Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

**Test: Merchant of Venice (Act 1 Scene 1), Nine Gold Medals,**

**Old Man at the Bridge**

**Std IX Set A**

**Marks 20 30min**

**Answer Key**

1. The bridge, described here, is a pontoon bridge. It is made on a floating structure like a flat bottomed boat. Though the other people were crossing the bridge and moving ahead, the old man sat there without moving and seemed too tired to walk any further.
2. The cat can take care of itself and is supposed to have nine lives. The doves are supposed to be symbols of peace and are expected by the narrator to fly away which would be the case when war is on). The goats are the animals he is worried about. Goats are supposed to be symbols of sacrifice and in this case too they are being sacrificed without any fault.

3. The merchant vessels of Antonio are described as signiors and rich burghers of the flood. It seems their movement is like a pageant of the sea as they overpeer the petty traffickers which are the smaller boats. It seems that they do curtsy to Antonio’s vessels when they fly by them with their woven wings.

4. A gudgeon is a fish which is supposed to be foolish and doesn’t require any effort to catch. Similarly impressing people’s opinion is a very simple task and doesn’t require any special effort.

5. The most important concern that Bassanio had was to come fairly off from the great debts that he had taken. He says that he had lived a prodigal life and had been gagged because of it.

6. The exploding of the pistol is compared to the runners. No sooner was the pistol fired to signal the beginning of the race than the participants started running. They ran with such zest that it seemed they too exploded like the pistol. Thus the poet has used the comparison.

1. When the youngest boy fell down while running, his dream and hope of winning was destroyed. The boy had put in a lot of hard work to train himself for weeks and months in order to win the race but all in vain. The term ‘dashed in the dirt’ means that his chance of winning and fulfilling his dream fell into the ground just like he had fallen.