



MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE IN ENGLISH (Prescribed Texts)

Maximum Marks: 80

Time Allotted: Three Hours

Reading Time: Additional Fifteen Minutes

Instructions to Candidates

1. You are allowed an **additional fifteen minutes** for **only** reading the question paper.
2. You must **NOT** start writing during reading time.
3. This question paper has **6 printed pages**.
4. It has **five questions** in all.
5. Answer **all** questions.
6. While answering **Multiple Choice Questions in Section A**, you are required to **write only ONE option as the correct answer**.
7. **Internal choice** has been given in the **long answer questions** on Drama, Prose and Poetry.
8. **Do not exceed the prescribed word limit** while answering the questions in Section B.
9. The intended marks for questions are given in brackets [].

Instruction to Supervising Examiner

Kindly read **aloud** the Instructions given above to all the candidates present in the examination hall.

Note: The Specimen Question Paper in the subject provides a realistic format of the Board Examination Question Paper and should be used as a practice tool. The questions for the Board Examination can be set from any part of the syllabus, though the format of the Board Examination Question Paper will remain the same as that of the Specimen Question Paper.

SECTION A – 20 MARKS

Question 1

[1×10]

Choose the correct options for the following questions.

- (i) In Act III of the play, *Pygmalion*, Higgins tells his mother that Mrs. Pearce keeps repeating, “You don’t think, Sir”. What does she intend to suggest about Higgins? **(Interpret)**
- (a) He is incapable of thought.
 - (b) He has not thought about Mrs. Pearce’s feelings.
 - (c) He has added to her burden of work through his action.
 - (d) He has not thought about the consequences of his experiment.
- (ii) “I should have chucked the whole thing up two months ago. It was a silly notion.” What is Higgins talking about? **(Understand)**
- (a) His experiment with Eliza
 - (b) His plan to visit his mother with Eliza
 - (c) Encouraging Freddy’s courtship of Eliza
 - (d) Collaborating with Col. Pickering on Phonetics
- (iii) Read the two statements from the play, *Pygmalion*, and choose the correct option from the ones given below. **(Understand)**
- Statement I:** “Pickering: If we were to take this man in hand for three months, he could choose between a seat in the Cabinet and a popular pulpit in Wales.”
- Statement II:** “I shouldn’t mind if it had only happened to me: anything might happen to anybody and nobody to blame but Providence, as you might say. But this is something that you done to me: yes, you, Henry Higgins.”
- (a) Statements I and II are similar.
 - (b) Statement I and II are unrelated to each other.
 - (c) Statement I is the result of Statement II.
 - (d) Statement II is the result of Statement I.

- (iv) In Act V of the play, *Pygmalion*, Eliza says to Higgins, “When you feel lonely without me, you can turn the machine on.” What does she imply? **(Analyse)**
- (a) He is obsessed with his machine.
 - (b) He does not need human companionship.
 - (c) The machine will keep her alive in his memories.
 - (d) He can listen to her voice which is recorded on the machines.
- (v) In the short story, *Death by Scrabble*, which word does the narrator begin the game with? **(Recall)**
- (a) Kill
 - (b) Stab
 - (c) Begin
 - (d) Murder
- (vi) In the short story, *The Dreamer*, why had Mrs. Charming invited Cyprian to accompany her to the sales? **(Understand)**
- (a) She liked his company.
 - (b) She was a nervous woman.
 - (c) She required a male escort.
 - (d) She found parcel carrying abhorrent.
- (vii) In the short story, *The Father- Thing*, why was Charles hesitant to call his father to the dinner table? **(Understand)**
- (a) He was lazy.
 - (b) He was very hungry.
 - (c) He was intimidated by his father.
 - (d) He was not sure if the man in the garage was actually his father.
- (viii) In the poem, *My Grandmother’s House*, what happened to the house after the grandmother died? **(Recall)**
- (a) It was sold.
 - (b) It retreated into silence.
 - (c) The poet came to live in it.
 - (d) The house crumbled into dust.

- (ix) In the poem, *Ode to Tomatoes*, what does the poet mean by saying the tomatoes ‘invade the kitchen’? **(Understand)**
- (a) They become like an invading army.
 - (b) They are found everywhere in the house.
 - (c) They leave the field and come to the kitchen.
 - (d) They overpower all the other dishes in the kitchen.
- (x) From where had the child learnt which gifts to ask Santa in the poem, *Black Santa*? **(Recall)**
- (a) His parents
 - (b) Newspapers
 - (c) Other children
 - (d) Television commercials

Question 2

Answer **any five** of the following subparts in **40-50 words**.

[2 × 5]

- (i) What reassurance does Higgins give his mother about Eliza when he brings her to his mother’s ‘at home’? **(Recall)**
- (ii) Why does Eliza hurl the slippers at Higgins when he comes looking for them? **(Understand)**
- (iii) Why are all the letters in the game of scrabble in the short story, *Death by Scrabble*, frayed? **(Understand)**
- (iv) In the short story, *The Dreamer*, why does the narrator say that Mrs. Charming had ‘human weakness’? **(Understand)**
- (v) In the poem, *My Grandmother’s House*, what memories does the poet have of the house? **(Recall)**
- (vi) What do the words ‘bony lap’ suggest about Santa in the poem, *Black Santa*? **(Interpret)**

SECTION B – 60 MARKS
PYGMALION: GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Question 3

- (i) Give an account of Eliza's actions and behaviour at Mrs. Higgins' 'at home'. [5]
How far has her training with Higgins progressed?

Incorporate the following details and write your answer in one paragraph of 80 - 100 words. **(Understand)**

- Eliza's actions and conversation
- Your idea of her education so far

- (ii) How does Higgins behave after Eliza's success at the ball? Why does this upset her? [5]

Incorporate the following details and write your answer in one paragraph of 80 - 100 words. **(Understand)**

- Higgins' words and behaviour
- Effect on Eliza

- (iii) (a) Col. Pickering acts as a source of comfort and support to Eliza throughout the experiment. Describe *two* specific instances to bear out the truth of this statement. [10]

Answer should be written in 150 - 200 words. **(Analyse)**

OR

- (b) Why, in your opinion, does Eliza choose to marry Freddy instead of returning to Wimpole Street with Higgins? [10]

Answer should be written in 150 - 200 words. **(Evaluate)**

PERSPECTIVES: A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES

Question 4

- (i) With reference to the short story, *The Dreamer*, describe Cyprian's manner of dressing. What does it tell you about him? [5]

Incorporate the following details and write your answer in one paragraph of 80 - 100 words. **(Interpret)**

- Manner of dressing
- Inference about Cyprian

- (ii) Describe the doll's house sent by Mrs. Hay to the Burnell children. What feelings did it arouse in them? [5]

Incorporate the following details and write your answer in one paragraph of 80 - 100 words. (Understand)

- Description of the doll's house
- Feeling aroused by the house in the children

- (iii) (a) Referring closely to the short story, *Death by Scrabble*, examine what the game being played suggest about the relationship between husband and wife. [10]

Answer should be written in 150 - 200 words. (Analyse)

OR

- (b) Referring closely to the short story, *Games by Twilight*, describe what you conclude about the thoughts and fears of a child. [10]

Answer should be written in 150 - 200 words. (Evaluate)

REFLECTIONS: A COLLECTION OF POEMS

Question 5

- (i) Referring closely to the poem, *Ode to Tomatoes*, describe how the tomatoes 'invade' the kitchen. What effect does the poem create? [5]

Incorporate the following details and write your answer in one paragraph of 80 - 100 words. (Understand)

- Manner in which the tomatoes invade the kitchen
- Effect created by the poem

- (ii) How does the poet create a sense of claustrophobia in the poem, *Urban*? What does he long for? [5]

Incorporate the following details and write your answer in one paragraph of 80 - 100 words. (Understand)

- Picture of the city
- Poet's longing

- (iii) (a) How does the poem, *Refugee Blues*, reflect the sorrow of refugees? [10]
Answer should be written in 150 - 200 words. (Analyse)

OR

- (b) How does the poem, *The Black Santa*, overturn traditional ideas of Santa Claus? [10]

Answer should be written in 150 - 200 words. (Analyse)



MODERN ENGLISH
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH
(Prescribed Texts)
ANSWER KEY

SECTION A– 20 MARKS

Question 1

[1×10]

Candidates are required to write only one option as the answer.

- (i) (a) He is incapable of thought.
- (ii) (a) His experiment with Eliza
- (iii) (d) Statement II is the result of Statement I.
- (iv) (b) He does not need human companionship.
- (v) (c) Begin
- (vi) (c) She required a male escort.
- (vii) (d) He was not sure if the man in the garage was actually his father.
- (viii) (b) It retreated into silence.
- (ix) (d) They overpower all the other dishes in the kitchen.
- (x) (d) Television commercials

Question 2

[2×5]

Candidates are required to answer any five subparts briefly and not in detail. Please note that the answers provided below are suggestive and not exhaustive. Any other correct interpretation / reason will be accepted.

- (i) He declared that Mrs. Higgins did not have to worry about Eliza coming to her 'at home'. He had given Eliza to talk about 'safe topics like the weather and everybody's health'.
- (ii) Her pent up anger and frustration make her do so. Her pride is wounded. Higgins had shown no appreciation for her achievements. The whole matter has gone out of his mind completely.
- (iii) While playing scrabble, the narrator would often chew on the scrabble tiles. He would chew on them whenever he felt nervous or got angry.
- (iv) It is said in an ironic way. She does not like bargains but likes to go where bargains are.
- (v) There was silence trapped in the house. She remembers the books and the fact that she was once proud and loved there.

- (vi) Traditionally, Santa is conceived as a plump, fair skinned jolly figure. The Santa in the poem is bony, impoverished, probably from the lower sections of society. An element of pathos clings about him.

SECTION B – 60 MARKS

PYGMALION: GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Question 3

- (i) *The guidelines have been specified in the question. Candidates have to develop their answers on the prompts given in the question within the specified word limit.* [5]
- (ii) *Candidates must formulate their answers on the areas specified in the question.* [5]
- (iii) (a) **Candidates are expected to elaborate on the following ideas:** [10]
- Col. Pickering acts as a foil to Higgins.
 - He is a thorough gentleman, polite, calm collected.
 - He too is interested in languages and correct pronunciation.
 - He is courteous and considerate.
 - Examples like the following could be given:
 - (1) addresses her with respect as a lady
 - (2) his behaviour at the ‘at home’
 - (3) the manner in which he gives her credit after the ambassador’s party

OR

- (b) **Candidates will be expected to use the following approach to the question:** [10]
- Eliza is an independent minded, spirited and feisty woman.
 - She knows her own mind and takes her own decisions.
 - He is not dependent on anyone and earns her own living.
 - Therefore, though she decides to become Higgins’ pupil, she refuses to be intimidated by him.
 - She wins Higgins’ bet for him but does not accept to be treated as an object by him.
 - Rather than a lifetime of fetching Higgins’ slippers, she would prefer Freddy fetching hers.
 - Freddy is besotted by her and looks up to her.
 - The afterward traces how both learn to become equal partners. She sees through Higgins’ weakness, and she uses it to her advantage, winning Higgins’ admiration at the end of the play.

PERSPECTIVES: A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES

Question 4

- (i) *The guidelines have been specified in the question. Candidates have to develop their answers on the prompts given in the question within the specified word limit.* [5]
- (ii) *Candidates must formulate their answers on the areas specified in the question within the prescribed word limit.* [5]
- (iii) (a) **Candidates are required to focus on the following areas in their answers:** [10]
- The marriage seems to be an acrimonious one, marked by repressed anger, frustration and an effort to belittle each other. The game of scrabble is symbolic of the acrimony between the pair.
 - Through the choice of words during the game, the inner feelings are brought out.
 - The marriage is marked by resentment, lack of communication and a power struggle between the two.
 - It is quite clearly a dysfunctional marriage.
- OR**
- (b) **Candidates are required to focus on the following areas in their answers:** [10]
- The short story, *Games at Twilight*, presents the delicate and sensitive world of childhood through the experiences of Ravi, a young boy who participates in a game of hide-and-seek with his siblings. The story explores the emotions, imagination, fears, hopes, and disappointments of a child's mind.
 - One of the most important features of the child's mind shown in the story is imagination. While hiding in the dark shed during the game, Ravi imagines himself as a brave and clever winner. His thoughts become adventurous and dramatic, showing how children often create fantasy worlds in their minds. The dusty shed appears mysterious and frightening to him, yet he also feels excited by the adventure.
 - Ravi wishes to be noticed and appreciated by others. He believes that by hiding successfully and winning the game, he will gain importance among his brothers and sisters. This reflects the need for attention, love, and recognition. Ravi dreams of becoming the "champion" and imagines the surprise and admiration of the others when he finally appears from his hiding place.
 - The story also presents the emotional sensitivity of children. When Ravi discovers that the other children have forgotten him and moved on to another game, he feels deeply hurt and humiliated.

- Desai highlights the loneliness that children may feel. Ravi's long stay in the shed makes him feel isolated, and his final disappointment creates a sense of insecurity. Like all children, Ravi desires inclusion and acceptance.

REFLECTIONS: A COLLECTION OF POEMS

Question 5

- (i) *The prompts have been specified in the question. Candidates have to develop their answers on those prompts within the specified word limit.* [5]
- (ii) *Candidates must formulate their answers on the areas specified in the question within the prescribed word limit.* [5]
- (iii) (a) **Candidates are required to build their answer on the following areas:** [10]
- The poem, *Refugee Blues*, by W.H. Auden (1939) expresses profound loss and sorrow through the intimate, desperate perspective of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. The poem highlights not only the physical loss of home but also the loss of identity, safety, and human dignity.
 - The speakers lament the loss of their home country, which they once saw as beautiful, noting, "we can't go there anymore". This loss is emphasised by the image of "ten million people" in the city but "nowhere for us to live".
 - The bureaucracy is dehumanising. The narrator is told that without a passport, they are 'legally dead', despite still being alive.
 - The refugees are surrounded by indifference, experiencing a 'world of locked doors' and being unwanted in foreign lands. This is highlighted by the contrast between the care given to pets (a 'poodle in a jacket') and the treatment of the refugees.
 - The poem captures the terror of being hunted by the Nazis. The refrain 'my dear' creates a sense of intimate desperation and heartbreak, amplifying the personal nature of this collective tragedy.
 - The repetitive, weary tone reflects the exhaustion of the refugees, particularly in the lines 'but where shall we go today' and the waiting imposed by committees.

OR

(b) **Candidates have to address the following areas in their answers:** [10]

- In the poem, *Black Santa*, Santa is presented in a way that challenges the traditional image of the white, Western Santa Claus. The poet uses the idea of a Black Santa to highlight themes of identity, representation, equality, and cultural pride.
- Santa is shown as someone who should belong to everyone, not just one race or culture. By presenting Santa as Black, the poem questions why popular cultural figures are usually represented in only one way.
- Black Santa is described with warmth, kindness, and dignity, just like the traditional Santa. This suggests that goodness and generosity are universal qualities.
- The poem encourages readers to think about racial representation in society and media. It shows that children from all backgrounds deserve to see themselves reflected in joyful traditions.
- It can be said that the poet uses Black Santa to suggest that race should not limit who can represent happiness, celebration, or authority.
- The poem presents Santa as a figure who represents diversity, fairness, and belonging, encouraging readers to embrace different cultural identities and challenge narrow traditions.

