PAUL ACADEMY & ENGLISH MINES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE (ENGLISH PAPER - 1)
SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER 4
ANSWER KEY & MARKING SCHEME

Maximum Marks: 80 **Duration: 2 Hours**

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QUESTION 1: COMPOSITION [20 MARKS]

[Teacher-Developed Assessment Rubric: Total 20 Marks]

Under the official CISCE 2027 specimen marking scheme (Code 011), compositions are evaluated holistically out of 20 marks. The following analytical division is teacher-developed guidance to assist evaluators:

- Content & Relevance (6 Marks): Thorough treatment of prompt, logical development, mature perspective.

- Structure & Paragraphing (4 Marks): Compelling introduction, cohesive transitions, satisfying conclusion.

- Expression & Language Mechanics (10 Marks): Vocabulary range, sentence diversity, accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Indicative Outlines & Key Assessment Points for Question 1
Choices:

(i) Narrative Composition (Mountain Trek Detour):

- Plotline: High-altitude trek in the Himalayas or Western Ghats. A curiosity-driven detour from the marked trail.

- Complication: Sudden change in weather or challenging terrain (steep scree slope, mist) testing courage and survival instinct.

- Climax & Discovery: Stumbling upon an isolated ancient cave shrine, a hidden alpine meadow with rare wildlife, or rescuing a trapped lamb.

- Resolution: Safe return to the base camp with heightened self-reliance.

(ii) Descriptive Composition (Mansion Library on Autumn Afternoon):

- Visual sensory details: Slanted shafts of golden autumnal light, dust motes dancing in the air, floor-to-ceiling mahogany bookshelves.

- Tactile and olfactory: Fragrance of beeswax polish, vellum, aged leather bindings, and dry oak leaves outside the leaded window panes.

- Atmosphere: Reverent, contemplative stillness broken only by the rhythmic tick of a tall grandfather clock.

(iii) Argumentative Composition (Boarding Schools vs Day Schools):

- Clear stance: Definite stance strictly maintained throughout.

- For: Fosters deep independence, self-discipline, lifelong camaraderie, egalitarian communal living away from parental pampering.

- Against: Deprives child of parental warmth during crucial formative years, risks institutional emotional detachment, causes homesickness.

(iv) Reflective Composition (Standing Up Against Peer Group):

- Dilemma: Popular peer group engaging in unfair behavior (e.g. bullying, cheating in an exam, ostracizing a shy classmate).

- Action: Overcoming fear of social exclusion to voice a firm moral objection.

- Aftermath: Initial coldness or ridicule followed by private respect from peers and lasting personal integrity.

(v) Picture-Based Composition (Athletes Helping Fallen Rival):

- Mandatory connection: Clear, organic link to the embedded picture (two track sprinters pausing during a race to hoist a fallen injured competitor).

- Interpretative approaches:

  * Narrative: A tense inter-school championship race where victory is willingly sacrificed for humanity and compassion.

  * Reflective: The true essence of sportsmanship transcending medals and podium finishes.

  * Descriptive: The physical tension of the cinder track, gasping breath, and the sudden quiet nobility of a shared finish.

QUESTION 2: LETTER WRITING [10 MARKS]

[Teacher-Developed Assessment Guidance: Format 3 M + Content 2 M + Expression 5 M]

2(i) Model Informal Letter (Sharing Board Exam Prep & Strategies with Cousin):

Flat 3A, Gulmohar Enclave

Tagore Road

Chandigarh - 160019

16th April 2027

Dear Kabir,

I hope you are in good health and high spirits. With our Class 10 board examinations just around the corner, I know how demanding and stressful this preparation phase can feel. I am writing to share how I have been coping with examination anxiety and the study strategies that have proven helpful for me.

Like you, I initially struggled with the sheer volume of syllabus revisions, especially in physics and chemistry. To overcome the overwhelm, I adopted the Pomodoro technique--studying in focused twenty-five minute intervals followed by five-minute breaks. I also created visual mind-maps for history and biology, which make quick revision before sleep far less daunting.

Remember to take brief evening walks and get at least seven hours of restful sleep every night. We have worked diligently throughout the academic session, and I have complete faith in our abilities. Let us stay calm, focused, and positive.

Please give my regards to Uncle and Aunt, and write back whenever you take a study break.

Yours affectionately,

Arjun

2(ii) Model Formal Letter (Speed Breakers & Zebra Crossing Outside School):

House No. 84, Sector 14

Vikas Marg

Gurugram - 122001

16th April 2027

The Assistant Commissioner of Police (Traffic)

Traffic Headquarters, Sector 29

Gurugram - 122009

Sir,

Subject: Urgent request for speed breakers and zebra crossing outside St. Jude's Academy on Vikas Marg

I am writing as the Head Prefect of St. Jude's Academy to draw your urgent attention to the hazardous traffic conditions prevailing directly outside our school gate on Vikas Marg.

During morning arrival at 7:30 a.m. and afternoon dispersal at 2:00 p.m., more than twelve hundred students cross this busy arterial corridor. Commuters and heavy transport vehicles frequently speed past at sixty kilometers per hour, completely ignoring pedestrian traffic. Over the past month, our school monitors have recorded three near-miss incidents involving primary school children.

To avert a serious accident, I earnestly request your department to construct two standard rubberized speed breakers, paint a prominent high-visibility zebra crossing, and install 'School Zone -- Speed Limit 25 km/h' warning signboards. Deploying a traffic warden during peak dispersal hours would further safeguard our students.

I trust your office will take swift and decisive action in the interest of child safety.

Yours faithfully,

Meera Nair

(Head Prefect, St. Jude's Academy)

QUESTION 3: NOTICE AND LINKED EMAIL [10 MARKS]

[Teacher-Developed Assessment Guidance: Notice 5 Marks; Email 5 Marks]

3(i) Model Notice (Annual Inter-School Spelling Bee Competition):

SPELL BOUND

Annual Inter-School Spelling Bee Competition

Date: Friday, 23rd April 2027

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Venue: Fr. Joseph Memorial Auditorium, St. Jude's Academy

Students of Classes 9 and 10 are invited to participate in the Annual Inter-School Spelling Bee Competition. The contest will feature rounds on phonetics, etymology, root words, and rapid-fire spell-offs. Each participating school may field one team comprising four students.

Interested teams must register their names with Mrs. Shalini Roy, Coordinator of the English Literary Club, in Room 15, on or before Monday, 19th April 2027.

3(ii) Model Linked Email:

To: principal@ststephensconvent.org

Subject: Invitation to Field Student Delegation for Annual Inter-School Spelling Bee

Dear Sister / Madam,

I am writing on behalf of the English Literary Club of St. Jude's Academy to cordially invite your esteemed institution to participate in our Annual Inter-School Spelling Bee Competition, entitled 'Spell Bound'.

The competition is scheduled for Friday, 23rd April 2027, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Fr. Joseph Memorial Auditorium at St. Jude's Academy. Leading schools from across the district will contest challenging rounds on etymology, word roots, and rapid spell-offs, having registered with Mrs. Shalini Roy (Room 15, by 19th April 2027).

We would be honored if your school could field a four-member student delegation from Classes 9 and 10 accompanied by a teacher escort to contest this literary challenge.

We kindly request you to confirm your school's participation by submitting team details by Monday, 19th April 2027.

Yours faithfully,

Rohan Dasgupta

Secretary, English Literary Club

St. Jude's Academy

QUESTION 4: COMPREHENSION [20 MARKS]

(i) Vocabulary [2 Marks]:

1. tenacious -> (a) persistent and determined [1 Mark]
2. submerged -> (b) completely buried or covered [1 Mark]

(ii) Antonym [1 Mark]:

Opposite of 'hesitant' -> (b) decisive [1 Mark]

(iii) Short Answer Questions [9 Marks] (Strictly Grounded in Passage):

(a) A colossal slab avalanche broke loose at 3,000 meters and swept down Mount Valais, burying a lone skier; the helicopter rescue team arrived within twenty minutes. [Award 1 mark each for two distinct text details - 2 Marks]

(b) The digital avalanche transceiver failed to detect any beacon signal because the victim's device was either damaged by the violent impact or had not been activated. [2 Marks]

(c) The avalanche runout was a chaotic, hazardous expanse filled with jagged ice boulders, splintered timber, and unstable snow fissures. [2 Marks]

(d) Bruno stiffened into rigid focus, pawed furiously at the hard crust, and unleashed sharp, rhythmic barks signaling a live human scent. [2 Marks]

(e) Marc drove a graduated carbon-fiber probe vertically into the snow, striking resilient resistance at a depth of 1.4 meters. [1 Mark]

(iv) Summary / Precis [8 Marks]:

Assessment Scheme [CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, p. 17]: Content: 6 marks; Expression: 2 marks

Key Text-Grounded Content Points Expected (6 x 1 = 6 Marks):

1. Marc checked transceiver signals and deployed search dog Bruno.
2. Bruno sprinted across the debris, quartering into mountain updrafts.
3. The dog pawed the crust and barked at live human scent.
4. Marc inserted a carbon-fiber probe, confirming depth at 1.4 meters.
5. Rescuers shoveled a stepped trench, reaching the victim's jacket.
6. They cleared the skier's airway and administered oxygen immediately.

[Teacher-Developed Guidance: Indicative Rough Draft]

Marc deployed Bruno after electronic signals failed. Scenting against mountain winds, Bruno barked and pawed beside a snow depression. Marc probed the snow, striking resistance at 1.4 meters. Rescuers shoveled a stepped trench, uncovering the victim, clearing his blocked airway, and administering life-saving oxygen promptly.

Final Fair Draft Grid (Exactly 50 Words):

Marc	deployed	rescue	dog	Bruno
after	beacon	signals	failed.	Sniffing
against	icy	updrafts,	Bruno	tracked
human	scent,	pawing	and	barking
beside	a	snow	depression.	Marc
probed	the	snow,	striking	resistance
deep	down.	Rescuers	shoveled	a
stepped	trench,	uncovering	the	victim,
clearing	his	obstructed	airway,	and
administering	vital	life-saving	oxygen	promptly.

QUESTION 5: FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR [20 MARKS]

5(i) Cloze Passage -- Tenses & Verb Forms [CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, pp. 17-18] (8 x 1/2 = 4 Marks):

Example: (0) reached

(1) had planned / planned

(2) chose

(3) learned / learnt

(4) established

(5) was

(6) braved

(7) had conquered

(8) securing

5(ii) Prepositions & Phrasal Verbs [CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, p. 18] (8 x 1/2 = 4 Marks):

(a) out [fall out with = quarrel and cease friendly relations]

(b) away [give away = donate or distribute freely]

(c) back [hold back = withhold or suppress vital information]

(d) at [laugh at = mock or ridicule someone's misfortune]

(e) off [put off = postpone or delay an event]

(f) off [round off = conclude or complete a ceremony fittingly]

(g) down [turn down = refuse or reject an offer/scholarship]

(h) out [wipe out = completely destroy or eliminate]

5(iii) Sentence Synthesis [CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, pp. 18-19] (4 x 1 = 4 Marks):

1. (d) Although the laboratory technician followed all sterilization protocols, the biological culture was contaminated.

[Explanation: (d) correctly uses the subordinating conjunction 'Although' to express concession without altering meaning. (a) incorrectly introduces causality ('because'). (b) has ungrammatical 'In spite of' followed by finite clause instead of noun phrase/gerund. (c) uses forbidden connective 'so that'.]

2. (a) Having completed the rigorous spacewalk, the astronaut re-entered the decompression chamber safely.

[Explanation: (a) correctly uses the perfect participle clause 'Having completed' to denote prior completion before the next action. (b) distorts purpose. (c) has ungrammatical base form 'On complete'. (d) tense/aspect clash with continuous 'was completing'.]

3. (c) Walk carefully along the snow-covered ridge lest you should slip into the crevasse.

[Explanation: (c) correctly uses 'lest' with auxiliary 'should' to indicate negative purpose/precaution. (a) has an ungrammatical double negative 'lest... not'. (b) distorts conditional logic. (d) uses forbidden connective 'so'.]

4. (b) The mountaineers praised the Sherpa guide whom they had trusted implicitly throughout the ascent.

[Explanation: (b) correctly uses the objective relative pronoun 'whom' referring to the Sherpa guide. (a) ungrammatical relative pronoun 'which' for a person. (c) contains a redundant object pronoun 'him'. (d) contains an unattached dangling participle and reverses original agent.]

5(iv) Sentence Transformations [CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, pp. 19-20] (8 x 1 = 8 Marks):

1. (c) No sooner did the lightning flash across the sky than the thunder roared deafeningly.

[Structure: Inverted auxiliary 'did' + base verb 'flash' + correlative 'than'. (a) incorrect past tense 'flashed' with 'did'. (b) ungrammatical pairing of 'No sooner' with 'when'. (d) missing auxiliary inversion.]

2. (a) The Gangetic plain is the most fertile river valley in the subcontinent.

[Structure: Superlative transformation ('the most fertile' + singular noun). (b) ungrammatical comparative omitting 'than any other'. (c) ungrammatical 'the more fertile'. (d) fails to produce superlative sense.]

3. (d) The forest warden inquired of the trekker whether he had seen any tiger pugmarks along the stream.

[Structure: Indirect speech of an interrogative using 'whether' + past perfect backshift 'had seen'. (a) pleonastic conjunction 'that whether'. (b) incorrect present perfect 'has seen'. (c) inverted interrogative order.]

4. (a) Relief packets are being distributed to the flood victims by the volunteers.

[Structure: Passive voice of present continuous ('are being' + past participle 'distributed'). (b) unauthorized past tense shift 'were'. (c) dropped continuous auxiliary 'being'. (d) erroneous shift to present perfect 'have been'.]

5. (b) The water in the mountain stream was too freezing for the hikers to wade through.

[Structure: Transformation from 'so... that' to 'too... to' retaining exact negative implication. (a) ungrammatical blend 'too... that'. (c) awkward word order with 'so that'. (d) ungrammatical double negative 'too... to not'.]

6. (d) Scarcely had the aircraft touched down on the runway when the engine sputtered into smoke.

[Structure: Negative inversion 'Scarcely had' + past participle 'touched' + correlative 'when'. (a) incorrect correlative 'than' (required with 'No sooner', not 'Scarcely'). (b) ungrammatical 'did... touched'. (c) lacks auxiliary inversion.]

7. (b) Unless the rescue team receives the distress coordinates, they cannot locate the expedition.

[Structure: Conditional transformation replacing 'If... not' with 'Unless' + simple present 'receives'. (a) ungrammatical double negative 'Unless... does not'. (c) reverses the meaning of the main clause. (d) future auxiliary 'will' forbidden in conditional protasis.]

8. (c) The mountaineers have surmounted incredible obstacles during the expedition, haven't they?

[Structure: Question tag for positive present perfect statement using contracted negative auxiliary 'haven't' + subject pronoun 'they'. (a) incorrect simple past auxiliary 'didn't'. (b) colloquial generic 'isn't it'. (d) incorrect past perfect auxiliary 'hadn't'.]