

ICSE BOARD PAPER - 2025
ENGLISH PAPER-2
[LITERATURE]
Class-10th
(Solved)

Maximum Marks: 80

Time Allotted: Two Hours

Instructions to Candidates:

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

(Attempt all questions from this Section.)

Question 1

[16]

Choose the correct answers to the questions from the given options.

(Do not copy the questions, write ONLY the correct answers.)

- (i) What does Antony describe as, 'thou bleeding piece of earth, '?
 - (a) Caesar's robe that was stained with his blood
 - (b) The blood-soaked spot on which Caesar lies
 - (c) The bloodied pedestal on which Caesar fell
 - (d) Caesar's lifeless body covered in blood
- (ii) When Brutus says, 'ambition's debt is paid', he means that _____.
 - (a) Caesar's greed for power and possession had resulted in his death
 - (b) Caesar had left seventy-five drachmas for every citizen of Rome
 - (c) Mark Antony would be permitted to speak at Caesar's funeral
 - (d) The conspirators would be punished for assassinating Caesar
- (iii) After Antony's speech following Caesar's assassination, the angry mob kills _____.
 - (a) Cinna the conspirator
 - (b) Cinna the poet
 - (c) Decius Brutus
 - (d) Cicero
- (iv) When Antony says, 'He must be taught, and train'd, and bid go forth: A barren-spirited fellow;' he refers to _____.
 - (a) Octavius
 - (b) Lucilius
 - (c) Lucius
 - (d) Lepidus
- (v) Who were the members of the Second Triumvirate, formed to rule over Rome after Caesar's assassination?
 - (a) Julius Caesar, Crassus, Pompey
 - (b) Marcus Brutus, Caius Cassius, Casca
 - (c) Mark Antony, Octavius Caesar, Lepidus
 - (d) Octavius Caesar, Julius Caesar, Mark Antony
- (vi) Which of the following words best describes Cassius's mood when he says:
*'Come, Antony, and young Octavius, come,
Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,'*
 - (a) anxious
 - (b) regretful
 - (c) fearful
 - (d) frustrated
- (vii) In the poem, 'Haunted Houses', what does the speaker see at his fireside that the stranger cannot?
 - (a) the speaker only sees what is physically present
 - (b) the stranger can see the spirits while the speaker cannot
 - (c) the speaker sees both the present and the past
 - (d) the stranger sees both the present and the future

- (viii) In the poem, *'The Glove and the Lions'*, who does Count de Lorge 'sigh for'?
- The lions that ramped and roared
 - King Francis who loved a royal sport
 - The nobles who filled the benches
 - The beautiful lively dame
- (ix) Select the option that shows the correct relationship between Statements (1) and (2) from Maya Angelou's poem, *'When Great Trees Fall'*:
- Statement 1:** When great trees fall, the world is left permanently unstable.
Statement 2: In the poem, the natural world is depicted as reacting with fear and uncertainty when great trees fall.
- (1) is false, but (2) is true.
 - Both (1) and (2) are false.
 - (1) is true, but (2) is false.
 - Both (1) and (2) are true.
- (x) The poem, *'A Considerable Speck'*, expresses Frost's _____.
- love for the little organism
 - respect for intelligent life
 - indifference to the tiny creature
 - anger at the mite's escape
- (xi) Which of the given options contains the figure of speech that appears in the following line from the poem, *'The Power of Music'*?
- And in the sky the feathered fly turn turtle while
They're winging,*
- You're one month on in the middle of May
 - Rainbow-tinted circles of light
 - And life is too much like a pathless wood
 - The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn
- (xii) In the short story, *'With the Photographer'*, the narrator asks the photographer, "Is it me?" because _____.
- He is delighted with the photographer's skill
 - He looks very handsome in the photograph
 - He is unable to recognise his own face
 - He is ashamed of how he looks in the picture
- (xiii) In the short story, *'The Elevator'*, which of the following does Martin's father **NOT** do when Martin expresses his fear of the elevator?
- He dismisses Martin's concerns
 - He encourages Martin to use the stairs
 - He tells Martin to grow up and be brave
 - He watches TV and ignores Martin's fear
- (xiv) Choose the option that lists the sequence of events from Ray Bradbury's short story, *'The Pedestrian'*:
- One night, as he was nearing home, he was stopped by a police car.
 - Since his answers were considered odd and unacceptable, he was forced to enter the car and taken away.
 - Leonard Mead loved to walk through the empty streets at night.
 - A metallic voice from the car asked him a series of questions.
- 2, 1, 3, 4
 - 1, 3, 4, 2
 - 3, 1, 4, 2
 - 4, 1, 2, 3
- (xv) Where was Adjoa born?
- Nigeria
 - Ghana
 - Ethiopia
 - Kenya
- (xvi) Why did M. Hamel have to leave the school after forty years of service?
- He was not allowed to teach French any longer
 - He had grown tired of his job as a school teacher
 - He was thought to be too strict in his ways
 - He wanted to retire and take up farming

SECTION B

[10]

(Answer *one or more* questions from this Section.)

DRAMA

(Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare)

Question 2

Read the extract from 'Julius Caesar' Act 3, Scene 2, given below and answer the questions that follow:

Antony: Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—
For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men—
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

- (i) What does Antony say he is there for? [3]
What does he say he is *not* there for?
What do you think he is actually there for?
- (ii) What were the *three* conditions that Brutus had laid down before allowing Antony to speak to the citizens of Rome? [3]
- (iii) List the *three* arguments that Antony uses immediately after he speaks these lines to prove conclusively that Julius Caesar was not ambitious. [3]
- (iv) Antony repeatedly uses certain words in his speech to describe Brutus. What are they? Why does he do this? [3]
- (v) Which *one* argument of Antony's do you think had the greatest impact on his listeners? Give a reason to support your answer. [4]
What were the citizens' feelings towards Antony before he began his speech?
How do their feelings towards him change at the end of his speech?

Question 3

Read the extract from 'Julius Caesar' Act 5, Scene 1, given below and answer the questions that follow:

Cassius: Then, if we lose this battle,
You are contented to be led in triumph
Through the streets of Rome?

Brutus: No, Cassius, no: think not, thou noble Roman,
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;
He bears too great a mind. But this same day
Must end that work the ides of March begun;
And whether we shall meet again I know not.
Therefore our everlasting farewell take:
Forever, and forever, farewell, Cassius.
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why then, this parting was well made.

- (i) Why does Brutus say, 'No, Cassius, no'? [3]
What conditions may force Brutus to go bound to Rome?
Brutus says, 'And whether we shall meet again I know not.' What do these words imply?
- (ii) To what does Brutus refer when he says, 'the work which the ides of March begun'? [3]
How was 'that work' begun?
What political change would take place in Rome if Brutus and Cassius lose this battle?
- (iii) Earlier in this scene, Cassius had confided to Messala a strange occurrence that he had observed when his army was on its way from Sardis to Philippi. [3]
Describe this strange occurrence.
- (iv) How does Brutus die? [3]
How does his manner of dying contradict the philosophy by which he had lived his life?
- (v) At the end of the play, Antony calls Brutus, 'the noblest Roman of them all'. Why does he say this? [3]
What does this reveal of Antony's character?

SECTION C

(Answer *one or more* questions from this Section.)

PROSE - SHORT STORIES

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

Question 4

Read the following extract from William Sleater's short story, '*The Elevator*' and answer the questions that follow:

Martin felt nervous when he got back to the building after school. But why should he be afraid of an old lady? He felt ashamed of himself. He pressed the button and stepped into the elevator, hoping that it would not stop, but it stopped on the third floor. Martin watched the door slide open ...

- (i) Who entered the elevator when the door slid open? Describe this person. [3]
- (ii) Why was Martin afraid of using this elevator? [3]
- (iii) What led to Martin's fall down the stairs?
What did it result in? [3]
- (iv) How does the story end?
Bring out the element of horror in the ending. [3]
- (v) What was Martin's father's opinion of him?
What does this reveal to us about his father's character? [4]

Question 5

Read the following extract from Alphonse Daudet's short story, '*The Last Lesson*' and answer the questions that follow:

"My children, this is the last lesson I shall give you. The order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new master comes tomorrow. This is your last French lesson. I want you to be very attentive."

What a thunder-clap these words were to me!

Oh the wretches; that was what they had put up at the town-hall!

- (i) What does the word, '*that*' in the extract refer to? [3]
What other 'bad news' had the villagers received from the bulletin board outside the town-hall?
- (ii) How does the narrator describe the daily bustle at the start of a typical school day? [3]
- (iii) What was different on that morning when he arrived late for school? [3]
- (iv) What thoughts filled the narrator's head when he heard the above announcement? [3]
- (v) What does M. Hamel urge his listeners never to forget? [4]
M. Hamel writes a few words on the board at the end of the lesson. What were they?
What does he hope to inspire through his words and actions on that day?

SECTION D

(Answer *one or more* questions from this Section.)

POETRY

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

Question 6

Read the following extract from Leigh Hunt's poem, '*The Glove and the Lions*' and answer the questions that follow:

*And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning show,
Valour and love, and a king above, and the royal beasts below.*

- (i) Describe the scene at the beginning of the poem. [3]
- (ii) "Leigh Hunt uses vivid sound and visual images to describe the contest between the royal beasts in the pit." Justify with close reference to the text. [3]
- (iii) Who was the '*beauteous lively dame*' mentioned in the poem? [3]
What did she do?
What prompted her to do this?

- (iv) Explain the following lines in your own words: [3]
(a) *'smiling lips and sharp bright eyes which always seemed the same'*
(b) *'the occasion is divine'*
(c) *'Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than there'*
- (v) When King Francis exclaims, "*rightly done!*", what action of Count de Lorge does he applaud? [4]
Why do you think the Count behaved the way he did?

Question 7

Read the following extract from Robert Frost's poem, '*A Considerable Speck*' and answer the questions that follow:

*This was no dust speck by my breathing blown,
But unmistakably a living mite
With inclinations it could call its own.*

- (i) What did the narrator first imagine the 'speck' to be? [3]
What does his use of the words 'speck' and 'mite' tell us about it?
- (ii) What was the narrator doing when he spotted the speck? [3]
Which **two** words from the poem helped you come to this conclusion?
- (iii) What made him realise that he was dealing with 'an intelligence'? [3]
- (iv) Why did the narrator conclude that the mite had feet? [3]
- (v) Describe the narrator's initial response to the speck. [4]
What did he eventually decide to do about it?
Why does he make this decision?
What does this decision reveal of his character?

Answers

Answer 1

- (i) *Correct option:* (d) Caesar's lifeless body covered in blood
Explanation: Antony refers to Caesar's dead body as a "bleeding piece of earth" to express his sorrow and rage over Caesar's assassination.
- (ii) *Correct option:* (a) Caesar's greed for power and possession had resulted in his death
Explanation: Brutus justifies the assassination by saying that Caesar's ambition led to his downfall, implying that they killed him to prevent him from rising to absolute power.
- (iii) *Correct option:* (b) Cinna the poet
Explanation: After Antony's speech, the angry Roman mob turns violent. They mistake Cinna the poet for Cinna the conspirator and kill him, showing how rage and chaos take over logic and reason.
- (iv) *Correct option:* (d) Lepidus
Explanation: In Act 4, Scene 1 of Julius Caesar, Antony refers to Lepidus as "a barren-spirited fellow" and compares him to a mere beast of burden, suggesting that he is not fit to rule but only to carry out orders. Antony and Octavius use Lepidus for their own purposes but do not consider him an equal leader.
- (v) *Correct option:* (c) Mark Antony, Octavius Caesar, Lepidus
Explanation: The Second Triumvirate, formed after Julius Caesar's assassination, consisted of Mark Antony, Octavius Caesar (later Augustus) and Lepidus. This alliance was established to consolidate power and avenge Caesar's death, distinguishing it from the First Triumvirate, which included Julius Caesar, Crassus and Pompey.
- (vi) *Correct option:* (b) regretful
Explanation: Cassius expresses deep sorrow and disappointment in this speech. He feels betrayed and weary of the world, believing that even Brutus, whom he loves, has turned against him. His words reflect self-pity and regret, particularly regarding the state of their friendship and the consequences of their actions.
- (vii) *Correct option:* (c) the speaker sees both the present and the past
Explanation: In *Haunted Houses* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the speaker perceives both the present and the past, seeing the ghosts and memories that linger in the house. However, the stranger, who is unfamiliar with the place, can only see what is physically present. The poem emphasises how past experiences and spirits remain present for those who have lived in a place.
- (viii) *Correct option:* (d) The beautiful lively dame
Explanation: In *The Glove and the Lions* by Leigh Hunt, Count de Lorge sighs for the "beautiful lively dame", the lady he admires. She tests his love by dropping her glove into the lion's den, expecting him to retrieve it as proof of his devotion. However, after successfully retrieving the glove, he throws it back at her face, realising that her act was driven by vanity rather than true affection.
- (ix) *Correct option:* (a) (1) is false, but (2) is true
Explanation: The poem illustrates how the natural world reacts with fear and uncertainty when great trees fall, describing trembling rocks, hiding lions and silent small creatures. This supports Statement 2. However, Statement 1 is incorrect because the poem does not suggest that the world remains permanently unstable; instead, it portrays an initial period of grief and disorientation followed by gradual healing and restoration, emphasising that although loss is profound, life continues with renewed awareness.
- (x) *Correct option:* (b) respect for intelligent life
Explanation: Robert Frost observes a tiny mite on his manuscript and recognises its intelligence, hesitation and survival instincts. Rather than harming it, he allows it to rest, appreciating its display of mind. The poem conveys admiration for even the smallest forms of intelligence, rather than love, indifference, or anger, making respect for intelligent life the best choice.
- (xi) *Correct option:* (d) The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn
Explanation: The given line "And in the sky the feathered fly turn turtle while they're winging", from *The Power of Music* uses personification, as birds are described as turning turtle mid-flight in response to the song. Similarly, option (d) personifies the wind by describing it as lying asleep in the arms of the dawn, attributing human qualities to natural elements.
- (xii) *Correct option:* (c) He is unable to recognise his own face
Explanation: In *With the Photographer* by Stephen Leacock, the narrator is shocked when he sees his photograph because the photographer has heavily altered his facial features. His eyebrows are redrawn, his mouth is adjusted, and even his hair is removed. The excessive retouching makes the narrator question whether the image is truly his, leading him to ask, "Is it me?" out of disbelief.
- (xiii) *Correct option:* (b) He encourages Martin to use the stairs
Explanation: Martin's father dismisses his concerns, tells him to grow up and be brave, and watches TV while ignoring Martin's fear. However, he does not encourage Martin to use the stairs. Instead, he criticises Martin for doing so, implying that he is weak and cowardly.
- (xiv) *Correct option:* (b) 1, 3, 4, 2
Explanation: Leonard Mead loved to walk through the empty streets at night, enjoying the silence and solitude of the city. One night, as he was nearing home, he was suddenly stopped by a police car, a

rare sight in a world where walking was considered unusual. A metallic voice from the car interrogated him, questioning his reasons for being outside. Since his answers were deemed odd and unacceptable, he was forced to enter the car and taken away to the Psychiatric Centre for Research on Regressive Tendencies.

(xv) *Correct option:* (b) Ghana

Explanation: Adjoa was born in a small village in Ghana.

(xvi) *Correct option:* (a) He was not allowed to teach French any longer

Explanation: In *The Last Lesson*, Prussia's annexation of Alsace-Lorraine led to an order from Berlin mandating German as the sole medium of instruction. M. Hamel, after 40 years, was compelled to leave because teaching French was banned.

Answer 2

(i) Antony states he has come "to bury Caesar, not to praise him." He emphasises that his presence is for a solemn funeral oration, not a celebratory eulogy. He explicitly denies any intention to praise Caesar, suggesting neutrality. However, this is a rhetorical tactic. He knows the crowd expects praise at a funeral. By claiming he *won't* praise Caesar, he piques their interest and makes his eventual praise, when it comes, more impactful. His true purpose, masked by this pretence of objectivity, is to manipulate the crowd against the conspirators. He aims to transform public perception of Caesar from a potential tyrant to a beloved leader, paving his own path to power. He subtly implies that Caesar's good deeds are in danger of being forgotten, stating, "The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones," thus making his "neutral" speech all the more necessary and, therefore, effective.

(ii) Before allowing Antony to address the Roman citizens, Brutus imposed three strict conditions to prevent any direct challenge to the conspirators' narrative. First, Antony was forbidden to blame the assassins, ensuring that his speech would not incite the people against them. Second, he had to speak only after Brutus had addressed the crowd, allowing the latter to shape public opinion first. Third, Antony was required to declare that he spoke with the conspirators' permission, reinforcing their authority. Brutus, believing in his own rhetoric, underestimated Antony's skill. Antony, though adhering to these conditions in form, masterfully circumvented them in spirit. His repeated reference to "*honourable men*" drips with irony, subtly eroding the credibility of Brutus's words. His ability to work within these constraints while simultaneously turning the tide against the conspirators is a testament to his political acumen.

(iii) Antony masterfully counters Brutus's claim of Caesar's ambition with three key points, each designed to resonate deeply with the crowd. He

begins by recalling how Caesar refused the crown three times during the Lupercal festival, asking, "Was this ambition?" A truly ambitious man would have seized such power without hesitation. Next, Antony points to Caesar's generosity, noting how he brought wealth to Rome by ransoming captives, enriching the public treasury rather than himself. This selflessness stands in stark contrast to the greed of an ambitious ruler. Finally, Antony stirs emotions by reminding the crowd of Caesar's compassion: "When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept." Such empathy, he argues, is not the mark of a power-hungry tyrant but of a leader who genuinely cared for his people. These arguments, woven with restraint and precision, gradually turn the crowd against Brutus and his conspirators.

(iv) Throughout his funeral speech, Mark Antony repeatedly refers to Brutus and the other conspirators as *honourable men*. At first glance, this seems like a gesture of respect, aligning with his claim that he does not seek to discredit them. However, the repetition of this phrase, "*But Brutus says he was ambitious, and Brutus is an honourable man*", slowly turns into a weapon. Antony subtly shifts its meaning, transforming it from an affirmation into a bitter irony. By juxtaposing Brutus's supposed honour with examples of Caesar's generosity and lack of ambition, such as his refusals of the crown and his sympathy for the poor, Antony forces the crowd to question whether Brutus is truly *honourable*. The phrase becomes laced with sarcasm, sowing doubt and indignation among the Romans. Each repetition chips away at Brutus's credibility until the people, inflamed with rage, are ready to rise against the conspirators.

(v) Antony's most impactful argument is his reminder that Caesar refused the crown three times during the Lupercal festival. This directly contradicts the idea of ambition, as an ambitious man would have eagerly accepted such power. The crowd, already swayed by Antony's emotional appeal, sees this as undeniable proof of Caesar's humility, making it the most convincing point.

Before Antony's speech, the citizens view him with suspicion, as he is associated with Caesar, whom they now consider a tyrant. However, by the end of his speech, their feelings shift dramatically. Antony's skilful use of rhetoric, emotional appeals and subtle hints at Caesar's generosity and compassion turn the crowd against Brutus and the conspirators. The citizens, once supportive of Brutus, are now enraged and call for revenge, showing how Antony's words have completely transformed their loyalty.

Answer 3

(i) Brutus says, "*No, Cassius, no*" in response to Cassius's suggestion that he might be captured and paraded as a prisoner through Rome if they lose the battle. Brutus, a man of great pride and principle, cannot bear the thought of being led in disgrace through

the streets of the city he sought to liberate. He would rather die than suffer such humiliation. His words, "*And whether we shall meet again I know not,*" suggest an acknowledgement of the uncertainty of war. This moment is deeply poignant, as he and Cassius prepare for what could be their final battle. The farewell they exchange carries a sense of inevitability, foreshadowing their impending fates and reinforcing the tragic weight of their choices.

- (ii) Brutus refers to Caesar's assassination when he speaks of "*the work which the Ides of March begun*". The conspirators, led by Brutus and Cassius, assassinated Caesar on the Ides of March, believing it would restore the Republic and prevent tyranny. However, their vision of Rome free from dictatorship was never realised. If Brutus and Cassius lose the battle, Rome will fall under the rule of Octavius and Antony, who will likely establish a new form of autocracy. This marks the ultimate failure of the conspiracy, as their attempt to preserve the Republic instead paves the way for an empire, proving the futility of their actions.
- (iii) Earlier in the scene, Cassius tells Messala about a strange omen he observed while marching from Sardis to Philippi. Two mighty eagles had perched on their banners, feeding from the hands of their soldiers, which he initially took as a good sign. However, on the morning of the battle, the eagles vanished, replaced by ravens, crows and kites circling ominously above them. Cassius, who once dismissed omens as mere superstitions, begins to see this as a sign of their impending doom. This change in his belief underscores his growing sense of fatalism and foreshadows his tragic end.
- (iv) Brutus dies by running onto his own sword, held by his loyal servant, Strato. His death is deeply ironic because throughout his life, Brutus upheld Stoic philosophy, which teaches endurance in the face of suffering and rejection of suicide as an escape from fate. He had earlier criticised Cato for taking his own life, calling it cowardly. Yet, in the end, he does exactly that, choosing death over dishonour. His suicide marks his final acknowledgement that their cause has failed, and that Rome will no longer be what he fought for.
- (v) Antony calls Brutus "*the noblest Roman of them all*" because, unlike the other conspirators, Brutus did not kill Caesar out of envy or ambition but out of a sincere belief in the Republic. He acted with what he thought was Rome's best interest at heart, even if his actions were misguided. Antony, despite having fought against him, acknowledges this purity of intent. This moment reveals Antony's ability to recognise virtue, even in his enemies. Though he has been ruthless throughout the play, Antony's words here show a sense of honour and respect for true nobility, reinforcing the complexity of his character.

Answer 4

- (i) When the elevator door slid open on the third floor, it revealed the same fat lady Martin had encountered earlier that morning. She was an imposing figure, clad in an old, green coat that seemed to engulf her. Her face, with its large fleshy cheeks and absence of a discernible chin, gave her a somewhat piggish appearance. Her small, sharp blue eyes, however, were the most striking feature, fixated on Martin with an unsettling intensity that made him deeply uncomfortable.
- (ii) Martin's fear of the elevator was multifaceted. The elevator itself was old and poorly maintained, with dim lighting, dirty walls and a tendency to shudder disconcertingly with every stop. Its claustrophobic dimensions amplified his unease, especially when other passengers were present. The constantly malfunctioning door, which slammed shut with a jarring clang, further exacerbated his anxiety. Beyond these physical attributes, Martin harboured a deep-seated fear of being trapped alone inside the elevator, a fear that was only heightened by the building's eerie atmosphere.
- (iii) Martin's fall down the stairs was a direct consequence of his escalating fear of the fat lady. Upon seeing her waiting for him on the third floor, his anxiety reached a breaking point, compelling him to flee in a blind panic. The dimly lit stairwell and his haste led to his unfortunate tumble. This fall resulted in a broken leg, necessitating the use of crutches and rendering him incapable of using the stairs, a consequence that would later prove to be a critical turning point in his predicament.
- (iv) The story concludes with a chilling climax that leaves Martin trapped and helpless. After his father departs the elevator on the ninth floor, seemingly oblivious to Martin's pleas to accompany him, the elevator stops on the tenth floor where the fat lady awaits. She quickly steps inside, closing the door behind her, effectively sealing Martin's fate. The element of horror is amplified by her sinister greeting, "Hello, Martin," followed by a chilling laugh as she presses the Stop button, bringing the elevator to an abrupt halt. This ending leaves the reader with a sense of dread and unease, highlighting Martin's vulnerability and the fat lady's malevolent intentions.
- (v) Martin's father views him as a "coward" and a "fool", constantly criticising his timidity and lack of bravery. He seems more concerned with Martin conforming to traditional notions of masculinity than with understanding his fears. This reveals him to be a rather unsympathetic and emotionally unintelligent character, more focused on outward appearances than his son's genuine anxieties. He appears dismissive and even scornful of Martin's concerns, prioritising his own perception of how a man should behave over his son's well-being. This ultimately contributes to Martin's vulnerability and isolation, as he is left to face his fears alone.

Answer 5

- (i) In the extract, the word that refers to the order from Berlin mandating that only German be taught in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. This decree, signifying the imposition of Prussian control over their education and culture, comes as a shock to the community. The bulletin board outside the town hall had been a source of distressing news for the past two years, delivering announcements of lost battles, military drafts and various orders from the commanding officer – all grim reminders of the ongoing war and its consequences.
- (ii) Franz, the narrator, vividly describes the typical start of a school day as one brimming with energy and activity. He recounts the “great bustle” that permeated the air, audible even from the street outside. The sounds of desks being opened and closed, students reciting lessons in unison, their voices echoing through the classroom, and the authoritative rap of the teacher’s ruler on the table all contribute to the vibrant atmosphere. This lively portrayal captures the essence of a regular school day, filled with the youthful energy of students and the ever-present authority of the teacher, creating a sense of normalcy that is now on the verge of being disrupted.
- (iii) On this particular morning, Franz observes a stark contrast to the usual commotion. Instead of the customary hustle and bustle, an unusual silence pervades the school. The students are already seated, and M. Hamel walks up and down with his iron ruler, the atmosphere heavy with a sense of gravity and foreboding. This unusual quietness reflects the sombre mood that has settled over the school in light of the impending changes.
- (iv) M. Hamel’s announcement that it was their last French lesson triggers a wave of regret and remorse in Franz. He laments his past negligence towards his studies, recalling his preference for leisurely activities like searching for birds’ eggs and going sliding on the Saar. His books, once a burden, now appear as cherished companions, symbolising the opportunities he has squandered. The thought of losing M. Hamel and the familiar comfort of his French lessons fills him with a sense of loss and apprehension about the uncertain future.
- (v) In his final lesson, M. Hamel passionately urges his students and the villagers to never forget their French language and heritage. He emphasises the importance of preserving their linguistic identity, especially in the face of occupation, stating that “when a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language, it is as if they had the key to their prison.” He sees language as a means of resistance and a symbol of their cultural freedom.
- At the end of the lesson, M. Hamel summons all his strength and writes “Vive La France!” on the blackboard. These words, meaning “Long Live France!”, are a powerful declaration of patriotism

and a poignant reminder of their national identity. Through his final words and actions, M. Hamel hopes to inspire a sense of pride and unity among his students and the villagers. He wants them to remember their French heritage and resist cultural assimilation. By demonstrating his own unwavering dedication to his country and language, he aims to instil in them a sense of resilience and hope for the future. He wants them to remember that even in the face of adversity, their language and culture are worth preserving and fighting for.

Answer 6

- (i) The poem opens with King Francis, a jovial monarch, enjoying a royal spectacle where lions are engaged in combat within a pit. The scene is set in a grand arena, with nobles and elegantly dressed ladies seated around, observing the event with great interest. Among them sits the Count de Lorge, accompanied by his beloved, adding a touch of romance to the already captivating atmosphere. The presence of the king, the valorous knights, the elegant ladies, and the fierce lions below creates a thrilling spectacle that embodies the spirit of the era.
- (ii) Leigh Hunt masterfully employs vivid imagery to depict the ferocity of the lions. He describes them as “ramped and roared”, with “horrid laughing jaws”, which creates a striking visual and auditory impression. The phrase “they bit, they glared, gave blows like beams” emphasises their power and aggression, while “a wind went with their paws” suggests the immense force behind their movements. The “bloody foam above the bars” and the “thunderous smother” of sand and mane further enhance the chaotic and intense atmosphere of the fight. These descriptions not only bring the scene to life but also convey the raw power and danger of the lions, making the reader feel as though they are witnessing the spectacle firsthand.
- (iii) The ‘beauteous lively dame’ is the lady admired by Count de Lorge. She is portrayed as having “smiling lips and sharp bright eyes,” indicating her cheerful and alert nature. To test Count de Lorge’s love and bravery, she deliberately drops her glove into the lion’s pit, expecting him to retrieve it. Her action is driven by a desire to prove his devotion and to gain admiration from the king and the court. She believes that such a daring act will not only demonstrate his love for her but also bring her great glory and recognition. This act reflects her vanity and the societal expectations of courtly love and valour.
- (a) This line describes the lady’s constant appearance of cheerfulness and alertness. Her smiling lips suggest a pleasant and amiable demeanour, while her sharp bright eyes indicate her keen and lively nature, which remains consistent and unchanging.
- (b) This phrase suggests that the moment is exceptionally perfect and significant, imbued with

a sense of grandeur and importance. It implies that the situation is ideal for a remarkable and memorable act, elevating the event to a divine or extraordinary level.

- (c) King Francis remarks that it is far safer and more comfortable to observe the lions from a distance rather than being in the pit with them. This statement underscores the danger and ferocity of the lions, highlighting the wisdom of staying at a safe remove from such perilous creatures.
- (v) King Francis exclaims "rightly done!" in response to Count de Lorge's daring retrieval of the lady's glove from the lion's pit and his subsequent act of throwing it back in her face. The Count's action demonstrates his courage in facing the lions, but it also signifies his disdain for the lady's vanity in testing his love. King Francis applauds this act because it underscores the distinction between genuine bravery and mere vanity. The Count likely behaved in this manner to convey that true valour is not about performing reckless acts for superficial approval but about maintaining one's dignity and self-respect. His response critiques the lady's frivolous challenge and highlights the folly of risking one's life for the sake of vain glory. This act serves as a powerful commentary on the nature of true courage and the superficiality of societal expectations.

Answer 7

- (i) Initially, the narrator imagined the 'speck' to be a mere particle of dust, possibly blown by his breath. The use of the word 'speck' suggests something tiny and insignificant, almost negligible in the grand scheme of things. However, as he observed it more closely, he realised it was a 'mite,' a small, living creature with its own inclinations and will. This shift in terminology from 'speck' to 'mite' reflects the narrator's growing awareness of the speck's complexity and individuality. The choice of words highlights the narrator's realisation that even the smallest beings can possess a form of life and agency, challenging his initial perception of insignificance.
- (ii) The narrator was engaged in writing when he spotted the speck. The words "manuscript" and "pen" from the poem help to confirm this conclusion. The narrator mentions having his pen poised in the air, ready to stop the speck with a period of ink, indicating that he was in the process of writing. The speck's movement across the manuscript further suggests that the narrator was

deeply involved in a literary activity. This context sets the stage for the narrator's detailed observation of the mite, as his focus on writing allowed him to notice and ponder the tiny creature's actions.

- (iii) The narrator realised he was dealing with an intelligence when he observed the mite's behaviour. The mite paused with suspicion of the pen, raced wildly, paused again, and then turned to fly with loathing. These actions indicated a level of awareness and decision-making that suggested the mite had its own inclinations and responses to its environment. The narrator's observation of these deliberate actions led him to conclude that the mite possessed a form of intelligence. This realisation was significant because it challenged the narrator's initial assumption that such a tiny creature could not exhibit signs of thought or intention.
- (iv) Despite its tiny size, the mite's actions such as racing, pausing and turning implied the presence of feet that allowed it to express its desire to avoid danger. The narrator inferred that such precise movements would not be possible without a complete set of feet, which the mite used to navigate its environment and attempt to escape. This conclusion was drawn from the mite's evident ability to move quickly and change direction, suggesting it had the necessary physical attributes to do so.
- (v) The narrator's initial response to the speck was one of curiosity and contemplation. He observed the mite's movements and behaviour, noting its apparent intelligence and will to survive. Despite his initial intention to stop the mite with a drop of ink, he eventually decided to let it live, allowing it to lie on the manuscript until he hoped it slept. This decision reflects the narrator's respect for life and individuality, even in its smallest forms. He recognises the mite's display of mind and intelligence, which resonates with his own values. This decision reveals the narrator's empathetic and thoughtful character, as he chooses to spare the mite's life out of a recognition of its intrinsic worth and a rejection of unnecessary harm. His actions demonstrate a deep appreciation for the presence of mind and consciousness, regardless of the form it takes. The narrator's decision to let the mite live underscores his belief in the value of all intelligent life, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant. This act of mercy and respect for the mite's existence highlights his compassionate and reflective nature, as well as his ability to find significance in the minutiae of life.