

ICSE Class 10 Literature in English Question Paper with Solutions(Memory Based)

Time Allowed :3 Hours	Maximum Marks :70	Total questions :37
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General Instructions

Read the following instructions very carefully and strictly follow them:

1. Answers to this Paper must be written on the paper provided separately.
2. You will not be allowed to write during the first 15 minutes
3. This time is to be spent in reading the question paper.
4. The time given at the head of this Paper is the time allowed for writing the answers,
5. The paper has four Sections.
6. Section A is compulsory - All questions in Section A must be answered.
7. You must attempt one question from each of the Sections B, C and D and one other question from any Section of your choice.
8. The intended marks for questions or parts of questions are given in brackets [].

1. What were Julius Caesar's dying words?

- (A) 'Caesar, now be still...'
- (B) 'Et tu Brute? Then fall Caesar!'
- (C) 'This is the most unkindest cut of all.'
- (D) 'By your leave, gods; this is a Roman's part.'

Correct Answer: (B) 'Et tu Brute? Then fall Caesar!'

Solution: Concept: The question refers to William Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar*. In the play, Julius Caesar is betrayed and assassinated by a group of conspirators led by Brutus and

Cassius.

Explanation: When Caesar sees Brutus, whom he trusted deeply, among the attackers, he expresses shock and betrayal. His famous last words in the play are:

“Et tu, Brute? Then fall, Caesar!”

The phrase means:

- *Et tu, Brute?* — Latin for “You too, Brutus?”
- It signifies the ultimate betrayal by a close friend.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (A) Not from the assassination scene.
- (C) Spoken by Mark Antony later in the play.
- (D) Said by Brutus, not Caesar.

Final Answer: Caesar’s famous dying words are:

“Et tu, Brute? Then fall, Caesar!”

Quick Tip

Remember: “Et tu, Brute?” symbolizes ultimate betrayal and is one of the most famous lines from Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*.

2. Which of the following phrases best describes Antony’s mood when he says:

‘O mighty Caesar! dost thou lie so low? Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils, Shrunken to this little measure?’

- (A) frustration and rage
- (B) grief and sorrow
- (C) hate and anger
- (D) remorse and regret

Correct Answer: (B) grief and sorrow

Solution: Concept: The lines are spoken by Mark Antony in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* after he sees Caesar’s dead body. This occurs shortly after the assassination, before Antony delivers his famous funeral speech.

Explanation: In these lines, Antony reflects on Caesar’s greatness and contrasts it with his current lifeless state. His tone is filled with:

- Shock at Caesar’s fall
- Deep emotional pain
- Mourning for a great leader

The words “mighty Caesar” and the lament about his “conquests” and “glories” clearly show a sorrowful and grieving tone rather than anger or revenge.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (A) Frustration and rage appear later, not in this line.
- (C) Hate and anger are not expressed here.
- (D) Antony feels no guilt, so remorse is incorrect.

Final Answer: Antony’s mood is best described as:

Grief and sorrow

Quick Tip

In early scenes after Caesar’s death, Antony shows sorrow and restraint. His anger and political strategy emerge later in the funeral speech.

3. Which of the following does Antony NOT say about Caesar in his funeral speech?

- (A) Caesar was ambitious and wanted to be crowned king.
- (B) Caesar had compassion for the poor and cried when they cried.

(C) Caesar was valiant in battle and had brought riches to the Roman treasury.

(D) Caesar had left seventy-five drachmas to every Roman citizen.

Correct Answer: (A) Caesar was ambitious and wanted to be crowned king.

Solution: Concept: This question refers to Mark Antony's funeral speech in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Antony's speech is carefully crafted to turn the Roman crowd against the conspirators while appearing respectful.

Explanation: In his speech, Antony actually argues against the claim that Caesar was ambitious. He repeatedly says:

“Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; And Brutus is an honourable man.”

This is an example of irony, as Antony subtly undermines Brutus's claim.

He instead presents examples to show Caesar was not ambitious:

- Caesar wept for the poor.
- He brought captives whose ransoms filled Rome's treasury.
- He refused the crown three times.
- He left money and parks to Roman citizens in his will.

Why Other Options Are Correct Statements by Antony:

- (B) Antony says Caesar was compassionate toward the poor.
- (C) He mentions Caesar bringing riches to Rome.
- (D) He reads Caesar's will giving money to citizens.

Final Answer: The statement Antony does NOT say is:

Caesar was ambitious and wanted to be crowned king.

Quick Tip

Antony uses irony in the funeral speech. He repeats Brutus's words but provides evidence that Caesar was not ambitious.

4. Antony says, ‘These many then shall die; their names are prick’d.’ These words reveal that he is

- (A) ruthless
- (B) anxious
- (C) frustrated
- (D) angry

Correct Answer: (A) ruthless

Solution: Concept: The line is spoken by Mark Antony in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* after Caesar’s assassination, when Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus form the Second Triumvirate and begin planning revenge.

Explanation: In this scene, Antony coldly discusses the names of people who must be executed. The phrase:

“These many then shall die; their names are prick’d.”

means that the names have been marked on a list of people to be killed.

This shows:

- Lack of mercy
- Political cruelty
- Willingness to eliminate enemies without hesitation

Thus, the tone reflects calculated brutality rather than emotional anger.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (B) Anxious — Antony is not fearful here.
- (C) Frustrated — He is decisive, not confused.
- (D) Angry — The line reflects cold planning, not emotional rage.

Final Answer: The words reveal that Antony is:

Ruthless

Quick Tip

In later acts of *Julius Caesar*, Antony shifts from emotional mourner to a calculating and ruthless political leader.

5. During their quarrel, Brutus says to Cassius, ‘Away, slight man!’ Brutus’s tone in the above line can be best described as _____.

- (A) disappointed
- (B) argumentative
- (C) vengeful
- (D) dismissive

Correct Answer: (D) dismissive

Solution: Concept: This line occurs during the quarrel between Brutus and Cassius in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* (Act IV). The scene reveals tensions among the conspirators after Caesar’s death.

Explanation: When Brutus says:

“Away, slight man!”

he is belittling Cassius and brushing him aside. The word *slight* implies someone insignificant or unworthy of attention.

This shows:

- A tone of contempt
- Emotional detachment
- Rejection rather than argument

Thus, the tone is dismissive rather than emotional or vengeful.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (A) Disappointed — Not the dominant tone here.
- (B) Argumentative — The line ends the argument rather than continues it.

- (C) Vengeful — No desire for revenge is expressed.

Final Answer: Brutus's tone is best described as:

Dismissive

Quick Tip

In the Brutus–Cassius quarrel, Brutus often appears morally rigid and emotionally distant, leading to dismissive language.

6. Towards the end of the play, Pindarus reports that Titinius had been captured by enemy troops. What does Cassius do on hearing this news?

- (A) He orders an immediate attack to rescue Titinius.
- (B) Fearing defeat, he decides to flee the battlefield.
- (C) He persuades Pindarus to help him take his life.
- (D) He surrenders to Antony's forces to save his men.

Correct Answer: (C) He persuades Pindarus to help him take his life.

Solution: Concept: This event occurs near the end of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* during the Battle of Philippi. Cassius misinterprets the situation due to incorrect information from Pindarus.

Explanation: Pindarus mistakenly reports that Titinius has been captured by the enemy. Believing the battle is lost and overcome with despair, Cassius chooses to end his life.

He asks Pindarus, his servant, to stab him with the same sword that had killed Caesar. This marks a tragic moment caused by misunderstanding and fatalism.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (A) Cassius does not attempt a rescue.
- (B) He does not flee; he chooses suicide.
- (D) He does not surrender to Antony.

Final Answer: Cassius persuades Pindarus to help him take his life.

He persuades Pindarus to help him take his life.

Quick Tip

Cassius's death is based on a tragic misunderstanding — Titinius was actually safe. This highlights the theme of fate and misjudgment in *Julius Caesar*.

7. What did Martin dislike about the elevator in his apartment building?

- (A) The unpleasant smell
- (B) Its dirty floor
- (C) Its small size
- (D) The poor ventilation

Correct Answer: (A) The unpleasant smell

Solution: Concept: This question refers to the prose lesson where Martin describes his experiences in his apartment building. The focus is on his personal discomfort with certain aspects of his surroundings.

Explanation: Martin specifically mentions that he disliked using the elevator because of the unpleasant smell inside it. The foul odor made the experience uncomfortable and left a strong impression on him.

The detail highlights:

- His sensitivity to surroundings
- The poor maintenance of the building
- Realistic everyday discomforts

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (B) Dirty floor — Not specifically mentioned as his main concern.
- (C) Small size — Not highlighted as the issue.

- (D) Poor ventilation — Not directly stated in the text.

Final Answer: Martin disliked:

The unpleasant smell

Quick Tip

In comprehension questions, focus on specific details mentioned in the text. Here, the key detail is the foul smell in the elevator.

8. Choose the option that lists the sequence of events from Stephen Leacock’s short story, *With the Photographer*, in the correct order:

1. Even as he was protesting, the photographer managed to take a candid photograph with which he was very pleased.
2. At the studio, the photographer’s criticism of his face made the author feel worthless and unattractive.
3. Disturbed and upset by the photographer’s criticisms and instructions, the author voiced his protest.
4. The author wanted to have his photograph taken.

(A) 3, 2, 1, 4

(B) 4, 2, 3, 1

(C) 2, 3, 4, 1

(D) 1, 4, 3, 2

Correct Answer: (B) 4, 2, 3, 1

Solution: Concept: This question tests understanding of the sequence of events in Stephen Leacock’s humorous short story *With the Photographer*, where the narrator has an unpleasant and absurd experience at a photography studio.

Correct Sequence Explanation:

Step 1: The story begins with the narrator deciding to get his photograph taken.

⇒ Statement 4

Step 2: At the studio, the photographer harshly criticizes his face and appearance, making him feel unattractive.

⇒ Statement 2

Step 3: Upset by the constant criticism and strange instructions, the narrator protests.

⇒ Statement 3

Step 4: Despite his protest, the photographer quickly takes a candid photograph and is satisfied with it.

⇒ Statement 1

Thus, the correct sequence is:

4 → 2 → 3 → 1

Final Answer:

4, 2, 3, 1

Quick Tip

In sequence questions, identify:

- The starting intention (why the story begins)
- The main conflict
- The reaction
- The final outcome

9. ‘Nana has many voices. There is a special one she uses to shut everyone up.’ What do these lines from Ama Ata Aidoo’s short story, *The Girl Who Can*, tell us about Nana?

- (A) She is a loud, rude woman.
(B) She has a strong, powerful voice.

- (C) She can speak many languages.
- (D) She dominates the household.

Correct Answer: (B) She has a strong, powerful voice.

Solution: Concept: This question refers to Ama Ata Aidoo’s short story *The Girl Who Can*, where Nana is portrayed as a strong and authoritative grandmother figure in the family.

Explanation: The line:

“Nana has many voices. There is a special one she uses to shut everyone up.”

suggests that Nana has a commanding presence. The phrase implies that she can control situations and silence others simply through the tone of her voice.

This indicates:

- Authority within the family
- Emotional strength
- A powerful and commanding tone

Thus, the best interpretation is that Nana possesses a strong and powerful voice.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (A) Loud and rude — The line shows authority, not rudeness.
- (C) Many languages — “Many voices” is figurative, not literal.
- (D) Dominates household — While she is authoritative, the line specifically highlights her voice.

Final Answer: These lines show that Nana:

Has a strong, powerful voice

Quick Tip

Watch for figurative language in literature questions. “Many voices” here refers to tone and authority, not literal speech.

10. What were the people in Mead’s neighbourhood doing when he was out walking at night?

- (A) Watching television
- (B) Reading magazines
- (C) Driving to the gas station
- (D) Staring out of their windows

Correct Answer: (A) Watching television

Solution: Concept: This question refers to Ray Bradbury’s short story *The Pedestrian*, which depicts a dystopian future where society is dominated by technology and isolation.

Explanation: Leonard Mead walks alone through silent streets at night. The houses appear dark and lifeless from the outside, but inside, people are absorbed in watching television.

Bradbury uses this detail to show:

- Social isolation
- Loss of human interaction
- Overdependence on technology

Mead’s habit of walking and observing the world makes him unusual in this technology-controlled society.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (B) Reading magazines — No longer common in the story’s setting.
- (C) Driving to the gas station — Streets are empty.
- (D) Staring out of windows — People are not engaged with the outside world.

Final Answer: The people in Mead’s neighbourhood were:

Watching television

Quick Tip

In *The Pedestrian*, television symbolizes technological control and social isolation — a key theme in Bradbury’s works.

11. In Alphonse Daudet’s short story, *The Last Lesson*, Franz says that ‘all our bad news had come from there.’ What does ‘there’ refer to?

- (A) The school building
- (B) The bulletin board
- (C) The clock tower
- (D) The town hall

Correct Answer: (B) The bulletin board

Solution:

Concept: The question is based on the story *The Last Lesson* by Alphonse Daudet. Understanding the historical context of the story helps identify the correct answer.

Explanation: In the story, Franz recalls that important and often unpleasant news about the war and new orders from Berlin used to be displayed on the bulletin board at the town hall. The villagers would gather there to read official announcements. This included news about lost battles and, ultimately, the order that only German would be taught in schools. Therefore, when Franz says that “all our bad news had come from there,” he is referring to the bulletin board.

Quick Tip

For literature MCQs, focus on context clues and recurring references in the story.

12. Which of the given options contains the figure of speech that appears in the following lines from Longfellow’s poem, *Haunted Houses*?

‘The spirit-world around this world of sense / Floats like an atmosphere, ... ’

- (A) ‘Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.’

- (B) ‘When Frost was spectre-gray’
- (C) ‘An hundred years should go to praise / Thine eyes’
- (D) ‘She sways like a flower in the wind of our song;’

Correct Answer: (D) ‘She sways like a flower in the wind of our song;’

Solution:

Concept: The given lines from Longfellow’s poem use a figure of speech. Identifying the comparison helps determine the correct answer.

Explanation: In the line “Floats like an atmosphere,” the poet uses a simile. A simile compares two things using words like “like” or “as.” Here, the spirit-world is compared to an atmosphere using the word “like.”

Among the options, sentence (D) — “She sways like a flower in the wind of our song” — also uses a simile because it compares “she” to a flower using the word “like.” The other options do not contain the same figure of speech.

Quick Tip

If a line contains words like “like” or “as” showing comparison, it is usually a simile.

13. The mood in the poem, *When Great Trees Fall* moves from

- (A) hurt to wonder
- (B) calm to distress
- (C) hope to despair
- (D) fear to hope

Correct Answer: (D) fear to hope

Solution:

Concept: The poem *When Great Trees Fall* by Maya Angelou explores the emotional impact of losing great individuals and the gradual healing that follows.

Explanation: At the beginning of the poem, the mood is filled with fear, grief, and disturbance. The poet describes how the world seems shaken and people feel lost when great souls pass away. There is a sense of emotional emptiness and confusion.

However, as the poem progresses, the mood shifts. The poet suggests that after mourning, people begin to heal and remember the goodness left behind by the departed souls. Their lives inspire strength and renewal. Thus, the poem ends on a note of hope and reassurance.

Quick Tip

When asked about mood shift in poetry, look at the beginning emotion and the final tone of the poem.

14. In the poem *The Glove and the Lions*, King Francis exclaims, “rightly done”. What action of Count de Lorge does he applaud when he says this?

- (A) Leaping into the pit full of angry lions.
- (B) Retrieving the lady’s glove from the pit.
- (C) Flinging the glove angrily in the lady’s face.
- (D) Sighing for the ‘beauteous lively dame’

Correct Answer: (C) Flinging the glove angrily in the lady’s face.

Solution:

Concept: The poem highlights themes of pride, love, and self-respect through the actions of Count de Lorge.

Explanation: Count de Lorge bravely jumps into the arena and retrieves the glove to prove his courage. However, instead of submitting to the lady’s pride, he throws the glove back in her face, rejecting her shallow demand. King Francis praises this act because it shows self-respect and dignity rather than blind devotion.

Quick Tip

Focus on character reactions in poetry-based MCQs — they often reveal the theme and correct answer.

15. Select the option that shows the correct relationship between Statement 1 and Statement 2 based on the poem, *A Considerable Speck*.

Statement 1: The mite on the paper ran, crept, faltered, hesitated and cowered.

Statement 2: The poet-narrator realised that it was an intelligent living creature.

- (A) Statement 1 is true and Statement 2 is false.
- (B) Statement 1 is false and Statement 2 is true.
- (C) Statement 1 is the reason for Statement 2.
- (D) Statement 2 is a contradiction of Statement 1.

Correct Answer: (C) Statement 1 is the reason for Statement 2.

Solution:

Concept: The poem *A Considerable Speck* by Robert Frost reflects on life and intelligence in even the tiniest creatures.

Explanation: The poet observes the speck moving in a purposeful and cautious way — running, hesitating, and reacting to danger. These actions show awareness and intent. Because of this behaviour, the poet realises that the speck is not just a dot of ink but a living, intelligent creature. Thus, Statement 1 directly leads to Statement 2.

Quick Tip

In assertion-reason questions, check whether the observation logically explains the conclusion.

16. Sukumar Ray's poem, *The Power of Music* can be classified as

- (A) nonsense verse
- (B) a sonnet
- (C) a lyrical poem
- (D) an ode

Correct Answer: (A) nonsense verse

Solution:

Concept: Sukumar Ray is well known for his humorous and absurd style of writing, especially in nonsense literature.

Explanation: *The Power of Music* contains exaggerated, humorous, and illogical situations meant to entertain rather than convey a serious poetic structure. The poem focuses on playful absurdity and comic imagination, which are key features of nonsense verse. It does not follow the structure of a sonnet, ode, or traditional lyrical poem.

Quick Tip

Nonsense verse is identified by humor, absurdity, and playful imagination rather than strict poetic form.

17. Read the extract from *Julius Caesar* Act 3, Scene 1, given below and answer the questions that follow:

Passage:

Antony:

Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bay'd, brave hart;
Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.
O world, thou wast the forest to this hart;
And this indeed, O world, the heart of thee.
How like a deer, struck by many princes,
Dost thou here lie!

Cassius: Mark Antony —

Antony: Pardon me, Caius Cassius:

The enemies of Caesar shall say this;
Then, in a friend, it is cold modesty.

Solution:

(i) Why does Antony say, 'Pardon me, Julius!'?

Antony says this to express sorrow and respect for the dead Caesar. He is apologising for

appearing to side with the conspirators temporarily and seeks forgiveness for not openly opposing them at that moment.

(ii) Where was Caesar ‘bay’d’? Explain the meaning of the words, ‘Here wast thou bay’d, brave hart.’

Caesar was bayed at the Senate House where he was surrounded and attacked by the conspirators. The phrase means that Caesar, compared to a brave deer (hart), was cornered and hunted down by his enemies.

(iii) Name any two of the ‘hunters’ who were present at the scene. Why are they described as being ‘sign’d’ and ‘crimson’d’?

Two of the hunters were Brutus and Cassius. They are described as ‘sign’d’ and ‘crimson’d’ because their hands and swords were marked and stained with Caesar’s blood after the assassination.

(iv) What does Cassius ask Antony immediately after this exchange? How does Antony respond to his question?

Cassius asks Antony whether he intends to oppose the conspirators or remain their friend. Antony responds diplomatically, assuring them that he wishes to be their friend and does not show open hostility.

(v) What request does Antony make to Brutus a little later in the scene? Who warns Brutus against granting this request? What reason does this person give? What does this tell us about this person’s character?

Antony requests permission to speak at Caesar’s funeral. Cassius warns Brutus not to grant this request because he fears Antony’s speech may turn the public against the conspirators. This shows that Cassius is shrewd, cautious, and politically perceptive.

Quick Tip

In drama extracts, include the passage, answer in sequence, and refer to character motives and themes.

18. Read the extract from *Julius Caesar* Act 5, Scene 3, given below and answer the questions that follow:

Passage:

Brutus:

O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet!

Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords

In our own proper entrails.

[Alarums]

Cato: Brave Titinius!

Look whether he have not crown'd dead Cassius!

Brutus: Are yet two Romans living such as these?

The last of all the Romans, fare thee well!

It is impossible that ever Rome

Should breed thy fellow. Friends, I owe more tears

To this dead man than you shall see me pay —

I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time.

Solution:

(i) Explain what Brutus means when he says,

'O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet! Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords in our own proper entrails.'

Brutus means that even after death, Caesar's influence continues to haunt the conspirators. Their defeat and internal conflicts make Brutus feel that Caesar's spirit is taking revenge by causing them to destroy themselves.

(ii) What were Cassius' last thoughts before he died? How did Titinius honour the dead Cassius?

Before dying, Cassius believed that Titinius had been captured by the enemy and thought their cause was lost. Overcome with despair, he ordered his servant Pindarus to kill him. Later, Titinius honoured Cassius by placing a wreath of victory on his head and then killed himself out of loyalty and grief.

(iii) What does Brutus promise when he says, ‘I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time.’ Why does he make this promise? What aspect of Brutus’ character does this reveal to us?

Brutus promises that he will mourn Cassius properly later. He makes this promise because the battle is still ongoing and he must remain strong for his army. This shows Brutus’ sense of duty, self-control, and stoic nature, as he puts responsibility above personal grief.

(iv) Explain the term ‘funerals’. Why does Brutus not want to hold ‘his funerals’ in their camp? Where will ‘his funerals’ be held?

The term ‘funerals’ refers to the funeral rites for Cassius and Titinius. Brutus does not want to perform them in the camp because it might demoralise the soldiers. He decides that the funerals will be held later at Thasos.

(v) How does Lucilius demonstrate his loyalty to Brutus at the end of the play? What does this tell you about Brutus’ character? How is Lucilius rewarded for his loyalty by Antony? What does this reveal about Antony’s character?

Lucilius shows loyalty by pretending to be Brutus and allowing himself to be captured so that Brutus can escape. This shows that Brutus was deeply respected and inspired devotion among his followers. Antony, upon learning the truth, treats Lucilius kindly and assures him safety. This reveals Antony’s nobility, generosity, and respect for bravery even in an enemy.

Quick Tip

In Shakespeare extracts, explain meanings clearly and highlight character traits and themes like loyalty, honour, and fate.

19. Read the following extract from Ama Ata Aidoo’s short story, *The Girl Who Can* and answer the questions that follow:

Passage:

‘Like all this business to do with my legs. I have always wanted to tell them not to worry. I mean Nana and my mother. That it did not have to be an issue for my two favourite people to

fight over. But I didn't want either to be told not to repeat that or it to be considered so funny that anyone would laugh at me until they cried. After all, they were my legs. . . '

Solution:

(i) Where was Adjoa born? Who were her 'two favourite people'?

Adjoa was born in Hasodzi, a small village in Ghana. Her two favourite people were her mother and her grandmother (Nana).

(ii) What 'issue' did her two favourite people fight over? Why?

They argued about Adjoa's thin legs. Nana believed that thin legs were not suitable for a woman, as women were expected to have strong legs for childbearing and traditional roles. Her mother, however, defended Adjoa and did not see it as a problem.

(iii) What other issue concerning Adjoa did Nana and Adjoa's mother disagree on?

What opinion did each of them have on this issue?

They also disagreed about Adjoa's intelligence and way of thinking. Nana felt that a young girl should not think or talk too much and should behave traditionally. In contrast, Adjoa's mother encouraged her daughter's curiosity and independent thinking.

(iv) Mention three little clues in Nana's behaviour that led Adjoa to realise that Nana's views on her legs had changed.

First, Nana began speaking less critically about Adjoa's legs. Second, she proudly watched Adjoa during the sports competition. Third, she openly admired Adjoa after her success as a runner.

(v) How does Adjoa's success as a runner bring about a change in the traditional views held by Nana? Mention two of Nana's character traits that make her a remarkable person.

Adjoa's victory in the running race proves that her thin legs are actually a strength rather than a weakness. This makes Nana realise that traditional beliefs can be wrong, and she changes her views. Nana is remarkable because she is open-minded and capable of accepting change. She is also loving and honest enough to admit when she is wrong.

Quick Tip

In prose extracts, focus on relationships, conflict, and character change for complete answers.

20. Read the following extract from Ray Bradbury's short story, *The Pedestrian*, and answer the questions that follow:

Passage:

'Sometimes he (Mead) would walk for hours and miles and return only at midnight to his house. And on his way he would see the cottages and homes with their dark windows, and it was not unequal to walking through a graveyard where only the faintest glimmers of firefly light appeared in flickers behind the windows.'

Solution:

(i) In which year is Bradbury's story set? What did Leonard Mead 'most dearly love to do'?

The story is set in the year 2053. Leonard Mead most dearly loved to go for long walks alone through the city streets at night.

(ii) In the given extract, what does Bradbury compare Mead's experience of walking through the city late at night to? List two reasons why you would consider the comparison suitable.

Bradbury compares Mead's walk through the city to walking through a graveyard. This comparison is suitable because the streets are silent and lifeless, and the houses are dark with only faint lights, making the city appear dead and abandoned.

(iii) Which three responses from Mead are viewed with suspicion by the police car?

The police car is suspicious when Mead says that he is a writer, when he admits that he does not own a television, and when he explains that he simply enjoys walking for pleasure.

(iv) Where is Mead taken to at the end of the story? What observation does the author make about Mead's house as the police car drives through the street?

Mead is taken to the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies. As the police

car passes his house, the author notes that it is the only house on the street with its lights on, highlighting Mead's individuality and difference from others.

(v) Mention two dangers that the author is warning us against, through this story.

Suggest an alternative title for the story. Give one reason for your choice.

The author warns against the dangers of excessive dependence on technology and the loss of individuality in a conformist society. An alternative title could be *The Last Walker*, as it reflects Mead's uniqueness as possibly the only person who still values walking and independent thought.

Quick Tip

For dystopian stories, focus on themes like technology, conformity, and individuality.

21. Read the following extract from Maya Angelou's poem, *When Great Trees Fall*, and answer the questions that follow:

Passage:

*When great trees fall,
rocks on distant hills shudder,
lions hunker down
in tall grasses,
and even elephants
lumber after safety.*

Solution:

(i) What three images from the natural world does Angelou use to describe the effect of great trees falling?

Angelou uses the images of rocks shuddering on distant hills, lions crouching in tall grasses, and elephants moving towards safety to show the powerful impact of great trees falling.

(ii) Angelou compares great trees to great souls. Mention two ways in which this comparison is appropriate. What is the mood created by the lines in the above extract?

The comparison is appropriate because both great trees and great souls provide strength and shelter to others, and their fall creates a deep sense of loss and disturbance. The mood created by the extract is one of shock, grief, and solemnity.

(iii) What words does the poet use to describe the condition of the air around us when great souls die? What feeling is being expressed in the line, ‘We breathe, briefly’?

The poet describes the air as light, rare, and sterile when great souls die. The line “We breathe, briefly” expresses a feeling of shock and disbelief, as if people are stunned and unable to fully comprehend the loss.

(iv) What, according to the poet, are the two things we remember and regret when a great soul dies? What happens to our souls when great souls die?

We remember and regret the kindness and goodness of the great soul, and the opportunities we may have lost. The poet says that our souls, once nourished by their presence, now shrink and feel diminished after their death.

(v) ‘Angelou’s poem is about the lasting influence of great souls.’ Explain the above statement briefly. What aspect of the poem appeals to you? Give one reason for your response.

The poem shows that even after great souls die, their influence continues through the values and memories they leave behind. Their lives inspire healing and growth in others. The most appealing aspect of the poem is its hopeful message, as it shows that goodness and love continue to guide us even after loss.

Quick Tip

For poetry extracts, include imagery, mood, theme, and personal response for full marks.

22. Read the following lines from Sukumar Ray’s poem, *The Power of Music* and answer the questions that follow:

Passage:

When summer comes, we hear the hums

Bhisma Lochan Sharma.

You catch his strain on hill and plain from Delhi down to Burma.

Solution:

(i) What is Bhisma Lochan Sharma known for? When can one hear him? Explain the words ‘You catch his strain’.

Bhisma Lochan Sharma is known for his loud and terrible singing. One can hear him during the summer season. The phrase “You catch his strain” means that his voice carries far and wide, and people can hear his singing everywhere.

(ii) How can we tell that his singing was not appreciated by the people who heard him?

We can tell that his singing was not appreciated because it causes discomfort and suffering to people and animals. The exaggerated reactions in the poem show that listeners find his voice unbearable rather than enjoyable.

(iii) The poet uses ridiculous images to exaggerate the effect of Bhisma Lochan Sharma’s voice on his listeners. Mention any three such images.

First, people faint or collapse after hearing his voice. Second, animals behave wildly or run away in fear. Third, buildings and surroundings seem affected as if shaken by the force of his singing.

(iv) How does the poet describe the billy goat which appears at the end of the poem? What does it do to help bring relief to the suffering people?

The billy goat is described as a simple but decisive animal. It suddenly charges at Bhisma Lochan Sharma and stops his singing, thereby bringing relief to the suffering people.

(v) Bring out the significance of the title of the poem. Do you feel sympathy for Bhisma Lochan Sharma or for those who listened to him? Give reasons for your response.

The title is ironic because it suggests the beauty and influence of music, but in the poem, music becomes a source of chaos and suffering. I feel sympathy for the listeners because they are forced to endure his unbearable singing and cannot escape from it.

Quick Tip

In humorous poems, note exaggeration, irony, and absurd imagery for strong answers.
