



THE INDIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Grade:X

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

HOLIDAY HOME WORK

JOURNALWRITING

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Question 1**

A disturbing train journey is the final cause of a life-changing decision.

All Change!

You are travelling on a train. The journey so far has been without remarkable event. As usual, you have had to run for your train which, ironically, has been delayed. You long to be home but have to endure the frequent stops at dull stations. You have watched unsmiling commuters hurry down the platforms, leaving the train until it is almost empty. You are tired, hungry, frustrated.

You have seen the city disperse, as all cities do, with the train dissecting the suburbs, exposing their endless rows of backyards and shopping centres. You are in the last carriage of the train, in the last compartment, with just one other person, another man in his mid-thirties, wearing a bright yellow raincoat, in the window-seat diagonally opposite your own. He stares through the window at an angle at the fading lights of the metropolis; you watch, at a similar angle, the approaching lights of the outer suburbs. You also watch him, or, more correctly, his reflection, in your window.

You think of your day, your life perhaps, like an overseer surveying his workers' efforts. You seem dissatisfied. Then you worry about the future: what will come tomorrow, and what should you do in preparation? You decide that your day is all essentially routine, and therefore without consequence. You consider the long hours. You look at your watch again. You feel uncomfortable.

As far as you can make out, there is no one else in the carriage. You hesitate to turn and look, as you know this may tell the man something of what you are thinking. He folds his arms.

A light rain streaks the window through which you stare. You approach a crossing, and its bells, which grow until they clang loudly in your window, and you see for a few seconds the blinking red lights and the cars, waiting patiently, like cows, with their un-blinking eyes. Then you are gone, and you are left with just the memory, and the fading sound of the bells.

As the light outside the carriage darkens again beyond the crossing, you return your attention to your fellow passenger. As you stare at his reflection, you feel your eyelids droop. You force them open, but they close again, and you reach the edge of consciousness.

The man has begun to smile. You realise that he too can see you in his window. It is possible that he has been intently watching you watching him for some time. Your gaze is frozen, unsure where to look. He stops smiling abruptly and suddenly leaps up and rushes impulsively at you like a wild beast. You turn to face him, throwing up your arms and legs helplessly for protection. He stops within a hair's breadth of your buckled legs.

'Sorry to have alarmed you,' he says, in a tone that surprises you by its calm, 'but I must get off here. I almost missed my stop.' And you realise that the train has been stopped at your station for some moments. He opens the carriage door by your shoulder and climbs down. 'Goodnight,' he says. 'I only just made it.'

The whistle blows and the train pulls out of the station. You can only stare as it passes, because of what has just happened, and now it is too late for you to get out. The train speeds away from your station.

You swear out loud. Then you look where the man has been. He has left a small paper bag.

The train blows its whistle for another crossing. You walk awkwardly across the rocking carriage and sit in his seat. There is no one else in the carriage. You pick up the paper bag and look inside: it is empty but you notice that there is something written on the outside. It is a poem of sorts, a haiku, like the ones you used to write at school.

Watching the landscape
From a train window at night
Reflecting yourself

The train stops at the next station. You leave, taking the poem with you. The stationmaster says there are no trains back to your station until morning and that there are no taxis at this time of night. You ask him where you are, and he replies by raising his eyebrows and staring sarcastically at the name sign behind him.

'I suppose I'll have to walk,' you say. You ask if the road leads back to your station. 'What am I, an information bureau?' he snaps, turning back into his office where you see a newspaper spread upon his desk. He shuts the door.

You decide that there is nothing for it but to walk home. As you set off, the rain gets heavier and you resign yourself to getting soaked to the skin. Your only thought is, 'Enough is enough', which runs repeatedly through your mind like the last line of a haiku.

1 Imagine that you are the 'you' in the story.

When you eventually get home to your family, you decide that you need to change your lifestyle. You write an entry in your journal, explaining why you have arrived at your decision.

Write the entry in your journal.

In your journal entry you should explain:

- why you are generally dissatisfied with your daily working life
- how tonight's journey has forced you to make your decision
- the possible consequences of not making these changes.

Base your writing on what you have read in Passage A. Address all three bullet points. Be careful to use your own words.

Begin your journal entry: 'I've made an important decision ...'.

Write 250 to 350 words

Up to 15 marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to 10 marks for the quality of your writing.