

ICSE Class 10 English Literature Question Paper 2026 with Solution

Time Allowed :3 Hours	Maximum Marks :80	Total Questions :38
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General Instructions

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 [].

Section - A

1(i). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question pertains to the climax of the assassination of Julius Caesar in William Shakespeare's play.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

In Act 3, Scene 1, as the conspirators stab Caesar, he initially tries to defend himself. However, when he sees Marcus Brutus, his closest and most trusted friend, delivering a blow, he utters the iconic Latin phrase "Et tu, Brute?" meaning "And you, Brutus?". Overwhelmed by this ultimate betrayal, he relinquishes his fight for life and says "Then fall Caesar!", accepting his fate.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The correct option is (b) as it accurately captures the words spoken by Caesar as he dies.

 Quick Tip

"Et tu, Brute?" is one of the most famous lines in literature, used to signify the ultimate betrayal by a friend.

1(ii). 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,
Shrunk 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks for the emotional state of Mark Antony immediately after he sees Caesar's corpse for the first time.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Upon seeing the body, Antony is struck by the contrast between Caesar's previous immense power and his current lifeless state.

The rhetorical questions "dost thou lie so low?" and the reference to his vast conquests being "shrunk to this little measure" reflect a sense of lamentation and profound loss.

He is not yet expressing the rage he later feels; rather, he is in a state of mourning and disbelief at the death of his friend and leader.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The mood is best described as grief and sorrow, which corresponds to option (b).

 Quick Tip

Mood in literature refers to the atmosphere or emotional aura of a scene; here, the "low" and "shrunk" imagery suggests despair and sadness.

1(iii). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Antony's funeral speech in Act 3, Scene 2 is a masterpiece of irony and rhetoric designed to disprove the conspirators' claims.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Antony uses the speech to refute Brutus's charge that Caesar was "ambitious."

He provides several counter-examples: Caesar's empathy for the poor (b), the wealth he brought to the state (c), and his generous will (d).

He repeatedly calls Brutus "an honourable man" while showing that Caesar was actually humble and altruistic, never explicitly stating that Caesar **wanted** to be king (in fact, he notes Caesar refused the crown three times).

Step 4: Final Answer:

Antony argues against the idea of Caesar's ambition; therefore, (a) is the statement he did NOT make as a fact.

💡 Quick Tip

Pay attention to the word "NOT." Antony quotes the conspirators saying Caesar was ambitious but spends his entire speech disproving it.

1(iv). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

In Act 4, Scene 1, the new Triumvirate (Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus) meets to decide who

should be executed to secure their power.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Antony is shown calmly marking a list of people for death, including his own nephew, as a matter of political bargaining.

The phrase "their names are prick'd" indicates a cold, mechanical process of selecting victims without any emotional hesitation or mercy.

This shift in character from the grieving friend in Act 3 to a cold-blooded politician in Act 4 highlights his lack of pity.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The adjective that best describes this behavior is "ruthless," which is option (a).

💡 Quick Tip

The Triumvirate scene is crucial because it shows that power has hardened Antony, making him as dangerous as those he fought against.

1(v). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

In Act 4, Scene 3, Brutus and Cassius have a legendary argument in Brutus's tent regarding corruption and leadership.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Brutus is morally outraged by Cassius's "itching palm" (corruption) and his failure to send money for the army.

By calling Cassius a "slight man," he is insulting his stature and importance, treating him as insignificant.

The command "Away" indicates that he wants Cassius to leave his presence because he finds him unworthy of further discussion at that moment.

Step 4: Final Answer:

This attitude of treating someone as unimportant or unworthy is defined as "dismissive," mak-

ing (d) the correct answer.

 Quick Tip

"Slight" here means trivial or of little account. Brutus's Stoic superiority often makes him appear arrogant or dismissive toward Cassius.

1(vi). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The tragedy of Cassius's death in Act 5, Scene 3, stems from a tragic misunderstanding of battlefield events.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Cassius believes the battle is lost and his friend Titinius is captured by Octavius's forces.

Overcome by despair and the belief that he has "lived to see [his] best friend ta'en before [his] face," he decides to commit suicide.

He commands his servant Pindarus to stab him with the very sword used to kill Caesar, fulfilling his promise of freedom to Pindarus in exchange for this deed.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Cassius commits suicide via Pindarus, which is option (c).

 Quick Tip

Cassius's death is ironic because Titinius was actually being greeted by friendly troops of Brutus, not captured by enemies.

1(vii). 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: (c) Its small size

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

In William Sleator's short story 'The Elevator', the protagonist Martin suffers from extreme claustrophobia and anxiety.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The elevator is a central symbol of Martin's fear. He describes it as incredibly cramped and old.

The text highlights that even when empty, the space feels oppressive. When he has to share it with another person (like the "Fat Lady"), the smallness becomes unbearable for him.

This physical attribute—the small size—is what triggers his psychological distress throughout the story.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The primary reason for his dislike is (c) its small size.

 Quick Tip

Claustrophobia is the fear of confined spaces; therefore, "small size" is the most logical answer for a claustrophobic character.

1(viii). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question requires arranging the plot points of Stephen Leacock's humorous narrative in chronological order.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

First, the author arrives at the studio with the intent of getting a photograph (Event 4).

While setting up, the photographer starts criticizing the author's physical features, like his eyes and mouth, which hurts the author's self-esteem (Event 2).

After enduring the photographer's intrusive handling of his head, the author finally snaps and begins a speech of protest (Event 3).

At the peak of this emotional outburst, the photographer takes the picture, claiming he liked the "animation" (Event 1).

Step 4: Final Answer:

The logical sequence is 4, 2, 3, 1. Thus, option (b) is correct.

💡 Quick Tip

In sequence questions, always identify the starting intent and the final climax to narrow down the choices quickly.

1(ix). '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: (d) She dominates the household.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

This character study explores the dynamics within Adjoa's family in Ama Ata Aidoo's story.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The description of Nana having a "special voice" to "shut everyone up" is metaphorical.

It indicates that she is the matriarch and the ultimate authority figure in the house.

When she speaks in this manner, no one dares to argue or continue talking, showing her dominance over her daughter and granddaughter.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The lines establish Nana as the dominant figure in the domestic sphere. Option (d) is correct.

💡 Quick Tip

The story explores the conflict between traditional views (represented by Nana) and modern potential (represented by Adjoa's legs).

1(x). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Ray Bradbury's 'The Pedestrian' is a dystopian story about a future where human interaction and physical activity have been replaced by technology.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

As Leonard Mead walks through his neighborhood, he describes the houses as "tombs." Inside, the residents are motionless, mesmerized by "viewing screens" or television sets. The gray light from the screens flickering behind windows is the only sign of "life," contrasting with Mead's active, physical movement.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The inhabitants are portrayed as passive consumers of television content. Option (a) is correct.

💡 Quick Tip

Bradbury uses the television as a symbol of social decay and the loss of individual thought in this narrative.

1(xi). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The story is set during the Franco-Prussian War in the French region of Alsace, which has just been annexed by Prussia.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Franz mentions that for the past two years, news of lost battles, drafts, and orders from the commanding officers had been posted at the town hall.

Specifically, the "bulletin board" outside the town hall was the site where people gathered to read the latest unfortunate updates regarding the war.

As he passes it on his way to school, he sees a crowd and realizes something new has happened.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The source of information is the bulletin board (b).

💡 Quick Tip

In 'The Last Lesson', the bulletin board represents the intrusion of war and political change into the peaceful life of the village.

1(xii). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The phrase "Floats like an atmosphere" uses the word "like" to compare the spirit-world to an

atmosphere, which is a **simile**.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

- (a) "Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear" contains a paradox or oxymoron ("huge nothing").
- (b) "spectre-gray" is a compound metaphor/adjective.
- (c) "An hundred years should go to praise / Thine eyes" is a hyperbole (exaggeration).
- (d) "She sways like a flower..." uses "like" to make a direct comparison, making it a simile.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Option (d) is the correct match for the figure of speech used in the prompt.

 Quick Tip

Similes are the easiest figures of speech to identify; just look for the words "like" or "as" used for comparison.

1(xiii). 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: (a) hurt to wonder

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Maya Angelou's poem discusses the impact of the death of a "great soul" (an influential person) and the subsequent healing process.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The poem begins with the immediate shock and pain (the "hurt") when the "trees fall," signifying death.

It describes the silence and fear that follows. However, it ends on a note of peace and renewal. The final stanzas describe how survivors begin to feel the presence of the departed and realize their legacy, leading to a sense of "wonder" and hope.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The progression is from initial pain to an enlightened state of wonder. Option (a) is correct.

 Quick Tip

"When Great Trees Fall" is an elegiac poem that follows the standard path of mourning: grief, followed by acceptance and inspiration.

1(xiv). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Leigh Hunt's poem explores the themes of chivalry versus vanity.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

A lady throws her glove into a pit of lions to test the Count's love and show off her power over him.

The Count bravely jumps in and retrieves it, but he realizes she set this life-threatening task out of vanity, not love.

Upon returning, he throws the glove in her face to express his disdain for her shallow character. The King approves of this rejection because the lady's "love" was actually vanity.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The King applauds the Count's act of defiance against the lady's vanity (c).

 Quick Tip

Chivalry is about noble service, but the poem argues it shouldn't be abused by those seeking to prove their own vanity.

1(xv). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

In Robert Frost's poem, the speaker observes a tiny insect (a mite) on his writing paper.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The speaker watches the mite's physical actions closely. It doesn't just move randomly; it shows caution, fear, and hesitation (Statement 1).

These human-like behavioral traits lead the speaker to the conclusion that the tiny speck has a "mind" and "intelligence" (Statement 2).

Without the observations described in Statement 1, the narrator would not have reached the conclusion in Statement 2.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Statement 1 provides the evidence or "reason" for the realization in Statement 2. Option (c) is correct.

💡 Quick Tip

In analytical questions, look for "evidence" (actions) and "conclusions" (thoughts) to find the relationship.

1(xvi). 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:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Sukumar Ray is a famous writer known for his contributions to the genre of 'Abol Tabol' (non-sense literature).

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

'The Power of Music' describes a singer named Bhisma Lochan Sharma whose singing is so loud and terrible that it causes absurd, impossible things to happen (e.g., houses collapsing,

trees turning upside down).

The poem uses illogical events, exaggerated imagery, and humorous situations purely for entertainment, which are the defining traits of "nonsense verse."

It does not follow the structural rules of a sonnet or the formal conventions of an ode.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The poem is a classic example of nonsense verse (a).

💡 Quick Tip

Nonsense verse often combines a serious-sounding style with completely absurd or ridiculous content.

SECTION B: DRAMA

(Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare)

Question 2

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

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, stricken 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.

2(i). Why does Antony say, 'Pardon me, Julius!'? [3]

Correct Answer:

Antony says "Pardon me, Julius!" to ask for forgiveness from Caesar's spirit because he has just been friendly and shook hands with the men who murdered Caesar. He feels he is betraying his friend's memory by compromising with the conspirators.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This line expresses Antony's inner conflict between his political strategy and his personal loyalty to Caesar.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

In the moments before this line, Antony enters the scene and shakes the bloody hands of Brutus, Cassius, and the other assassins.

He does this to ensure his own safety and to gain permission to speak at Caesar's funeral.

However, looking at the body, he is overwhelmed by grief and feels that his diplomatic behavior looks like a betrayal of Caesar.

He is essentially telling Caesar's ghost that his current friendliness toward the "hunters" is a necessary act, not a change in his feelings.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Antony apologizes for appearing to be on the side of the conspirators for tactical reasons.

💡 Quick Tip

This soliloquy reveals Antony's true intentions, contrasting with the deceptive "peace" he offered the conspirators.

2(ii). Where was Caesar 'bay'd'? Explain the meaning of the words, 'Here wast thou bay'd, brave hart;' [3]

Correct Answer:

Caesar was 'bay'd' (cornered) in the Capitol (Senate House) at the base of Pompey's statue. The phrase compares Caesar to a "brave hart" (a noble deer) that has been surrounded by hunting hounds (the conspirators) and forced to a standstill before being killed.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

Shakespeare uses hunting metaphors to emphasize the savage and unfair nature of the assassination.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Location: The physical location is the Senate, where the conspirators gathered around Caesar under the guise of presenting a petition.

Metaphor: To be "at bay" is a hunting term for when a cornered animal turns to face the dogs because it can no longer run.

Pun: There is a pun on "hart" (a male deer) and "heart" (the vital organ/center of the world). Antony suggests that the world was the forest where Caesar lived nobly, and he was cornered

like prey by men who should have been his subjects.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Caesar was cornered in the Senate; the metaphor highlights his nobility and the conspirators' predatory nature.

 Quick Tip

Shakespearean puns like "hart/heart" are frequent and often carry dual meanings of life-force and noble character.

2(iii). Name any two of the 'hunters' who were present at the scene. Why are they described as being, 'sign'd' and 'crimson'd'? [3]

Correct Answer:

Two 'hunters' are Brutus and Cassius. They are described as 'sign'd' and 'crimson'd' because they are covered in Caesar's blood, which they smeared on their hands and swords as a sign of their "liberation" of Rome.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The "hunters" are the conspirators. The blood-smearing was a ritualistic act proposed by Brutus.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The Names: Other hunters include Casca, Cinna, Decius Brutus, and Metellus Cimber.

'Sign'd': This refers to the practice of marking a hunter with the blood of the first kill (the "spoil") as a mark of success.

'Crimson'd': This describes the physical appearance of their hands and weapons, stained with the deep red (crimson) blood of the victim.

Antony uses these terms to mock their claim that the murder was a "religious sacrifice," framing it instead as a brutal, bloody hunt.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The hunters are Brutus and Cassius; they are blood-stained as a mark of their participation in the assassination.

 Quick Tip

The word 'lethe' in this context refers to the blood that carries away life, derived from the river of forgetfulness in mythology.

2(iv). What does Cassius ask Antony immediately after this exchange? How does Antony respond to his question? [3]

Correct Answer:

Cassius asks Antony whether they can count him as a friend or if they should proceed with their plans without him. Antony responds by saying he is their friend, provided they can give him logical reasons why Caesar was dangerous and deserved to die.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Cassius is more suspicious and pragmatic than Brutus and wants a definitive answer from Antony.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The Question: Cassius interrupts Antony's lamentation to ask: "Will you be prick'd in number of our friends; / Or shall we on, and not depend on you?". He wants to know if Antony will be part of their new government.

The Response: Antony cleverly navigates the situation. He shakes their hands again and says he wants to be friends.

However, he sets a condition: he wants "reasons" why Caesar was "ambitious." This is a tactic to delay his revenge and get a chance to speak to the public.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Cassius asks for Antony's allegiance; Antony offers it conditionally based on being given a justification for the murder.

 Quick Tip

Antony's response is a masterclass in diplomacy—he gives them what they want (friendship) while secretly plotting their downfall.

2(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 for doing so? What does this tell us about this person's character? [4]

Correct Answer:

Antony requests permission to speak at Caesar's funeral. Cassius warns Brutus against this. He argues that the people may be easily swayed by Antony's powerful oratory skills. This reveals that Cassius is shrewd, practical, and a keen judge of human nature.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

This request is the pivotal moment that leads to the civil war in the play.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Request: Antony asks to bring Caesar's body to the marketplace and speak a funeral oration.

Warner: Cassius pulls Brutus aside to protest.

Reason: Cassius tells Brutus, "Know you how much the people may be moved / By that which he will utter?". He knows Antony is a dangerous and gifted speaker.

Character Reveal: While Brutus is an **idealist** who trusts Antony's "honour," Cassius is a **realist**. He understands political danger and the volatility of the Roman mob. This highlights Cassius's intelligence and caution.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Antony asks to give a funeral speech; Cassius warns it will incite the mob; this shows Cassius is politically astute and realistic.

💡 Quick Tip

Brutus's refusal to listen to Cassius here is one of his "tragic errors" that leads to his eventual downfall.

Question 3

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

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 whe'r 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.

**3(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'. [3]**

Correct Answer:

Brutus means that even though Caesar is dead, his influence and power are still active and causing the conspirators to die. He believes Caesar's ghost is seeking revenge by driving the conspirators to commit suicide with their own swords.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This line addresses the supernatural theme of the play—the idea that Caesar's ghost is the ultimate victor.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Brutus says this upon finding the dead bodies of Cassius and Titinius on the battlefield of Philippi.

"Mighty yet" acknowledges that Caesar's political legacy and the spirit of his authority have not vanished with his assassination.

The "swords in our own proper entrails" refers to the fact that the conspirators are killing themselves with the same weapons they used to kill Caesar.

It suggests a sense of inevitable fate or cosmic justice pursuing the murderers.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Brutus is admitting that the ghost of Caesar is winning the war and forcing his enemies to self-destruct.

💡 Quick Tip

This line validates Antony's prophecy from Act 3: "And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge... Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice cry 'Havoc!'".

3(ii). What were Cassius' last thoughts before he died? How did Titinius honour the dead Cassius? [3]

Correct Answer:

Cassius's last thoughts were of Caesar; he died noting the irony that he was killed by the same sword used on Caesar, on his own birthday. Titinius honoured him by placing a wreath of victory on his head and then committing suicide to follow his friend.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The deaths of the main characters at Philippi emphasize the tragic end of the Roman Republic.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Cassius' Thoughts: He realizes the cycle of violence is complete. He says, "Caesar, thou art revenged, / Even with the sword that kill'd thee." He dies feeling defeated by the man he tried to destroy.

Titinius' Honour: Titinius had been sent to check on the troops. Finding Cassius dead due to a tragic mistake, he is devastated.

He calls Cassius "the sun of Rome" and places a garland (victory wreath) on his brow as a final tribute before using Cassius's sword to kill himself.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Cassius thinks of his revenge on Caesar; Titinius crowns him with a wreath and kills himself in a display of ultimate loyalty.

Quick Tip

The "victory wreath" is ironic because Cassius died thinking they were losing, when in fact, Brutus had won his part of the battle.

3(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? [3]

Correct Answer:

Brutus promises that he will eventually find time to mourn and weep for Cassius. He makes this promise because he must continue the battle and cannot afford to lose focus or demoralize his troops by grieving now. This reveals his Stoic character and his sense of duty.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Brutus's Stoic philosophy requires him to prioritize logic and duty over personal emotions and grief.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The Promise: He promises to pay Cassius the "tears" he owes him at a later, more appropriate time.

The Reason: The second half of the battle is about to begin. As the general, Brutus must

maintain a brave face. Showing intense grief would discourage his soldiers.

Character Reveal: It shows Brutus as **self-disciplined** and **stoic**. He suppresses his natural human feelings of loss to serve the greater "public" good of his army and his cause.

Step 4: Final Answer:

He promises to mourn Cassius later because the ongoing war demands his leadership; this highlights his discipline and Stoicism.

 Quick Tip

"Stoicism" is the key term here. It means enduring pain or hardship without showing feelings or complaining.

3(iv). Explain the term 'funerals'. Why does Brutus not want to hold 'his funerals' in their camp? Where will 'his funerals' be held? [3]

Correct Answer:

The term 'funerals' refers to the formal burial rites and ceremonies for the deceased. Brutus does not want them in the camp because the sight of their dead leader's funeral would cause deep sadness (discomfort) and lower the morale of the soldiers. He orders that the body be sent to the island of Thasos for the rites.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Managing the morale of a retreating or battling army is a key responsibility of a general.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Definition: In Shakespearean English, "funerals" often referred to the entire process of burial and mourning rites.

Reason: Brutus says, "his funerals shall not be in our camp, / Lest it discomfort us." "Discomfort" in this context means to discourage or take away the fighting spirit of the men.

Location: He specifies that the body should be taken to **Thasos**, an island near the coast of Thrace, away from the immediate battlefield.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Funerals are burial rites; they are moved away to preserve the army's morale; they will take place at Thasos.

 Quick Tip

Brutus is consistently portrayed as a man who thinks of the "public" impact of every action, even in the middle of a war.

3(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 to us of Antony's character? [4]

Correct Answer:

Lucilius pretends to be Brutus when captured to give the real Brutus time to escape. This shows that Brutus was a noble and inspirational leader who commanded great love. Antony rewards Lucilius by sparing his life and taking him into his service. This reveals that Antony is magnanimous and respects true valor and loyalty, even in an enemy.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The play's conclusion highlights the nobility of the fallen and the respectful nature of the victors.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Lucilius's Act: In Act 5, Scene 4, Lucilius tells the soldiers "I am Brutus," risking death to protect his general.

Brutus's Legacy: Such self-sacrifice from a follower proves that Brutus was a man of immense personal integrity and "nobility," capable of inspiring deep devotion.

Antony's Action: When Antony discovers the ruse, he is not angry. He says, "Keep this man safe; / Give him all kindness: I had rather have / Such men my friends than enemies."

Antony's Character: This shows Antony's **magnanimity** and his tactical brilliance. He values quality of character over petty revenge, realizing that a loyal soldier like Lucilius is an asset.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Lucilius's impersonation shows Brutus's inspiring nature; Antony's mercy shows his own nobility and respect for bravery.

 Quick Tip

The respect shown to Lucilius foreshadows Antony's final speech, where he calls Brutus "the noblest Roman of them all."

SECTION C

PROSE - SHORT STORIES

(Treasure Chest – A Collection of Poems and Short Stories)

Question 4

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

'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...'

4(i). Where was Adjoa born?

Who were her 'two favourite people'?

Correct Answer: Adjoa was born in the village of Hasodzi in Ghana.

Her 'two favourite people' were her mother, Maami, and her grandmother, Nana.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question identifies the setting and the primary characters in Ama Ata Aidoo's story 'The Girl Who Can'.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The story is set in rural Ghana, specifically in the village of Hasodzi.

The narrator, Adjoa, is a young girl growing up in a female-dominated household.

Her world revolves around the two most significant adults in her life: her mother, referred to as Maami, and her maternal grandmother, Nana.

Despite the conflicts between them regarding her appearance, she considers them her favorites.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Adjoa was born in Hasodzi; her two favorite people are her mother (Maami) and her grandmother (Nana).

Quick Tip

In short stories, the protagonist's "favorite people" usually represent the central figures of the external conflict or theme.

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

Correct Answer: The issue was the appearance and nature of Adjoa's legs.

They fought because Nana believed Adjoa's legs were too thin and spindly to support a woman's hips, which Nana considered essential for childbearing.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The central conflict of the story revolves around traditional African perceptions of physical beauty and functionality.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Nana often commented that Adjoa's legs were "spindly" and "too long."

In Nana's traditional view, a woman's primary value was linked to her ability to bear children. She believed that thin legs were a sign that Adjoa would not develop the broad hips necessary for successful motherhood.

This constant criticism caused friction with Adjoa's mother, who felt defensive about her daughter's physical development.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The fight was over Adjoa's thin legs, which Nana viewed as a biological failure regarding future fertility.

 Quick Tip

Focus on the symbolic meaning: the legs represent the clash between traditional utility and individual potential.

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

What opinion did each of them have on this issue?

Correct Answer: They disagreed on the value of Adjoa's education.

Nana was skeptical, viewing schooling as a waste of time, while Maami believed education was necessary for Adjoa's future and progress.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The story explores the generational gap regarding modern education versus traditional domestic roles.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Nana represents the old world where domestic skills and physical labor were prioritized over literacy.

She often mocked the idea of "scholarship" and questioned what good books would do for a girl with "useless" legs.

Maami, representing the transition to modernity, saw education as the only way for Adjoa to transcend the limitations of their village life.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The secondary issue was schooling; Nana was cynical about it, while Maami advocated for its benefits.

💡 Quick Tip

Conflict between characters often serves to highlight the broader social transition from tradition to modernity.

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

Correct Answer: 1. Nana began to carefully wash and iron Adjoa's school uniform and sports kit.

2. She proudly carried Adjoa's winning trophy on her head for the whole village to see.

3. She stopped her negative comments about Adjoa's legs and instead boasted about her granddaughter's athletic achievements.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

This identifies the turning point in Nana's character arc when Adjoa's athletic talent is revealed.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

When Adjoa was selected to represent her school in a race, her thin legs proved to be an asset rather than a liability.

Adjoa noticed that Nana began to take extreme care with her clothes, which indicated a newfound respect for Adjoa's activities.

The most significant clue was Nana's public display of pride, parading the trophy and changing her narrative from criticism to celebration.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The clues were Nana's care for the uniform, her public parade with the trophy, and her vocal pride in Adjoa's speed.

💡 Quick Tip

Look for changes in physical actions (washing/carrying) to identify internal shifts in a character's mindset.

4(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.

Correct Answer: Adjoa's success proves that her thin legs have a different kind of "use" (athletic excellence) that Nana had never considered, leading Nana to accept that traditional physical standards are not the only measure of worth.

Two remarkable traits of Nana are her **strong authority** and her **willingness to admit error** and adapt.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

The resolution of the story demonstrates how personal achievement can dismantle rigid cultural prejudices.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Nana's traditional views were based on a narrow definition of a woman's utility.

By winning the race, Adjoa showed that what Nana saw as a defect was actually a strength in a different context (sports).

Nana is remarkable because, despite being elderly and set in her ways, she has the integrity to recognize her mistake.

She is also remarkable for her fierce protective nature and the dominance she exerts over her household to ensure order.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Success changes Nana's view by showing physical "defects" can be talents; Nana is characterized by her authority and her capacity for growth.

 Quick Tip

A character who changes their mind in response to evidence is often portrayed as possessing wisdom and humility.

Question 5

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

'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.'

5(i). In which year is Bradbury's story set?

What did Leonard Mead 'most dearly love to do'?

Correct Answer: The story is set in the year A.D. 2053.

Leonard Mead 'most dearly loved' to take long, solitary walks through the city streets at night.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

'The Pedestrian' is a dystopian science fiction story that critiques the loss of physical activity and human connection.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The setting in 2053 presents a future where society has become completely passive and technologically dependent.

Leonard Mead is an anomaly because he finds pleasure in walking, an activity that serves no "practical" purpose in a world of automated transport and home entertainment.

He loves the silence, the cold air, and the simple act of using his legs to explore the world, which highlights his lingering humanity.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The setting is 2053; Mead's passion is night-walking.

 Quick Tip

In dystopian settings, look for activities the protagonist does that the rest of society has abandoned; these usually represent the theme.

5(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.

Correct Answer: Bradbury compares walking through the city to walking through a "graveyard."

This is suitable because:

1. The houses are dark, silent, and motionless, much like tombs.
2. The people inside are socially and physically "dead" to the outside world, isolated by their screens.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Bradbury uses the graveyard metaphor to describe a society that has lost its vitality and soul.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The metaphor is effective because it emphasizes the eerie silence of the suburban neighborhood. Each house is a "tomb" containing people who have effectively "died" to the physical world because they are mesmerized by television.

The "firefly light" of the screens is compared to ghostly flickers, reinforcing the supernatural, cemetery-like atmosphere.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The experience is compared to a graveyard due to the profound silence and the death-like passivity of the inhabitants.

 Quick Tip

Metaphors of death and graveyards in Bradbury's work often symbolize the stagnation caused by excessive technology.

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

Correct Answer: 1. He says he is walking "for air" or "just to see."

2. He states that he is not married.

3. He identifies himself as a "writer," which the car views as having "no profession."

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The robotic police car represents a society that only understands standardized, "productive" behavior.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The car is programmed to find logic in every action. Walking without a destination (walking "for air") is considered illogical and therefore suspicious.

Being unmarried suggests a lack of conformity to social norms.

Being a writer is suspicious because, in this future, people no longer read; thus, his creative identity is dismissed as invalid or non-existent.

Step 4: Final Answer:

His purposeless walking, his single status, and his obsolete career as a writer are the three suspicious points.

💡 Quick Tip

In this story, "suspicion" is cast on anything that represents individual thought or non-technological joy.

5(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?

Correct Answer: Mead is taken to the "Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies."

The author observes that Mead's house is the only one on the street with all its lights brightly glowing, unlike the dark houses of his neighbors.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

The ending emphasizes that Mead's behavior is categorized as a mental illness in this society.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The term "Regressive Tendencies" suggests that wanting to walk or be alone with one's thoughts is seen as moving backward in human evolution.

Mead's brightly lit house is a powerful symbol of his warm, active mind and his refusal to be a "shadow" like everyone else.

The light marks him as an individual and serves as the final visual contrast before he is removed from society.

Step 4: Final Answer:

He is sent to a psychiatric center; his house is unique for being full of light in a dark neighborhood.

💡 Quick Tip

Light often symbolizes knowledge and life, while darkness symbolizes ignorance and the "death" of the spirit in literature.

5(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.

Correct Answer: The author warns against:

1. The loss of human individuality and physical health to over-dependence on technology.
2. The rise of a totalitarian, automated society that punishes non-conformity.

An alternative title could be 'The Last Human' because Mead is the only person who still behaves with traditional human curiosity.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

This evaluates the theme and the reader's interpretation of Bradbury's message.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Bradbury is warning us that if we replace nature and physical life with screens, we become "tombs."

He also warns that when society becomes purely mechanical, those who think or act differently will be treated as insane.

The title 'The Last Human' is suitable because Mead's actions (walking, writing, observing) are what define the human experience, which has been lost by everyone else.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The warnings concern technological apathy and enforced conformity; the title 'The Last Human' reflects Mead's role as the final keeper of humanity.

💡 Quick Tip

Dystopian fiction is almost always a "cautionary tale" intended to warn the present about a possible future.

SECTION D

POETRY

(Treasure Chest – A Collection of Poems and Short Stories)

Question 6

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

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

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

Correct Answer: 1. Rocks on distant hills shudder.
2. Lions hunker down in tall grasses.
3. Elephants lumber away toward safety.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Maya Angelou uses large-scale natural imagery to symbolize the profound impact of the death of a "great soul."

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The "shuddering" of rocks suggests a geological disruption, implying the world feels less stable. Lions and elephants are symbols of power and courage in the animal kingdom. By showing these "kings" of the forest hunkering down and fleeing, Angelou emphasizes that the loss is so great it scares even the strongest among us.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The images are shuddering rocks, hiding lions, and retreating elephants.

Quick Tip

Imagery using powerful animals and landscapes is a common way to elevate a personal loss to a universal scale.

6(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?

Correct Answer: The comparison is appropriate because:

1. Both offer shelter, shade, and a sense of protection to those smaller than them.
2. Both have deep roots (values or legacy) that hold their environment together.

The mood is shocking, heavy, and distressing.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The poem uses extended metaphor to explain why some deaths feel more significant than others.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Great trees dominate the forest just as great souls dominate their social or intellectual landscape.

Their fall leaves a physical and spiritual gap that cannot be easily filled.

The mood in the first stanza is chaotic and fearful, signaled by words like "shudder" and "safety," reflecting the initial stage of grief.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The comparison works through the shared traits of protection and deep roots; the mood is one of profound distress.

 Quick Tip

In poetry, "mood" is the atmosphere created by word choice (diction). Words like "shudder" always imply a fearful mood.

6(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'?

Correct Answer: The poet describes the air as "sterile" and "unbearable."

The line 'We breathe, briefly' expresses a feeling of shock, paralysis, and a struggle for survival.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Angelou explores the physical sensation of grief, where even the most basic acts become difficult.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

"Sterile" air implies that the life-giving inspiration provided by the great person has been sucked out of the world.

"Unbearable" emphasizes the weight of the sadness.

The phrase 'breathe, briefly' suggests a person catching their breath in a moment of panic or shock, as if the news of the death has physically knocked the wind out of them.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The air is sterile/unbearable; the phrase expresses the breathless shock of loss.

💡 Quick Tip

Metaphors involving breath often symbolize the presence of life and spirit; when it is "brief," it indicates a close brush with mortality.

6(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?

Correct Answer: We regret:

1. The kind words we never spoke to them.
2. The shared experiences or paths we never took with them.

When great souls die, our own souls "shrink" and become "wizened," feeling small and empty in the wake of the loss.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This identifies the theme of regret that is common in elegiac (mourning) poetry.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The poet observes that we are often haunted by the "unsaid" and the "undone." This is the guilt of missed opportunity.

The reaction of our souls—shrinking—reflects the loss of self-confidence and the crushing realization that a light we relied on has gone out.

We feel diminished because a source of our own growth (the great soul) is no longer there to nourish us.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Regret centers on unspoken words and missed time; our souls wither and shrink in reaction.

💡 Quick Tip

Regret is usually focused on the "lost future" of the relationship, which is a key psychological aspect of mourning.

6(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.

Correct Answer: The poem argues that although the initial shock is painful, the "great soul" leaves an enduring legacy that eventually allows the survivors to heal and grow. I am appealed by the final transition to peace, because it offers a message of hope after the chaos of grief.

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

The poem follows the standard structure of an elegy: grief, followed by reflection, ending in consolation.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The "lasting influence" is seen in the final lines where the poet says, "They existed. They existed."

This affirmation means that having known the person is enough to permanently change us for the better.

The shift from "shuddering rocks" to "peace" is the most powerful part because it validates the pain but promises that life will continue with a new, deeper meaning.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The poem highlights that the memory of "great trees" eventually fills the space they left; the resolution toward peace is its most appealing trait.

💡 Quick Tip

When asked what "appeals" to you, always link your personal feeling to a specific structural change or theme in the text.

Question 7

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

'When summer comes, we hear the hums

Bhisma Lochan Sharma.

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

7(i). What is Bhisma Lochan Sharma known for?

When can one hear him?

Explain the following words from the given extract: 'You catch his strain'.

Correct Answer: Bhisma Lochan Sharma is known for his incredibly loud and terrible singing. He can be heard when summer arrives. 'You catch his strain' means that his song (melody) reaches you no matter where you are, even across vast distances.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Sukumar Ray's 'The Power of Music' is a nonsense poem that uses extreme hyperbole for humor.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

Bhisma is a character with no talent but immense volume.

The mention of summer suggests that his singing is like a seasonal plague that no one can avoid.

"Strain" is a musical term for a tune or section of a song. "Catching" it implies the sound is so loud it travels from Delhi all the way to Burma, which is an absurd exaggeration.

Step 4: Final Answer:

He is a bad, loud singer heard in summer; his 'strain' is his unavoidable and far-reaching melody.

Quick Tip

Nonsense verse often gives characters grand names (like Bhisma Lochan Sharma) to make their ridiculousness even more humorous.

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

Correct Answer: We can tell because the people react with fear and desperation, fleeing for their lives, covering their ears, and begging him to stop. Even the local animals and nature react negatively.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The humorous core of the poem is the gap between Bhisma's intent (to sing) and the effect (a natural disaster).

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The poem describes people pleading, "O save us from this song!" which shows they are in literal pain.

The fact that they would rather run away than listen to a "performance" proves how much they dislike it.

Their appreciation is non-existent because the music is depicted as an assault on their senses.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The frantic physical flight and pleas of the listeners prove their extreme dislike for his singing.

Quick Tip

In a humorous poem, the more exaggerated the negative reaction, the worse the "talent" is supposed to be.

7(iii). The poet uses ridiculous images to exaggerate the effect of Bhisma Lochan Sharma's voice on his listeners.

Mention any three such images.

Correct Answer: 1. Trees turning upside down with their leaves falling.

2. Houses "tottering" and collapsing as if during an earthquake.

3. Birds falling dead or unconscious from the sky.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

These are examples of hyperbole (exaggeration) which define the "nonsense" genre.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The voice is treated like a destructive sonic weapon.

The imagery of trees flipping over and houses shaking suggests that his singing disrupts the very laws of nature and architecture.

The birds falling emphasizes that the sound is so unnatural that even living creatures in the air cannot withstand it.

Step 4: Final Answer:

Inverted trees, collapsing houses, and fainting birds are three ridiculous images used.

💡 Quick Tip

Ridiculous imagery is used in nonsense verse to provoke laughter through the impossibility of the situation.

7(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?

Correct Answer: The billy goat is described as "scrawny" but "bold." It brings relief by charging at Bhisma and butting him with its horns, which finally causes him to stop singing and collapse.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The ending provides a comedic resolution to the "unstoppable" noise.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

While the humans were too polite or too terrified to act, the goat takes a purely physical, non-human approach.

The description of it being "scrawny" adds to the humor because such a small creature defeats the "mighty" singer.

By butting him, it provides the "relief" of silence, which the entire population had been praying for.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The goat is scrawny/bold; it silences Bhisma by physically butting him until he stops.

💡 Quick Tip

The "hero" of a nonsense poem is often a small animal or a ridiculous figure who succeeds through luck or brute force.

7(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.

Correct Answer: The title is ironic; it suggests music has a positive, inspiring power, but the poem shows it as a destructive, terrifying force. I feel sympathy for the listeners, as they are innocent victims of a sound that physically hurts them, whereas Bhisma is completely selfish and unaware of his lack of talent.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This evaluates the use of irony and the reader's judgment of the characters' roles.

Step 3: Detailed Explanation:

The title 'The Power of Music' usually implies beauty or healing. Ray subverts this by making music a natural disaster.

Bhisma Lochan Sharma is the "villain" of the piece, not because he is evil, but because his ego and lack of awareness cause widespread suffering.

The listeners deserve sympathy because their world is literally falling apart around them, and they are powerless to stop the noise until the goat arrives.

Step 4: Final Answer:

The title subverts expectations through irony; sympathy lies with the suffering public who endure the sonic torture.

 Quick Tip

Irony is the key literary device here: the contrast between what the title suggests and what the poem actually describes.