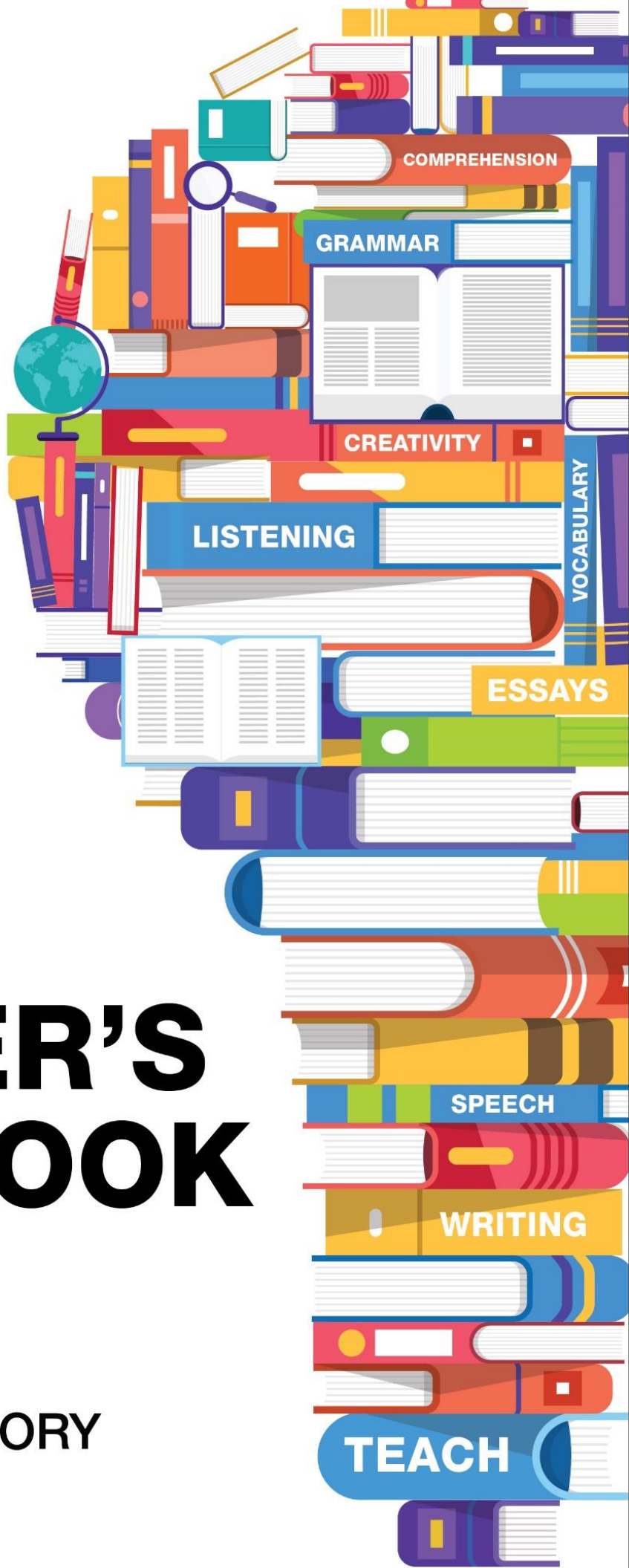




آغا خان یونیورسٹی ایگزامینیشن بورڈ  
AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION BOARD



# TEACHER'S GUIDEBOOK

SSC and HSSC

ENGLISH COMPULSORY

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**TEACHER'S GUIDEBOOK**  
**ENGLISH COMPULSORY**

**Secondary School and Higher Secondary  
School Certificate (SSC and HSSC)**

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## Note for Teachers:

This guide has been designed to communicate the need of introducing a variety of texts into the classrooms for learners. The text types and brief guidance regarding assessment practice and question types required to attempt the English Compulsory examination as per the guidelines mentioned in the AKU-EB English Compulsory Syllabus are introduced and highlighted through this guide. It comprises of a list of sample questions that could be used by teachers and some sample texts that teachers can use in their classrooms to clarify different text types that are recommended in the syllabus.

Sections 1 and 2 comprise of sample questions that assess the Listening and Reading skills. They have ONE example of each type of texts that are included in the AKU-EB English Compulsory syllabus. Teachers are advised to share these texts in their classrooms and, in addition to this, introduce a variety of different texts catering to the specific text types in the AKU-EB syllabus. Teachers are encouraged to see the Annexure given at the end of the syllabus for more information on selection of text types. A selection of sample questions given in Sections 1 and 2 can be used with each of the given texts in the guide to enhance the teaching, learning and assessment outcomes.

Section 3 includes Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) developed on various skills and subskills to exemplify the questions teachers can develop on various text types. In Section 4, teachers are provided with sample texts on which they can develop MCQs. They are encouraged to introduce students to all text types that are mandated by the English syllabi of AKU-EB including the ones in this guide. Teachers are also advised to keep in consideration the type of questions included in Section 3 when developing questions on the sample passages in Section 4.

Section 5 introduces teachers to various formal and informal writing sample formats including letter and essay writing, and responses that target writing skills. Furthermore, Section 6 addresses grammar components that lay the foundation of language accuracy.

This guide is designed to cater teachers of both SSC and HSSC considering the skills required to attempt the English Compulsory paper, remain the same, i.e., listening, reading and writing. The teachers are also encouraged to use the resource list shared with them including visiting the AKU-EB website for more information on resources of teaching and learning.

# **SECTION 1: SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

In the initial classes, you may want to focus on the knowledge of basic facts and figures. It may be a good idea to include a few knowledge-based questions in each class to make sure that students comprehend the details. However, questions asking for ‘who’, ‘when’, and ‘what’, which do not require thinking and require students to simply take an information from the passage to state an answer, should not take too much of the class time. The major focus of an effective language classroom should be on questions that probe thinking skills, reasoning skills and creativity.

### 1. Avoid questions which assess statement of explicitly stated facts

- Details (facts, figures, names, etc.)
- Catering to content-matching in the passage
- Something which is stated in black and white
- Based on Memorisation, NOT Understanding
- Examples...
  - *What is the main character doing in the passage?*
  - *In what year was A/ B/ C born?*
  - *When did the inquiry start?*

### 2. Apply questions which assess higher-order thinking skills

- Questions asking ‘how’, ‘why’, ‘to what extent’
- Requires application of details to a new situation
- Asking for suggestions/ alternate solutions/ adding details from outside the text to support opinion(s)/ thought(s)/ idea(s)
- Relating the theme(s)/ message(s) of a passage to real-life context(s)
- Examples...
  - *How does the imagery used in this story affect the overall tone of the author?*
  - *In your opinion, how effective are the strategies discussed in the passage?*
  - *Add at least two more points to support or negate the author’s view.*
  - *How would you change the tone of this letter to sound more formal?*

### 3. Strategies for Effective Questioning Techniques in the Classroom... (Adapted from Gibbs, 2001)

- Ask questions that invite more than one plausible answer. (Is this true for every situation/ Who is wiser between \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_, and why)
- Provide a ‘wait time’ after asking a question to give less confident students time to think
- Ask follow-up questions, such as, “What can you add?” or “What is your opinion?”
- Survey the other students: “Who agrees with the student, XYZ? Who disagrees? Why?”
- Provide feedback that neither confirms nor denies students’ responses to ensure the discussion remains open. Examples are: “Interesting.” or “I hadn’t thought of that...”
- Request a summary. “Who can make the point in different words?”
- Encourage students to direct questions to other students.

#### 4. Questions to Probe Thinking

- Actively question students' thinking
- Create a culture of inquiry by supporting students' thinking process(es)
- Guide the Thinking Process
  - *What is the main idea of this passage?*
  - *Why do you think that?*
  - *What is your knowledge based upon?*
  - *What does it imply and presuppose?*
  - *What are you assuming?*
  - *What are your assumptions based upon?*
  - *Who do you think is the audience for this text?*

#### 5. Questions to Probe Reasoning Skills

- Engage students to assess how arguments or views can be validated with reasons
- Guide the Thinking Process
  - *What is the author's viewpoint?*
  - *Why do you think that?*
  - *What reasons are mentioned in the passage to support this view?*
  - *Are those reasons adequate?*
  - *Do you have any evidence for that?*
  - *Can you think of an example to illustrate the same point?*
  - *Can you negate this point (if applicable)?*
  - *Do you think (A/ B/ C) is the protagonist of this story? Give evidence from the passage to support your answer.*

**Note:** The evidence can be in the form of a quote/ dialogue/ phrase/ adjective/ etc.

#### 6. Questions about Views and Perspectives

- "Do you agree or disagree with the author? Give reasons to support your answer?"
- "How would you feel if someone disagrees with you?"
- "What would you say to defend your position?"
- "How could you answer the objection that XYZ would make?"
- "Do you think this text/ story addresses concerns related to a certain culture/ race/ issue/ perspective?"

Source: Adapted from 'New Worlds: An Introduction to College Reading' by Joe Cortina and Janet Elder

Note:

Teachers are encouraged to use the command words suggested by AKU-EB and introduce students in comprehending their use in questions. Teachers are advised to use the command words in their classroom teaching and link them to the sample questions mentioned above. The list of command words are available on the AKU-EB website. Teachers can access it through the given link:

<https://examinationboard.aku.edu/learning-materials/Documents/Command%20Words%20-%20Urdu.pdf>



# **SECTION 2: GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS**

**(CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND ASSESSMENT)**

Teachers should use (but not limit themselves to) the following questions during the classroom practice and assessment of listening and reading skills. Based on the requirements and context of each text, teachers should select relevant questions as mentioned below and develop four options for each of the given question. Teachers are recommended to develop Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) as per the requirement of their selected text.

The questions written below closely relate to the assessment practices of AKU-EB. These questions may serve as the lead-ins (question phrases) for MCQs. The comprehension skills of students will be improved using these and additional MCQs during classroom practice. Refer to page 8 for note on use of command words while developing the questions.

Each of the below mentioned questions may be developed into an MCQ by supplying four options, i.e., one BEST answer (key) and three possible distractors. While developing MCQ options, please be sure that the options should

- be relevant to the text.
- be grammatically correct.
- have one BEST answer.
- be of similar sentence structure.
- not be obvious or linked through word-matching.

## **Part A: LISTENING SKILLS**

### **Sample Questions for Classroom Practice of Listening Comprehension SSC and HSSC:**

Possible stem and lead-ins (question phrases) for Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs):

#### **a. Basic Listening Comprehension**

- Which of the following is correct about the description of (A/ B/ C)?
- The speaker mentions (A/ B/ C) in order to ...
- What is the main idea of the heard text?
- The main focus of the speaker was to...
- The text gives least information about...
- Which of the following is an opinion?
- Which of the following is a fact?
- The main character of the story is...

#### **b. Close Listening**

- The speaker mentions (A/ B/ C). Which information is given IMMEDIATELY after/ before this?
- The author begins the text by stating (A/ B/ C). This is done in order to...
- The first suggestion given by the speaker is...
- Which information is heard FIRST/ LAST?
- The text type of the heard text is...

#### **c. Interpretive Listening**

- The speaker mentions the benefits/ disadvantages of (A/ B/ C) in order to...
- Which of the following could be the advice for the readers?
- Which sentence/ phrase closely refers to the heard text?
- What could be a possible title for this text?

#### **d. Critical Listening and Thinking Skills**

- Which suggestion/ point is repeated/ stressed most by the speaker in the heard text?
- The speaker ends his/ her speech/ lecture/ text by saying...
- Who is the intended audience for this text?
- The speaker's purpose in the text is to...
- The tone of the speaker is ...

### **Part B: READING SKILLS**

#### **Sample Questions for Classroom Practice of Reading Comprehension SSC and HSSC:**

Possible lead-ins (question phrases) for Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs):

##### **a. Basic Reading Comprehension**

- Based on the description, we can conclude that the setting/ location of the story is...
- What BEST indicates the personality (character) of (A/ B/ C)?
- The passage provides the MOST information on the...
- The main focus/ purpose of the author was to...
- What is the main idea of the given story/ text?
- The author mentions (A/ B/ C) in order to...
- The text gives least information about...
- Which of the following is an OPINION?
- The main character of the story is...
- Which of the following is a fact?

##### **b. Close Reading**

- What information from the passage supports the idea that (A/ B) plays an important role in the life/ creation of (C/ D)?
- Which word in paragraph 2 is of the same meaning as 'exhale'?
- The information in the story/ text is organised to show...
- The meaning of 'influx' in paragraph 1 is ...
- Paragraphs 2 and 3 are organised to show...
- Which event happened FIRST/ LAST?

##### **c. Interpretive Reading**

- Which statement/ idiom/ phrase/ quote can BEST be supported by information from the passage?
- Which of the following BEST represents the opposing forces/ themes present in this passage?
- The given information about (A/ B/ C) MOST CLOSELY relates to which of the phrases?
- The author begins/ ends the text by stating (A/ B/ C). This is done in order to...
- Read the given description.  
Based on the given details, what can be inferred about Mr. A's life?
- The underlined word/ phrase/ is used in the context of...

#### **d. Critical Reading and Thinking Skills**

- The tone of the text/ author is ...
- Who is the intended audience for this text?
- Which strategies are used for persuasion?
- The author gives most importance to (A/ B). The evidence which supports this is ...
- The author's purpose/ viewpoint/ belief system as reflected in the text is to/ is...
- Based on information in the last paragraph of the passage, it is likely that in the future...

### **Part C: READING SKILLS**

Constructed Response Questions:

#### **a. Basic Comprehension**

- Describe any THREE social problems depicted in (XYZ) passage and support them with THREE evidences from the text.
- Describe the personality of (A/ B/ C) with reference to the text/ with the help of textual evidences.
- Do you think (A/ B/ C) is a likeable person? Give a reason for your answer.

#### **b. Questions to Probe Thinking**

- "As you sow so shall you reap", (use different proverbs as per context) explain the given proverb in the context of this passage. Do the details in the passage support or negate this proverb? Give textual evidences/ references.
- Can you easily categorise all major characters of the given story as 'good' or 'bad' or are there certain grey areas in their personality? Explain with the help of TWO examples.
- Have you ever faced issues similar to the issues presented in the text? Support your answer by citing a personal experience briefly.
- If you were in the place of the author, what will be your thoughts about XYZ.
- Give some suggestions to ABC character/ the author about the XYZ issue.
- Do you agree with the author's viewpoint? Why or why not?
- What do you understand about ABC issue? Being in his/ her place, how you would have resolved the issue?

#### **c. Questions to Probe Reasoning Skills**

- What logical inference can be made about the XYZ situation from the ABC details of the passage?
- Imagine yourself as the co-author of this article; add any THREE relevant details to the passage. Justify your addition.
- What do you think is the main idea of this text? Support with THREE points.
- Suggest appropriate titles for each paragraph of the text.

#### d. Questions to Encourage Creativity

- Present an alternate introduction of this text.
- Present an alternate ending for this text.
- If PQR character in a certain story is introduced to present/ past era, how would he/ she behave?
- Rewrite the same story in a different location.
- Rewrite the same story with a different structure, i.e., you may start from the climax, or you may start from the end and present the device of flashback.
- How would you react to the situation/ issue/ problem presented in the given passage? Give THREE reasons to justify/ support your answer.

Source: Adapted from '*New Worlds: An Introduction to College Reading*' by Joe Cortina and Janet Elder

Note:

Teachers are also encouraged to integrate technology in their teaching. There are various online platforms that provide interactive exercises, vocabulary-building activities, and pronunciation guides that can supplement classroom instruction. Multimedia resources such as videos, online podcasts can help enrich students' English language and improve their listening, reading, and writing skills. Encourage students to use grade and age-appropriate language learning websites and language exchange platforms online to practice writing.

Teachers are also encouraged to study the E-marking notes that are developed to highlight the marking criteria against the questions designed by AKU-EB. This will help them prepare students and plan their lessons according to AKU-EB standards. Furthermore, teachers are advised to use the recommended books suggested by AKU-EB to integrate in their teaching and learning.

# **SECTION 3: WORKSHEETS**

In this section, you will have listening and reading worksheets with their respective passages followed by MCQs. Many MCQs in this section, resemble the stem questions discussed in **Sections 1 and 2**. Teachers are advised to create more worksheets on a similar pattern.

## Listening Skills Worksheet

### Listening Passage

#### Instructions for the teacher:

**Read out this passage to your class. Instruct your students to listen carefully. After you have read the passage, give 1 minute to your students for reading the questions. Read out the passage again. The students can mark the answers after listening to the passage.**

Samina Khayal Baig is the first Pakistani woman and the third Pakistani to climb Mount Everest. She was born on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 1990. She is also the youngest Muslim woman to climb Everest, having done so at the age of 23. Samina is also the first Pakistani woman and the first Muslim to climb the seven summits.<sup>1</sup>

Samina Baig comes from Shimshaal village in Hunza which is situated in the Gilgit–Baltistan region of Pakistan, and was trained for mountain climbing from the age of 15 by her brother, Mirza Ali. She is a student of Arts and began climbing when she was merely four years old. Besides the Himalayas, Baig has been employed as a mountain guide and expedition leader in the Hindu Kush and the peaks of Karakoram. Samina has been a professional climber since 2009.

Samina Baig became the first Pakistani woman to climb Mount Everest on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013. She was joined by Indian twin girls Tashi and Nungshi Malik in climbing Mount Everest and they together perched national flags of India and Pakistan side-by-side atop the peak, in order to spread a message of Indo-Pakistani friendship and peace. In an interview with her brother before the ascent, Samina also stated that the expedition was a demonstration of gender equality.<sup>2</sup>

Samina's brother Mirza Ali, approximately 248 meters short from the summit of Everest, let his sister go to the summit without his support, to give message to the women of Pakistan that like Samina, they too are capable of achieving great things.

In 2010, Samina became the first to ascend the previously unexplored peak ChashkinSar which is above 6,000 meters in height. The peak is now known as 'Samina Peak'. She conquered another peak in 2011 that was named 'Koh-i-Brobar' or the 'Mount Equality'. Samina Baig and her brother were not so lucky on the 7,027 metres high Spantik Peak where bad weather forced them to abandon their summit attempts. Nevertheless, Samina has made headlines all over the world for her extraordinary achievements.<sup>3</sup>

Source: Adapted from articles on Express Tribune, pakpeaks.com and DAWN epaper

<sup>1</sup> 'Samina Baig touching new heights' on [www.nation.com/pk](http://www.nation.com/pk)

<sup>2</sup> 'The Samina Story – Pakistan's First Women who reached Everest' on [www.pakpeaks.com](http://www.pakpeaks.com)

<sup>3</sup> 'First Pakistani woman scales Mount Everest' on [www.dawn.com](http://www.dawn.com)

**a. Questions for Basic Listening: Questions asking for basic and explicitly stated information in a heard text.**

1. Based on the heard passage, Samina Baig climbed Mount Everest when she was
  - A. 20 years old.
  - B. 23 years old.
  - C. 28 years old.
  - D. 30 years old.
2. According to the information in the heard passage, which of the following has been named 'Samina Peak'?
  - A. Koh-i-Brobar
  - B. ChashkinSar (Key)
  - C. Spantik Peak
  - D. Hindu Kush
3. The text type of the heard passage is
  - A. narrative.
  - B. reflective.
  - C. persuasive.
  - D. expository.

**b. Questions for Close Listening: Sequencing, inferring details, causes and consequences of any phenomenon.**

1. The information heard **FIRST** in the passage is that Samina Baig
  - A. comes from Shimshaal village in Hunza.
  - B. and her brother were not so lucky on the 7,027 metres high Spantik Peak.
  - C. is a student of Arts and began climbing when she was merely four years old.
  - D. became the first Pakistani woman to climb Mount Everest on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013.
2. According to the speaker, Samina also stated that the expedition was a demonstration of gender equality. Which information is given **IMMEDIATELY** after this?
  - A. Her brother let her go to the summit on her own.
  - B. In order to recognise her efforts, a peak was named after Samina.
  - C. She had climbed a certain distance alone to inspire Pakistani women.
  - D. She has made numerous efforts to encourage other girls to choose mountaineering.
3. According to the heard passage, Samina Baig and her Indian co-climbers contribute in spreading the message of peace between India and Pakistan by
  - A. speaking about the message of women empowerment in both countries.
  - B. hoisting flags of both countries side by side on Mount Everest.
  - C. acting as guides and expedition leaders on climbing projects.
  - D. caring for each other during the entire climbing expedition.



**c. Questions for Interpretive Listening: Author's purpose, possible outcomes, intentions**

1. The MAIN purpose of the heard passage is to
  - A. analyse the efforts of Samina Baig for promoting her profession.
  - B. describe the achievements of Samina Baig as a mountain climber.
  - C. analyse which types of mountains were easier to climb for Samina.
  - D. describe the appreciation Samina Baig has received throughout her career.
2. The speaker relates many achievements of Samina Baig. S/he has done this MOST LIKELY to
  - A. encourage the women of Hunza to take up the same profession.
  - B. highlight that women can be successful in professions which are physically demanding.
  - C. invite government's attention to the profession of mountain climbing for better facilities.
  - D. describe that Samina Baig was naturally gifted and only a few people in the world could be as successful.
3. The speaker's attitude towards Samina is
  - A. appreciative.
  - B. dismissive.
  - C. patient.
  - D. neutral.
4. The information in the heard passage about Samina Baig MOST CLOSELY relates to the phrase
  - A. 'all is well that ends well'.
  - B. 'as you sow so shall you reap'.
  - C. 'a picture is worth a thousand words.'
  - D. 'nothing is impossible to a willing heart'.

**Source:** AKU-EB Past Paper September 2015

**Answers (Keys):**

**Note:** Explanations for two questions are given below for reference.

**a. Questions for Basic Listening**

1. B as mentioned in the first paragraph (beginning of listening text)
2. B
3. D (*The passage explains Samina's journey as a mountaineer with relevant factual details in an objective way; hence, it is an expository passage.*)

**b. Questions for Close Listening**

1. D
2. A
3. B (*The passage mentions 'they together perched national flags of India and Pakistan side-by-side atop the peak, in order to spread a message of Indo-Pakistani friendship and peace'.)*

**c. Questions for Interpretive Listening**

1. B
2. B
3. A
4. D (*The passage mostly mentions Samina's achievements; hence, D is closest to the passage.*)

## Reading Skills Worksheets

### Reading Passage

Read the passage given below and answer the question that follows.

The children were to be driven, as a special treat, to the sands at Jagborough. Nicholas was not to be of the party; he was in disgrace. Only that morning he had refused to eat his wholesome bread-and-milk on the seemingly frivolous ground that there was a frog in it. Older and wiser and better people had told him that there could not possibly be a frog in his bread-and-milk and that he was not to talk nonsense; he continued, nevertheless, to talk what seemed the veriest nonsense, and described with much detail the colouration and markings of the alleged frog. The dramatic part of the incident was that there really was a frog in Nicholas' basin of bread-and-milk; he had put it there himself, so he felt entitled to know something about it. The sin of taking a frog from the garden and putting it into a bowl of wholesome bread-and-milk was enlarged on at great length, but the fact that stood out clearest in the whole affair, as it presented itself to the mind of Nicholas, was that the older, wiser, and better people had been proved to be profoundly in error in matters about which they had expressed the utmost assurance.

"You said there couldn't possibly be a frog in my bread-and-milk; there was a frog in my bread-and-milk," he repeated, with the insistence of a skilled tactician who does not intend to shift from favourable ground.

So his boy-cousin and girl-cousin and his quite uninteresting younger brother were to be taken to Jagborough sands that afternoon and he was to stay at home. His cousins' aunt, who insisted, by an unwarranted stretch of imagination, in styling herself his aunt also, had hastily invented the Jagborough expedition in order to impress on Nicholas the delights that he had justly forfeited by his disgraceful conduct at the breakfast-table.

A few decent tears were looked for on the part of Nicholas when the moment for the departure of the expedition arrived. As a matter of fact, however, all the crying was done by his girl-cousin, who scraped her knee rather painfully against the step of the carriage as she was scrambling in.

"How she did howl," said Nicholas cheerfully, as the party drove off without any of the elation of high spirits that should have characterised it. "She'll soon get over that," said the soi-disant aunt; "it will be a glorious afternoon for racing about over those beautiful sands. How they will enjoy themselves!"

"Bobby won't enjoy himself much, and he won't race much either," said Nicholas with a grim chuckle; his boots are hurting him. They're too tight." "Why didn't he tell me they were hurting?" asked the aunt with some asperity.

"He told you twice, but you weren't listening. You often don't listen when we tell you important things." "You are not to go into the gooseberry garden," said the aunt, changing the subject.

"Why not?" demanded Nicholas. "Because you are in disgrace," said the aunt loftily. Nicholas did not admit the flawlessness of the reasoning; he felt perfectly capable of being in disgrace and in a gooseberry garden at the same moment. His face took on an expression of considerable obstinacy. It was clear to his aunt that he was determined to get into the gooseberry garden, "only," as she remarked to herself, "because I have told him he is not to."

Source: Taken from '*Lumber-Room*' by Saki

**a. Questions for Basic Reading Comprehension:**

1. Based on the information in the given passage, which of the following BEST describes Nicholas's situation?
  - A. He discovered a frog in his basin.
  - B. He described the frog frivolously.
  - C. He was ashamed of provoking his elders.
  - D. He wanted to refute his elder's reasoning.
2. In the given passage, the conversation of Nicholas reflects that he wanted to
  - A. show that he is not interested in Jagborough trip.
  - B. talk non-sense and provoke everyone.
  - C. suggest not having breakfast at all.
  - D. prove that his point is valid.
3. The trip to Jagborough sands was improvised to
  - A. provide entertainment for the kids.
  - B. deprive the offenders of delights.
  - C. improve the conduct of the kids.
  - D. show adult's control on the trip.

**b. Reading for Vocabulary:**

1. Based on the information in the given passage, Nicholas' brother and cousins left for the trip
  - A. unintentionally.
  - B. understandably.
  - C. unexcitedly.
  - D. unlikely.
2. In line 3, the meaning of the word 'frivolous' is
  - A. temporary.
  - B. unrealistic.
  - C. suitable.
  - D. fragile.
3. Which of the following terms is NOT used for describing Nicholas's attitude in the given passage?
  - A. Cheerful
  - B. Insistent
  - C. Entitled
  - D. Decent

**c. Reading for Inference:**

1. The following phrases were uttered by Nicholas in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.
  - I. "How she did howl,"
  - II. "...his boots are hurting him..."
  - III. "He told you twice, but you weren't listening..."They indicate that Nicholas is
  - A. agile and clever.
  - B. cheerful and active.
  - C. active and regretful.
  - D. clever and observant.
2. Which of the following indicates CLOSELY that the plan of adults failed in the given passage?
  - A. Nicholas was happy after the cousins left.
  - B. Nicholas overcame his disappointment soon.
  - C. Nicholas stated that his cousins won't be able to enjoy.
  - D. Nicholas did not show any regret about missing Jagborough.
3. According to the given passage, which of the following did not make logical sense to Nicholas?
  - I. There could not be a frog in his basin.
  - II. He could not be in disgrace for a long period.
  - III. He could not go to the gooseberry garden when he acts disagreeably.
  - A. I only
  - B. II only.
  - C. I and III
  - D. II and III
4. Based on the information given in the passage, it can be predicted that Nicholas will
  - A. befriend his aunt soon.
  - B. not question his adults again.
  - C. eventually regret missing the trip.
  - D. try his best to gain access to the garden.

**Answers (Keys):**

**a. Questions for Basic Reading Comprehension**

1. D
2. D
3. A

**b. Reading for Vocabulary**

1. C
2. B
3. D

**c. Reading for Inference**

1. D
2. D
3. D
4. D

## Reading Passage

**Read the text given below and answer the questions that follow.**

It may look like a thorny cactus, but the aloe vera plant belongs to the onion/ lily family. Distinguished by its thick fleshy lance-shaped leaves, this green plant is supposed to have mystical properties. People sometimes call it the fragrant desert lily.

If we go by Egyptian folklore, the gel from the leaves of aloe vera was the secret ingredient that Cleopatra used for her skin and not the much-touted milk. In fact, the Egyptians have used aloe vera for their embalming process since time immemorial.

The clear juice of the plant is sold all over the world in health stores in the form of capsules and gels. The gel has twenty amino acids which the body needs as a supplement for its wear and tear and, according to various sources; eight of these amino acids have to be ingested and are not produced by the body itself. The gel oozes from the leaf when it is cut and the mucilage rich cells emit the clear sap.

As a beauty aid, the gel has been incorporated in lotions and creams for its moisturising and soothing effect. When these aloe vera lotions are used on skin, the glowing freshness of the skin is a testimony of its beneficial value. As a topical treatment for burns and wounds, it is sold as over-the-counter gel in most countries.

But locally, the aloe vera industry is still in its infancy and not developed to the desired extent; it is mostly used in its raw form.

The natural state is, in fact, the most effective and provides faster relief since the polysaccharides are destroyed during processing when heat is applied and enzymes are added in order to stabilise it. In its natural form, a leaf of the plant is cut into palm size pieces and slit open; the gel is then used to treat minor wounds, sunburns and fissures.

The gel also has amazing antibacterial, anti-fungal and anti-inflammatory properties. It is said to aid the immune system, cure constipation and also has a positive effect on the texture of the skin.

Use of the gel on the skin restores its elasticity to a great extent by its immense moisturising effect and rejuvenates the skin. When the flesh of the aloe is applied to the scalp, it deters hair loss and decreases dandruff.

Source: Adapted from '*NATURE-WISE: Aloe aloe*' as published on [www.dawn.com](http://www.dawn.com)

1. According to the given passage, which of the following is another name for the aloe vera plant?
  - A. Thorny cactus
  - B. Mystical plant
  - C. Egyptian lily
  - D. Desert lily
2. According to Egyptian folklore, which of the following was used by Cleopatra as mentioned in the given passage?
  - A. Gel of the leaves of aloe vera
  - B. Secret ingredients of aloe vera
  - C. Much-touted milk of aloe vera
  - D. Capsules and juice of aloe vera
3. Based on the information in the given passage, other than its use as a beauty product, aloe vera was also used in ancient Egypt for
  - A. extracting amino acids.
  - B. preserving the dead.
  - C. mystical properties.
  - D. reviving skin.
4. According to the author of the given passage, aloe vera is much needed by our bodies because
  - A. it has mucilage rich cells.
  - B. its amino acids are not produced by the body.
  - C. its clear juice helps in wear and tear of the body.
  - D. it helps in reviving the decay of polysaccharides.
5. Based on the information in the given passage, evidence of the positive effect of aloe vera on complexion is its
  - A. natural state.
  - B. use in lotions.
  - C. its incorporation in capsules.
  - D. impact of fresh glowing the skin.
6. According to the author, which of the following is NOT a cosmetic use of aloe vera?
  - A. It restores the elasticity of the skin.
  - B. It provides relaxation to the skin.
  - C. It prevents dryness of the skin.
  - D. It cures wounds on the skin.
7. Based on the information in the given passage, in addition to its effects on the skin, aloe vera also helps the
  - A. eyes.
  - B. back.
  - C. heart.
  - D. stomach.

8. According to the author, aloe vera is beneficial for all of the following EXCEPT
- A. curing injuries.
  - B. dryness of skin.
  - C. changing skin colour.
  - D. reducing scalp problems.
9. In the given passage, the author suggests that aloe vera should be used in its natural form because
- A. it severely affects the immune system.
  - B. processing decreases its efficacy.
  - C. it has anti-fungal properties.
  - D. it has enzymes.
10. Which of the following is an opinion in the given passage?
- A. Aloe vera industry in Pakistan has not been fully developed.
  - B. Aloe vera is the best product for moisturising skin.
  - C. Aloe vera is most effective in its natural form.
  - D. Aloe vera provides amino acids to the body.

**Answers (Keys):**

- 1. D
- 2. A
- 3. B
- 4. C
- 5. D
- 6. D
- 7. D
- 8. C
- 9. C
- 10. A

# **SECTION 4:**

# **SAMPLE TEXTS**



## PART A: LISTENING

Teachers are advised to use questions from Section 2 part A, i.e., Listening Skills to assess the listening comprehension of each listening text. For a better practice, questions from each sub-section should be selected.

### 1. LISTENING TO NARRATIVE TEXTS

*The passage tells the story of a young Syrian girl who swam as a refugee to save her life and later-on competed at the Olympics.*

#### **The 18-Year-Old Syrian Refugee Who Swam for Her Life All the Way to Olympics**

One year ago, Yusra Mardini pushed a sinking dinghy filled with refugees through the frigid Aegean Sea for over three hours – today, the 18-year-old Syrian swimmer is heading to the Rio Olympics to compete in two women's swimming events! Yusra is one of ten athletes selected for a special Olympic Refugee Team, which will compete under the Olympic flag and represent the more than 60 million refugees around the world today. Not only will the young athlete be fulfilling the dream of a lifetime to compete at the Olympic Games, Yusra also sees it as an opportunity to inspire those left behind in her war-torn homeland: "I want them to not give up," she says. "I want everyone to think of their dreams because a lot of people there forgot their dreams. A lot of things happened, and it was really bad... We motivate ourselves because there are a lot of people who (expect) a lot from us. A lot of people have hopes in us, and we can't let them down."

A swimmer from the age of three, Yusra was beginning to train seriously with the support of the Syrian Olympic Committee when the civil war broke out nearly five years ago and she went from being a typical teenager to living in a war zone. Her family's home and the swimming facility where she trained were both destroyed by bombs. As conditions continued to deteriorate and everyday life became a constant struggle, she realised she had to escape. "Maybe I'm going to die on the way," she remembers thinking. "But I'm almost dead in my country... I could not take it anymore."

Last August, she and her older sister Sarah said goodbye to their family and set out on a dangerous 25-day journey from Syria to Germany. In the midst of the journey, she found herself packed on a dinghy designed to carry six with 19 other people. Within thirty minutes of leaving Turkey, the motor stopped working and the boat began to take on water. Yusra and her sister, along with two other swimmers, jumped into the water to push it toward the Greek island of Lesbos. Even after the two older male swimmers gave up, the two young women continued to swim for three and a half hours. Thanks to their efforts, everyone made it safely ashore, but Yusra says that the experience was grueling and the sight of the sea makes her feel faint even now: "It was three and half hours in cold water. Your body is almost like... done. I don't know if I can describe that."

After making her way to Berlin, Yusra settled briefly in a refugee camp, which referred her to one of the city's swimming clubs. Coach Sven Spannerkrebs was so impressed by Yusra that he began training her with the goal of making it to the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. Then the IOC announced the refugee team, giving her an unexpected opportunity to compete this year – and to tackle stereotypes about what being a refugee means. "A lot of people think refugees had no home, that they had nothing at all," she says. "No, we had everything like you." Her parents and younger sister have now joined the young women in Berlin, and the whole family is thrilled that Yusra has this chance to compete.

“It’s a dream come true,” says Yusra, who will swim in the 100-meter freestyle and the 100-meter butterfly. “The Olympics is everything, it’s a life chance... [Swimming is] my passion, it’s my life, you can’t explain. It’s the most important thing in my life. It’s in my heart and I want to achieve something in it.”

Source: Adapted from the article ‘*She Swam to Escape Syria. Now She’ll Swim in Rio.*’ by Charlie Wilder from The New York Times

AKUEB (FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING ONLY)

## 2. LISTENING TO COMMUNICATIVE TEXTS

*Listening to informative interviews can enhance your listening comprehension skills. Given below is an excerpt from an interview of the celebrated humanitarian, Abdul Sattar Edhi.*

Assalam-O-Alaikum!

Walai-Kum-Assalam!

Q. Tell us something about your family?

A. My parents descended from a community of small farmers. Three centuries ago, a religious leader in Thatta converted our tribe from the Hindu faith to Islam and named them 'Momins' meaning true believers. This was later distorted to Memons. The Memons moved from Halla in Sind through the Thar Desert or via the Ran of Kutch and migrated to Kathiawar in Gujrat (India). There were different groups, namely the Viravel Memons, the Dorajee and Kotyana Memons, and us, the Bantva Memons.

Q. Where did this last name of Edhi come from?

A. Actually, we descended from one of the Bantva Memons and our family was called Edhi family. In Gujrati "Edi" means lazy. Bantva is a small village near Junagadh in Gujrat. Once there was a village named Edhi Mohalla, but it disappeared over time. The tribe was vigilant, committed to hard work, and infused with a spirit of humanitarianism.

Q. How do you recall your school days?

A. I virtually grew up playing pranks and games on the streets and alleys of Bantva, with little interest in formal education. I was a very mischief-monger in the "madrassah" (school). I became the team leader in the madrassah and used to divide all the kids into two teams for games. Later, I had a fight in the madrassah as a result of which I had to drop out of my fourth grade. Instead, I started assisting my mother in her social community work. She was so involved in her work and relying on me to distribute the stuff among the needy that she forgot I was missing the school. This work fired my inspiration for social work and it laid the foundation of my future.

Q. How did you come to Pakistan?

A. During the movement for a Muslim state in India, the British were pulling out and the sub-continent was being divided; a Muslim homeland was in the offing. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had addressed a large rally at Bantva where we collected a party fund of Rs 35,000. Most of us became four ANNA members of Muslim League. Soon after Bantva was attacked by Hindus, we all decided to migrate to Pakistan. Four thousand Memons took a train ride to Occha in September 1947. We camped for five days before boarding the boat for Karachi. It took two days by sea, and we suffered no inconvenience in landing at Karachi.

Q. What inspired you to launch a charitable organisation?

A. The Memon community who migrated to Pakistan started business and the first Textile Government of Pakistan and Valika family jointly funded the industry. My father started working as a Commission Agent. Later, my childhood dream was transformed into a reality when I was given permission and money to do business. I started doing small business and become independent at the age of fifteen. In 1948 an advertisement in a newspaper informed the public of the first charitable organization in Mithadar. Senior Bantva Memon made up its Board, and called it the Bantva Memon Dispensary. When the patrons approved eight members for registration, I was the youngest. When members of the community asked my father, "Haji Shakoor, what are you contributing to charity?" He replied, "I have given more to charity than any work or money's worth," pointing to me, he said very earnestly, "I have donated a whole human being to it, watch him."

Q. When did you start your own charitable set up?

A. In 1951, I spent Rs. 2,300/- from my savings, to buy an eight-foot square shop in Mithadar. Outside it, I put up a small tin moneybox and called it, "The Memon Voluntary Corps". Ten Memon boys also joined me. The dispensary catered to everyone. Medicines were purchased at wholesale rates and sold cheaper than the retail price. As doctors' fees were beyond the reach of the poor, hired a physician on a fixed salary. This provided an option to the public. The news spread far and wide and the people began turning away from the hoax of the first dispensary.

Q. How did you learn to expand your charitable outfit?

A. To understand the world beyond Bantva and Karachi, in 1956 I decided to travel to the West by bus. We drove through Iran, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, and I was surprised that I faced no problems on the way. I was fascinated by the system there and saw how welfare needs were being met in England and learnt to use them myself. I also noted sections that seemed important and were implemented practically. My host friend from Bantva, Siddiq Edhi asked me to stay and offered me a job in London. I refused on the pretext, "I have to do something for the people in Pakistan. A volcano is stirring inside me." I explained to my friend, "The five basic tenets of Islam continue into the sixth for me, Huquq-ul-Ibaad or Humanitarianism". I clarified my point: "Within this tenet lies the essence of all religions and test of all mankind, a universal brotherhood is evident from it. All religions move in the same direction and towards the same goal.... humanitarianism and all Holy Books convey the same message."

Source: Taken from the interview transcript as published on

<http://www.sadaewatansydney.com/abdulsattaredhi-interview-zakat.htm>

### 3. LISTENING TO EXPOSITORY TEXTS

*Umerkot fort is a well-known fort in Sindh. The passage contains factual information about Umerkot.*

#### UMERKOT FORT (EXPOSITORY)

The route to Umerkot (or Amarkot) from Karachi is a study in contrasts, the most obvious being the landscape. The arid terrain leading up to Hyderabad transitions into cultivated fields of rice, sugarcane and wheat, interspersed by mango and chikoo trees, as well as the occasional small herd of cattle and goats, on both sides of the double carriageway up to Mirpurkhas. Then, the road narrows to a single carriageway, but the distinct rural ambiance stays.

I arrived in Umerkot at dusk, almost seven hours after leaving Karachi. The city has descended into darkness due to a power shutdown, but the mid-March evening is pleasantly cool.

Like other cities in the country, rickshaw drivers are the only tourist guides for visitors who do not come with references or have friends or relatives to go to.

I found the hotel hunt to be the most exciting part of going to a new place, and this time is no different, but for an average visitor this can be quite a daunting task.

Every town or city affects its first-time visitors with two or three things before opening up to reveal more. Seamlessly blended communities belonging to different religions (mostly Muslim and Hindu) engage one's attention and are obvious in the most mundane of settings. Two adjacent signboards in a commercial district, for instance, capture this: one says 'Parshotam Khatri Advocate'; the other 'Abdul Aziz Advocate'. The same goes for various shops and other businesses.

Mind you, this ethnic diversity is absent in large cities but characterises many towns in Pakistan; more so in rural Sindh and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and it has done so for centuries.

Mosques as well as temples abound. My rickshaw driver-cum-tour guide, Shahid Ali, referring to the communal harmony points out, "We don't feel any difference living side by side in more or less equal numbers."

There is a long crooked street with numerous jewellery shops, mostly owned by Hindu jewellers selling ethnic silver ornaments that Thari women wear. Reportedly, the population of non-Muslim Pakistanis in this region came down from 80 per cent at the time of partition.

I asked for directions to the Kali Mata Temple from a vendor in one of the narrow streets. He instructs one of his colleagues to escort me there, who complies courteously. The temple is located in a cul-de-sac.

"Can I go inside?"

"Yes."

"Will anyone mind if I took pictures?" I ask after entering the imposing temple.

"No one minds. Go ahead."

What spurred my interest in Umerkot was its crumbling fort, and the historical fact that the Mughal Emperor Akbar was born a few kilometres away from here. The Umerkot (or Amarkot) Fort was the property of Hindu Rajputs, the Ranas of Umerkot, before being taken over by the government.

The entrance of the fort is a smaller version of the Shahi Qila, Lahore, while the inside is a miniature version of Mohenjo-Daro. At both, the site and museum, there are more staff than visitors. Nothing much to write home about this historical site, except that the museum is better than the one in Karachi.

But there is plenty one can say about the people of the city. Having lived most of my life in Karachi, the dichotomy of temperament of the residents of Umerkot — or for that matter Bahawalpur, Khushab, etc — on the one hand, and Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad on the other, is like the difference between two planets.

We seem to be disconnected from, if not oblivious to, the real Pakistan; the one outside the beaten tracks and urban centres of Karachi, Multan, Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi and Peshawar.

Even Quetta seems to have drifted away from the mainstream imagination of the country, although it used to be, along with cool, green Ziarat, a popular holiday destination for families until some years ago.

For four days in Umerkot, I did not see uniformed law-enforcement personnel or arms being publicly displayed, and neither felt the insecurity to miss them.

It is not that rural or small-town residents are destitute or helpless. In fact, they are very enterprising, self-sufficient and to an extent thriving — in spite of having been elbowed out by an urban elite class, which is actually the minority in the country.

Being pushed to the margins seems to have spurred entrepreneurial spirit in these areas. For instance, I spot more alternative energy sources such as solar panels in far-flung mountain hamlets and in towns such as Umerkot than in mega cities.

With their can-do attitude and celebration of religious diversity, the people of Umerkot capture what many towns in rural Sindh are like.

It's only when one veers off the tried-and-tested routes that one explores the heart of true Pakistan. Indeed, there is no substitute for exploring a new place than through the eyes of the people who reside there.

Source: Taken from '*Karachi to Umerkot: The 'real' Pakistan found outside the beaten tracks*' by Imtiaz Piracha and published in Dawn, Sunday Magazine, May 8, 2016

#### 4. LISTENING TO DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS

*Given below is an account of the life of the great scientist, Albert Einstein.*

What is the first word you think of when you hear the name Albert Einstein? Most people answer with a resounding, “Genius!” Never will you ever hear the word, “Nut.” Seldom will anyone ever hear the name and not recognize it as one of the greatest minds to have ever lived.

Most, however, perhaps feel that his genius was immediately apparent. Not so! We assume that early in childhood he had a recognizable gift. Perhaps, his parents immediately whisked him off to schools for the gifted. Everything he touched or did was incredibly easy and he breezed through life effortlessly on the wings of his genius. We imagine that to him problems were easily solvable, questions were easily answered, and we could only dream of ever having such a gift.

In actuality, his life was far different. It is assumed he grew up humbly and his genius was not obvious. In fact, Einstein was unable to speak fluently until he was 12 years old. At school he was actually tormented by other children who commented he smelled of dill pickles and peanut butter, his hair was a mess, his clothes were dishevelled, and he ate large quantities of paste. He would often act out in class by barking or snorting loudly which earned him the nickname Schweinhund, meaning “pig-dog”. He in turn exhibited other unruly behavior in the classroom. In one instance, he released two bats from his lunchbox. Seven students were injured in the panic as the bats flew through the classroom.

His classroom behaviour, coupled with his never-ending imagination and exploratory mind, caused Einstein to wonder about the laws of physics. In fact, in 1886, as young Albert was hurling a spitball at the back of his classmate’s head, he began to ponder the laws of physics as it applied to the flight of his projectile. Einstein felt at that moment that he had to know more and by age 16, he had mastered differential and integral calculus to further comprehend the dynamics of his flying spitball. His strides in his academic achievements did not prevent him, however, from getting expelled from the Rotterdam Academy for releasing into the classroom a rabid skunk, again concealed in his lunchbox.

Kicked out of academia, Einstein went on the road to pursue life as a musician and a standup comedian. Not many know that Einstein was a violin virtuoso. He performed solos and was the coveted first chair in a symphony. He was soon bored with his life as a musician.

With his hopes as a performer in shambles, Einstein had little left to do, but return to his “academic arts”. In 1896 he applied to FIT, New York’s Fashion Institute of Technology. He failed the entrance exam several times before finally passing it and being admitted. He seems to have excelled in his years at FIT, but a disagreement with a professor over an algorithm to calculate optimum lapel width left him closed to future opportunities with the University. He returned to Europe. It was here and then that he finally became the Albert Einstein we’ve come to know: the greatest scientist to have ever lived.

Source: Taken from ‘*The Einstein We Know*’ by Lance W. Harger



## PART B: READING

Teachers are advised to use questions from Section 2 part B, i.e., Reading Skills to assess the reading comprehension of each text. For a better practice, questions from each sub-section should be selected.

### 1. READING REFLECTIVE TEXTS

#### The Needs of Teenagers

While we are still children, most of us live at home with our parents more or less peacefully, but as we become teenagers things change, and we all know the sort of difficulties we're likely to have. What's happening is that we're beginning to grow apart from our parents. We're a new generation that's almost ready to be independent, to leave the home where we grew up and make a new home of our own.

All human beings must do this, but we don't all do in the same way. Suppose, for instance we belonged to a primitive tribe, there as we grew up, we'd learn the skills we needed as adults – how to hunt or fish, how to keep house and look after children. In our early teens, we'd be ready to marry and set up house near our family in the village we knew.

We call this a primitive way of life, but it's what human beings have adapted to through hundreds of thousands of years. And it's what we are still adapted to in the twentieth century, for man hasn't changed much in the short time since he became civilised.

But could we leave home and look after ourselves at puberty? Most people in so-called civilised countries wouldn't do very well. For, even if man hasn't changed, the society he lives in has changed enormously, and we've more and more to learn before we're ready to leave our parents' shelter.

Things what we've learnt by puberty. We've learnt to read and write. We've learnt to use figures, to use money to buy things we need. We've learnt to use such things as radios, cooking-stoves, buses trains.

All the same, at puberty we still don't know enough. We may be very nearly adult human beings, but we're certainly not adult members of society. We've still a lot to learn, and while we learn it, we still need shelter – so we usually stay in our parent's home.

But no wonder there are difficulties. Physically we become adults younger and younger. Socially we become adults older and older. And the more ambitious we are about what we want to do in life, the more we must learn, and the longer we need support.

No wonder teenagers feel frustrated, restless, and rebellious.

Here is what a teenaged girl, Marjorie, said about this time in her life:

"I suppose it all began in the usual way. My parents weren't any worse or any better than most parents. When I was about fourteen, my parents would let me go round to a girlfriend's house and get home late or stay up to watch a midnight movie on television, but if I wanted to go to a dance or a party, they made me be in by ten o'clock.

I was scared of them being annoyed with me, so I need to try and be in on time, but sometimes things didn't always work out like that and if I was later than they said, they were furious. My mother would



sit up with a rigid fury on her face whatever time of night it was and she'd terrify me so much, that it wouldn't happen again for ages."

Most of Marjorie's girlfriends were going through the same sort of thing, but as she got older things became worse. Her parents refused to give her the house-key and she had to wake them up at whatever time she got home. Once her father came to a dance and dragged her out while she was dancing.

"...My mother put such an unnaturally tight rein on me. She was always very possessive and, whereas my girlfriends' parents treated them as friend, I was never allowed to think for myself. My mother would tell me when to have a bath, what to wear, when to wear it. She was over-protective. When I started going out with Jim, she didn't trust me an inch. She wanted to know where we were going, when we were coming back and where she could get hold of me.

The ironic thing, of course, is that my friends' parents were more lenient, and yet it was me who ended up in trouble."

Source: Adapted from '*Shelter: Environments and Human Needs*' by Nan Fari

## 2. READING NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS

*The stories given below are good examples of overlapping of narrative and descriptive writings. Read carefully and identify the features of good description.*

### a. The Hidden Box

I opened the iron gate and walked as softly as I could up the weed-tufted gravel drive. My mind was strangely empty. I felt no glow of pleasure and was unexcited at the prospect of becoming rich. I was occupied only with the mechanical task of finding a black box. The front door was closed and set far back in a very deep porch. The wind and rain had whipped a coating of gritty dust against the panels and deep into the crack where the door opened, showing that it had been shut for years. Standing on a derelict flower-bed, I tried to push open the first window on the left. It yielded to my strength, raspingly and stubbornly. I clambered through the opening and found myself, not at once in a room, but crawling along the deepest window-ledge I had ever seen. After I had jumped noisily down upon the floor, I looked up and the open window seemed very far away and much too small to have admitted me.

The room where I found myself was thick with dust, musty and empty of all furniture. Spiders had erected great stretchings of their webs about the fireplace. I made my way quickly to the hall, threw open the door of the room where the box was and paused on the threshold. It was a dark morning and the weather had stained the windows with blears of grey wash which kept the brightest part of the weak light from coming in. The far corner of the room was a blur of shadow. I had a sudden urge to have done with my task and be out of this house forever. I walked across the bare boards, knelt down in the corner and passed my hands about the floor in search of the loose board. To my surprise I found it easily. It was about two feet in length and rocked hollowly under my hand. I lifted it up, laid it aside and struck a match. I saw a black metal cash-box nestling dimly in the hole. I put my hand down and crooked a finger into the loose reclining handle, but the match suddenly flickered and went out and the handle of the box, which I had lifted up about an inch, slid heavily off my finger. Without stopping to light another match, I thrust my hand into the opening and, just when it should be closing about the box, something happened.

I cannot hope to describe what it was, but it had frightened me very much. It was some change which came upon me or upon the room, indescribably subtle, yet momentous. It was as if the daylight had changed with unnatural suddenness, as if the temperature had altered greatly in an instant or as if the air had become twice as rare or twice as dense as it had been in the twinkling of an eye. Perhaps all of these, or other things, happened together, for all my senses were bewildered all at once and could give me no explanation. The fingers of my right hand, thrust in the opening in the floor, had closed mechanically, found nothing at all, and came up again empty. The box had gone!

I heard a cough behind me, soft and natural, yet more disturbing than any sound that could ever come upon the human ear. That I did not die of fright was due, I think, to two things: the fact that my senses were already disarranged and able to interpret to me only gradually what they had perceived, and also the fact that the utterance of the cough seemed to bring with it some more awful alteration in everything. It was as if the universe stood still for an instant, suspending the planets in their courses. I collapsed weakly from my kneeling backwards into a limp sitting-down position upon the floor. Sweat broke out on my brow and my eyes remained open for a long time without a wink, glazed and almost sightless. In the darkest corner of the room, near the window, a man was sitting in a chair, eyeing me with a mild but unwavering interest.

Source: Adapted from 'The Hidden Box' by Florence Parry Heide

## **b. The Wheaton Book of Ghost Stories**

The blue Room in the north tower had always been haunted. Those who had seen the ghost described it in different ways. Some said that the room was haunted by a white lady dressed in a long robe; others, that the ghost looked like a small child crying all the time; and there were those who recalled it as a young man in an Elizabethan ruff, with his head tucked underneath his arm. No one had slept in the Blue Room for a long time, however; so nobody was really sure what it looked like.

One night, when the stories of the ghost had been told and retold, one of the guests at the castle began to feel very bad. The others had gone to bed as the candles flared and guttered, but this one guest stayed behind sitting with his host. He spoke slowly and carefully.

“I have never seen a ghost. I don’t believe in ghosts.”

The owner of the castle shrugged but didn’t reply.

“I don’t believe in ghosts,” said the guests, “and I don’t believe in haunted rooms! Give me the chance and I’ll sleep tonight in that Blue Room of yours, all alone. Just give me the chance, that’s all.”

The host said nothing, but sighed and nodded. Then he lifted a candle and crooked one finger. The guest followed him along dark panelled corridors, under high moonlit windows, and through creaking doors. The final door opened and shut, leaving and guest alone, sitting on the bed in the Blue Room.

The room was bare except for a large four-poster bed hung with deep-blue hangings, a single armchair, and a large blue-painted wooden chest. On the wall hung an unsmiling portrait of a man dressed in deep blue. Through the mullioned window, pale moonlight streaked with dust fell on the pure white sheets of the bed.

The guest took a swig at a bottle he had picked up in the dining-room. Then, smiling, he took a revolver out of his pocket and put in under his pillow. Finally, he took off his clothes and slid between the grave-cold sheets. He was soon asleep.

He was awoken by a rustling sound somewhere in the room. Opening his eyes, he lay motionless, listening. The noise had stopped. But then, there is the moonlight, his staring eyes caught sight of something white at the end of the bed. The blood began to pound in his ears and his heart thumped. He strained his eyes to see better. There was no doubt of it – a ghostly white hand was grasping the brass rail at the foot of his bed!

Beads of sweat came to his face. For a moment he wished he had not been so foolhardy. But then he remembered his revolver and slowly slid his hand under the pillow until he felt the hard handle of the weapon. With a swift movement, he pulled out the revolver, levelled it at the ghostly hand, and fired!

Source: Adapted from ‘*The Wheaton Book of Ghost Stories*’ by David Oakden

### 3. READING EXPOSITORY TEXTS

#### The Advance of Medicine

Many mysteries remain about the way in which the body functions and the causes of some deadly diseases. People die every day from cancer, heart disease and diabetes. We read of great advances in transplant surgery and “miracle” drugs, but we have still not found a cure for the common cold. However, great advances have been made in medical sciences. Diseases such as tuberculosis and smallpox, which killed millions of people, have been conquered. Many people who, twenty years ago, would have died; but now with the help of [medicinal] drugs, lead ‘normal’ lives.

- **Blood transfusions**

Perhaps the best known of the developments in the field of medical technology has been organ transplantation. Transplantation is not new. The idea goes back to the seventeenth century when a surgeon attempted to transfuse the blood of a dog into a sick human being Samuel Pepys, the famous diarist, reported that the men appeared well shortly after the transfusion, but died some days later. Today it seems strange that such an experiment was carried out on a human being, it was considered quite reasonable at the time because the man was insane.

Before the First World War, transfusions were considered a modern ‘marvel’ and newspaper carried reports of ‘heroes’ who had given a pint of blood. Of course, today, blood transfusions are commonplace. There are National Blood Transfusion services and every day thousands of adults give a pint of their blood to help others.

- **Skin Graft**

The next important step along the road to the actual transplantation of organ was skin grafting. One of the pioneers in this was an Australian, Archibald McIndo. During the Second World War in England, McIndo rebuilt the faces of pilots who had received terrible burns. The patients called themselves “the Guinea-pigs” and still meet every year in memory of the pioneering surgeon. One problem with grafting was that the body tried to reject the skin, so the best donor was a twin or close relative—but usually skin was taken from another part of the patient’s body. Today with the help of immunosuppressive drugs, the problem of rejection has practically been overcome.

- **Kidney Transplants**

The forerunner to heart transplants was the transplantation of kidneys. The pioneers in this field were aided by a number of factors. One was that kidney machines were developed which could keep people alive until donor organs were available. Another was that people were prepared to sacrifice one of their own kidneys in order to save someone’s life. A third factor was that if the patient’s body rejected the new kidney, he could be reconnected to the kidney machine until another kidney became available.

- **Heart Transplants**

Surgeons have believed for many years that to temper with the heart meant, instant death. In the mid 1960's, a heart-lung machine was developed which took over the function of the heart and lungs in pumping and oxygenating blood. This machine enabled surgeons to replace diseased valves, bypass arteries and repair holes. Medical technology had been unable to develop an artificial heart, so the only alternative was to transplant human hearts. The first experiment took place on animals, notably dogs and pigs.

The first human transplant took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1967 in Cape Town, South Africa.

The whole question of donor organs presents problems which need to be considered. Is it right, for example, to keep body functions going mechanically until a convenient moment when the body becomes useful as the source of a spare part? Having kept the body 'alive' artificially on a machine, do doctors have the right to switch the machine off, thereby 'killing' the patients?

Source: Adapted from '*Science: Fact or Fiction?*' by Ray Linforth and Margaret Bell

#### 4. READING EXPRESSIVE TEXTS

*A 12-year-old girl from Canada travelled to Brazil and spoke to the United Nations Earth Summit (UNES) to speak the truth with such power and grace that she silenced the world. She called on the adults to follow the same rules we teach our children.*

Hello, I'm Severn Suzuki speaking for E.C.O. – The Environmental Children's Organisation. We are a group of twelve and thirteen-year-olds from Canada trying to make a difference: Vanessa Suttie, Morgan Geisler, Michelle Quigg and me. We raised all the money ourselves to come six thousand miles to tell you adults you must change your ways. Coming here today, I have no hidden agenda. I am fighting for my future.

Losing my future is not like losing an election or a few points on the stock market. I am here to speak for all generations to come. I am here to speak on behalf of the starving children around the world whose cries go unheard. I am here to speak for the countless animals dying across this planet because they have nowhere left to go. We cannot afford to not be heard.

I am afraid to go out in the sun now because of the holes in the ozone. I am afraid to breathe the air because I don't know what chemicals are in it. I used to go fishing in Vancouver with my dad until just a few years ago we found the fish full of cancers. And now we hear about animals and plants going extinct every day – vanishing forever. In my life, I have dreamt of seeing the great herds of wild animals, jungles and rainforests full of birds and butterflies, but now I wonder if they will even exist for my children to see. Did you have to worry about these little things when you were my age? All this is happening before our eyes and yet we act as if we have all the time we want and all the solutions. I'm only a child and I don't have all the solutions, but I want you to realise, neither do you!

You don't know how to fix the holes in our ozone layer. You don't know how to bring salmon back up a dead stream. You don't know how to bring back an animal now extinct. And you can't bring back forests that once grew where there is now desert. If you don't know how to fix it, please stop breaking it!

Here, you may be delegates of your governments, business people, organisers, reporters or politicians – but really you are mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles – and all of you are somebody's child. I'm only a child yet I know we are all part of a family, five billion strong, in fact, 30 million species strong and we all share the same air, water and soil – borders and governments will never change that. I'm only a child yet I know we are all in this together and should act as one single world towards one single goal. In my anger, I am not blind, and in my fear, I am not afraid of telling the world how I feel.

In my country, we make so much waste, we buy and throw away, buy and throw away, buy and throw away, and yet northern countries will not share with the needy. Even when we have more than enough, we are afraid to share, we are afraid to let go of some of our wealth. In Canada, we live the privileged life, with plenty of food, water and shelter – we have watches, bicycles, computers and television sets. The list could go on for two days.

Two days ago here in Brazil, we were shocked when we spent some time with some children living on the streets. And this is what one child told us: "I wish I was rich and if I were, I would give all the street children food, clothes, medicine, shelter and love and affection." If a child on the street who has nothing, is willing to share, why are we who have everything still so greedy?

I can't stop thinking that these children are my age, that it makes a tremendous difference where you are born, that I could be one of those children living in the Favelas of Rio; I could be a child starving in Somalia; a victim of war in the Middle East or a beggar in India. I'm only a child yet I know if all the money spent on war was spent on ending poverty and finding environmental answers, what a wonderful place this earth would be!

Source: Transcript of Severn Suzuki's speech at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992

## 5. READING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS

Read the passage given below carefully. The passage is an extract from Bram Stoker's novel 'Dracula'. Make notes about how the author describes the scene, people's reactions without actually revealing Dracula's secret. Reflect on the following as you read.

- Description of people
- Who is the narrator in this passage?
- How do you understand that there is something wrong with the narrator?

When I got on the coach, the driver had not taken his seat, and I saw him talking to the landlady. They were evidently talking of me, for every now and then they looked at me, and some of the people who were sitting on the bench outside the door—came and listened, and then looked at me, most of them pityingly. I could hear a lot of words often repeated, queer words, for there were many nationalities in the crowd, so I quietly got my poly-glot dictionary from my bag and looked them out.

I must say they were not cheering to me, for amongst them were 'Ordog'—Satan, 'Pokol'—hell, 'stregoica'—witch, 'vrolok' and 'vlkoslak'—both mean the same thing, one being Slovak and the other Servian for something that is either werewolf or vampire. (Mem., I must ask the Count about these superstitions.)

When we started, the crowd round the inn door, which had by this time swelled to a considerable size, all made the sign of the cross and pointed two fingers towards me.

With some difficulty, I got a fellow passenger to tell me what they meant. He would not answer at first, but on learning that I was English, he explained that it was a charm or guard against the evil eye.

This was not very pleasant for me, just starting for an unknown place to meet an unknown man. But everyone seemed so kind-hearted, and so sorrowful, and so sympathetic that I could not but be touched.

I shall never forget the last glimpse which I had of the inn yard and its crowd of picturesque figures, all crossing themselves, as they stood round the wide archway, with its background of rich foliage of oleander and orange trees in green tubs clustered in the centre of the yard.

Source: Taken from 'Dracula' by Bram Stoker



## READING PAIRED TEXTS (in HSSC)

Reading paired texts is a useful way of improving comprehension skills. Paired texts may present contrasting or similar viewpoints or perspectives. Read each text separately and discuss the given questions in groups. The texts are titled A and B in the examination paper. Text A will be a reading passage. However, Text B will either be a reading passage or an illustrative representation. This is applicable to candidates of HSSC I and II.

### Passage I: Age need not prevent your learning.

One of the commonest misconceptions about the brain is that as you grow older something happens to it so that further attempts to study are difficult. This is true only to such a minute extent that for most of us it is of no practical importance.

You are born with all the brain cells you will ever have; a few of them die from time to time, and are not replaced. Except in the case of a serious brain disease, however, the number that die is negligible.

Impairment of the brain in the aged is associated with decreased circulation of the blood and the precious substances it carries, especially oxygen and glucose. This is probably why old people remember happenings of their youth more vividly than those of the recent past; the youthful memories were implanted when blood circulation was better.

Yet severe mental impairment occurs only in part of the elderly generation. Everyone knows of men and women who are vigorous and alert mentally into the ninth or even the tenth decade of life. Their existence proves that impaired mental powers are not an inevitable accompaniment of the passing years, but a result of disease processes.

Science knows no reason why the average person cannot continue to learn with at least 85 to 90 percent efficiency through the seventh decade and beyond. It would be a fine thing if retired people went back to school or college or began to learn new skills and subjects. On the false notion that they are “too old to learn” millions of elderly people cut themselves off from exhilarating intellectual adventures.

Source: Adapted from Mind Power, A Collection of Articles from Readers’ Digest

## Passage II: Am I Too old to Learn a New Language?

Learning a new language may not always be easy for adults, but there is research to suggest that doing so is beneficial for brain health. As we get older, most of us experience an age-related decline in mental functions such as attention and memory, and in some people the acceleration of this process leads to the development of Alzheimer's disease or some other form of dementia. A number of recent studies suggest that learning a foreign language can slow this inevitable age-related cognitive decline or perhaps even delay the onset of dementia.

In the largest study of its kind to date, researchers at Edinburgh University examined the medical records of 648 Alzheimer's patients in the Indian city of Hyderabad. They found that the bilinguals developed dementia later than monolinguals, by an average of four-and-a-half years.

We know that education can also delay the onset of dementia, but the researchers also took that into account. "A large part of the population in Hyderabad is bilingual but illiterate, so we compared educated bilinguals with bilinguals who never went to school," says lead researcher, Thomas Bak. The study found that dementia was delayed by an average of six years in uneducated bilinguals, compared to four years in educated bilinguals.

"Learning a language later on in life might be more beneficial than learning it earlier, because it takes more effort," Bak continues. "It has parallels with physical exercise – a stroll is good for your health, but not as beneficial as a run."

Learning – and using – a foreign language seems to improve what psychologists and neuroscientists call executive function, which refers to a hypothetical set of mental processes that enable us to vary our thoughts and behaviours from one moment to the next, depending on the task at hand.

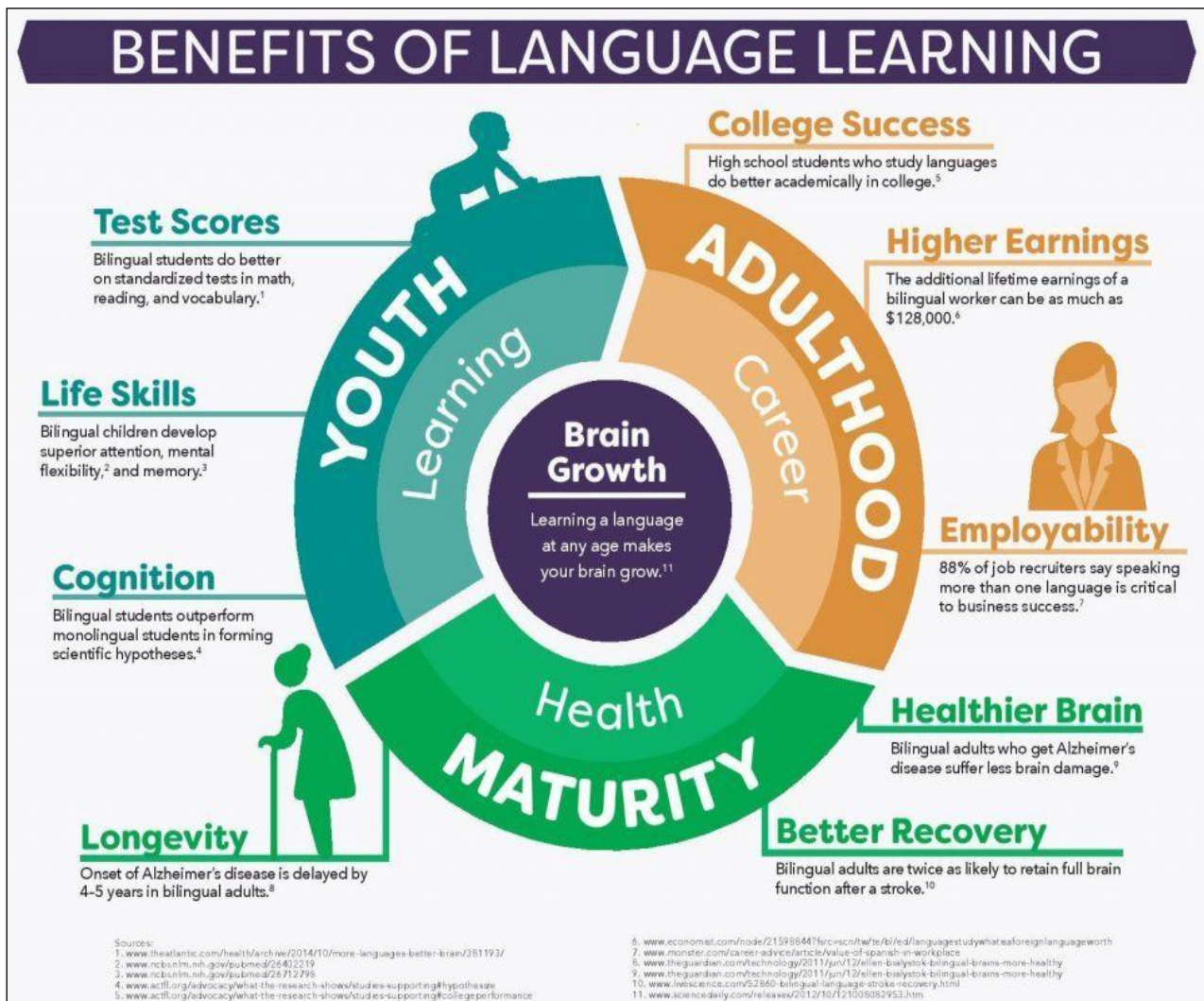
"Using two languages seems to have consequences not only for executive functions, but also for other processes," says Costa. "It's like learning to juggle, the idea being that you have to juggle two balls every time you speak. Some of the work is controversial, so we need more data to have a definite answer."

Despite the difficulties, Bak regards learning foreign languages as fun, and treats the endeavour like a puzzle that has to be solved. "I'm doing it partly to keep my brain active," he says. "When you have some success and can express yourself, it feels like you're using different parts of your brain that you weren't using before."

Indeed, research shows that bilingual children use the same brain regions for both languages if they are learned during childhood, whereas learning a second language later on in life recruits different regions from those involved in using one's mother tongue. And learning a foreign language, much like learning to play a musical instrument, does indeed appear to be a good way of exercising one's brain, and keeping it healthy, throughout life.

Source: Adapted from the article '*Am I Too old to Learn a New Language?*' by Mo Costandi as published on The Guardian e-paper (13<sup>th</sup> September, 2014)

**Note:** An illustration can also be paired with the reading passage as mentioned earlier. See the picture given below for reference. The picture can be on the same theme or a contrasting theme of Text A. This is given in lieu of Passage II:



Source: Taken from <https://www.mla.org/Resources/Advocacy/Infographics/Infographic-Benefits-of-Language-Learning>

### Questions for Assessment of Paired Texts

The following questions are based on the paired texts for reading. Answer the following questions.

### Synthesising Information

- Identify TWO similarities and TWO differences in the two articles that you have read.
- Explore the ways the authors of the texts support their point of view. Mention any THREE ways.

### **Evaluating Two Comparable Texts**

- a. Compare the introductory paragraphs in both the texts. Focus on the following.
  - Which introduction is more informative?
  - Which introduction compels you to read the text further?
- b. To what extent do you agree with the authors of the two texts? Evaluate the authors' views about learning in old age by
  - investigating popular views around you.
  - interviewing some old people around you.

Compose your answer by integrating your research (popular views and findings of the interview) and the main ideas and findings of the texts that you have read. Write a report on your findings.

# **SECTION 5: SAMPLE LETTERS, EMAILS, REPORTS and ESSAYS**

## 1. Letter

### Format

**Note:** The format shared below is of a full block format. Teachers are, nevertheless, encouraged to teach multiple letter writing formats for student's capacity building.

Sender's Address:

Date:

Receiver's Address:

Salutation:

Paragraphing:

Complimentary Close:

### Question 01

Write a letter to your friend commenting on the things that he or she is doing that worry you. Explain why those things are unwise or dangerous and suggest something safer that you and your friend can do together instead.

Examination hall,
ABC Road.
Date: 12, May, 2016.
Dear friend,
I hope my letter finds you in a well state. We are all fine too.
Thank you for the wonderful books you suggested to me.
I loved them all. How is your mother feeling? I hope she is well by now.
In your last letter, you told me about your result. I am not saying that I am dissatisfied, but I am not very happy either. You used to be the best student in your class. In the span of the last few months, your grades are going down, and so is your health. I have heard that you are currently not studying much as you used to do. And you have also started to hang out with a few people who don't particularly have a pleasing reputation. And I was stunned to hear that you are participating in serious and dangerous activities like street racing.
A person is defined by the people he chooses as his friends. Spending your time with those people is doing you no good. In fact, it is changing you, in a really bad way. You do know, that street racing is among the



most dangerous sports. It is threatening to life and it is also ruining your image you worked so hard for. Think about it. Ask yourself if it all is worth the countless nights you stayed up, studying or the extreme hard work you did for your grades? I care for you and this is why I am saying this, stop indulging in these sort of activities and end your friendship with those people. Because it is not worth it. It's not only drifting you away from your bright future, but also from who you really are.

There is no need to cry over the spilt milk. You need to clean up the mess you created. I know you love computers. So we both can enroll in any web-designing institution. We can also opt out for learning new and helpful things like different languages. We can also volunteer for community service like we did last year. There are a million things we can do, which are much better and safer than what you're doing right now.

I hope you will take all my suggestions into consideration and think about what I said. I am looking forward to your reply. Write back soon and till then take care. Good bye.

Yours truly

X-Y-Z.

Source: AKU-EB SSC I Past Paper (Annual Exam 2016)

## Question 02

You have noticed that the quality of your favourite brand of biscuits has been going down since the past few months. In a box of the same biscuits that you recently bought, you discovered something absolutely shocking.

Write a letter of complaint to the company that produces this brand of biscuits. Include the following in your letter:

- Deteriorating quality of the biscuits over several months.
- What did you find shocking in the recently bought packet of biscuits?
- What do you expect the company to do?

Examination Hall

ABC Road

Karachi

13-5-16

Manager of LMN Company

OPQ Road

Karachi

Subject:- To inform you about <sup>why your</sup> ~~the reason~~ brand is becoming unpopular

Dear Sir,

I have been eating ~~bisc~~ biscuits and cookies of your company since many years and have been admiring them, but recently the quality of your company's biscuits have been affected badly.

To my surprise, since the past few months the taste of your biscuits have become really bad. Biscuits that have to be fully filled with chocolate, ~~are~~ now only have a small amount of it. Also, often I have noticed in the past recent months that your biscuits are not very crunchy and instead they are soft and the most shocking part was when I bought a ~~box~~ pack of biscuits last night. In a pack ~~of~~ which should ~~have~~ contain five biscuits, this contained



only four, furthermore these biscuits were also stale and on tasting a bit of it I realized that they were bitter too. In order for your company to not face huge losses because of your deteriorating quality, I would suggest you to stop producing more biscuits and also, if possible, take back the stock you have recently transported to the markets. Then you should reassure the quality of the ingredients you use for baking the biscuits and resolve all issues you find within your manufacturing and biscuit <sup>Packaging</sup> ~~packing~~ department, and ~~with~~ after a few months you should again start your production <sup>with</sup> better quality of biscuits.

I hope you take note of the problems your biscuits have been having recently and soon we will be having new biscuits ~~with~~ <sup>of</sup> much better quality, being manufactured by your company.

Yours sincerely,

X Y Z

Source: AKU-EB HSSC Past Paper (Annual Exam 2016)

## 2. Email

### Format

From:

To:

CC:

Subject:

Dear (Insert Name/ Title),

Paragraphing (The body of the letter could consist of the following):

- Introduction - your reason for writing
- Your views, feelings, or opinions about the matter
- Any other details that need to be added

Complimentary Cloze: (can be added)

### Question

Write an email to a friend of yours who is visiting your city for the first time with his/ her family. Mention the following in your email:

- Which places should be visited and why (at least two places)?
- Where should they stay?
- What the total cost of the visit should be?

To: abc.123@gmail.com
From: xyz.456@yahoo.com
Subject: Hey ho! Hey ho! On a trip you go!
Date: 11 <sup>th</sup> May, 2017
Dearest Friend,
I am dancing a jig right <sup>now</sup> from sheer happiness that you are finally coming to Karachi. I am so excited. I have amazing days planned for us, packed with fun, with not a tinge of boredom! And let the plan unfold!

So I was thinking you could easily stay at my place. Your parents and younger brother can share the guest room and you can sleep with me! I have a list of places you can visit, while in Karachi: Quaid-e-Azam's Mausoleum, to pay your respects (Not to mention it's beautiful), Feroze Hall (Sadequain has painted the roof of the hall and it's amazing), Maritime Museum can also be visited as it has ~~a~~ really interesting things on display (Including a submarine!). For your little brother I thought he could visit Sindbad or Safari Park. Both of them have rides which are extremely <sup>fun</sup> (Also a 3D movie theatre <sup>in Sindbad</sup> and a safari trip in Safari Park).

I talked to my father and he thought that Rs. 50,000 should be more than enough as you ~~to~~ are travelling by train and ~~to~~ staying with us. This amount should cover the travel expenses inside the city and to and from the city as well.

Regards.

P.S: Can't wait to see you xx

Source: AKU-EB SSC I Past Paper (Annual Exam 2017)

### 3. Report

#### Format

To:

From:

Subject: A phrase mentioning the crux or the purpose

Date:

Dear Editor,

(The body of the letter could consist of the following):

- Introduction - your reason for writing
- Your views, feelings, or opinions about the matter
- Any other details that need to be added

Complimentary Close: (can be added)

#### Question

Agriculture sector is the mainstay of Pakistan's economy. However, like many developing countries of the world, Pakistan is faced with the problem of low agricultural productivity.

Write a report for a donor agency which provides funds for developing higher educational institutes in Pakistan and persuade them to provide funds for education related to advances in agriculture. In your report, discuss the following.

- Number of students from your school who are interested in pursuing higher education
- in agricultural sciences
- Benefits it would have for Pakistan's economy
- Recommendations for the donor agency to provide funds

To:- XYZ Newspaper
From:- ABC Reporter
Subject:- Donation for agricultural sector and increase in educational institutions
Date:- 9.5.18
Respected Sir,
Agriculture is the main field for <del>the</del> half of the country. It is the earning of all most of the people in rural areas. You donate for our country. You provide funds for higher education in Pakistan and this is really good for the students. I want you to provide funds for advance education for agriculture sciences, so that people who are interested in this field may join this field.
Pakistan is a developing country which will develop in few areas of agriculture if funds would be provided for advance education for agricultural sciences. Students who study in this field will help to increase

go on when they get more raw materials for the production. It will increase the economy of Pakistan slowly and gradually.

In short, I want to request you to give funds for agricultural sciences field so that students who are interested can work hard and increase the economy of the country.

Yours Sincerely,  
XYZ.

Source: AKU-EB SSC II Past Paper (Annual Exam 2018)

#### 4. Personal Statement:

A personal statement is a written document that typically highlights a candidate's personal, educational, and professional background and experiences. It is often required as part of a college or job application, and its purpose is to give the reader a better understanding of the suitability of a candidate. The personal statement can be written in the form of an essay. However a sample format is given below.

##### **Format**

Candidate's Name here

Name of Institute/ Scholarship for which personal statement is made for

Date

Dear Scholarship Selection Committee:

- Education and Professional Goals
- Responsibilities/ Characteristics
- Relevant Experience
- Financial Need

**Note:** The candidate can mention the Responsibilities/ Characteristics before Education/ Professional Goals. Or relevant headings best suited for the personal statement letter.

Complimentary Cloze

Signature of Candidate

Candidate's Address

Candidate's Contact details (Phone number/ E-mail)

In HSSC I and II, the candidate will be asked to write a personal statement. A question on a personal statement is given below.

##### **Question**

An engineering university has announced admissions for their undergraduate programmes. However, the deadline for the form for the form submission is a month before your exam result is announced and the admission committee will only grant admission on the result.

Write a personal statement to the university's admission committee. In your statement,

- describe TWO reasons why the committee should consider you for the programme regardless of your result.
- discuss TWO ways in which the programme is in line with your future goals.

**Source:** AKU-EB HSSC I Past Paper (Annual Exam 2022)

## Résumé and Covering Letter

Résumé, sometimes spelled resume, is a summary of a person's educational and professional background, skills, and experiences. In HSSC II, the candidates are asked to write a résumé along with a covering letter to develop their professional writing skills. The covering letter will have the same format as a normal letter (see page 46). The contents of the résumé will and must include the following features: Objective/ Personal Statement, Professional Qualifications/ Relevant Experience, Academic Qualifications/ Education, Skills, References.

A sample question on the documentation is given below.

### Question

An advertisement firm is looking for a young freelance (work from home) researcher for their firm. You have suitable academic qualifications and skills for this position; therefore, you are interested to apply for the job.

Write a covering letter and develop a suitable CV to apply for the given position. Include the following details in your covering letter:

- Why you are a suitable candidate?
- How would this job help you in developing your career.

(Note: The content of the covering letter and CV should be realistic, considering that you are a student of Grade XII.)

**Source:** AKU-EB HSSC II Past Paper (Annual Exam 2019)



### Question

Describe an occasion when, at the request of your aunt, you agreed to babysit her three-year-old child for a few hours. Your composition should include the following details.

- How did the child behave?
- How did you respond to the situation?
- What were your feelings?

Option   Q  

Weekend is best part of the whole week. A time every kid waits for. But this weekend, no fun for me. My Aunt, ~~Alberta~~, lives near our house. ~~A~~ Last Wednesday, she came to visit our house. Turns out the whole point of the 'visit' was to ask me if I would babysit her three-year-old devil, James.

I like kids but like everything, there was an exception. In this matter, it was James. He was so mischievous one could hardly believe that a ~~three~~ <sup>three</sup>-year-old kid came up with those tricks he played on us. Once he added salt and pepper to my cake batter. And when I baked it, ..... well, you can imagine what could have happened.

Aunt Alberta asked me, with the ~~of~~ sweetest tone she could muster, if I would baby-sit James or not. My mum was looking at me with the expression ~~was~~ you-would-regret-if-you-say-no. What could I have done? I agreed. Well, after she left, it dawned on me that maybe my mother's reaction would have been better than that little devil.

On Sunday, I went to her house. I had to baby-sit him from 4 in the evening till 9 at night. Such a long time! When I went there she was in the



kitchen. She told me to call her if James went out of control. Also there were snacks in the kitchen for me.

It was alright at the beginning. James just kept himself to his room. And then suddenly I heard his loud cries from his bedroom upstairs. I ran to see what happened. It was his unicorn toy. It had a broken horn. I tried to ~~shut~~ <sup>quiet</sup> him but he won't shut. ~~But~~ Well, ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> succeeded <sup>in telling me</sup>, between sobs, that there was glue somewhere in the kitchen drawers. After a life time of search I found it, fixed the toy and told him to stay quiet.

I went downstairs to watch T.V. My favourite movie was about to start. "This is not bad after all" I thought. Barely 2 min passed when James came. "I want to watch <sup>Cartoons</sup>" he said. I didn't want to watch ~~that~~ but seeing as he was about to cry, I had spend the rest of my time, watching cartoons!

At half past 8, I told him to go to bed. "But what about the bed time story?" he asked, in most innocent voice. Wow! just the thing I wanted. I did not know any bedtime story so I had to make up one, myself. He didn't look really pleased <sup>with it</sup> but I am not much good of a <sup>story-teller</sup> ~~writer~~! The lesson I got? Never babysit any kid. And I mean ANY KID!

Source: AKU-EB SSC I Past Paper (Annual Exam 2015)

**Note:** Student responses reproduced in this guide have not been corrected for grammar, spelling, format, or factual information. These are just to serve as sample answers. Teachers are encouraged to study the E-marking notes shared with the school administration for further information on marking of various writing components.

# **SECTION 6: GRAMMAR**

Why do we insist so much on grammar? Well, maybe we just want to sound smart. But besides that, grammar is important to get the meaning across in a language. For example, if someone says, 'I like eating cherries and babies' as opposed to, 'I like eating cherries, and babies' – there is a LOT of difference!

Every language has its own structures and rules.

Structurally, to write any text, whether it is in English or Urdu, if you put in a lot of words together and throw in a few punctuation marks, you would get a sentence. Then, when we put some of these sentences together, we get a paragraph. Put these paragraphs together and use a few 'cohesive devices' as 'glue' and you have an essay. All of this 'structuring' is governed by certain rules – and these rules are often different across languages.

However, a sentence can follow all the rules and yet not be meaningful.

Example: 'Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.'

Ideally, a text should have both meaning and structure. Some of the structural rules and devices are mentioned below.

## Basic Grammar

### Dimensions of Text:

- Paragraphing and Cohesive Devices
- Sentence Construction and Punctuation
- Verbs
  - Tense
  - Subject-Verb Agreement

A simple English sentence has a subject, verb and object.

**Ali has a cat.**  
**Subject Verb Object**

### Basic Rules of Subject Verb Agreement:

If the 'subject' of the sentence is a singular noun or a 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular pronoun, the 'verb' would end in 's'. In all other cases, the 'verb' will not end with 's'.

- **Has/ Wants/ Lives**
  - He
  - She
  - It
  - Anyone
  - Someone
  - Sarah
  - The teacher

- **Have/ Want/ Live**

- I
- You
- We
- Sana and Sarah
- The teachers

**Note:** This does not apply to past or future tense.

- **Wanted/ Lived/ Had (Will live, Will want, Will be)**

- He
- She
- It
- I
- You
- We
- Sana & Sarah

**Note:** If the sentence is in the present tense, the subject has to agree with the verb.

**Some Common Sentence Structures:**

1. **Simple Sentences** (has at least a verb and subject)

- He studies.
- She is a nice person.
- Sarah happily ran out of the house.

2. **Compound Sentences** (simple sentence + cohesive device + simple sentence)

- The school starts at 8 and ends at 2.
- We will reach Karachi tomorrow but will go to the beach on
- We can either go to the park or to the mall.

3. **Complex Sentences** (dependent clause + independent clause)

- Even though I slept a lot, I am still sleepy.
- I am sleepy even though I slept a lot.
- The party that I told you about starts at 8.

4. **Minor sentences** (don't have verbs)

- Yes.
- Monday morning at nine.
- Always a pleasure.

*GCE English Language: A Study and Revision Course for O levels (pg 176)*

## Sentence Structure and Comma in a Complex Sentence

### 1. Sentence Type 1

- Cohesive Device
  - Dependent Clause , Independent Clause

### 2. Sentence Type 2

- Cohesive Device
  - Independent Clause ~~,~~ Dependent Clause

- **Dependent clause:** The part of a sentence that doesn't have a verb and cannot exist on its own (except as a minor sentence).
- **Independent clause:** The part of a sentence that has a verb and can exist on its own.

#### Examples:

- Type 1: *Due to the darkness, I could not see.*
- Type 2: *I could not see due to the darkness.*

#### Some cohesive devices are always followed by a comma:

- Therefore,
- As a result,
- Hence,
- In comparison,

#### Others are not:

- Since

#### Cohesive Devices

Addition	Contrast	Result	Cause and Effect	Exceptions
And	However	Hence	If	Although
Moreover	On the other hand	Therefore	Because	In Spite of
In addition to	In contrast	As a result	Since	Despite
Similarly	Where as	Thus	Unless	Even though
Furthermore	On the contrary	So	As	Unless

### Further Reading for Grammar:

- **Advanced Grammar – writing complex sentences:**  
[https://www.theibsc.org/uploaded/IBSC/Conference\\_and\\_workshops/2010\\_Workshops/WEBER\\_Write\\_Way\\_to\\_Teach\\_Grammar\\_PPT.pdf](https://www.theibsc.org/uploaded/IBSC/Conference_and_workshops/2010_Workshops/WEBER_Write_Way_to_Teach_Grammar_PPT.pdf)
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- <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/verb-tenses/>
- <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/grammar-basics-what-is-subject-verb-agreement/#:~:text=Subject%2Dverb%20agreement%20is%20the,number%20and%20sometimes%20the%20person.>

## Assessing Grammar through Cloze Passages

**a. Sample Cloze Test 01:** Cloze test focuses on contextual and grammatical accuracy. This is a sample cloze test for English Compulsory examination. The sample of assessing the cloze passage section in Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exams is given below.

**Note:** The cloze passage section is assessed through multiple choice questions (MCQs) at the SSC level.

When you imagine a desert, you probably think of a very hot place covered with sand. Although this is a good description for many deserts, Earth's largest desert is actually a very cold place covered 1 \_\_\_\_\_ ice that is Antarctica.

In order for an area to be considered a desert, it must 2 \_\_\_\_\_ very little rainfall. More specifically, it must receive an average of less than ten inches of precipitation—which can be rain, sleet, hail, or snow—on the ground every year. Antarctica, the coldest place on earth, (3) been an average temperature that usually falls below the freezing point. And because cold air 4 \_\_\_\_\_ less moisture than warm air, the air in Antarctica does not hold much moisture at all. This is evident in the low precipitation statistics recorded in Antarctica...Because Antarctica gets so little precipitation every year, it is considered a desert.

Source: Adapted from an article on [https://englishforeveryone.org/PDFs/Level\\_6\\_Passage\\_3.pdf](https://englishforeveryone.org/PDFs/Level_6_Passage_3.pdf)

1. The preposition best suited to fill blank 1 is
  - A. **with**
  - B. for
  - C. on
  - D. in
2. The word BEST suited to fill blank 2 is
  - A. **receive**
  - B. record
  - C. contain
  - D. conceive
3. The verb that can replace the underlined word labelled as 3 is
  - A. **has**
  - B. was
  - C. have
  - D. is
4. The word that will fill blank 4 is
  - A. **holds**
  - B. prepares
  - C. permeates
  - D. formulates



**b. Sample Cloze Test 02:** The sample of assessing the cloze passage section in Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) exams is given below.

**Note:** The cloze passage section is assessed through a constructed response question (CRQ) at the HSSC level as given below.

Baked or fried, boiled or roasted, as chips or fries. At some point in your life, you have probably eaten a potato. Delicious, for sure, but, the fact is, potatoes have played a much more significant role in our history than just that of the dietary staple we have come to know and love today.

There are hundreds of different breeds of potatoes, and 1 \_\_\_\_\_ turns out that beneath that yellow or brown or purple or red skin, they 2 \_\_\_\_\_ quite different chemistries.

Potato was first cultivated in South America and was 3 \_\_\_\_\_ to Europe by the Spanish. Europeans simply didn't want to eat it as they considered potato dull and tasteless. So instead of consuming them, they 4 \_\_\_\_\_ potatoes as decorative garden plants.

More than 200 years would pass before the potato caught on as a major food source throughout Europe, though even then, it was predominantly 5 \_\_\_\_\_ by the lower classes. However, beginning around 1750, and thanks at least in part to the wide availability of inexpensive and nutritious potatoes, European peasants 6 \_\_\_\_\_ greater food security no longer found themselves at the mercy of the regularly occurring grain famines of the time, and so their populations steadily grew.

As a result, the British, Dutch and German Empires rose on the backs of the growing groups of farmers, labourers, and soldiers, thus lifting the West to its place of world dominion.

However, not all European countries 7 \_\_\_\_\_ empires. After the Irish adopted the potato, their population dramatically increased, as did their dependence on the tuber as a major food 8 \_\_\_\_\_.

Aided by the influx of migrants, Europe then 9 \_\_\_\_\_ a large, sustainable, and well-fed population who 10 \_\_\_\_\_ capable of manning the emerging factories that would bring about our modern world via the Industrial Revolution. Hence, potato has played a significant role in the Industrial Revolution.

Source: AKU-EB HSSC II Past Paper (Annual Exam 2018)

Possible Answers:

1. It
2. Have
3. Introduced/ brought
4. Used
5. Eaten/ consumed
6. With/ having/ possessing
7. Sprouted/ developed
8. Source/ item/ staple/ crop
9. Had
10. Were

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