

First Year Higher Secondary Improvement Examination

Part - I

ENGLISH

Maximum : 80 Scores

Time : 2½ Hours

Cool off time : 15 Minutes

General Instructions to Candidates :

- There is a 'Cool off time' of 15 minutes in addition to the writing time of 2½ hrs.
- You are neither allowed to write your answers nor to discuss anything with others during the 'cool off time'.
- Read the questions carefully before answering.
- All questions are compulsory and only internal choice is allowed.
- When you select a question, all the sub-questions must be answered from the same question itself.
- Electronic devices are not allowed in the Examination Hall.

(Q. 1 to 3) : Read the following excerpt from the story, 'The Price of Flowers' and answer the questions that follow.

'When I grow up, I shall be paid more for my work. My mother is very old.'

'Is the work you do to your liking?'

'No, the work is very mechanical. I want work that will make me use my head, brain work.'

1. Who is the speaker? (1)

2. What is meant by the expression, 'brain work'? (1)

3. What, in your opinion, are the drawbacks of mechanical work? (2)

(Write any two drawbacks).

4. Read the following conversation between Greta and her dad. Make a report of their conversation. (You may begin with : Greta looked at the screen. Her dad, who was creating a house for her, asked whether)

Greta looked at the screen. Her dad, who was creating a house for her, asked, 'Do you want peaches and pears in a house, with bowls in a kitchen?' Without paying attention to him, she enquired, 'Why are you writing all that down?' He promptly said, 'Because they're yours. They belong to you'. Greta then said enthusiastically, 'Put peaches everywhere'. (4)

5. Fill in the blanks in the following passage choosing the right words given in the box.

Then, Suddenly, But, Although

(a)....., the fishermen leapt from their canoe and seized the two women, bound their hands and feet with vine, tossed them into the bottom of the canoe, and set off in great haste for home. (b)..... the women pleaded for their lives, the cruel warriors from Nabukelevu did not listen to their entreaties. (2)

- (Q. 6 to 9) : Read the following lines from the poem, 'The Wreck of the Titanic' and answer the questions that follow.

She was the last, best work of men,
And on her first voyage was speeding – when :
Out of the darkness, Out of the night,
Loomed an ominous form of ghostly white.

- ✓ 6. Who is referred to as 'she' here? (1)
7. Identify the figure of speech used in the lines. (1)
8. What was the ominous form of white that loomed out of night? (1)
9. Why is she said to be the last, best work of men? (1)

10. Fill in the blank spaces to know what happened in the life of Stephen Hawking at certain specific periods.

At Oxford, Hawking ended up disastrously on the borderline between a first and a second in the final examination. The examiners summoned him for an interview and questioned him about his plans. In spite of the tenseness of the situation, Hawking remarked, 'If I **(a)** (get) a first, I shall go to Cambridge'. He got his 'First' and went to Cambridge. Later, when the rare disease was diagnosed, he thought to himself, 'after all, if I **(b)** (be) going to die, I might as well do some good'. (2)

11. James Shirley in his poem, 'Death the Leveller' speaks about the vanity and impermanence of life, earthly glory and power. What then is the only substantial thing in the world? (2)

12. Narrate the 'mad flight' of the balloon, 'Le Horla' just before its landing, from the point of view of one of the peasants who witnessed the scene. (5)

13. Read the following excerpt from the essay, 'The Cyber Space' and write a précis reducing it into 1/3rd of its size.

Is there a place where you can go and be yourself without worrying about the neighbors? Yes, there is such a place : cyberspace. Formerly a playground for computer nerds and techies, cyberspace now embraces every conceivable constituency, including school children. Can they all get along amicably in the cyber world? Or will our fear of kids misusing the cyberspace provoke a crackdown?

The first order of business is to grasp what cyberspace is. It might help to leave behind metaphors of highways and frontiers and to think instead of real estate. Real estate, remember, is an intellectual, legal, artificial environment constructed on top of land.

In the same way, cyberspace is an unbounded world of virtual real estate. Some property is privately owned and rented out; other property is common land; some are suitable for children and others are best avoided by all but the oddest citizens. Unfortunately, it's those places that are now capturing the popular imagination. They make cyberspace sound like a nasty place. Good citizens jump to a conclusion : Better regulate it. (180 words).

(4)

14. Liam O'Flaherty's 'His First Flight' makes the reader think about the kind of support given by parents to make their children self-reliant and self-confident. After reading the story, you decide to communicate your feelings to your friend abroad. Draft an e-mail to send to him/her.

(Word limit : 40 to 50 words).

(5)

(Q. 15 to 18) : Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Oscar Pistorius, the double-amputee sprinter from South Africa, is known worldwide for his successful fight to run in able-bodied events, including the 2012 Olympic Games. Oscar Pistorius was born without a fibula in either leg. Both legs were amputated below the knee when he was 11 months old, but he took up running at age 16 while rehabbing a rugby injury, and the next year won a gold medal in the 200 meters at the World Paralympic Games in Athens. Pistorius runs on springy carbon-fiber blades called Flex-Foot Cheetahs which attach to the stumps of his legs below the knees; they earned him the nickname of the Blade Runner. By 2007, he was competing in both able-bodied and paralympic events. In 2008, the International Association of Athletics Federations ruled that his blades were a competitive advantage and banned him from competing with able-bodied runners. The Court of Arbitration for Sport ruled that Pistorius could legally compete in IAAF races with the prosthetics. In 2012, he ran in the London Olympics as part of the South African 4 × 400 meter team. The team did not win, but Pistorius did win two golds in the 400 meters and the 4 × 100 meter relay at the 2012 Paralympic Games

which followed. However, things took a shocking turn a few months later : on 14th February, 2013, Oscar Pistorius was arrested and charged with murder after his girlfriend, the model Reeva Steenkamp, was shot and killed inside of Pistorius's home in Pretoria.

Though he committed the murder quite accidentally, mistaking his girlfriend for an intruder, the court sentenced him with five years' imprisonment, on 21st October, 2014.

For questions 15 and 16, choose the right option from the following.

- ✓ 15. The word 'Springy' means
- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----|
| a) strong | b) bouncy | |
| ✓ c) long | d) sharp | (1) |
16. The word opposite in meaning to 'sentence' is
- | | | |
|-----------|------------|-----|
| a) punish | b) prolong | |
| c) acquit | d) pardon | (1) |
17. Why was he nicknamed as 'The Blade Runner'? (2)
- ✓ 18. What made a shocking turn in his life? (2)
- ✓ 19. Your school has decided to conduct a debate in connection with the celebrations of Women's Day on the topic 'The social system of India does not instill confidence in women'. You are selected to speak for the motion. Draft the script for your arguments as you would like to present there. (4)
20. Read the following information about Nelson Mandela and prepare a short profile of him. (Word limit : 60 to 70 words).
- Nelson Mandela (1918–2013) – South African political activist–law degree in 1942–1943, joined the ANC, 1956, arrested and charged with treason–acquitted in 1961–imprisoned for treason–20 years in–released in 1990 elected the first leader of the democratic South Africa–Nobel Peace Prize in 1993. (5)

21. Read the following comment made by Ivan Ivanich about his brother Nicholai in the story 'Gooseberries'.
'He was a good fellow and I loved him, but I never sympathized with the desire to shut oneself up on one's own farm. It is a common saying that a man needs only six feet of land. But surely a corpse wants that, not a man.' Here we find a sharp contradiction between the characters of the two. What other differences do you find in their nature?
(Prepare a write-up of about 75 words). (4)
22. After the eventful voyage to Calcutta, Ranaganji reached Liverpool. A. J. Cronin recommended Hasan for a promotion and sent him to the director of the ship with a character certificate. Imagine what he would write. Prepare the certificate for A. J. Cronin. (4)
23. Imagine that you are a tour operator of a houseboat. You have a new group of 20 tourists from abroad for a boat cruise. How would you introduce the cruise to them? Prepare the introductory speech you would likely to present there. (5)

OR

Imagine that you conducted a boat cruise along the backwaters of Kerala by houseboat. Prepare a travel essay on your boat cruise.

The following hints would help you.

(huge, slow-moving exotic barges—powered by a 40 HP engine—furnished bedrooms, modern toilets, cozy living rooms, kitchen, balcony for angling—curved roof of wood or plaited palm, open out provide shade and allow uninterrupted views—breathtaking view of the untouched and otherwise inaccessible rural Kerala.)

24. Mahatma Gandhi's call of action in the preindependent India was two-fold. Even after sixty-seven years of its independence, India is still in urgent need of this two-fold action. Prepare an essay on the 'Internal and external challenges of free India.' (6)

25. In the essay, 'Disasters and Disaster Management in India', you have learnt that constructing buildings according to proper guidelines and using good quality materials can reduce the risk arising from disasters. However, you find people violating the norms laid down by the government for constructing such houses, especially the multistoreyed flats and buildings. You decide to write a letter to the editor of a local daily to bring this matter before the authorities and the public. Draft the letter which you would send to the editor. (6)

26. Read the sonnet, 'To Peace' by Shakespeare and write a note of appreciation.

To Peace

O Peace! For ages haven't we invoked
 Your grace, by chanting your name ceaselessly?
 We're sorely tired; our voices are choked:
 Must you still evade us mercilessly?

What will you accept as our libation?
 In vain we've offered you, at various stages,
 Of Faith and Hope a sweet distillation.
 'Labour' too failed to win you as 'wages'.

Ah! You're too precious to be won cheaply!
 For you costlier things we need to barter.
 We must place, one by one, successively,
 The rarest things at your holy altar -

These being Love, Sacrifice, Selflessness,
 Compassion, Contentment and Generousness.

(Libation : a drink poured as an offering to a god).

(William Shakespeare) (8)