



**INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT  
HALF YEARLY EXAMINATION  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

CLASS: X

Sub. Code: 184

Time Allotted: 3 Hrs

17.09.2019

Max. Marks: 80

**General Instructions:**

- a) This paper consists of 3 sections A, B & C. All the sections are compulsory.
- b) Separate instructions are given with each section and question, wherever necessary. Read these instructions very carefully and follow them.
- c) Do not exceed the given word limit while answering the questions. Marks will be deducted if the word limit exceeds.

**1. Read the following passage carefully.**

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1. My grandmother's house is like a chambered sea shell. It has many rooms, yet it is not a mansion. Its proportions are small and its designs are simple. It is a house that has grown organically, according to the needs of its inhabitants. To all of us in the family, it is known as the la casa de Mama. It is the place of our origin, the stage of our memories and dreams of Island life.
2. I remember how in my childhood it sat on stilts, this was before it had a car park downstairs-it rested on its perch like a great blue bird-not a flying sort of bird, more like a nesting hen, but with spread wings. Grandfather had built it soon after their marriage. He was a painter and house-builder by trade, a poet and meditative man by nature. As each of their eight children was born, new rooms were added. After a few years, the paint didn't exactly match, nor the materials, so there was a chronology to it, like the rings of a tree, and Mama could tell you the history of each room in her casa, and thus, the genealogy of family along with it.
3. Her own room is the heart of the house. Though I have seen it recently, both woman and room have diminished in size, changed by the new perspective of my eyes, now capable of looking over countertops and tall beds. It is not this picture I carry in my memory of Mama's casa. Instead, I see her room as a queen's chamber where a small woman loomed large, a throne room with a massive four poster bed in its center, which stood that the smallest grandchildren were allowed to take naps in the afternoons, here too was where Mama secluded herself to dispense private advice to her daughters, sitting on the edge of the bed, looking down at whoever sat on the rocker where generations of babies had been sung to sleep. To me, she looked like a wise empress right out of the fairy tales I was addicted to reading.
4. And there was the monstrous wardrobe, she kept locked with a little golden key, she did not hide. This was a test of her dominion over us, though my cousins and I wanted a look inside that massive wardrobe more than anything, we never reached for that little key lying on top of her bible on the dresser. This was also where she placed her earrings and rosary when she took them off at night. God's word was her security system. This wardrobe was the place I imagined where she kept jewels, satin slippers, and elegant silk, sequined gowns of heartbreaking fineness. I lusted after those imaginary costumes. I heard that Mama had been a great beauty in her youth. My cousins had ideas as to what she kept in that wooden vault; its secret could be money Mama did not hand cash to strangers, banks were out of the question, so there were stories that her

mattress was stuffed with dollar bills, and that she buried coins in jars in her garden under rose-bushes, or kept them in her untouched wardrobe; there might be that legendary gun salvaged from the Spanish American conflict over the Island. We went wild over suspected treasures that we made up simply because children have to fill locked trunks with something wonderful.

**A. Choose the correct option to complete the following sentences.**

1x4=4

- (i) Grandmother's house resembles a chambered sea shell because
- (a) its design is simple (b) of the many rings on the tree
- (c) it looks like the Queen's chamber (d) it has many rooms
- (ii) Grandfather was a \_\_\_\_\_ by profession
- (a) Sailor (b) Painter (c) Poet (d) meditative
- (iii) As each of her eight children was born, new \_\_\_\_\_ were added.
- (a) Rooms (b) trees (c) birds (d) houses
- (iv) The key was kept on top of the Grandmother's \_\_\_\_\_ on the dresser
- (a) Clothes (b) Bible (c) Silk gown (d) books

**B. Answer the following questions in one word or one sentence.**

4x2=8

- (i) What was the la casa de Mama in the family?
- (ii) What was the test of her dominion over them?
- (iii) What according to the narrator did Mama keep in the wardrobe?
- (iv) What had the author heard of Mama as a young woman?

**2. Read the following passage carefully.**

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1. The habit of reading is one of the greatest resources of mankind; and we enjoy reading books that belong to us much more than if they are borrowed. A borrowed book is like a guest in the house; it must be treated with punctiliousness, with a certain considerate formality. You must see that it sustains no damage; it must not suffer while under your roof. You cannot leave it carelessly, you cannot mark it, you cannot turn down the pages, you cannot use it familiarly. And then, some day, although this is seldom done, you really ought to return it.

2. But your own books belong to you; you treat them with that affectionate intimacy that annihilates formality. Books are for use, not for show; you should own no book that you are afraid to mark up, or afraid to place on the table, wide open and face down. A good reason for marking favorite passages in books is that this practice enables you to remember more easily the significant sayings, to refer to them quickly, and then in later years, it is like visiting a forest where you once blazed a trail. You have the pleasure of going over the old ground, and recalling both the intellectual scenery and your own earlier self.

3. Everyone should begin collecting a private library in youth; the instinct of private property, which is fundamental in human beings, can here be cultivated with every advantage and no evils. One should have one's own bookshelves, which should not have doors, glass windows, or keys; they should be free and accessible to the hand as well as to the eye. The best of mural decorations is books; they are more varied in color and appearance than any wallpaper, they are more attractive in design, and they have the prime advantage of being separate personalities, so that if you sit alone in the room in the firelight, you are surrounded with intimate friends. The knowledge that they are there in plain view is both stimulating and refreshing. You do not have to read them all. Most of my indoor life is spent in a room containing six thousand books; and I have a stock answer to the invariable question that comes from strangers. "Have you read all of

these books?" "Some of them twice." This reply is both true and unexpected.

4. My devotion to reading has never made me a recluse. How could it? Books are of the people, by the people, for the people. Literature is the immortal part of history; it is the best and most enduring part of personality. But book-friends have this advantage over living friends; you can enjoy the most truly aristocratic society in the world whenever you want it. The great dead are beyond our physical reach, and the great living are usually almost as inaccessible; as for our personal friends and acquaintances, we cannot always see them. Perchance they are asleep, or away on a journey. But in a private library, you can at any moment converse with Socrates or Shakespeare or Carlyle or Dumas or Dickens or Shaw or Barrie or Galsworthy.

A. **Answer the following questions briefly:**

2x4=8

- (i) We enjoy reading books that belong to us much more than if they are borrowed. Why?
- (ii) What is a good reason for marking favourite passages in book?
- (iii) What kind of bookshelf should one have?
- (iv) Why are books the best mural decorations?

B. **Find the words from the passage that mean the same as the following. Choose the correct option.**

1x4=4

(i) Strict or exact in the observation (para 1)

- (a) Punctiliousness      (b) Familiarly      (c) Formality      (d) seldom

(ii) ability to think and understand things (para 2)

- (a) significant      (b) annihilates      (c) intellectual      (d) blazed

(iii) the most basic and important (para-3)

- (a) fundamental      (b) private      (c) intimate      (d) instinct

(iv) living or lasting forever (para-4)

- (a) devotion      (b) enduring      (c) immortal      (d) aristocratic

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**SECTION- B**

3. The teenagers nowadays do not go out to play. They prefer to play games on internet. They do not like to play in sun. It has become a cause for Vitamin D deficiency in their bodies. Write an article for your school magazine in about 100-150 words, on 'Importance of Outdoor Games'. 8

**OR**

You are Reena/Rahul. Living at E-95, Sector-12, Dwaraka. You read an advertisement about the short term course in Computer Programming by Zee Computer World, Pitampura, Delhi. Write a letter, in about 100-150 words enquiring about all relevant details of the course.

4. **Write a story with the following as its opening lines, in about 150-200 words.** 10  
"Being a Sunday morning, I walked down the stairway lethargically when suddenly I was jolted by what I saw!! Bouquets of flowers filled my living and dining rooms, but how did they get in there???"

5. Complete the following passage by choosing the most appropriate option from the ones given below.

1x4=4

The colour of your skin (a) \_\_\_\_\_ on how much pigment, and colouring matter you have (b) \_\_\_\_\_ it. All people have brown and some yellow pigments (c) \_\_\_\_\_ their skin. But different people have different amount (d) \_\_\_\_\_ each pigment.

- |                |                |               |               |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| (a) (i) depend | (ii) depending | (iii) depends | (iv) depended |
| (b) (i) in     | (ii) and       | (iii) but     | (iv) for      |
| (c) (i) on     | (ii) in        | (iii) at      | (iv) above    |
| (d) (i) on     | (ii) of        | (iii) off     | (iv) in       |

6. In the passage given below one word has been omitted in each line. Write the missing word along with the word that comes before and the word that comes after it in your answer sheet. Ensure that the word that forms your answer is underlined.

1x4=4

The small town was the  
foot of the mountains. Most the  
people were farmers. There traders also  
in the town. Though not rich were  
happy and contended.

- |     |       |       |       |
|-----|-------|-------|-------|
| (a) | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (b) | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (c) | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (d) | _____ | _____ | _____ |

7. Rearrange the following words and phrases to form meaningful sentences.

1x4=4

- (a) algebra and/ a week/ me/ geometry/ twice/ he taught  
(b) very poor/ subjects/ I was/ in these/ earlier  
(c) very/ now/ proficient/ have become/ in them/ I  
(d) and my/ persistence/ hard work/ to his/ thanks

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### SECTION C

8. Read any one of the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.

1x4=4

- (i) Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.

- (a) What had given the poet 'a change of mood'?  
(b) What had the poet thought of that day?  
(c) How was some part of the day saved for the poet?  
(d) What is the rhyme scheme of this stanza?

OR

- (ii) "He is learning, well behind his desperate eyes,  
The epistemology of loss, how to stand up  
Knowing what every man must one day know  
And most know many days, how to stand up."

- (a) How are the boy's eyes?
- (b) Why are the boy's eyes 'desperate'?
- (c) What is the boy learning?
- (d) What is the boy going to know?

9. Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each.

2x5=10

- (a) Why did Mr. Keesing punish Anne Frank?
- (b) Lencho calls the raindrops 'new coins'. Why does he call them so?
- (c) Why did Mrs. Pumphrey take Tricki to the doctor?
- (d) Why does Mrs. Hall find the scientist eccentric?
- (e) What does the poet say about a tiger in his natural surroundings?

10. Answer the following questions in 100-150 words.

8

Describe the narrator's experience as he flew the aeroplane into the storm.

**OR**

What were the difficulties faced by Nelson Mandela in achieving freedom for his people?

11. Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each.

8

Write a character sketch of Horace Danby.

**OR**

With reference to The Midnight Visitor, do you think the presence of mind should be developed and to what advantage? Elaborate highlighting the characteristics of Ausable.

**End of the Question Paper**

