PAUL ACADEMY

@ English Mines

English II — Specimen Paper No. 1

ICSE Class 10 | Literature in English | English Paper 2

Practice for the ICSE Examination 2027

Maximum Marks: 80 **Writing Time: 2 hours**

Reading Time: 15 minutes before the writing time begins.

Name: _____ Class/Section: _____

Instructions to candidates

Write your answers on separate answer sheets. Do not write answers during the reading time.

Section A is compulsory: answer all sixteen parts of Question 1.

Answer FOUR questions from Questions 2–7: choose at least ONE from Section B, ONE from Section C and ONE from Section D, plus ONE further question from any of these three sections.

Answer all five parts of every extract-based question you choose. Each complete question carries 16 marks. Total attempted: 16 + (4 × 16) = 80.

Marks are shown in square brackets. Answer with close reference to the prescribed texts.

Scope: the full prescribed Class X syllabus for 2027, including Julius Caesar Acts III–V and the Class X stories and poems in Treasure Chest.

An original Paul Academy practice paper.

SECTION A COMPULSORY

Question 1 **[16]**

Choose the correct answer in each case. Write the part number and the correct option. Each part carries 1 mark.

(i) In Act III, why does Caesar postpone reading Artemidorus's letter? [1]

(a) He has already read an identical warning.
(b) He believes matters concerning himself should be considered last.
(c) He orders Antony to read it on his behalf.
(d) He thinks it contains a petition from Metellus.

(ii) What is the immediate purpose of Trebonius drawing Antony away before Caesar is attacked? [1]

(a) To prevent Antony from interfering with the conspirators' plan.
(b) To obtain Antony's permission for the assassination.
(c) To ask Antony to announce Caesar's new title.
(d) To bring Antony back with armed guards.

(iii) The citizens first approve of Brutus and later turn against the conspirators. This change chiefly exposes their [1]

(a) detailed knowledge of Roman law.
(b) unwillingness to listen to any public speaker.
(c) unshakeable loyalty to Brutus.
(d) susceptibility to persuasive public speaking.

(iv) In Act V, Octavius insists on taking the right side of the battlefield despite Antony's direction. This suggests that Octavius [1]

(a) does not understand which army he commands.
(b) is preparing to desert Antony.
(c) intends to exercise authority independently.
(d) has agreed to obey Cassius.

SECTION A COMPULSORY

Question 1 continued. Each part carries 1 mark.

(v) Which mistaken conclusion leads Cassius to ask Pindarus to kill him? [1]

(a) Brutus has surrendered to Octavius.
(b) Titinius has been captured by the enemy.
(c) Antony has killed all the Roman senators.
(d) Messala has betrayed the republican army.

(vi) Lucilius allows himself to be captured while claiming to be Brutus principally to [1]

(a) gain a place in Antony's army.
(b) persuade the enemy to abandon the battle.
(c) claim the credit for Caesar's assassination.
(d) divert pursuit and give Brutus a chance to escape.

(vii) In With the Photographer, the photographer's idea of a successful portrait conflicts with the narrator's because the narrator wants [1]

(a) an altered face that follows the latest fashion.
(b) a picture of the photographer instead of himself.
(c) a recognisable record of his own appearance.
(d) a photograph with every facial feature removed.

(viii) In The Elevator, Martin's injury makes his fear more intense chiefly because it [1]

(a) restricts his ability to escape by using the stairs.
(b) prevents him from recognising the woman.
(c) makes the elevator stop on every floor.
(d) forces his father to move to another building.

SECTION A COMPULSORY

Question 1 continued. Each part carries 1 mark.

(ix) In The Girl Who Can, Adjoa's success in running most directly challenges the belief that [1]

(a) children should never attend school.
(b) a girl's body should be judged chiefly by its future role in motherhood.
(c) grandmothers cannot be proud of their grandchildren.
(d) athletic achievement depends on expensive equipment.

(x) At the end of The Pedestrian, the police car passes Leonard Mead's brightly lit home. Its contrast with the surrounding dark houses mainly emphasises [1]

(a) his secret employment as a police officer.
(b) the city's frequent power failures.
(c) his determination to leave the city that night.
(d) his difference from the passive life of the surrounding households.

(xi) In The Last Lesson, the villagers' attendance in the classroom combines [1]

(a) gratitude to their teacher with regret for neglected learning.
(b) delight at the new order with impatience to leave.
(c) fear of Franz with anger at the blacksmith.
(d) curiosity about a school prize with pride in their grammar.

(xii) In Haunted Houses, the world of everyday physical experience is presented as [1]

(a) completely sealed off from the past.
(b) less real than a deliberately invented nightmare.
(c) surrounded and influenced by a continuing spiritual presence.
(d) an empty place from which all memory has disappeared.

SECTION A COMPULSORY

Question 1 continued. Each part carries 1 mark.

(xiii) In The Glove and the Lions, the rapid description of the Count's leap and return chiefly highlights [1]

(a) his hesitation before an impossible task.
(b) his quick courage, which contrasts with the lady's calculating display.
(c) the king's attempt to rescue him.
(d) the lions' willingness to obey the lady.

(xiv) Which description best captures the movement of thought in When Great Trees Fall? [1]

(a) From admiration of nature to a celebration of violence.
(b) From grief to the belief that the dead never mattered.
(c) From personal loss to complete forgetfulness.
(d) From the shock of loss towards a changed capacity to live and grow.

(xv) In A Considerable Speck, the creature's hesitant and purposeful movements lead the speaker to recognise [1]

(a) the presence of a mind independent of his own.
(b) a flaw in the paper that needs to be erased.
(c) a mechanical object controlled by his pen.
(d) a stain that is spreading across the page.

(xvi) In The Power of Music, the goat's intervention provides a comic ending because [1]

(a) it joins the audience in praising the singer.
(b) it teaches the singer a more difficult melody.
(c) a blunt physical action ends the disturbance that others have endured.
(d) its voice is even louder than the singer's.

SECTION B DRAMA

Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare

Choose questions according to the instructions on page 1.

Question 2 **[16]**

Read the extract from Act III, Scene 1 and answer all the questions that follow.

Caesar:
But I am constant as the Northern Star,
Of whose true-fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,
They are all fire, and every one doth shine;
But there's but one in all doth hold his place.

(i) Who first presents the petition concerning the banished Cimber? Name the banished man and state what is requested. [3]

(ii) How does the act of petitioning help the conspirators carry out their real purpose? What has Trebonius done to assist them? [3]

(iii) Identify the figure of speech in Caesar's comparison with the Northern Star. Explain the quality he claims for himself and what this claim reveals about his self-image. [3]

(iv) Who strikes Caesar first? What does Caesar say on seeing Brutus among his attackers, and what does this reaction suggest about his feelings towards Brutus? [3]

(v) Does Caesar appear admirable or dangerously inflexible in this scene? State your judgement and support it with two distinct details from the scene, explaining how each supports your view. [4]

SECTION B DRAMA

Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare

Choose questions according to the instructions on page 1.

Question 3 **[16]**

Read the extract from Act IV, Scene 3 and answer all the questions that follow.

BRUTUS:
There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves
Or lose our ventures.

(i) Where are Brutus and Cassius holding this discussion? What military course does Brutus propose, and whom do they expect to confront? [3]

(ii) What alternative strategy does Cassius recommend? Explain two advantages he believes it would give their army. [3]

(iii) Give two reasons Brutus offers for moving without delay. How does his concern about the people between their camp and Philippi strengthen his argument? [3]

(iv) Explain the extended metaphor of the tide and the voyage. What does taking the flood represent, and what danger is suggested by the shallows? [3]

(v) How does the outcome at Philippi qualify Brutus's confidence here? Refer to two events from Act V and explain how each challenges his expectation of success. [4]

SECTION C PROSE

Treasure Chest Short Stories

Choose questions according to the instructions on page 1.

Question 4 **[16]**

Read the extract from With the Photographer by Stephen Leacock and answer all the questions that follow.

> I waited an hour. I read the Ladies Companion for 1912, the Girls Magazine for 1902 and the Infants Journal for 1888. I began to see that I had done an unwarrantable thing in breaking in on the privacy of this man's scientific pursuits with a face like mine.

(i) Why has the narrator come to the studio? What do the long wait and the magazines suggest about the way the photographer treats his customers? [3]

(ii) Explain the irony in the narrator's feeling that he has interrupted the photographer's scientific pursuits. What does this reveal about the narrator's tone? [3]

(iii) Describe two instructions or criticisms the photographer gives while arranging the narrator for the photograph. What effect do these have on the narrator? [3]

(iv) At what unexpected moment is the photograph taken? How does the photographer describe the expression he has captured, and why is this description comic? [3]

(v) Discuss two changes made to the proof and explain why the narrator rejects the photographer's idea of improvement. Support your explanation with the narrator's purpose in wanting the photograph. [4]

SECTION C PROSE

Treasure Chest Short Stories

Choose questions according to the instructions on page 1.

Question 5 **[16]**

Read the extract from The Last Lesson by Alphonse Daudet and answer all the questions that follow.

> But he had the courage to hear every lesson to the very last. After the writing, we had a lesson in history, and then the babies chanted their ba, be, bi, bo, bu.

(i) Identify the narrator. What political order has made this lesson the last of its kind, and which two regions are affected? [3]

(ii) Describe two things that tempted the narrator to stay away from school that morning. Explain how the value he attaches to school changes after the announcement. [3]

(iii) What words are written on the new copies used for the writing lesson? Explain why their comparison with little flags is significant in the circumstances. [3]

(iv) How does M. Hamel's conduct during the final lesson differ from the severe teacher Franz had expected? Give two details and explain the feeling they reveal. [3]

(v) Describe two actions or gestures through which M. Hamel ends the lesson. Explain how these communicate both his personal grief and his loyalty to his country. [4]

SECTION D POETRY

Treasure Chest Poems

Choose questions according to the instructions on page 1.

Question 6 **[16]**

Read the extract from Haunted Houses by H. W. Longfellow and answer all the questions that follow.

We have no title-deeds to house or lands;
Owners and occupants of earlier dates
From graves forgotten stretch their dusty hands,
And hold in mortmain still their old estates.

(i) Who are the owners and occupants of earlier dates? Explain where they are said to come from and what their stretched hands suggest. [3]

(ii) Explain the legal image created by title-deeds and mortmain. How does it challenge the living occupants' belief that a house belongs entirely to them? [3]

(iii) Give two details from elsewhere in the poem that show the spirits are not threatening. How do these details shape the mood of the poem? [3]

(iv) Later in the poem, what bridge is compared with the moonlight stretching across the sea? Explain how this image links everyday life with the spirit-world. [3]

(v) How does the poem encourage humility about ownership and awareness of the past? Develop each idea with a separate reference to the poem. [4]

SECTION D POETRY

Treasure Chest Poems

Choose questions according to the instructions on page 1.

Question 7 **[16]**

Read the extract from The Glove and the Lions by Leigh Hunt and answer all the questions that follow.

Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws;
They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams, a wind went with their paws;
With wallowing might and stifled roar they rolled on one another;
Till all the pit with sand and mane was in a thunderous smother;
The bloody foam above the bars came whisking through the air;
Said Francis then, "Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than there."

(i) Where are the lions and their spectators situated? Explain the contrast between here and there in the king's remark. [3]

(ii) Select two visual details and one sound detail from this extract. Explain how, together, they make the contest seem dangerous. [3]

(iii) Identify and explain the comparison in gave blows like beams. What does it suggest about the strength of the animals? [3]

(iv) How does the lady turn this dangerous spectacle into a test of the Count? Explain what she expects to gain from the presence of the court. [3]

(v) Explain how the Count's treatment of the glove after his return changes the meaning of his brave action. How does the king's final judgement distinguish vanity from love? [4]

End of question paper