

Challenging Comprehension Practices

For
O
LEVEL

52

Challenging
Passages
With
Answer
Keys



Project Editor: Mahwish Ahmad

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Preface

Compiling a comprehensive book is a daunting task that requires careful consideration of various factors, including passage length, depth, and complexity, as well as the inclusion of challenging vocabulary and sufficient material for summary writing. After an extensive search, we have curated a selection of passages, both original and adapted from past papers, to meet the requirements of the new syllabus.

We hope that these passages will provide students with ample practice in navigating the new pattern of comprehension papers and refining their comprehension skills.

Mahwish Ahmad

email: mahwishahmad900@gmial.com

CHAPTER 2

PASSAGE 1

Read Text A, Treasures in the Baul, and then answer Question 1 and Question 2.

Text A : Treasures in the Baul

1. Before I proceed, let me explain what a baul is. It is a wooden trunk made of two compartments where old folks store their clothes. The first compartment is a shallow one and stores underwear and other small things. The second compartment is deeper so it can hold bigger garments. Camphor balls keep away the rats and cockroaches.
2. My mother had a baul. It was her hope chest. 5
3. I was only 13 years old when Mama died. Father told me that after giving birth to my youngest brother the previous year, she had become very sickly. Yet she went on with the usual household chores. It was my role to see to my five siblings, whose ages ranged from one to ten years old. I saw to it that they were properly bathed, clothed and fed. 10
4. Not wanting to worry us, Mama carried on with her usual calm disposition, never faltering in her speech or in her steps. Still, we noticed her sudden loss of weight and paleness.
5. Being an optimist, Mama had strong faith in God. We would have our morning "promenade," as she called it, praying the rosary as we went along. Our home - in Barangay Sagpon, Albany province, in central Philippines - was a stone's throw from the church, so after our walk, we would attend Mass. 15
6. During one of these walks Mama casually told me about her baul. She said it contained her burial dress and some treasures she was leaving for me. However, she explicitly told me that I should only open it in the event of her death. She handed me the key of the baul for safekeeping. 20
7. Her words didn't have much of an impact on me. Not having experienced death in our family, I thought that it was nothing to be reckoned with.
8. As days went by, Mama's health did not improve. Gradually she became weaker and weaker. 25
9. One day, I saw her sewing a brown dress by hand in spite of her condition. She was adept at sewing and needlework. It was from her that I learned all these things.
10. In spite of all the medications, her condition became worse. The doctor, who visited regularly, diagnosed lung infection. On her final day, a Thursday, she woke up in the middle of the night. We found her profusely sweating and struggling to breathe. But her mind was clear and lucid. 30
11. She called us one by one - my father, my brothers and sisters, my maternal and paternal grandparents and myself - to ask for forgiveness. She also told me that, being the eldest, I had to take care of my siblings and love them. She finally breathed her last breath after the priest gave her Holy Communion. 35

12. My father, who had never been away from Mama, was inconsolable in his grief. Immediately after she died, he seemed to be lost in time, not knowing what to do. God must have given me the strength and the courage to take action.

13. I went to my father and told him about Mama's burial dress in the baul. He broke into tears, for how long I cannot remember. He must have come to his senses at some **40** point because he eventually started making preparations for the wake and the burial.

14. Obeying my mother's request, I took the key and hurried to the baul, which was kept in a storeroom. I was apprehensive; a feeling of mysterious expectancy overcame me. I wondered if a genie, like the one in Aladdin's lamp, would spring forth when the baul was opened. **45**

15. As the key rattled in the lock, the lid lifted with a melodious ring. The room was filled with the scent of camphor, reminiscent of clothes stored for ages. There on top of the first compartment was Mama's burial dress. It was the brown dress I had seen her painstakingly sewing by hand.

16. I felt a tug in my heart. Mama must have imagined herself wearing it on her deathbed. **50** Optimist that she was, she still had a premonition that death might come to her any time. So she prepared to face the Lord in proper attire.

17. Occupied with thoughts of the funeral, I quickly removed the dress and closed the baul without looking any further. After the burial, I could not contain my curiosity; I went back to the baul to see what else Mama had left for me. **55**

18. There, underneath bed linens at the bottom of the second compartment, I found dozens of hankies - some embroidered by her own hands, others fancy ones - fans made of silk and paper, and bottles of perfumes. Were they the treasures that she had lovingly set aside for me?

19. That day marked the beginning of my fondness for all these things. I would rather lose **60** a dress than lose a hanky. In my free time I embroider hankies. I collect fans. I make rag dolls, which I give to my grandchildren.

20. I am nearly 90 years old but my love for these things has never waned. To some they may seem trivial, very material things, but to me they are the symbols of Mama's love, mementos too sweet to forget for they bring poignant memories of a tender, loving **65** mother. My mother is still with me when I daub her favourite scent, jasmine.

21. My memory fails me now, but there is a line in a song, which says, "If you lost your mother, you lost the best of all."

Section: A

❖ Comprehension and Use of Language ❖

Question 1

(a) **Using your own words**, explain what the text means by 'baul'. (line 1) [1]

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.....

(b) Give another word for 'promenade'? (line 14) [1]

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.....

(c) What was mother adept at? (line 26) [1]

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.....

(d) What was the effect of the medication? (line 28) [1]

.....
.....

(e) How did the author's father feel after her mother's death? (line 36–37) [1]

.....
.....

(f) What preparations were made by the father? (line 40) [1]

.....
.....

(g) Give **one** word which means memories. (line 46–47) [1]

.....
.....

(h) What were the writer's emotions on seeing the brown dress? (line 50) [1]

(i) Give **two** details revealing her mother's character. (line 53-55) [2]

(j) **Using your own words**, explain why did the writer go back to the baul. (line 53–55) [1]

(k) Give **two single words** that show the contrast between the outlook of others compared to the writer's outlook. (line 63–66) [2]

(I) Explain **using your own words** the author's different feelings about her parents. Give **three** details from anywhere in the text to support your answer. [3]

[Total: 16]

Question 2

(a) Read this extract from the text:

'Not wanting to worry us, Mama carried on with her usual calm disposition, never faltering in her speech or in her steps. Still, we noticed her sudden loss of weight and paleness. Being an optimist, Mama had strong faith in God.' (lines 11–14)

What does the writer want to suggest to us about the situation at this point in the story? [1]

.....
.....
.....

(b) Explain why the writer say that death was nothing to be 'reckoned' with? (line 23)

[1]

.....
.....

(c) What **two** impressions does the writer convey to the reader in the sentence:

'Obeying my mother's request, I took the key and hurried to the baul, which was kept in a storeroom. I was apprehensive; a feeling of mysterious expectancy overcame me. I wondered if a genie, like the one in Aladdin's lamp, would spring forth when the baul was opened.' (lines 42–45) [2]

.....
.....
.....

(d) Read this sentence from the text:

'Occupied with thoughts of the funeral, I quickly removed the dress and closed the baul without looking any further. After the burial, I could not contain my curiosity; I went back to the baul to see what else Mama had left for me.' (lines 53–55)

What effect does the writer suggest about the daughter's feelings by using the phrase 'contain my curiosity' to express what she felt at this point? [2]

.....
.....
.....
.....

(e) Identify **one** example from the text below of how the writer uses language effectively to convey the daughter's feelings:

'I am nearly 90 years old but my love for these things has never waned. To some they may seem trivial, very material things, but to me they are the symbols of Mama's love, mementos too sweet to forget for they bring poignant memories of a tender, loving mother. My mother is still with me when I daub her favourite scent, jasmine.

My memory fails me now, but there is a line in a song, which says, "If you lost your mother, you lost the best of all.' (lines 63–68)

Explain the impression the writer creates in the example you have identified [3]

example

explanation

.....

.....

.....

.....

[Total: 9]

PASSAGE 2

Read Text B below and then answer Question 3.

Text B : Insecticide

1. Cocoa is a rather new crop in Sabah: The first plantings were made in 1956. Large clearings were made in the forest, a few trees being left to shade the cocoa. Almost immediately several varieties of branch-borers, the larvae of moths, appeared, together with a tiny borer which cracked nearer the ground, ringing the tree. Among the trees under two years old, upto 20% were killed. In 1959, insecticides were applied in high concentration still the borers continued to destroy crops.. Meanwhile, various leaf-eating caterpillars, aphids, and mealy-bugs made their appearance. The sprayers returned to the attack, adding other insecticides to their armament. The coverage was 'very heavy'. 5
2. The branch-borers seemed to thrive on this: by 1961, one new tree in every six was attacked every month. Now two leaf-eating caterpillars showed up - one of them had been known to attack only coconuts before - followed by a plant-hopper. By July the most serious outbreak of all occurred: this time it was bagworms of several species. 10
3. Bagworms construct for themselves a bag of silk and sit inside, only their heads showing. When danger threatens, they retreat inside and close the top. This protects them very effectively from insecticides and, since they keep their eggs in the bag too, it also protects the eggs. They showed almost complete resistance to every insecticide - victory for the bagworms. In addition to what they actually eat, they chew up large amounts of leaf to make the bags, with the result that the damage to the trees is colossal. By late 1961, there was a big area of bare and dying trees, and it was spreading. Furious spraying knocked out one of the caterpillars, but left the bagworms laughing. Picking them off by hand was tried in desperation, but this was found to be ineffective and costly. 15
4. At this point, someone had the brilliant idea to stop spraying. Could it be that the broad-spectrum insecticides were knocking out the predators, which attack these pests more effectively than they were knocking out the pests? 20
5. Almost at once, the cocoa trees were covered with whitish cocoons as scores of parasites attacked one of the caterpillars, which by June had declined to a point where it was negligible. In April and May it became evident that the plant-hopper was also disappearing. By August it had gone, and in this month a decline in bark-borings was noticed. On opening up some of the borings, it was seen that a wasp was preying on the branch-borers. By the end of the year, they too had ceased to be a destructive force. 25
6. This released enough labour to treat the ring-bark borers by injecting dieldrin directly into their tunnels. At the same time it was found that these borers were coming from certain forest trees nearby which were heavily tunneled. These were then destroyed and the two measures together eliminated this pest. There now remained only the smug 30

little bagworms. A selective insecticide was found which killed about three quarters of them, and the trees began to put on new leaves. In 1963 it was possible to abandon this form of treatment, because a parasitic fly was then keeping them in check. In the five years following none of these pests reappeared, and, on the strength of this, the 40 neighbouring commercial estates were urged to stop spraying also, with the same result. Only on one estate, where the spraying programme was maintained, did infestation continue.

- As this story shows, it is courting trouble to engage in cultivating large areas under a single crop - monoculture it is called. If a pest gets in, it is liable to spread rapidly and cause widespread destruction; if the crop is an essential one, like wheat or rice, the result may be famine. It is simply a case of putting all one's eggs in a single basket. 45
- People still labour under the delusion that a pest - or a human disease - can be eliminated without causing adverse reactions elsewhere. They fail to realize the connectedness of the universe in which we live. 50

50

Section: B

ఈ Summary and Short response కాంటోన్మానం

Summarise required information

Question 3.

(a) Summarise how the use of the broad-spectrum insecticide further harmed the plantation and what methods and the results incurred after the control of pests, according to Text B.

You must use continuous writing (not note form).

Use your own words where appropriate.

Avoid copying long sections of the text.

Your summary should be no more than 150 words.

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

[20]

(b) Imagine you are a farmer, and your friend is faced with a major insecticide problem. Your friend is visiting you and asking you for advice on how to tackle the problem. what is your expert advice to your friend?

Give your answer to your friend's question, using information from the text.

Friend's question: A lot of insecticides are attacking my cocoa plants; what do you think I should do to be rid of them?

Your answer:

Your answer:

[5]

[Total]: 25]

ANSWERS

CHAPTER 2.

Passage 1.

1. (a) It is a wooden trunk made of two compartments where old folks store their clothes.

(b) Walk

(c) Sewing and needlework

(d) Her condition became worse / worsened.

(e) He was inconsolable.

(f) For the wake and the burial.

(g) "Reminiscent"

(h) The writer was deeply moved.

(i) She was an optimist.

She was not afraid of death.

Courageous (either two)

(j) She could not control / hold back her desire to find out what the baul contained.

(k) "Trivial"

"Momentos"

(l) I felt tug in my heart: **emotional pull / heartfelt reaction**

The day marked the beginning of fondness for all these things: **attachment / affection**

Father was inconsolable in his grief / broke into tears: **Sadness / devoted father**

2. (a) Her mother balanced health struggles, shielding her family and projecting strength, relying on faith and optimism for resilience.

(b) The writer emphasises death's complexity, unpredictability, and the fact that it defies easy understanding or calculation in the context of human life and existence.

(c) **Anticipation/Excitement:** The "mysterious expectancy" hints at excitement, akin to anticipating a genie's magic, fostering curiosity and wonder about the baul's contents.

(d) **Apprehension / Nervousness:** Mixed with excitement, the writer admits slight apprehension, hinting at a blend of nervousness and curiosity about the baul's contents.

The phrase "could not contain my curiosity" implies an intense, uncontrollable eagerness. It emphasizes her strong desire to explore the baul despite deciding against it earlier, revealing a deep emotional connection to uncover her mother's legacy.

(e) **The symbols of Mama's love / mementos too sweet to forget / poignant memories of a tender, loving mother:** These emotive phrases express the daughter's sentimentality and the profound significance the items hold in her heart.

I daub her favourite scent, jasmine: Daubing her mother's favorite scent, jasmine, adds a sensory dimension to the daughter's memories. It illustrates her attempt to keep her mother's presence alive by engaging with something that evokes memories and emotions tied to her mother.

If you lost your mother, you lost the best of all: Strengthens the emotional impact by providing a universal sentiment about the profound loss of a mother. This reinforces the depth of the daughter's feelings about her mother's importance in her life.

CHAPTER 2.

Passage 2.

3. (a) (Indicative Reading Content: Students may refer to the following key points in summary)

How the use of broad-spectrum insecticides harmed the plantation:

- Initial pest resistance despite high concentrations of insecticides
- Emergence of new pests like leaf-eating caterpillars, aphids, mealy-bugs, and plant-hoppers, which further damaged the crops.
- The most serious outbreak involved bagworms, which were almost completely resistant to all insecticides. They caused colossal damage by chewing large amounts of leaves to make their protective bags.
- It killed the natural predators that could have kept the pest population in check, besides pests.
- Labor and cost inefficiency

Methods and results after controlling pests:

- Cessation of spraying resulted in cocoa trees to be covered with cocoons of parasites that attacked the caterpillars, significantly reducing their population by June.
- Natural predation resulted in decline of plant-hoppers and branch-borers.
- Targeted treatments like injecting dieldrin directly into the tunnels of ring-bark borers resulted in eliminating and reducing the source of infestation.
- Using a selective insecticide that targeted bagworms resulted in killing about three-quarters of the bagworms, allowing the trees to recover and grow new leaves.
- Introduction of parasitic method-controlled bagworm population, making it possible to abandon insecticide treatments by 1963. None of the pests reappeared in the following five years.
- Urging neighbouring commercial estates to stop spraying resulted in experiencing the same positive outcomes, while those that continued spraying faced ongoing infestations.

(b) You should:

- Stop using broad-spectrum insecticides.
- Encourage natural predators.
- Use manual treatments for specific pests.
- Use only selective insecticides.
- Destroy infested nearby trees.

CHAPTER 25**PASSAGE 1**

Read Text A, The Hospital, and then answer Question 1 and Question 2.

Text A : The Hospital

1. The night before my baby's operation I lay awake anxiously; in the morning I packed her pitifully small requirements and we went to the hospital. She cried when they took her away. The world had contracted to the small size of her face and her clenching, waving hands; the poignancy was intolerable. I went away, and walked around outside the hospital for hours. When I went back at the appointed time, the senior nurse told me that the operation had been successful and that Octavia was well. I could not believe that a mere recital of facts could thus change my fate; I stood there dumbly, wondering whether she had got the wrong name, the wrong data, the wrong message. When I got round to speaking, I asked if I could see her, and they said to come back in the morning, as she was still unconscious. Such was my nervousness that I did not ask again 10 to see her. I went home and wept copiously.
2. It was only then that I began to be preoccupied with certain details about which I had not previously dared to think. Would there be a nurse with Octavia at all times? Would they feed her properly? Earlier these things had seemed trivial, but now their importance swelled in my mind. Because the threat of fatality had been removed, life seemed to 15 have gone back to normal. It was the strangeness more than the pain, I thought, that would afflict her, for she liked nobody but me, and strangers she disliked with noisy vehemence.
3. When I went round in the morning, the senior nurse told me that Octavia was comfortable. Summoning some courage, I asked to see her, but was told that was impossible. 20 'She will settle in more happily if she doesn't see you,' she said. I didn't like the sound of that word 'settle'; it suggested complete inactivity. 'I'm afraid that for such small infants we don't allow any visiting at all,' she continued. Octavia had never been settled in her short life, and I pictured her lying there in a state of lethargy. Furthermore, it was now imperative to see her. Already, we had endured the longest separation of our 25 lives, and I began to see it stretching away, indefinitely prolonged. Why would they not let me see the child? Had the operation not been a success?
4. The senior nurse showed me the surgeon's report. Although it was nothing but a mass of technicalities to me, I fell better; for all the senior nurse knew, I might have had enough medical knowledge to understand the report and she would not have taken that 30 silly risk. By this time I could tell that she considered my behaviour to be tedious, and I left.
5. But I had been outside the hospital for only a few moments when I thought of my baby's possible distress, and I went back inside. Two junior nurses greeted me nervously, repeating the earlier message, but I told them I had no intention of not seeing my baby, 35 Their voices hardened. They had that whole building behind them and I had nothing behind me except my intention. Just then, the senior nurse returned. 'Well, well, you're

back again,' she said. She took my arm and began to push me towards the door. At first I was unable to resist her physical propulsion, but then she took hold of my elbow and started to exert greater pressure, so I started to scream. I screamed very loudly, 40 shutting my eyes to do it, and listened in amazement to the deafening noise. Once I had started, I could not stop. I stood there, motionless, screaming, whilst they shook me and yelled that I was upsetting everyone.

6. Through the noise I could hear things happening and I felt I had to keep doing this until they let me see her. Inside my head it was red and black and very hot. After a 45 while I heard someone shouting above the din: 'For goodness sake, tell her she can see her baby.' I instantly stopped and opened my eyes. I looked at the breathless circle surrounding me: the surgeon himself looking white with anger; the senior nurse crying; the junior nurses looking stunned. It was as though I had opened my eyes on a whole new narrative in which I myself had taken no part. But I had no interest in their story; 50 I wished to know only my own. 'Of course you can see the baby,' said the surgeon, kindly. 'I will take you to see her myself.'

Section: A

❖ Comprehension and Use of Language ❖

Question 1

(a) **Using your own words**, explain 'the world had contracted to the small size of her face'. (line 3) [1]

.....

(b) **Using your own words**, explain what the text means by 'inactivity'? (line 22) [2]

.....

(c) Elaborate why did the author stood there "dumbly" when she met the senior nurse? (line 7) [2]

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(d) Give **two** details which worries author about Octavia when she went home? (lines 12–18), according to the text. [2]

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-

(e) Why "life" seemed to have gone normal? (lines 15–16) [1]

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-
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(f) (i) How did the junior nurse greeted the author? (lines 34–37) [1]

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-
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(g) (i) Explain "they had that whole building behind them and I had nothing behind me except my intention? (lines 36–37) [1]

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-
-

(ii) Explain why was the surgeon looked "white with anger"? (line 48) [1]

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(h) Explain using your own words, the author's different worrisome feelings.

Give **three** details from anywhere in the text to support your answer. [3]

[Total: 16]

Question 2

(a) Read this extract from the text:

'At first I was unable to resist her physical propulsion, but then she took hold of my elbow and started to exert greater pressure, so I started to scream' (lines 38–40)

What does the writer want to suggest to us about the situation at this point in the story? [1]

(b) Give reason why the writer used the words 'it became "imperative" to see Octavia?' (line 25)

「 1 」

(c) What **two** impressions does the writer want to convey to the reader in the sentence:

'It was the strangeness more than the pain, I thought, that would afflict her, for she liked nobody but me, and strangers she disliked with noisy vehemence.'
(lines 16–18) [2]

.....

.....

.....

(d) Read this sentence from the text:

'For goodness sake, tell her she can see her baby.' (lines 46–47)

What effect does the writer suggest about the situation by using the word 'For goodness sake' to describe it? [2]

.....

.....

.....

(e) Identify **one** example from the text below of how the writer uses language effectively to convey her feelings.

'She took my arm and began to push me towards the door. At first I was unable to resist her physical propulsion, but then she took hold of my elbow and started to exert greater pressure, so I started to scream. I screamed very loudly, shutting my eyes to do it, and listened in amazement to the deafening noise. Once I had started, I could not stop. I stood there, motionless, screaming, whilst they shook me and yelled that I was upsetting everyone.' (lines 38–43)

Explain the impression the writer creates in the example you have identified. [3]

example

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.....

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explanation

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.....

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PASSAGE 2

Read Text B below and then answer Question 3.

Text B : Shopping

1. Markets, bazaars, corner shops, high street stores or out-of-town retail centres – wherever you live, shopping plays some part in your life, and the hours available for this common activity will vary. But do extended shopping hours have a positive or a negative effect on society? 5
2. Extending the opening hours of shops has many advantages. People do not have to rush to the supermarket after a hard day at the office, checking their watches to see how much time they have to buy the evening meal for the family. If a shop is open for a restricted number of hours per week, say forty, then one set of employees is sufficient to run it, but extended opening hours mean that more people are needed to work in the store, thus providing an income for them. This can be particularly beneficial for students, who are able to work for a limited period to earn some money without compromising their 'studies. Families can also benefit: parents, usually mothers, can work a few hours part-time in the local supermarket when their spouses are not at work. Not only does this provide additional income for the family; it can also avoid the costly and sometimes complicated childcare arrangements which will be necessary if both parents work the same hours. Extended opening hours mean more income for the shop owner, who will not miss out on a potential sale because the shop is shut. 10
3. Keeping shops open longer spreads the load for the shopping centre, as not all the potential shoppers are arriving at the same time, or fighting for a limited number of parking spaces. People have more time to browse when it suits them, and so shopping can become a form of relaxation, giving rise to the term 'retail therapy'. In modern times there has been a rise in the number of covered shopping malls, which are usually open for longer than the conventional highstreet stores. These malls offer under one roof a wide range of merchandise – from clothes, to food, to electronic equipment – and so there is increased availability of goods in these virtually round-the-clock outlets. 15 Because these malls are normally modern and bright, they offer an attractive day out for families, and make shopping a valuable family activity. 20
4. But extended shopping hours are sometimes under fire from critics who argue that, far from promoting family life, the 'shop till you drop' mentality actually decreases the opportunities for family activities. Indeed, the very expression 'shop till you drop' suggests silly, robot-like behaviour. Children miss out on valuable recreational excursions with their parents, who take them on endless shopping trips instead of, for example, to an art gallery. If mum is working in the supermarket in the evening, chances for family bonding, such as simply eating dinner together, or watching television, have been removed. Children are not taken to run around parks and playgrounds because they are shopping instead. There is nothing more depressing than seeing the long faces of parents 30 35

pushing baby buggies and trailing youngsters round yet another computer shop. The resulting lack of exercise perhaps contributes to increasing childhood obesity in some parts of the world.

5. Extending shopping hours also has a detrimental effect on employees, whose own family life is interrupted or compromised because one or other of the family members, possibly including teenage students, is working at any given time. Employers suffer too; they cannot always be in the shop, and will need to appoint an employee as deputy in their absence, which might cause problems. If they decide that this is impossible they may choose to close the shop, but they will lose business to the shops which have stayed open. Moreover, as people have a fixed amount of money to spend shopping, the idea that they spend more because shops are open longer is a myth in any case, and so employers do not ultimately benefit. 40
6. Finally, if people know that the shops are open constantly, they will waste the time that they might have spent doing more useful things. 50

Section: B

ఈ Summary and Short response ఈ

Summarise required information

Question 3.

(a) Summarise the advantages and disadvantages of extended shopping hours, according to Text B.

You must use continuous writing (not note form).

Use your own words where appropriate.

Avoid copying long sections of the text.

Your summary should be no more than 150 words.

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

(b) Imagine you are one of the sales persons in a shopping mall.

You are interviewed by a local news programme about the long shopping hours.

Give your answer to the interviewer's question, using information from the text.

Interviewer's question: Some local people think that the government should extend shopping hours and malls should remain open till midnight. What is your opinion and why?

Your answer:

[5]

[Total: 25]

ANSWERS

CHAPTER 25.

Passage 1.

I. (a) It signifies the writer's intense emotional concentration amid anxiety, where the world seemed insignificant compared to the vulnerability of the baby's small face. The writer's focus centers sharply on the child's well-being.

(b) It suggests a state of quietness, lack of movement and a subdued condition

(c) • A moment of speechlessness or stunned silence, highlighting the profound impact of the positive news.

- experienced anxiety and uncertainty, found it challenging to process the change in circumstances.

(d) • The author worried whether Octavia would have constant nursing care and proper feeding, as these details gained importance after the operation.

- The author feared Octavia might be inactive and lethargic without her presence, troubled by the nurse's use of the word "settle."

(e) After the successful operation, the phrase implies a return to routine life, free from the imminent threat, signifying relief.

(f) i. Reiterating the previous message

- ii. Their voices hardened

(g) i. It conveys that the junior nurses possess the support and authority of the entire hospital, symbolised by "that whole building." In contrast, the author feels vulnerable, relying solely on personal determination to confront the institutional authority and assert their right to see their baby, creating a palpable power struggle within the medical setting.

- ii. It was a reaction to the disruption caused by the author's loud screaming.

(h) The author's worries about Octavia's care, questioning constant nursing and proper feeding, reveal profound parental concern: **anxiety about care**
Post-surgery, once-trivial details about Octavia's care gain significance, showcasing heightened sensitivity and emotional impact for the author: **heightened sensitivity**
Desperation to see Octavia after surgery is clear in their insistence, reflecting deep parental concern and emotional turmoil: **desperation and determination**

2. (a) It depicts a tense situation as the author, unable to resist the senior nurse's pressure, starts to scream, thus showing intense emotional conflict and emphasises the author's determination to see the baby.

(b) It shows writer's urgent, unavoidable need to see Octavia, emphasizing utmost importance and necessity.

(c) **Strangeness as a source of affliction:** Octavia's distress is linked to the unfamiliarity of the situation, highlighting the emotional impact of post-operative changes.
Strong bond: Octavia's exclusive liking for the author accentuates a deep bond, contrasting with her strong aversion to strangers.

(d) Implies the speaker's frustration and urgency, emphasising the critical importance of allowing the author to see the baby. It conveys a plea, accentuating the heightened emotional state and underscoring the urgency in the situation.

(e) **"Unable to resist," "exert greater pressure," and "physical propulsion":** a power struggle between the writer and the senior nurse / the writer's resistance and the nurse's forceful actions
"Scream," "very loudly," and "deafening noise": the writer's escalating desperation / to shut their eyes intensifies the emotional turmoil / the distress of the situation.
"Motionless, screaming": a sense of helplessness / the writer's inability to stop screaming despite being shaken and yelled at underscores / the overwhelming emotional state and the feeling of being out of control.
"Yelled that I was upsetting everyone": writer's awareness of the disturbance they are causing / writer's emotional turmoil

CHAPTER 25.

Passage 2.

3. (a) (Indicative Reading Content: Students may refer to the following key points in summary)

Advantages & Disadvantages of Extended Shopping Hours :

- Extended shopping hours offer convenience and flexibility for shoppers.
- Longer hours create more job opportunities, especially for students and part-time workers.
- Additional income for families through part-time work.
- Increased income for shop owners and reduced childcare costs.
- Extended hours spread out shopping times, reducing congestion and making shopping a leisure activity.
- Critics argue that extended hours can negatively impact family life and promote excessive consumerism.
- Children may miss out on recreational activities due to extended shopping hours.
- Extended hours can disrupt employees' family life and create staffing challenges for employers.
- Extended hours do not necessarily lead to increased spending as people have limited budgets.
- Modern shopping malls offer a wide range of goods and are attractive family destinations.
- Lack of exercise due to extended shopping hours may contribute to childhood obesity.

(b) Yes, longer hours can provide convenience for shoppers who have busy schedules.

- Extended hours can boost the economy by increasing sales and revenue.
- More working hours can create additional job opportunities.
- But being a sales person, I believe that extended hours can reduce family time and negatively impact family life.
- We will get less time for ourselves and lack of exercise can cause health issues among workers.