpreters are available for people who want to learn about the habitat of these animals. The aquarium has arrangements of tactile activities to promote inquiry and discovery of the lovely beings living in water. I personally enjoyed taking the colourful starfish in my hands and exploring them closely. I'd like to mention that the aquarium is a non-profit organisation committed to conservation of the world's aquatic treasures.

Although I have spent just over a month here in Baltimore, I have realized that even the fast-paced life here is organised and adorned with etiquette. People do rush to work and colleges, but they also find time to engage in recreational activities. And when they do that, they do not inconvenience others.

(d)

Once upon a time, India and Pakistan were not two separate countries. The Indian Hindus and Muslims lived harmoniously in close proximity. Then in 1947, the British Indian Empire was partitioned and this led to the creation of two separate countries, Pakistan and India on 15 August 1947. There have been hundreds of painful and agonizing stories about the Partition. Millions were displaced and killed and we all know about it either because of historical facts or because of movies. However, the picture above reminds me of the love-hate relationship between the two countries. The Wagah border ceremony or the Beating Retreat ceremony is a daily military practice conducted by the security forces of India and Pakistan.

The ceremony is carried by the soldiers of the Indian BSF and the Pakistan Rangers every evening before sunset. The drill is comprises elaborate and rapid colourful movements by the respective soldiers. Thousands of people gather on either side of the border gates every evening to witness the drill. The event has many international viewers too. One infantryman stands on each side of the gate at attention. As the sun sets, the iron gates at the border are opened and the two flags are lowered at the same time. The flags are folded and the ceremony ends with a retreat that involves a rough handshake between soldiers from either side, followed by the closing of the gates again. The ceremony is symbolic of the rivalry between the two nations. In addition, it is also a reflection of the goodwill and

cooperation between India and Pakistan, two nations divided by politics but united by sentiments.

The Wagah border bears historical and political significance for people of both the countries. When the Partition took place, massive population exchanges occurred between the two newly formed states. Historical records state massive violence and slaughter on both sides of the border. The Partition remains a cause of a lot of tension on the Indian subcontinent even today. Even after more than six decades, people on both sides have strong feelings about the Partition. Some people are of the opinion that it should have never happened. Some people strongly favour the Partition and say that it was a best fit for colonial India at that time.

The ceremony at the Wagah border may be between two nations. In reality, the people on the Pakistan side are no different than the people on the Indian side. Both the nations still wish to cross the border one day without any fear or hatred, and greet each other sans any weapons and security.

Question 2

(a)

Vibha Swami
C/31, Pramod CHS,
Kalbadevi,
Mumbai - 400 002
5th Nov 2015

To
Shri Santanu Maiti
Superintending Archaeologist (Monument)
Archeological Survey of India
Janpath, New Delhi - 110011

Subject: Babulnath Temple Being Ruined by Hooligans

Dear Sir,

My name is Vibha Swami, and I am a resident of Kalbadevi. I regularly visit the Babulnath temple. However, I have been noticing that the ancient temple is at risk because of some insensitive visitors lately.

Some local boys have been visiting the temple recently and fooling around the temple premises. They have been writing their names on the intricately carved interiors of the temple. I have also seen them scribbling on the exterior walls of the temple in a way that the CCTV cannot capture any footage. If officers dressed in civil clothes are employed within the temple premises, such acts can be tracked and prevented.

Your understanding in this regard will be greatly appreciated. I look forward to your reply.
Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,
Prakash Amte

(b)

Prakash Raj
Ramwadi
Mumbai
5th Dec 2015

Dearest Salim,

I hope you have settled down there in your new home. Thank you for sending the pictures. You have a very beautiful house! I also liked your school premises. It is spacious, airy, and full of vibrant posters around the school walls.

Salim, your new school seems to be different than our school here. While I saw colourful furniture in your school library, I remember our school library is a dull looking hall smelling of dusty books. I observed in one of the photos that although your teachers are casually dressed, all of them have uniformly worn lighter shades. However, here in our schools, teachers dress differently. Further, when I saw the picture of your lunchtime, I remembered how we had to rush to the canteen to catch a place and how suffocating the canteen is. I observed that your lunch hall is out in the open, facing a small garden where nursery and play group children are allowed to play while they are fed by their attendants.

I think there is a striking contrast between the education system here in India and there in Japan. When you reply to my letter, please share more information about the schools in Japan. I really want to know more about the academic developments there.

Yours truly,

Prakash

Question 3

(a)

- (i) Resplendent: splendid
- (ii) Acquire: obtain
- (iii) Exception: exclusion

(b)

- (i) Gaiety Land was popular for providing people all sorts of fun and gambling and side-shows. There were lotteries, shooting galleries, performing parrots and motor cyclists all ready to entertain people for a few annas.
- (ii) The narrator won a road engine, which was a huge machine that couldn't be carried home like any other prize like pin cushion or a sewing machine.
- (iii) When the narrator asked the showman for help to transport the engine, he drew his attention to a notice mentioning that the all the prizes should be taken by the winners as soon as possible.
- (iv) The narrator's friends and relatives didn't know the how much the engine would fetch. However, all the same they felt that there was a lot of money in it.
- (v) The relatives thought even if the narrator decided to sell it as scrap iron, a few thousands could be earned from it.

(c)

(i)

First draft:

- People gathered around.
- They started at him curiously.
- Some people imagined becoming the owner of a road engine.
- His friends and relatives came to congratulate him.
- No one really knew how much it would cost.
- Some thought the engine could be sold as iron scrap.
- The narrator would go to the Gymkhana Grounds to have a look at his engine.
- He loved its shining brass parts.
- The narrator stood near it, affectionately hovering about it and returned home at the close of the show.

Fair Draft

Title: The road engine.

Reason: the summary describes the narrator's experience with the engine that he won at the fair.

People gathered around the narrator when his prize was announced. Some even muttered and giggled about him becoming the owner of a road engine. Friends and relatives came home to congratulate him on his latest possession. Although none of them knew what the worth of the engine was, they thought it would fetch a lot of money, even if the metal was sold off in scrap. The narrator went regularly to the Gymkhana Grounds to look at his engine as he loved its shining brass parts. He would affectionately hover about it till the end of the show before returning home.

Question 4

(a)

1. No sooner did the teacher arrive, than the boys stopped throwing books at each other.
2. He is poor but he never casts away those who are in need.
3. My aunt asked me if I wanted some ice cream or a slice of cake.
4. A mural is being painted on the exit wall by them.

Or

A mural is being painted by them on the exit wall.

5. You didn't forget to pick the laundry on your way back, did you?
6. Despite being a kind woman she was abandoned by her sons.
7. No singer was better than Tansen in Akbar's court.
8. Not inky did he go to the library but also to the bank.

(b)

1. was
2. got
3. banged
4. sat
5. began

(c)

- (i) Although Tanushree was a skilled dancer, her mother wanted her to become a doctor.
- (ii) As Iqbal was thrown out of the community hall by the priest, his family protested outside the priest's house.
- (iii) Though Deepak worked day and night on the project, the supervisor selected Chirag's project for the exhibition.
- (iv) When I went to the clinic, I met my old friend there.
- (v) Pinakin and his sister being nature lovers had shifted to a city where there was not a single park in site.

(d)

- (i) of
- (ii) on
- (iii) from
- (iv) below
- (v) over
- (vi) through
- (vii) by
- (viii) about