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ISC YEAR 2013
ENGLISH
PAPER 1 (LANGUAGE)

- **SOLUTION OF 2013**
- **COMMENTS OF COUNCIL EXAMINERS**
- **SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

Dedicated to all my lovely students. May God help you always.

This small booklet contains solution of 2013 ISC English Paper 1 (Language). The comments from the council examiners under solution of every question makes this a very handy guide for students to understand what the council expects as answer from the students.

I hope that the students will find this to be useful.

Md. Zeeshan Akhtar

23rd February, 2015

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ENGLISH PAPER 1 (LANGUAGE)

Question 1

Write a composition (in approximately 450-500 words) on any **one** of the following subjects: **[30]**

(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.)

(a) *One should judge a man not by what he has, but by what he is*. Express your views on this statement.

(b) Write a description of the most interesting person you have ever met.

(c) *It is right for a person to interfere in the affairs of another*. Write *for* or *against* this statement.

(d) Memories.

(e) Relate how travel has been of educational value to you.

(f) Write an original story with the following ending:

"…..It was exactly as he had said it would be."

Comments of Examiners

(a) By and large this question was attempted well. However, some candidates got confused between 'what he has' and 'what he is'. The difference between material possessions (what he has) and character (what he is) was largely misconstrued. A large number of candidates believed that being 'poor' naturally indicated that the person was of high moral character and that if a person had many possessions he could never be good.

(b) A number of candidates wrote about whom they 'wished to meet' rather than 'who they met'. Some candidates even wrote imaginary essays on meeting Jesus Christ or Rabindranath Tagore. They failed to realize that the word 'met' was the key word. A few described more than one interesting person without specifying WHY they found them interesting.

(c) Very few candidates attempted this topic. Most candidates who attempted this failed to take a clear stand. Many also got confused by the words 'interfere' and 'affairs'. Some took them to mean 'a love affair' or even parents being too 'interfering' in their children's affairs.

(d) This was by far the most popular topic and most candidates attempted it well, barring, normal linguistic errors. There was a variety of interesting essays.

(e) Most candidates who attempted this essay lost marks because they had not read the question properly. They wrote only about travel but did not touch upon its educational value. What they wrote was general and not personal.

Suggestions for teachers

- Instruct students to read the question properly, at least two or three times.
- Teach students to organise and sequence their thoughts and ideas.
- Write at least one composition a week for practice, on each kind of topic, in turn.
- Teachers should teach students how to build a plot with a beginning, a middle, and a conclusion.
- Only those students with a creative bent of mind should be encouraged to attempt the short story topic.
- Students should plan their essay logically before starting to write.

(f) A large number of 'original short stories' were in fact either completely lifted from school texts or plagiarized accounts of films. Some did not end with the given statement. Many candidates were unaware of the requirements of a short story, viz. plot, characterization, dialogue, et al.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 1.

Marks were deducted for gross errors like – errors of agreement and number, serious tense errors, wrong verb form, elementary errors of sentence construction, misuse of vocabulary, errors in spellings, punctuation or lack of it, use of incorrect or irrelevant idioms, misuse of pronouns, articles and prepositions.

(a) This was a reflective topic. Candidates were required to write in some detail why they think material possessions are not important in judging the quality of a man's character. They could agree or disagree with the statement or even sit on the fence.

(b) This was a descriptive topic. Candidates were required to describe a person that they found the most interesting and why. The reason for this had to be included in the composition. Aspects such as general nature, characteristics and incidents needed to be highlighted.

(c) This was a debatable topic. Candidates had to take a definite stand and express it clearly. The stand had to be supported by effective argumentation.

(d) This was a one-word topic. The content had a wider range/scope. All relevant interpretations/approaches were accepted.

(e) This topic called for a true account of personal experiences. Candidates needed to write how travel has helped them learn and become more rounded personalities and how it has added to the education acquired in school by conventional means.

(f) The story had to be original and not plagiarised or lifted partly or fully from any source. It needed to have necessary elements such as plot and characterisation. It was not to be a mere narration of events. Originality of thought and a creative bent of mind were given credit.

Question 2

Write a review of a book you have recently read (in approximately 300 words) for your school magazine. Make use of the given points. **[20]**

Name of the book – author – publisher – readership – cover and illustrations – plot – characters – insight into some interesting incidents – message if any – appeal the book holds for you.

Comments of Examiners

Some students were unable to comprehend terms such as 'readership', 'cover and illustrations' and 'appeal'. The word limit was completely ignored by some candidates. Some reviews were only around 100 words long and some were even longer than the compositions.

Suggestions for teachers

- Give students plenty of practice on writing book reviews, film reviews, newspaper reports, feature articles, FIRs and testimonials.
- Instruct students to strictly adhere to the word limit.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 2.

This was an exercise in amplification. If points were missing marks were deducted. There had to be effective linking of points. Candidates could use the points in any order they chose; however, all points had to be used. If there was no development of points, marks were deducted.

Question 3

Answer sections **(a), (b)** and **(c).**

(a) In each of the following items, sentence **A** is complete, while sentence **B** is not. Complete sentence **B**, making it as similar as possible to sentence **A**. Write sentence **B** in each case. **[10]**

Example:

(0) (A) Though it was a cloudy day, the temperature was 45°C.

(B) Despite……..……

Answer: (0) Despite it being a cloudy day, the temperature was 45°C.

(1) (A) They are demolishing the entire block of flats.

(B) The entire……

(2) (A) Anil thought the examination would be held later.

(B) Anil was..……..

(3) (A) I do not like this food as much as you do.

(B) You …..……

(4) (A) Raju failed in the examination, yet he was not upset.

(B) In spite of ……..

(5) (A) "Don't lend Ramesh any money," I said to Rita.

(B) I advised……..…….

(6) (A) As soon as the arrangements were made to release extra water from the reservoirs, the rain came in a downpour.

(B) No sooner……..

(7) (A) He had to sign or be arrested.

(B) If he ……

(8) (A) Meena complained of not being able to see the performance from the back row.

(B) Meena complained that……..……..…….

(9) (A) Many ambitious people see politics as a stepping stone to personal power.

(B) Politics……

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(10) (A) Rahul has wasted his wealth and ruined his health by his drinking habit.

(B) Rahul has not only……...

(b) Fill in each blank with a suitable word. (Do not write the sentence.) **[5]**

(1) Let us talk _____ them tomorrow about their homework.

(2) The Principal gave us a talk _____ bullying.

(3) Manoj was not at home when his grandfather passed _____.

(4) When we visited Dalhousie, we passed _____ the house in which we had lived twenty years ago.

(5) This novel has been written _____ Jeffrey Archer.

(6) In the Middle Ages, books were written _____ a variety of subjects.

(7) He had promised her that he would come to the party but he didn't turn _____.

(8) I was forced to turn _____ Maya's invitation as I was going to be out of town the following week.

(9) Rashi has applied _____ a scholarship in an American university.

(10) Arjun applied _____ the university for higher studies but was denied admission.

(c) Fill in the blanks in the passage given below with the appropriate form of the verb given in brackets. Do not write the passage, but write the verbs in the correct order. **[5]**

Breathing is good, on this we _____ (1) (can) agree. That is why sleep apnoea, a condition in which sufferers repeatedly _____(2) (stop) breathing and _____(3) (awake) during the night, _____(4) (be) so distressing and dangerous. Doctors _____ (5) (have) long known that the majority of people with sleep apnoea also _____(6) (have) gas and reflux, so they often _____(7) (treat) the reflux with heartburn medication. To prove the connection between reflux and sleep apnoea, scientists at an army hospital _____ (8) (observe) apnoea patients as they_____(9) (sleep). They _____(10) (find) that reflux could, in fact, be the cause of many night-time awakenings.

Comments of Examiners

This question was poorly attempted by most candidates. Common errors seen were:

- Careless mistakes (words wrongly spelt sentences wrongly copied);
- Errors with tense;
- Errors in Subject – Verb agreement;
- Errors in all aspects of usage and conversion;
- Linguistic errors in restructuring;
- 'No sooner than' sentences mostly incorrect;
- Confusion in the usage of prepositions;
- Confusion between Past and Present Tenses;
- Many candidates wrote two answers instead of one in Sections (b) and (c) which is not accepted.

Suggestions for teachers

– Give students ample practice in the following:
  - Active to Passive and vice versa
  - Direct to Indirect and vice versa
  - Degree
  - Clauses and conjunctions
  - Prepositions and Phrasal verbs
  - Verbs and Tenses
  - Subject – Verb agreement

– Instruct students not to write two answers.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 3.

(a) In this question, the opening word of each answer (part B) had been given in the Question Paper. No other beginning was acceptable.

(1) (B) The entire block of flats is being demolished (by them).

(2) (B) Anil was under the impression / of the opinion that the examination would be held later.

(3) (B) You like this food more than I do.

(4) (B) In spite of failing in the examination, Raju was not upset.

In spite of having failed the examination, Raju was not upset.

In spite of his failure in the examination, Raju was not upset.

In spite of the fact that Raju failed in the examination, he was not upset.

(5) (B) I advised Rita not to lend Ramesh any money.

I advised Rita not to lend any money to Ramesh.

(6) (B) No sooner were the arrangements made to release extra water from the reservoirs than the rain came in a downpour.

(7) (B) If he had not signed, he would have been arrested.

(8) (B) Meena complained that she was not able to see the performance from the back row.

Meena complained that she was unable to see the performance from the back row.

Meena complained that she wasn't able to see the performance from the back row.

Meena complained that she couldn't see the performance from the back row.

(9) (B) Politics is seen by many ambitious people as a stepping stone to personal power.

Politics is seen as a stepping stone to personal power by many ambitious people.

(10) (B) Rahul has <u>not only</u> wasted his wealth <u>but also</u> ruined his health by his drinking habit.

(b) The candidates were advised not to copy the sentences. This was done with a view to save their time.

(1) to

(2) on

(3) away

(4) by

(5) by

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(6) on
(7) up
(8) down
(9) for
(10) to

(c) For every appropriate verb form marks were given. The candidates were advised not to copy the sentence.

(1) can
(2) stop
(3) awaken
(4) is
(5) have
(6) have
(7) treat
(8) observed
(9) slept / were sleeping
(10) found

Question 4

Read the passage given below and answer the questions (a), (b) and (c) that follow:

BOYHOOD AND BALANCE

(1) My eldest boy had just turned nine. One day not long after, he was on his way to the pool on his bike when he slammed on his brakes in front of me and did a really neat skid. He looked back and gave me his cheesy smile of satisfaction.

(2) Normally that little skid would have provoked a stern warning not to "wear out your tyres." I was always taught to take care of my things and keep them in good shape. I've come to learn, though, that there is a difference between the natural course of wearing things out and trying to make things last at any price. The difference became acute to me one bright sunny day four years ago.

(3) My then five-year-old boy had spent a normal summer afternoon playing in the park and swimming at the neighbourhood pool. At his bath time that night, I noticed he had small red spots all over his body. Some kind of measles, I thought, and called my wife to take a look. By pure chance, the next day he had an appointment with his paediatrician.

(4) Several tests (and long hours) later, the doctors figured my son had an illness called ITP (idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura), which causes your spleen to kill off your body's own blood-clotting platelets. If it got worse, he could bleed to death internally. Only time would tell whether it would get better on its own. You can imagine the fear that crept into our hearts.

(5) Three days into his stay at the hospital, I went to pick out a present for him. I reached for a yellow toy convertible (he loves cars). My hand hesitated. I knew that it wouldn't last long with a five-year-old boy. Then I thought to myself: So what if the doors break off and the wheels fall off. If those things happen, it will mean he is alive and well. I bought it in the hope that he would be well enough to play with it. He was thrilled to receive it, and it helped him pass the week he spent at the hospital.

(6) I saw the car the other day, sitting on a shelf in his room. The wheels have fallen off, the doors are broken and all of the chrome has worn off. I see it and I smile to myself. My boy has been perfectly well these past four years, and is full of vitality. His mysterious illness came and went.

(7) And I learned that things are things and can be replaced if necessary. If any one of my three boys happens to break something or wear it out playing with it, instead of chastising him for carelessness, I now prefer to celebrate his boyhood. The empty shell of what once was a nice car, the balding tyre of his new bike, the lost pieces of his Monopoly game, all bear witness to the fact that there lives a healthy, happy boy.

(8) Prudence and preservation have their place, as do experimentation and curiosity. In the end, it is my relationships with my sons and my wife that have real lasting power. I choose to celebrate our lives and live with the losses.

(9) Besides, I used to skid my tyres the same way—just not in front of my dad.

Elliot Van Egmond – *The Globe and Mail* *(Adapted)*

(a) (i) Given below are four words and phrases. Find the words which have a similar meaning in the passage: **[4]**

(1) strict

(2) energy and vigour

(3) scolding

(4) strong desire to know

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(ii) For each of the words given below, write a sentence of at least ten words using the same word **unchanged in form, but with a different meaning** from that which it carries in the passage: **[4]**

(1) shape (*line 7)*

(2) park *(line 12)*

(3) present *(line 22)*

(4) well *(line 27)*

(b) Answer the following questions in your own words as briefly as possible:

(i) Why is the disease ITP so serious? **[2]**

(ii) What does the yellow car look like at present? **[2]**

(iii) What did the writer learn from his experience? **[3]**

(iv) What is most important to the writer now? **[3]**

(c) Summarize the given passage in not more than 100 words. Failure to keep within the word limit will be penalised. You will be required to:

(i) List your ideas clearly in point form. **[6]**

(ii) In about 100 words, write your points in the form of a connected passage. **[6]**

Comments of Examiners

(a) (i) Many candidates wrote phrases in the vocabulary exercise.

(ii) A number of candidates made sentences using the words given in the same meaning as used in the passage.

(b) Most candidates tended to lift answers directly from the passage even though they had been specifically instructed to write in their own words.

(c) (i) Many candidates copied entire paragraphs from the passage as points.

(ii) A large number of candidates did not write the summary in the form of a connected passage, nor did they use a grid.

Suggestions for teachers

- In Q. 4 (a) (i), students must be told to write ONE word only and not a phrase.
- Practice in sentence making with homonyms is an absolute MUST.
- In Q.4 (a) (ii), emphasis must be laid on not changing the form of the given word.
- Give practice in at least ONE unseen comprehension passage per fortnight.
- Stress upon writing answers in one's own words.
- Stress upon adhering to the word limit.
- Give practice to students of writing the summary in grid form. Connected passage must be sequential in nature.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 4.

(a) (i) Candidates were instructed to find words, from the passage which had a similar meaning to those given in the passage.

(1) strict - stern

(2) energy and vigour - vitality

(3) scolding - chastising

(4) strong desire to know - curiosity

(ii) The candidates were instructed to use the following words in sentences of their own but with a different meaning from that used in the passage. If the form of the word was changed, marks were deducted.

(1) shape – (in the passage : condition - noun) – to make; physical shape

(2) park – (in the passage : place to play – noun) – to park a car

(3) present – (in the passage : a gift – noun) – to gift; the present tense; to be somewhere at a given time.

(4) well – (in the passage: alright – adjective) – well of water; oil well

(b) Candidates were required to answer the questions as briefly as possible and in their own words. Marks were deducted for excessive length, rambling and gross error/errors. Candidates were to draw their material only from the passage. The candidate's examples and illustrations were not accepted.

(i) It is serious because it causes the spleen to kill the body's blood clotting platelets. It may even cause death by internal bleeding.

(ii) It is lying on the boy's shelf at present. The wheels have fallen off, the doors are broken and the chrome has worn off.

(iii) The writer learned that material things are things and can be replaced. However, one should celebrate things like life, health and boyhood.

(iv) What are most important to the writer are his relationships with his wife and his sons. He, therefore, chooses to celebrate their lives and live with the losses.

(c) Summary: Special Instructions:

(i) A minimum of six points were required. Marks were given for content.

(ii) Marks were awarded for expression and the candidate's ability to express the points clearly in complete sentences. Marks were deducted for writing in short phrases and for linguistic errors.

Possible points:

- Once, the author's five year old son developed a life threatening disease.
- The disease causes the spleen to kill the body's own blood clotting platelets.

- The disease could cause heavy internal bleeding and death.
- While his son was in hospital, he bought a car as a gift for him.
- He realised that if the car broke, it meant that the boy was well.
- He sees the broken car now and realises that material things are not important.
- What is important is his relationship with his wife and sons.
- He celebrates their lives and accepts any losses that come his way.

(any six)

GENERAL COMMENTS:

(a) Topics found difficult by candidates in the Question Paper:

Question 1:

- Topic (a) – confusion between 'what he has' and 'what he is'
- Topic (b) – some confusion on the word 'met'
- Topic (c) – misunderstanding of the words 'interference' and 'affairs', and not being able to take a stand on the topic.
- Topic (f) – lack of knowledge of the requirements of an original short story, and not ending with the given words.

Question 2:

- Writing a prepared book review without proper amplification of the given points in the question.

Question 3:

- (a) – many errors in Transformation of sentences.
- (b) – confusion in Prepositions and Phrasal Verbs, writing two answers instead of one.
- (c) – some confusion between Past and Present Tenses, writing two answers instead of one.

Question 4:

- (a) (i) – writing phrases instead of single words.
- (a) (ii) – changing the form of the given word or using the word with the same meaning as used in the passage.
- (c) (i) – writing entire paragraphs as points.
- (c) (ii) – not using a grid, writing irrelevant points, and not adhering to the word limit.

(b) Concepts in which candidates got confused:

– Concept of an argumentative essay

– Concept of writing a short story

– Words such as ‘readership’, ‘cover and illustrations’ and ‘appeal’ in the Book Review
– Transformation of sentences with conditional clauses
– Making sentences using homonyms
– Summary:
  - Concept of making a list
  - Concept of making a grid
  - Concept of writing a sequential summary
  - Adhering to the word limit

(c) Suggestions for students:

Before the examination:

- Read newspapers and works other than text books.
- Expose yourselves to fiction and print and electronic media
- Increase your level of awareness and general knowledge.
- Practice writing unseen passages, essays, reviews and articles throughout the year.
- Develop linguistic skills and the habit of speaking and thinking in English.

During the examination:

- Use the reading time judiciously, identifying key words and understanding what is required in the question.
- Read the essay topics in detail, choosing carefully the topic best suited to your understanding and writing ability.
- Manage your time as well as you can.
- Revise your paper after completion to avoid any careless mistakes.