Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

**Std VIII-JK Marks: 40 Duration: 1 hour**

**Question 1:**

**Read carefully the passage given below and answer the questions that follow.**

Through the window of the compartment, I watched the countryside slip past. From a distance, the men in the fields in their white dhotis and turbans, and the womenfolk in bright splashes of colour against the green background of paddy fields, seemed to inhabit some beautiful painting. I sat **glued** to the window. Almost everywhere, the people were engaged in some activity which had a rhythm and **tranquility** about it- men driving cattle, women fetching water from streams. Occasionally, a child would appear and wave at the train.

It is astonishing how the landscape changes as one moves northwards. The rich and the fertile planes of the Ganga and its numerous tributaries have invited invasion, turmoil and change. Around 1500 BC, fair-skinned Aryans swept in through the mountain passes from the north-west. The tenth century brought Muslims, who later mingled with the local people and later became an integral part of this country. One empire gave way to another. Religious conquests continued. All this time, the part of the India South of the Tropic of Cancer remained largely untouched, safe behind the shield of the Vindhya and Satpura mountain ranges. The Narmada, Tapti, Mahanadi, Godavari and Krishna rivers had woven a net of almost **unassailable** protection for the tapering Indian peninsula. To bring me to Delhi, my train had crossed all these geographical impediments through the power of scientific advancement.

I halted a week in Delhi, a city of the great Sufi Saint Hazrat Nizamuddin, and appeared for the interview at DTD&P(Air). I did well at the interview. The questions were of a routine nature, and did not challenge my knowledge of the subject. Then I proceeded to Dehradun for my interview at the Air Force Selection Board. At the Selection Board, the **emphasis** was more on “personality” than on intelligence. Perhaps they were looking for physical fitness and an articulate manner. I was excited but nervous, determined but anxious, confident but tense. I could only finish ninth in the batch of twenty five examined to select eight officers for commissioning in the Air Force. I was deeply disappointed. It took me sometime to comprehend that the opportunity to join the Air Force had just slipped through my finger. I dragged myself out of the selection board and stood at the edge of a cliff. There was a lake far below. I knew that the days ahead would be difficult. There were questions to be answered and a plan of action to be prepared. I trekked down to Rishikesh.

*-Wings of Fire-------- A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.*

1. **Give the meaning of the following words from the passage: 4**
2. glued
3. tranquility
4. emphasis
5. unassailable
6. **Answer the following questions:**
7. How does the narrator describe the ‘beautiful painting’ which he saw through the window of the compartment? 2
8. Why did the plains of Ganga invite invasion, turmoil and change? Which part of India remained untouched during invasions and turmoil? 3
9. Why did the narrator halt in Delhi? How does he describe the result of that halt? Why? 3
10. **In not more that 50 words, describe the narrator’s experience at the Air Force Selection Board. 8**

**Question 2:**

1. **In the following passage fill in each of the numbered blanks with the correct form of the verbs given in the brackets. Do not write the passage but write down the answers in the correct order. 4**

Most of us \_\_\_\_\_\_(1)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (know) who is the ‘nightingale’ of India. The nickname \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(2)\_\_\_\_\_\_ (give) by Gandhiji to Sarojini Naidu. Once Sarojini \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(3)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (felicitate) at a public meeting by the Khoja community in East Africa. Sarojini \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(4)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (go) to South Africa to build relationships with Indians living there. A rich Khoja businessman \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(5)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (deliver) a speech in her honour. Since his speech was bad it was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(6)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (write) by a teacher. Instead of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(7)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (address) Sarojini Naidu as the ‘nightingale of India’, the businessman said ‘naughty girl of India.’ The members of the audience first \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(8)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (gasp) and then laughed out aloud.

1. **Fill in the blanks with appropriate words: 4**
2. He is very partial \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ his friends.
3. We should sympathise \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ her in her troubles.
4. He has run \_\_\_\_\_\_ debt.
5. The servant has promised to return \_\_\_\_\_ an hour.
6. The arrow missed the aim \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ an inch.
7. She broke \_\_\_\_\_\_ when she heard the sad news.
8. The doctor asked me \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ my health.
9. She is leaving \_\_\_\_\_\_ Germany today.
10. **Join the sentences to make one complete sentence without using ‘and’, ‘but’ or ‘so’. 4**
11. Your train was delayed by floods. It came two hours late.
12. I have a friend. He is a great artist.
13. She worked hard. She was not able to save money.
14. You must return the money. You will be punished.
15. **Rewrite the following sentences according to the instructions given after each. Make other necessary changed if required but do not change the meaning of each sentence. 8**
16. She said to the boy, “Please give me your pen as soon as your finished writing.” (Begin: She requested)
17. My grandmother is the fittest person I know in our neighbourhood.(Change to positive degree)
18. As soon as Jacob seated himself, he asked for some water. (Begin: No sooner)
19. Time is too precious to be wasted. (Remove ‘too’)
20. Everybody loves this country. (End: ….country?)
21. An ant is as intelligent as an elephant. (Use ‘intelligence’)
22. Arya is not as tall as Yash (Use ‘taller)
23. They should do this. (Add a question tag)