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ISC YEAR 2014
ENGLISH
PAPER 1 (LANGUAGE)

- **SOLUTION OF 2014**
- **COMMENTS OF COUNCIL EXAMINERS**
- **SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

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

This small booklet contains solution of 2014 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) *The small things that we own are the most precious to us.* Give your views on the statement.

(b) Write about an incident in your life when you experienced the pain of defeat. It had seemed to you then that life would come to an end. What lessons did you learn from the experience and how did you move ahead after that incident?

(c) Describe the career you have decided to pursue and the factors that have influenced you to make that decision.

(d) *Capital punishment should be abolished.* Argue *for* or *against* the proposition.

(e) Luck.

(f) Write an original story beginning with the following words:

"The silence of the evening was broken when I heard my sister's shrill cry ….."

Comments of Examiners

(a) The word 'small' was interpreted literally, for things small in size, like buttons, switches, remote control devices and so on by some candidates. A number of candidates interpreted 'small' for things which are taken for granted – even parents and friends were included! In a few cases, 'Money' was also regarded as a 'small' thing, being so in size as well as intrinsic value. Several candidates wrote about only one thing, not 'things'.

(b) This composition was attempted by a large number of candidates. It had four parts: (i) the incident, (ii) the pain of defeat, (iii) lessons learnt, and (iv) moving ahead.

Suggestions for teachers

- Encourage students to share personal experiences or emotional attachments.
- Give more written practice of recounting first-hand experiences of success and failure
- Discuss careers, professions, courses available after Class XII. Teach students the need to focus on a goal or an aim in life.
- Discuss as many debateable topics as possible, especially on current issues. Teach students to be firm in their views and take a definite stand

Most candidates described the incident in great detail but skimmed over the rest, especially how they moved ahead. Also, a few candidates talked of incidents such as participating in the Olympics, etc. so the perspective of an 18-year-old was missed. Sometimes, the narrated incident concerned others, with the candidate being an observer.

- Common concepts such as 'Charity' or 'Love' should be discussed.
- Discuss the essential features of a short story.

(c) A large number of candidates were not able to decide on one career and shifted from one to the other. Many interpreted 'career' as the subjects or stream chosen in Class XI. Most candidates gave a general explanation of career options, seeming to lack information or awareness of the specific requirements of each option.

(d) Most of the candidates were thoroughly confused between 'capital' and 'corporal' punishment. In some cases 'Capital' was mistaken as 'money', so candidates wrote about monetary penalties such as fines. Some candidates took 'capital' punishment and life imprisonment to be one and the same thing. Many candidates discussed both pros and cons instead of taking a stand.

(e) This topic was quite satisfactorily handled by most candidates, but some candidates repeated a few points or did not give concrete or real-life examples or substantiate their views.

(f) Many candidates did not begin the story with the given words. In some cases, even if the story began with the given words, they had no link with the story. Most stories were only narratives and lacked all features of a short story – plot, characters, dialogue, et al. Many stories were only reproductions of films, serials or works of known writers.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 1.

The quality of language employed, the range and appropriateness of vocabulary and sentence structure, syntax, the correctness of grammatical constructions, punctuation and spelling decided the overall grade of the essay.

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. The candidates were required to write in some detail why they think small things are precious to them, or vice versa. They could agree or disagree with the topic or even give their general views.

(b) This was a narrative topic. It called for a true account of a <u>personal experience</u>. Candidates needed to write about any incident during their lives when they experienced the <u>pain of defeat</u>. They had to write <u>what lessons they learnt</u> from the incident and <u>how they moved ahead after</u> it.

(c) This was a descriptive topic. The candidate was required to describe the career that he/she had chosen and why. Who / what / had influenced this choice?

(d) This was an argumentative topic. Candidates had to take a definite stand and express it clearly. The stand had to be supported by effective argumentation. Candidates could NOT sit on the fence. Candidate were not penalized for holding a view different from that of the examiner.

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

(f) The story had to be original and not plagiarised or lifted partly or wholly 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

You have recently visited a tourist destination. Write a description of it for a travel magazine in about 300 words using the points given below: **[20]**

Name of the place – location – means of travelling to the destination – climate – best season to visit – picturesque landscape – lodging and food – recreational facilities – places of interest in the area – local language / dress – handicrafts / products – overall experience.

Comments of Examiners

A number of candidates did not know the difference between a report and a narration. Words such as 'landscape' and 'recreational' were misunderstood, with 'recreation' being used as 're-creation' of broken-down, old and ruined buildings. Very weak geographical knowledge was displayed by many candidates, e.g. Agra was said to be next to Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir was imagined to be in the North-eastern part of the country.

Suggestions for teachers
- Teach students the difference between a report and an essay.
- Give more written practice in report writing.
- Encourage students to learn more about their own country.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 2.

This was an exercise in amplification. If points are 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) I lost the book.

(B) The book……..……

Answer: (0) The book was lost by me.

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(1) (A) Raju plays both cricket and football.

(B) Not only……

(2) (A) She was too full for another meal.

(B) She was so...……..

(3) (A) Ranjeet said, "Sheela, why don't you take the advice of your parents in this matter?"

(B) Ranjeet asked Sheela …..……

(4) (A) Rahul has not been to school for over two months.

(B) It has ……..

(5) (A) As soon as he entered the room, he slipped and fell.

(B) Hardly……..…….

(6) (A) Candidates may not bring textbooks into the examination hall.

(B) Candidates are ……

(7) (A) Although it was a sunny day, it was very cold.

(B) Despite……

(8) (A) The book I had read earlier was better than this book.

(B) This book is……..……..…….

(9) (A) They said that he had broken the chair.

(B) They accused…….……

(10) (A) All the girls have brought their books with them.

(B) Each of the girls……...

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

(1) We failed to agree _____ a common plan of action.

(2) When I explained my plan of action to him, he did not agree _____ me.

(3) The Principal does not approve_____ indiscipline.

(4) I need his approval _____ I can start the work.

(5) An explanation about the evolution of species is given _____ Chapter 2.

(6) The answers to these questions are given _____ page 44.

(7) One fine day, he set _____ on his adventurous trip.

(8) As soon as he entered the room, he set _____ his heavy bag.

(9) It has been a long time _____ I saw her.

(10) I have not seen Ravi _____ ten years.

(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]**

We decided to travel by car and _____ (1)(leave) the house early. We_____(2)(be) on the road for two hours, when our car _____(3)(hit) a stone that _____(4)(lie) in the middle of the road. The car_____(5)(go) off the road but we_____(6)(escape) with minor injuries. Had we_____(7)(travel) faster, we_____(8)(involve) in a serious accident. The mishap_____(9)(delay) us but did not _____(10)(damp) our enthusiasm.

Comments of Examiners

(a) In this part, short forms such as 'shouldn't', 'couldn't' and 'didn't were used by many candidates. Some candidates omitted the comma in conditional sentences, as in sentence No. 7. Several candidates failed to keep to tense / number. Many failed to adhere to rules of grammar. Candidates disregarded rules of punctuation such as capital letters, full stops, etc.

(b) Many candidates gave more than one answer. Use of appropriate prepositions was not clear to many candidates. Most candidates had a hit-and-miss approach.

(c) Many candidates had only sketchy knowledge of the sequence of tenses. Incorrect tenses were used, such as 'hitted' as the past tense of 'hit' and 'damped' instead of 'dampen'.

Suggestions for teachers

- More practice should be given in transformation of sentences and rules of grammar.
- Practice should be given in the use of prepositional phrases and phrasal verbs.
- Oral exercises should be done in class and students should be encouraged to read.
- Different prepositions and their usage should be discussed in class.
- Discourage colloquial usage.
- Drilling in the sequence of tenses is necessary.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 3.

(a) The opening word of each answer (part B) had to be given as in the question paper. No other beginning was acceptable.

(1)	(B)	Not only does Raju play cricket but also football.
(2)	(B)	She was so full that she could not have/eat another meal.
(3)	(B)	Ranjeet asked Sheela why she did not take the advice of her parents in that matter.
(4)	(B)	It has been over two months since Rahul went to school.
(5)	(B)	Hardly did he enter the room when he slipped and fell.
(6)	(B)	Candidates are not allowed/permitted to bring textbooks into the examination hall/ Candidates are not to bring……
(7)	(B)	Despite the fact that it was/it being a sunny day, it was very cold.

(8) (B) This book is not as good as the one I had read earlier.

(9) (B) They accused him of having broken the chair.

(10) (B) Each of the girls has brought her book/books with her.

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

(1) on /upon
(2) with
(3) of
(4) before
(5) in
(6) on
(7) Off/out
(8) down
(9) Since
(10) For

(c) The candidates were advised not to copy the sentence.

(1) left
(2) had been
(3) hit
(4) was lying/lay
(5) went
(6) escaped
(7) been travelling
(8) would have been involved
(9) delayed
(10) dampen

Question 4

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

The Snow Goose

(1) In the late spring of 1930, Philip Rhayader came to the abandoned lighthouse at the mouth of the river Aelder on the Essex coast. He was a painter of birds and of nature and had withdrawn from all human society. He was afflicted with a hunched back and a deformed, twisted hand.

(2) Although physical deformity often breeds hatred of humanity in people, Rhayader did not hate any one. His heart was filled with pity and understanding. He had mastered his handicap, but he could not master the rebuffs he suffered because of his appearance. The thing that drove him into seclusion was his failure to find anybody who loved him as much as he loved nature and humanity.

(3) One November afternoon, three years after Rhayader had come to the Great Marsh, a child approached his lighthouse studio. In her arms, she carried a burden. She was no more than twelve, slender, dirty, nervous and timid as a bird, but beneath the dirt, as beautiful as a fairy. She was desperately frightened of the ugly man she had come to see, but greater than her fear was the need of that which she carried. For locked in her child's heart was the knowledge picked up somewhere in the swamp-land, that this ogre who lived in the lighthouse had magic that could heal injured things.

(4) She had never seen Rhayader before and was close to fleeing in panic at the dark apparition that appeared at the studio door, drawn by her footsteps – the black head and beard, the sinister hump and the crooked hand, bent at the wrist. She stood there staring, poised like a disturbed marsh bird for instant flight. But his voice was deep and kind when he spoke to her.
"What is it, child?"

(5) She stood her ground, and then edged timidly forward. The thing she carried in her arms was a large white bird, and it was quite still. There were stains of blood on its whiteness and on her dress where she had held it to her.

(6) The girl placed it in his arms. "I found it, sir. It is hurt. Is it still alive?" "Yes. Yes, I think so. Come in, child, come in." Rhayader went inside bearing the bird, which he placed upon a table, where it moved feebly.

Curiosity overcame fear. The little girl followed and found herself in a room warmed by a coal fire, shining with many coloured pictures that covered the walls, and full of a strange but pleasant smell.

(7) The bird fluttered. With his good right hand Rhayader spread one of its immense white pinions. The end was beautifully tipped with black. Rhayader looked and marvelled, and said, "Child, where did you find it?"

(8) "In the marsh, sir, where fowlers had been. What – what is it, sir?"
"It is a snow goose from Canada. But how in heaven did it come here?"

(9) The name seemed to mean nothing to the little girl. Her deep, violet eyes, shining out of the dirt on her thin face, were fixed with concern on the injured bird.

She said, "Can you heal it, sir?"

"Yes, yes," said Rhayader. "We will try. Come, you shall help me."

(10) There were scissors and bandages and splints on a shelf, and he was marvellously deft, even with the crooked hand that managed to hold things. He said, "Ah, she has been shot, poor thing. Her leg is broken, and the wing tip, but not badly. We will bandage the wing closer to her body, so that she cannot move it until it has set, and then make a splint for the poor leg."

(11) Her fears forgotten, the child watched, fascinated, as he worked, and fixed a fine splint to the shattered leg. "A bitter reception for a visiting princess," concluded Rhayader. "We will call her the Lost Princess. And in a few days, she will be feeling much better. See?"

(12) He reached into his pocket and produced a handful of grains. The snow goose opened its round yellow eyes and nibbled at it. The child laughed with delight.

Paul Gallico – *The Snow Goose (Adapted)*

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

(1) cruel and frightening person

(2) seemingly evil and dangerous

(3) wings

(4) skilful

(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) master (*line* 7)

(2) flight *(line 23)*

(3) still *(line 26)*

(4) bitter *(line 51)*

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

(i) Why did Rhayader live alone? **[2]**

(ii) What was the child's reaction on first seeing Rhayader? **[3]**

(iii) What was the child's burden? **[2]**

(iv) How did Rhayader manage to fascinate the child and make her happy? **[3]**

(c) Describe how Rhayader attended to the bird (paragraphs 6 to 12) 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) 'Ogre' seemed an unfamiliar word for a number of candidates who spelt it wrong. Very few candidates got all the words correct.

(ii) Many candidates used the given word as part of a compound verb and framed sentences, e.g. schoolmaster, headmaster, masterpiece, etc. several candidates either changed the form of the given word or used it in the same meaning as given in the passage.

(b) (i) Many candidates did not give a precise answer. Most candidates either copied the answer from the passage or wrote a long, rambling, meaningless answer.

(ii) The reaction was not clearly explained by a number of candidates. Only one point – 'fear' – was mentioned by most candidates.

Suggestions for teachers

- Encourage students to read to improve their vocabulary and to use the dictionary.
- Teach students to find the meaning of the word in the context of the passage.
- Make students aware of different meanings of a single word.
- Oral sentence construction exercises may be undertaken, so that immediate feedback can be given.

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(iii) Many candidates did not understand that the word 'burden' referred to the bird.

(iv) A number of candidates wrote a general answer about the man taking care of the injured bird but hardly any details on what he actually did and what fascinated the girl were given.

(c) (i) Many candidates did not know how to take notes. Some copied the paragraphs of the passage as points. A large number did not attempt this question at all. A few wrote single words – 'girl', 'bird', 'man', 'blood' etc. as points.

(ii) A number of candidates wrote a completely disjointed précis with no connection to the points at all. Many disregarded the 100 word limit. A large number of candidates did not read the instructions to take material only from paragraphs 6 to 12 and wrote irrelevant points from the whole passage. A few candidates did not attempt this part at all.

- Teach precision, brevity, and the art of writing in one's own words.
- Regular practice in comprehension and analysis of unseen texts is necessary.
- Teach students to read and understand the key words of the question properly, be specific and mention each detail in the answer.
- Students must be taught how to list important points.
- They must also be told that there are two parts to Q.4(c) and that they should attempt both parts.
- Regular practice should be given in précis writing.

MARKING SCHEME

Question 4.

(a) (i) Candidates are instructed to find words, from the passage which have a similar meaning to those given in the question paper. Give one mark for each.

(1) ogre

(2) sinister

(3) pinions

(4) deft

(ii) The candidates are instructed to use the following words in sentences of their own but <u>with a different meaning from that used in the passage</u>. If the form of the word was changed or if the meaning was the same as that of the passage, marks were deducted.

(1) master – (as used in the passage: to learn, understand) master of servants; of a pet; male teacher; captain of a ship; skilled person; person in control

(2) flight – (as used in the passage: running away) journey by air; plane; the act of flying; movement; a flight of steps; flight of fantasy.

(3) still – (as used in the passage: unmoving) yet; further in time; to become calm and quiet; apparatus for producing alcohol; as a verb; to still

(4) bitter – (as used in the passage: unpleasant) bitter in taste; angry; bad weather; bitter as in beer

(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.

(i) Rhayader lived alone because firstly people rebuffed him because of his appearance, and secondly because he failed to find anybody who loved him as much as he loved nature and humanity.

(ii) She was

– Close to panic at his appearance

– Staring

– Poised for instant flight

(iii) The child was carrying a large bird which was quite still. Shot and wounded/there were stains of blood on its white feathers.

(iv) Rhayader managed to fascinate her and make her happy by first bandaging the bird's wing close to its body, fixing a fine splint to the broken leg and lastly, feeding the snow goose a handful of grain.

(c) Summary: Special Instructions:

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

(ii) Marks are awarded for expression and the candidate's ability to express the points clearly. Marks were deducted for linguistic errors.

Possible points:

- Firstly Rhayader took the bird inside his house and placed it on a table.
- He then spread one of the bird's big black-tipped white wings.
- He did this to check what was wrong with the bird.
- There were scissors and bandages and splints on a shelf in his house.
- Rhayader made deft use of these things.
- He decided to bandage the wing close to the bird's body.
- He did this so it could not move.
- He also fixed a fine splint to the broken leg.
- He then took some grain out of his pocket to feed the bird.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

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

Question 3: Transformation of sentences

Question 4: Listing of points

Précis writing

(b) Concepts in which candidates got confused:

Question 1(d): Capital and Corporal Punishment.

Question 2: Report and Essay

(c) Suggestions for candidates:

- Read extensively, learn different usage and new changes taking place in the language.
- Develop the habit of consulting the dictionary, learn new words and their use, both formal and informal. Only regular practice in speaking, reading and writing English can bring about a comprehensive knowledge of the subject.
- Last minute practice is of no help. To know English as a language, one has to practice it, use it, speak, read and write it throughout the academic year.
- Read the question paper properly and follow the given instructions carefully.
- Avoid careless mistakes.
- Read each sentence carefully, check for simple errors of punctuation and articles and the major errors of tense, vocabulary and comprehension.