

ISC SEMESTER 2 EXAMINATION
SAMPLE PAPER - 2
(LANGUAGE)

Maximum Marks: 40

Time Allowed: One and a half hour

*(Candidates are allowed additional 10 minutes for only reading the paper.
They must NOT start writing during this time.)*

All questions are compulsory.

Question 1.

Write a composition in approximately 350-400 words on any one of the following subjects:

(You are reminded that you will be rewarded for orderly and coherent presentation of material, use of appropriate style and general accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar.)

- (i) The 21st century with all its science and technology, allows us to go to Mars and develop Artificial Intelligence. Yet, one virus brings us to a complete standstill in a few weeks. Do you think there should be changes in priorities for science and research in future?
- (ii) "Childhood is the golden period of life." Narrate an incident of your childhood to support this statement.
- (iii) Craze for English is justified. Do you think we should focus on English? Write for or against this statement.
- (iv) Women's Education.
- (v) Reflect upon the deed of Communal Harmony in today's India.
- (vi) Write an original short story beginning with the following words:
'It was raining hard last night. In a hurry to get into the house, I didn't notice ...'

Question 2.

- (i) You have been asked to attend a school fair organised with a view to raise funds for the school. In about 200-250 words, write an article about the fair, to be included in the school magazine using the points given below:
Date and venue of the fair—games—stalls—sale of tickets and coupons—brochure—spectators—prizes—collection of money—the colourful atmosphere—noise, etc.
- (ii) Write a proposal in not more than 150 words to the principals of all the schools in your city for an interschool arts and sports tournament extravaganza.



Answer 1.

(i)

THE BASICS NEED PRIORITY

Over the decades, man has progressed in leaps and bounds. Scaling the dizzying heights in the field of technology, he is in a position to reach the outer world and also create intelligence that can revolutionise his way of living. However, the biggest paradox today is that a nano-sized virus has brought him to his feet. A ridiculous situation, but so very true!

Where has he gone wrong? Surely, it is not a sin to explore the possibilities of an advanced intelligence that he has been blessed with! However, in his flight to reach the heights, he forgot to nurture his roots, and herein lies the answer to the crisis we are faced with. Time and again, we have exploited Nature, the very system that supports us. As the learned would say, "There is no well-being without Nature's well-being." So, how can we set our heads in clouds, when we totter on our feet?

Well, the answer is to invest in what matters first. The scientists and the economists should first find ways to lay the foundation for a green environment. Let us spend our resources in building up a sustainable environment for all living creatures. Human activities have upset the ecological balance, which has resulted in grave concerns for all living beings. There is global warming, habitat loss, shortage of drinking water and loss of natural resources. There is poverty and disease. Instead of trying to mitigate these problems, one cannot spend money and energy on highly ambitious projects such as Mars exploration. Although expeditions and innovations help in reaching long term goals, but the basics have to be addressed first.

First and foremost, there is widespread hunger in the world. Let the scientists work on genetic engineering and farming methods to grow sufficient crops at affordable rates. A large scale investment in agribots, and vertical farming will ensure healthier and a more abundant yield from reduced space. Secondly, genomics has to be given priority. The cure and treatment of community destroying diseases like Corona and Ebola has to be speeded up and vaccines have to be created. New healthcare technologies have to be made possible to detect chronic diseases as well as the ones that pounce upon unawares. Universal flu vaccines that can protect from mild to catastrophic pandemics are a great challenge but to be done at any cost.

Safe environment is another priority. Renewable energies have to be given a boost, especially solar power which is cheaper and better for use. Carbon dioxide accumulation has to be contained by recycling. Grid scale energy saving methods have to be resorted to save electricity. Ocean clean-up of micro plastics is the biggest challenge to be undertaken to save marine lives and humans.

There has to be a basic infrastructure that needs implementation to provide fair chances on earth. One way to achieve this is to incorporate high-end technology, but not for its own sake.

(ii)

CHILDHOOD – THE GOLDEN PERIOD OF LIFE

It is rightly said that childhood is the golden period of one's life because a child is carefree, free from every kind of liability, unbiased and free from all evil passions. In the words of William Wordsworth: 'The Child is the Father of Man'. Childhood is the storehouse of energy and pleasure. Love and affection showers from all sides. Mistakes committed during the days of childhood are sympathetically forgiven. Days pass between the care and play of the mother and father.

I have grown up in a joint family where I received the love and affection of not only my parents, but also of my grandparents, aunts and uncles. I have enjoyed the companionship of my cousins and endless days of joy and affection. I particularly remember a time when we were allowed to do anything. There was this day when we had hidden my uncle's diary. He was a private person who guarded his diary very closely because it contained his private musings. Initially, he thought he had simply misplaced it. When looking for it yielded no results, he resorted to asking people whether they had seen it. My mother, grandmother and aunt all said that they had not seen his diary. Next, he checked with his friends at work. All this while, we were hiding it in a box full of junk in the attic in the hope of finding a quiet moment to read it.

However, things did not go as planned and my five-year-old brother told him. He was furious and almost brought the whole house down in his rage. My mother was upset with us and wanted to punish us for invading his privacy. However, my ever protective grandmother forgave us and saved us from a bollocking, as we promised to never do this again.

Sometimes, I wonder how many mischiefs and transgression which we committed intentionally and otherwise were forgiven and overlooked by our parents. Only one promise was elicited from us in return for forgiveness— the promise to study well. My mother used to say that the main duty of the child is to receive good education and to play. No wonder, we cousins look upon those days fondly whenever we meet and remember those days as the golden period of our lives.

(iii)

CRAZE FOR ENGLISH IS JUSTIFIED

For the Motion

English has never been as important in the past as it is today. In order to present, clarify, negotiate, persuade, win, you need to possess a total mastery of the English language. You need a mix of skills of speaking, writing, listening and you will feel the difference when you are an expert in English. You will become more effective and satisfied with your work and also with your social life.

English dominates the world of business. It started spreading from Britain to other parts of the world primarily to serve the purposes of trade and commerce. In India, it has been in use for more than two hundred years. It is not only our associate official language, but also the language of business and administration. It is all the more important to emphasise this fact now that India is fast opening up to the world economy. Most sectors are now open to foreign investment. Companies from all parts of the world are setting up their offices and branches here and tying up with Indian companies. Indians settled abroad are returning home in large numbers and setting up businesses here. Ambitious young men and women are looking for lucrative jobs in the business sector and all this is possible and very well-defined to youngsters that the first and most important requirement for success is the ability to communicate effectively in English. Look anywhere—professional, personal, academics, hospitality, business, medicine, computer science, designing, architecture and the list can continue. We need to have a flair for English if we are to compete successfully.

In the global arena, the status, the recognition, the acceptance of English as a special kind of language, suitable for business or otherwise is so clearly visible that it has been translated into today's 'Craze for English', and a deep awareness of its place and need especially amongst the youth. English is an indispensable tool, whether verbal or written. Come by an interview, and it is always conducted in English. In the written context, it is our 'ambassador', a representation of what we are and a password to further opportunities.

To conclude, English, as we see it— the fastest growing language in world helps in unifying the world. It is the single, most dynamic communication phenomenon absorbing all kinds of usages of vocabulary even outside the language that flows into it. New terms are being coined and incorporated into the English language, making it more powerful and prominent. Re-establishing the fact that change is growth, English continues to feature high on the chart as something totally desirable.

Against the Motion

English is called as a global language only because the British colonised almost the entire world at one point—almost not entirely. Thus, the people colonised had no other choice but to learn English. Furthermore, the superpowers in the form of multinational corporations have roots in the English speaking countries of the West. Thus, it became mandatory for employees to speak the language of the employers. Same story, different versions.

However, we can learn any language and be perfect in that. This is the material point. Mandarin, Japanese, Latin languages or French, Hindi or Urdu, whatever language we learn, we should make sure that we learn the rudiments and climb up to the advanced levels. The world is a global village and we will always find ways to communicate. There are also apps on phones nowadays that make any language redundant.

Shaming people or judging people by their use of the English language is the worst blight of modernity. A person's worth is not measured in terms of his usage of a certain language but his merits of will, determination and labour. Learning English can certainly help you but not knowing English is not the end of the world. It is a skill, like any other, that can be acquired. English is now, a measurement of our social stature. This is the sad reality. If we find a job in Munich or Paris, German or French would be more a friend than English. The Chinese and the Japanese are doing just fine without forcing their kids to learn English. Why can't the Indians learn to do so too?

Learning English does not guarantee you success. We must learn our own language first before joining the queues outside English coaching centers. English is a commodity now. We can buy it anytime we want. We should not let a commodity define the person we are.

(iv)

WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Education is very important for the proper social and economic growth of the country. Both men and women are like two sides of a coin and run equally like two wheels of the society. Hence, both are essential for the growth and development of the country. They thus require equal opportunity in education. Women's education is highly necessary for the future of the country as women are the first teachers of their children, who later become the future of the nation. The children receive their primary lessons from their mothers. An educated woman may easily handle her family, make each family member responsible, infuse good qualities in children, participate in the social works and lead towards

a socially and economically healthy nation. It is truly said that educating a man only educates a man, however educating a woman educates the whole family and thereby the whole nation.

Women are free citizens of the independent country and have all rights like men. They have the right to get proper education to perform better in all areas of life. Women education helps them to be more independent and empowered in their life. Education helps them to develop their mind and status, and not be a burden on anyone, like in the past. Education helps them to be well aware of their duties and rights as well as realise their responsibilities to contribute towards development of the country in the same manner as men do.

The deeds of bravery, courage and valour of Maharani Laxmi Bai of Jhansi make the bravest of the brave men bow heads before her name. Every Indian takes pride in the late Sarojini Naidu. Her sacrifices and her outstanding services to the motherland are a source of inspiration to all. In recent times, late Mrs. India Gandhi impressed all by her courage and determination. As a leader, she acquired an international status.

Today, Indian women are trying to become economically self-sufficient. Our constitution has provided that women shall have equal opportunities as men in education, employment as well as in social, economic and political fields. They are entitled to equal wages as men for equal work and have been given the right to take up progressive occupations and professions. Though the position of women in village communities has not improved much, but in urban areas, women are enjoying high positions in every walk of life. They are taking up careers which were considered the monopoly of men, like the police department and other administrative services.

(v)

COMMUNAL HARMONY IN TODAY'S INDIA

India is home to many people, cultures and religions. For centuries, different communities have co-existed here as brothers and sisters. As Indians, they have taken disasters and misfortunes in their stride.

There is no one who hasn't read any recent newspaper headlines and failed to observe that most of the front page reports of tragic violence are mostly cases of communal violence in India. India is a diverse country. It is home to numerous citizens, who follow their own faiths freely in our secular country. People in different parts of the country enjoy different kinds of landscape and weather, eat various kinds of food, wear many different clothes and speak different languages. Our motto is 'Unity in Diversity'. However, have we thought in hindsight, whether this motto holds true in today's context? Is India really united? Do we celebrate the diversity or use it to unleash violence on each other.

We take away other people's rights everyday - their right to choose what to eat, what they want, their freedom of speech and their basic human rights, simply because we want to prove that our God is better than their God. Friends do not remain friends and neighbours step on each other's toes in the name of religious superiority.

The thoughtless violence— houses being burnt; shops looted, poor men, women and children brutally murdered— all in the name of religion or in the name of God!

Which God wants violence? Which God wants his beautiful creations destroyed so cruelly? The very thought that people find a religious belief is worth killing innocent people, deeply saddens me. Why don't people realise, they are their own fellow human beings whom they are killing?

Our forefathers died trying to win freedom for us. They dreamt of their future generations waking up in a free country, where people lived in harmony, peace and brotherhood.

It seems, centuries of war and violence haven't made us any wiser. We continue to be brutal, insensitive and insecure. We continue to fight for water, land, money and God. It's so pathetic!

Today, as never before, there is a dire need to shun violence, hatred and communalism, if we want our motherland to survive. Let us join hands to be more tolerant, so that each person in this free country can enjoy the right to life and the basic human rights they deserve.

(vi)

A NIGHTMARE

It was raining hard last night. In a hurry to get into the house, I didn't notice a black car parked across the road. I realised something was wrong when an arm pulled me into the bush next to the door. I tried

shouting, but another big palm landed on my mouth. I struggled with my legs, but soon felt a fistful blow that made me unconscious. I woke up to loud voices of men and women screaming around me and the heat made me squirm uncomfortably. I opened my eyes, feeling dizziness in my head and coughed. There was smoke all around me. I heard the loud sound of a fire engine and found myself in a house that was on fire. It was not my house, the things lying there were not mine. It was an unknown place. I was scared. In order to look for a way out, I pulled myself up and started moving towards the door. I touched the doorknob and 'aeww!', it was hot. It then struck me, the house was on fire. I didn't know what to do. The cough became frequent and it was difficult to breathe. I didn't realise when I fell down unconsciously.

I could feel nothing, but faintly heard a door break open and I was being covered and carried away. The cool breeze on the skin and faint voice calling out my name brought me out of the deep slumber. I opened my eyes to white walls and lights around me. I felt a warm hand on my palm and heard exciting words. 'He is awake now!' Moving my head towards the right, I saw the most beautiful face, my mother was there in front of me and tears welled up in my eyes. Feeling safe, I drifted peacefully into sleep again. My parched throat forced me out of sleep and I mumbled softly, 'water', 'water!' I drank some and opened my eyes, feeling a lot better. It felt like a rebirth.

Answer 2.

(i)

St. VINCENT'S SCHOOL FAIR

By Shweta Basu

A friend of mine, who was also the secretary of St. Vincent's School, asked me to attend the fair in the school campus. It was on the 25th of February. The fair looked like a colourful festivity. Games like table tennis, badminton, and cricket were held. Several stalls containing a variety of articles were displayed. The prominent attractions of the fair were the music conference, the disc jockey, the disco dancing and the mini zoo. A drama was also staged. The students of the school presented most of the activities. Tickets were sold to raise funds for the school.

I was surprised to see that the number of spectators was huge. On enquiring, I was told that most of the visitors were the parents of the students. They had come to encourage their sons or daughters to take an active part in the school activities. Most of the chaat stalls, lunch stalls, painting and embroidery centres, and cosmetics stalls were organised and run by the students. The profits they earned was donated to the school.

The players who fared well were awarded prizes. The school authorities bore the expenses of the prizes. In return, every team desirous of taking part in the tournament was required to deposit ₹ 25 each as an entry fee.

I was treated as an important guest. One of the members of the school committee escorted me to the ground. I was glad to walk through the whole place. My friends offered me a coffee with a heavy breakfast. I was informed that a fund of ₹ 2 lakhs was expected to be raised, which was really a great achievement.

(ii) **PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERSCHOOL ARTS AND SPORTS TOURNAMENT**

To instill cooperation and friendship among the students of all the ICSE schools in the city, a proposal to give opportunity to the students around the city to showcase their talents in the fields of arts and sports in a competitive arena.

- To invite students from classes IX to XII for interschool arts and sports tournaments.
- Enlist the help of teachers and student councils of the participating schools.
- Have a meeting under the supervision of the principals to form plans and rules for the tournament.
- To invite Principals to put forth names of neutral judges for all competitions in the tournaments and selection to be done via secret ballot.
- Visit the city stadium and book grounds and auditoriums for the finale.
- Select the competitions, themes, number of participants, dates and other details of the tournament.

I am looking forward to the Principals to come together, so that we can give the students of all ICSE schools a chance to mingle and compete to boost friendly bonds.