PAUL ACADEMY & ENGLISH MINES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE (ENGLISH PAPER - 1)
SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER 9
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 (Midnight Knock on Door):

- Mandatory opening: Must begin strictly with "The knock on the door came at two in the morning, sharp and persistent, shattering the stillness of the house."

- Plotline: Atmospheric nighttime tension, unexpected visitor (distressed neighbor, stranded traveler, emergency telegram), unraveling suspense.

- Climax & Resolution: Solving an urgent crisis through collective family courage and presence of mind.

(ii) Descriptive Composition (Ancient Bazaar Bookshop):

- Sensory richness: Tactile feel of brittle parchment, scent of leather bindings and aged glue, golden dust dancing in sunshafts.

- Visual elements: Stacks of calfskin atlases, globes, narrow winding alleys of mahogany bookcases reaching high ceilings.

- Atmosphere: Reverent silence, timeless scholarly tranquility, eccentric antiquarian curator sharing historical curiosities.

(iii) Argumentative Composition (Failure as a Teacher):

- Clear stance: Definitive stance maintained throughout.

- For (Failure teaches more): Exposes cognitive blind spots, builds psychological resilience, dispels hubris, forces root-cause analysis.

- Against (Success reinforces): Builds positive momentum, validates effective strategies, fosters confidence and ambition.

(iv) Reflective Composition (The Power of Silence and Attentive Listening):

- Setting & Dilemma: A heated interpersonal dispute where an impulsive retort was about to be spoken.

- Insight: Choosing active, empathetic listening allowed the other person to vent and revealed the underlying pain.

- Enduring reflection: Silence is not weakness; it is emotional mastery that de-escalates conflict and fosters harmony.

(v) Picture-Based Composition (Grandmother Teaching Girl on Courtyard Slate):

- Mandatory connection: Clear link to the embedded photograph (elderly grandmother with silver hair guiding schoolgirl writing with chalk on courtyard wall blackboard).

- Interpretative approaches:

  * Narrative: A grandmother who missed formal schooling in her youth eagerly learning and revising lessons alongside her granddaughter.

  * Descriptive: The warm afternoon sunlight on the earthen courtyard, the scratching of chalk, the affectionate intergenerational bond.

  * Reflective: The enduring power of foundational literacy, dignity of lifelong education, and familial love.

QUESTION 2: LETTER WRITING [10 MARKS]

[Teacher-Developed Assessment Criteria & Layout Standards]:
- Format (Address, Date, Salutation, Subscription): 3 Marks
- Content & Development of Points: 4 Marks
- Expression & Mechanical Accuracy: 3 Marks

Total: 10 Marks. Length: ~120 to 150 words.

2(i) Model Informal Letter (Volunteering at Elder Care Home):

32, Park View Apartments
Mallital, Nainital - 263001
18th May 2027

Dearest Tanmay,

I hope you are having an enjoyable mid-term break. I am writing to share an exceptionally moving experience that has deeply touched my heart over the past fortnight.

Instead of spending my vacation glued to digital screens, I decided to volunteer at the Sandhya Elderly Care Home in Tallital. Initially, I felt awkward, but reading newspapers aloud, playing carrom, and simply listening to their nostalgic reminiscences of youth brought immense warmth to the residents. An octogenarian retired schoolmaster, Mr. Joshi, shared fascinating historical anecdotes about our town that no textbook could ever capture.

This experience taught me that what elderly citizens crave most is not charity, but attentive companionship and human dignity. It has given me a renewed sense of gratitude and empathy. I strongly encourage you to volunteer with me for a couple of afternoons next term; it will enrich your perspective profoundly.

Write back soon and let me know your thoughts.

Yours affectionately,
Divyansh

2(ii) Model Formal Letter (Misdirection of Registered Educational Parcels):

Student Citizens' Forum
Post Box 19, Sector 4, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad - 201014
18th May 2027

The Postmaster General
Western Postal Circle, Head Post Office, Ghaziabad - 201001

Respected Sir/Madam,

Subject: Urgent complaint regarding chronic misdirection and delays of registered educational parcels

I write on behalf of secondary school candidates residing in Sector 4, Indirapuram, to register an urgent complaint against the persistent mismanagement and delayed delivery of registered postal articles.

Over the past three weeks, more than twenty registered consignments containing crucial national entrance examination admit cards, academic mark-sheets, and Olympiad dossiers have either been misdirected to distant sub-post offices or delivered after weeks of delay. In several instances, delivery status alerts falsely reported 'Address Incomplete' despite complete postal pin-codes.

This administrative negligence has caused severe distress and panic among students who risk missing mandatory reporting deadlines for their admissions. Repeated oral inquiries at the local sub-post office have yielded only evasive responses.

I earnestly request your immediate personal intervention to order an inquiry into the sorting protocols of the Indirapuram delivery hub and ensure that educational mail is tagged for priority same-day dispatch.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,
Meenakshi Sundaram (Convenor, Student Citizens' Forum)

QUESTION 3: NOTICE AND LINKED EMAIL [10 MARKS]

[Teacher-Developed Assessment Criteria & Layout Standards]:
- Notice: Headline (1), Nature of Event (1), Date (1/2), Timings (1/2), Venue (1), Target Audience & Registration (1) = 5 Marks.
- Email: Addressee (1/2), Subject (1/2), Salutation (1/2), Event Details (1), Specific Invitation/Request (1), Courteous Closing & Signature (1/2), Layout/Expression (1) = 5 Marks.

Total: 10 Marks.

3(i) Model Notice:

Mind Over Matter
Mental Health and Well-being Workshop

Date: Friday, 20th August 2027
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Venue: School Multipurpose Hall, Cambridge Court High School

Students of Classes 9 and 10 are invited to attend an interactive workshop on mental health, examination stress management, and emotional resilience titled 'Mind Over Matter'. The workshop will feature guided mindfulness sessions, cognitive reframing techniques, and confidential Q&A forums. Interested students must register their names with Mrs. Shalini Nair (Student Counselor, Room 11) by Tuesday, 10th August 2027.

Pranit Deshmukh
President, Student Wellness Committee
Cambridge Court High School

3(ii) Model Linked Email:

To: dr.menon.wellness@adolescentcare.org

Subject: Invitation to Facilitate 'Mind Over Matter' Workshop on Adolescent Well-being and Stress Management

Respected Dr. Menon,

The Student Wellness Committee of Cambridge Court High School is pleased to organise 'Mind Over Matter', our Annual Mental Health and Well-being Workshop, on Friday, 20th August 2027, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the School Multipurpose Hall.

Around two hundred students of Classes 9 and 10 will attend. Given your pioneering expertise in adolescent developmental psychology and examination anxiety management, we would be deeply honoured if you would grace the session as our keynote facilitator, guide our students through interactive stress-relief exercises, and address an open counseling forum.

The school management will gladly arrange chauffeured transit to and from your clinic at your convenience. We earnestly look forward to your gracious confirmation by Tuesday, 10th August 2027.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,
Pranit Deshmukh
President, Student Wellness Committee
Cambridge Court High School
Contact: wellness@cambridgeschool.edu.in

QUESTION 4: COMPREHENSION [20 MARKS]

(i) Vocabulary [2 Marks]:

1. tranquility -> (a) state of peaceful calm and quiet [1 Mark]
2. self-reliance -> (b) ability to rely on one's own resources [1 Mark]

(ii) Antonym [1 Mark]:

Opposite of 'depleted' -> (b) restored [1 Mark]

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

(a) Fifty years ago, the island council unanimously enacted an absolute, permanent ban on all internal combustion motor vehicles to curb smog and gridlock. [2 Marks]

(b) Doctors used pedal-bicycles with medical panniers for house calls, while harbor commerce relied on horse-drawn drays and pack donkeys. [2 Marks]

(c) The ban eliminated vehicular roar, allowing residents to converse effortlessly across balconies and restoring the songs of rare migratory warblers. [2 Marks]

(d) Residents composted domestic organic waste for terraced groves, harvested rainwater in cisterns, and operated a shared solar and micro-wind energy cooperative. [2 Marks]

(e) The island reveals that true societal progress is measured not by speed or mechanization, but by living in harmony and peace with nature. [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. Enacted complete ban on internal combustion motor vehicles.
2. Substituted cars with bicycles, pack donkeys, and horse-drawn drays.
3. Eliminated traffic noise, restoring peaceful conversations and warbler birdsong.
4. Composted waste for organic orchards and harvested rainwater.
5. Shared cooperative solar and micro-wind renewable electricity.
6. Fostered communal trust, pediatric safety, and enhanced physical longevity.

[Teacher-Developed Guidance: Indicative Rough Draft]

By banning motor vehicles, the island established peaceful tranquility, relying entirely upon bicycles and horses. Eliminating traffic fumes and deafening combustion noise revived native birdlife and lush vegetation. Cooperatively harvesting organic olive groves and utilizing solar microgrids, residents created an enduring model of communal self-reliance, ecological conservation, and harmonious living.

Final Fair Draft Grid (Exactly 50 Words):

By	banning	motor	vehicles,	the
island	established	peaceful	tranquility,	relying
entirely	upon	bicycles	and	horses.
Eliminating	traffic	fumes	and	deafening
combustion	noise	revived	native	birdlife
and	lush	vegetation.	Cooperatively	harvesting
organic	olive	groves	and	utilizing
solar	microgrids,	residents	created	an
enduring	model	of	communal	self-reliance,
ecological	conservation,	and	harmonious	living.

QUESTION 5: FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR [20 MARKS]

5(i) Cloze Passage (Discovery of the Titanic by Robert Ballard) [4 Marks]:

[CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, p. 18: 1/2 mark for each correct answer]

Example: (0) descended

1. swept
2. flickered
3. revealing
4. had belonged / belonged
5. showed
6. standing
7. opposed
8. be treated / was treated

5(ii) Prepositions [4 Marks]:

[CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, p. 18: 1/2 mark for each correct preposition]

(a) on [act on = take action according to information]

(b) out [bear out = confirm or substantiate a claim]

(c) across [come across = find or meet by chance]

(d) upon [dawn upon = become suddenly apparent to]

(e) round [get round = overcome or circumvent a difficulty]

(f) up [keep up = continue or maintain a pace]

(g) in [set in = begin and likely to continue (weather/season)]

(h) up [turn up = arrive or appear unexpectedly]

5(iii) Sentence Synthesis [4 Marks]:
[CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, pp. 18-19: 1 mark for each completely correct sentence]

1. The lightning struck the tall pine tree. It burst into roaring flames.
Correct Option: (b) No sooner did the lightning strike the tall pine tree than it burst into roaring flames.
[Analysis: Uses standard correlative inversion 'No sooner did... than' with base verb 'strike'. Option (a) incorrectly pairs 'No sooner' with 'when'; option (c) lacks required auxiliary inversion; option (d) incorrectly uses past tense 'struck' after auxiliary 'did'.]

2. The observatory installed a giant reflecting telescope. It can capture images of distant star clusters.
Correct Option: (a) The observatory installed a giant reflecting telescope which can capture images of distant star clusters.
[Analysis: Accurately connects clauses with relative pronoun 'which' referring to inanimate instrument. Option (b) incorrectly uses 'who' for a telescope; option (c) uses forbidden coordinator 'so'; option (d) produces clumsy passive with redundant pronoun 'it'.]

3. The team faced severe budget cuts and logistical hurdles. They successfully launched the environmental satellite.
Correct Option: (c) In spite of severe budget cuts and logistical hurdles, the team successfully launched the environmental satellite.
[Analysis: Accurately uses prepositional phrase of concession 'In spite of' without coordinators. Option (a) introduces forbidden coordinator 'but'; option (b) introduces ungrammatical form 'Despite of'; option (d) uses forbidden coordinator 'so'.]

4. You may borrow these rare historical reference books. You must promise to return them undamaged by Friday.
Correct Option: (d) You may borrow these rare historical reference books as long as you promise to return them undamaged by Friday.
[Analysis: Uses conditional conjunction 'as long as' expressing stipulation. Option (a) uses forbidden coordinator 'so'; option (b) uses forbidden coordinator 'but'; option (c) introduces faulty participle syntax.]

5(iv) Sentence Transformations [8 Marks]:
[CISCE 2027 Specimen MS, pp. 19-20: 1 mark for each completely correct sentence]

1. No sooner had the harbor bell chimed than the passenger ferry departed from the pier. (Begin: Hardly had...)
Correct Option: (a) Hardly had the harbor bell chimed when the passenger ferry departed from the pier.
[Analysis: Standard negative adverbial inversion: 'Hardly had' placed sentence-initially, followed by subject, past participle, and correlative 'when'. Option (b) incorrectly uses 'than'; option (c) omits subject-auxiliary inversion; option (d) incorrectly pairs 'did' with past tense 'chimed'.]

2. No other desert on Earth is as vast as the Sahara. (Begin: The Sahara is vaster...)
Correct Option: (d) The Sahara is vaster than any other desert on Earth.
[Analysis: Accurately transforms positive degree to comparative degree using 'vaster than any other'. Option (a) incorrectly pairs comparative with 'as'; option (b) uses plural omission 'all desert'; option (c) incorrectly uses preposition 'from'.]

3. The chemistry teacher said to the students, "Never pour water into concentrated sulphuric acid." (Begin: The chemistry teacher warned...)
Correct Option: (c) The chemistry teacher warned the students never to pour water into concentrated sulphuric acid.
[Analysis: Converts negative imperative warning into indirect speech using infinitive with 'never to pour'. Option (a) creates wordy clause with modal; option (b) introduces incorrect double negative 'not to never'; option (d) has ungrammatical past participle 'to never poured'.]

4. The municipal council ought to maintain the historical public fountains. (Begin: The historical public fountains...)
Correct Option: (b) The historical public fountains ought to be maintained by the municipal council.
[Analysis: Accurately transforms modal auxiliary 'ought to' into passive voice ('ought to be maintained'). Option (a) omits auxiliary 'be'; option (c) shifts tense to past perfect modal; option (d) introduces ungrammatical participle 'being'.]

5(iv) Sentence Transformations (Continued) [Items 5 to 8]:

5. The sea breeze was so fierce that the young kitesurfer could not control the sail. (Use: too... to)

Correct Option: (a) The sea breeze was too fierce for the young kitesurfer to control the sail.

[Analysis: Converts 'so... that could not' to 'too... to' using prepositional phrase 'for the young kitesurfer'. Option (b) produces a mixed contradictory structure 'too... that'; option (c) misplaces the prepositional phrase; option (d) introduces ungrammatical double adverb 'too control'.]

6. A true statesman seldom compromises on national welfare for petty partisan gains. (Begin: Seldom does...)

Correct Option: (c) Seldom does a true statesman compromise on national welfare for petty partisan gains.

[Analysis: Standard negative adverbial inversion: 'Seldom does' placed at sentence head, requiring bare base verb 'compromise'. Option (a) incorrectly retains third-person 's' on 'compromises'; option (b) omits subject-auxiliary inversion; option (d) shifts present tense to past tense 'did'.]

7. If the city administration does not repair the leaky pipelines, severe water rationing will follow. (Begin: Unless...)

Correct Option: (b) Unless the city administration repairs the leaky pipelines, severe water rationing will follow.

[Analysis: Replaces 'If... does not' with 'Unless', changing negative verb to affirmative third-person singular present 'repairs' without altering the principal clause. Option (a) contains incorrect double negative 'Unless... does not'; option (c) alters conditional tense to past subjunctive; option (d) incorrectly inserts future modal 'will' inside conditional clause.]

8. Everyone present at the auditorium was deeply moved by the musician's final recital. (Begin: There was no one...)

Correct Option: (d) There was no one present at the auditorium who was not deeply moved by the musician's final recital.

[Analysis: Accurately transforms affirmative sentence into negative using double negation ('no one... who was not'). Option (a) reverses the meaning by omitting the negative relative clause; option (b) uses awkward coordinator 'but'; option (c) contains convoluted triple negation.]