

About



ENGLISH LANGUAGE (YEARLY)

About **Comments on Essays**

The compositions are written by caring individuals who have endeavoured to write at the level of 'O' level students.

Comments on Essays by qualified writers reveal in detail the techniques and skills of penning good essays.

About **Explanation To Comprehension Passages**

It is intended to help the students understand better the actual meanings of the passages.

Period	2010 to 2025
Contents	June & November Paper 1 & 2, Worked Solutions
Form	Year By Year
Compiled for	'O' Levels
Special features	Comments on Essays, Explanation to Comprehension Passages

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C O N T E N T S

‘O’ Level English Language 1123 (Yearly)

Revised Syllabus



June **2010** Paper 1 & 2

November **2010** Paper 1 & 2



June **2011** Paper 1 & 2

November **2011** Paper 1 & 2



June **2012** Paper 1 & 2

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June **2013** Paper 1 & 2

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June **2024** Paper 1 & 2

November **2024** Paper 1 & 2



June **2025** Paper 1 & 2

November **2025** Paper 1 & 2

uNe 2024

PaPeR 1

Read the following passages carefully before you attempt any questions.

Answer **all** questions.

Mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be penalised in any part of the paper.



EXPLANATIONS TO THE PASSAGE

Read Text A and answer Question 1 and Question 2

Text A: Where it all began

In this extract from a story set a long time ago in Italy, the writer has just started as a kitchen worker in a grand palace. One of his duties is to transport heavy blocks of ice from the ice house in the palace gardens to the kitchen.

- 1 The first time I did this, the curiosity of playing with the frozen slabs – of seeing how they slid away from me like eels, how I could ride them down the slope, or best of all shoot them at the kitchen wall from a distance and watch them shatter into jewel-like shards – enchanted me so much that, in a state of childish enthusiasm, I neglected my other duties.
- 2 When Ahmad, my master, found me in the courtyard, surrounded by ruined ice blocks, he showed none of the displeasure which I knew my ill-discipline warranted. ‘Come with me,’ he said without expression.
- 3 He took me to the ice house and ushered me in, apparently closing the door tight shut behind me. Inside, in pleasant contrast to the stifling heat outside, it was the temperature at which water becomes ice. Initially, though dressed in a thin shirt and short breeches, I stood congratulating myself on avoiding the task of cleaning up. After a few minutes, I began to shiver. The cold felt like a flame. A few more minutes and I was shaking from the searing cold. My confidence crumbled. Feebly, I leant against the door, which surprisingly swung open to reveal Ahmad waiting patiently outside.
- 4 I never again played with the ice.
- 5 Each night, exhausted, I crawled into the kitchen to sleep next to the huge open fireplace the cooks used to roast meats. The cooks grew used to me. I watched them as they worked: observing how they pureed fruits to intensify the flavours; how they extracted the perfumes of flowers to flavour creams and liqueurs. But when I suggested to Ahmad that we could use these techniques, he waved me away. ‘We are engineers, not cooks,’ he would proclaim. ‘Cooking is women’s business. We know the secrets of ice.’

**Paragraph 1**

The first time I played with the frozen slabs, I was captivated by how they slid, shattered like jewels when thrown, and distracted from my other responsibilities in my excitement.

**Paragraph 2**

When Ahmad found me amidst the broken ice blocks, he showed no anger and simply gestured for me to follow.

**Paragraph 3**

Ahmad led me into the ice house, closing the door behind me. Inside, the cold was sharp and intense, contrasting the heat outside. At first, I felt relieved, but soon the freezing temperature overwhelmed me, and I sought the door, finding Ahmad waiting patiently.

**Paragraph 4**

I never touched the ice again.

**Paragraph 5**

Each night, exhausted, I slept by the large open fireplace in the kitchen, where the cooks’ roasted meats. Over time, I observed their techniques: how they pureed fruits to intensify flavours and extracted flower perfumes to infuse creams and liqueurs. When I suggested using these methods to Ahmad, he dismissed me, insisting that engineers deal with ice, not cooking.

- 6 Indeed, these were ancient secrets known to few, passed down within two families who supplied frozen ices to the royal court. Some of this knowledge was contained in stained leather-bound notebooks, but most was kept only in Ahmad's head, in a set of rules he had no desire to question.
- 'To five measures of crushed ice, add three...' he would recite.
- 'Why?' I would say.
- 'Why what?'
- 'Why must the ice be crushed?'
- 'What does it matter? Stir the mixture clockwise...'
- 7 I had been working for Ahmad almost two years before I dared to ask what the ices we made tasted like. 'What does the taste matter to you, child?' answered Ahmad.
- 'Sir, I've seen how the cooks try their dishes as they make them. I think I'll understand better how to make these ices if I know how they are meant to taste.' We were making an ice flavoured with a tempting syrup of small, sweet oranges.
- 'Very well,' Ahmad said casually. 'Try some.'
- 8 Before he could change his mind, I grabbed a spoon, scooping out a little and putting it to my lips. Ice crystals cracked and crunched against my teeth, dissolving on my tongue with a sparkling sensation. I gasped with delight, then pain, as the cold gripped my throat. I spluttered. Ahmad's lip curled with amusement.
- 9 'Now, perhaps, you understand this is not a dish for us. We are here to entertain, boy. We are like singers, or actors, for the wealthy and the great. No one but them will ever be able to waste so much expense on something that melts to nothing.' But, once I'd got over the initial strangeness, I found I could not forget that extraordinary flavour, nor the cold, frozen grittiness. It was as if the ice itself was enticing, daring me on. From then on, without Ahmad knowing, I tasted every ice confection we made.
- 10 I sometimes wondered why Ahmad shared his knowledge so readily with me, but soon realised that to him I was simply a workhorse, a creature incapable of reason. He taught me what he knew, not because he wanted to share his secrets, but because he wanted to share the labour. And so I learnt the subtle art of more complex water ices: 'sorbetti', in which the syrups themselves were frozen, transforming magically to mounds of glittering crystals; and 'sher-bets', the most difficult and enchanting of all, expertly infused with fragrant cardamom, and resembling refrozen snow.



EXPLANATIONS TO THE PASSAGE



Paragraph 6

Guarded for generations, the secrets of supplying frozen ice to the royal court were entrusted to two families. While some were written in ink-stained leather journals, the rest lived in Ahmad's memory, bound by unchallenged traditions. Explaining the process, he insisted on five parts of crushed ice combined with three others. When questioned why the ice must be crushed, Ahmad dismissed it, emphasizing strict adherence to stirring clockwise without questioning.



Paragraph 7

After nearly two years of working for Ahmad, I finally asked what the ices we made tasted like. Dismissing my question, he asked why it mattered. I explained that tasting might help me improve, and, while making orange-flavoured ice, he casually allowed me to try some.



Paragraph 8

Before Ahmad could stop me, I quickly scooped some ice and tasted it. The crystals crunched, melting into a sparkling sensation. I gasped in delight, but the cold gripped my throat, making me splutter, while Ahmad smiled with amusement.



Paragraph 9

Ahmad explained that such indulgence was not meant for people like them, likening themselves to entertainers for the wealthy. Only the rich could afford such a fleeting luxury. Despite his words, the taste and texture of the ice haunted the narrator, who secretly tasted every creation from then on.



Paragraph 10

I wondered why Ahmad taught me, but soon realised I was just a labourer to him. He shared his knowledge not to reveal secrets, but to lighten his work. That's how I learned to make intricate ices like sorbetti and cardamom-infused sherbets.

 Read *Text A*, *Where it all began*, and answer
Question 1 and Question 2.

Question 1

- (a) In paragraph 1, what did the writer enjoy the most about moving the ice blocks the first time he did this?

[1]

- (b) Using your own words, explain what the text means by 'I neglected my other duties.' (line 6)

[2]

- (c) In paragraph 3, how did the writer feel at first about being in the ice house?

Give **two** details from the text to support your answer.

writer's feeling _____

details _____

[3]

- (d) Explain what the writer was thinking when he leant against the door and it 'surprisingly swung open'. (line 19)

[1]

- (e) From paragraph 5, identify **two** techniques used by the palace kitchen cooks that the writer thought could be useful to improve the flavour of the ices he is making with Ahmad.

- _____
 - _____
- [2]



ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. (a) The most thrilling part was firing at the kitchen wall, seeing them explode into jewel-like shards, scattering into tiny fragments.
- (b) He ignored / forgot and failed to complete his tasks which he was supposed to do.
- (c) Writer's feeling : excitement, curiosity, enthusiasm.
Details: The writer initially felt joy and curiosity about the ice blocks, captivated by how they slid and enjoyed shooting them at the kitchen wall. This reflects his sense of wonder and playfulness.
Upon entering the ice house, he felt pleased to avoid cleanup, noting he was "congratulating myself on avoiding the task." This shows a brief sense of accomplishment.
- (d) He had not anticipated the door to move so effortlessly, and since it was closed, he found himself trapped inside.
- (e)
 - The pureed fruits which intensified the flavours.
 - The extracting perfumes of flowers to flavour creams and liqueurs.

- (f) Give **two** reasons why the secrets of ice had remained 'known to few'. (line 31)

 [2]

- (g) In paragraph 7, the writer asked Ahmad what the ices they made tasted like.

- (i) What reason did the writer give Ahmad for wanting to know?

 [1]

- (ii) Suggest the real reason the writer was asking about the taste of the ices.

 [1]

- (h) Explain **using your own words** the writer's different feelings and opinions about Ahmad while he was working for him. Give **three** details from anywhere in the text to support your answer.

 [3]

Total : [16]

Question 2

- (a) Read this sentence from the text:

'Ice crystals cracked and crunched against my teeth, dissolving on my tongue with a sparkling sensation.' (lines 50–52)

What effect does the writer suggest about the sensation of the crystals dissolving on his tongue by using the word 'sparkling' to describe it?

 [2]



ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

- (f) • The secrets were shared between two families and kept hidden from outsiders.

- Only a small portion was written in notebooks, with the majority stored in Ahmad's memory.

- (g) i. He will understand better how to make and improve them only if he knows how they are meant to taste.

- ii. He was curious to taste them and is tempted by the syrup.

- (h) • **"ill-discipline warranted":** The writer was surprised initially / unsure at the start and expected Ahmad to show 'displeasure'.

- **It was 'two years before I dared to ask what the ices ... tasted like':** The writer realised Ahmad was strict, was scared of him as Ahmad punished him by 'closing the door tight shut'.

- **"We are engineers (not cooks)" / 'Cooking is women's business':** The writer thought Ahmad was proud and boastful.

2. (a) It seemed pleasurable and enjoyable, more of a magical, tingling, popping explosion. Overall, it was exciting and surprising.

(b) Read this extract from the text:

'But, once I'd got over the initial strangeness, I found I could not forget that extraordinary flavour, nor the cold, frozen grittiness. It was as if the ice itself was enticing, daring me on. From then on, without Ahmad knowing, I tasted every ice confection we made.' (lines 58–62)

What does the writer want to suggest to the reader at this point in the story?

[1]

(c) Explain why the writer uses the word 'creature' rather than 'boy' in the expression 'a creature incapable of reason.' (line 65)

[1]

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

'And so I learnt the subtle art of more complex water ices: 'sorbetti', in which the syrups themselves were frozen, transforming magically to mounds of glittering crystals; and 'sherbets', the most difficult and enchanting of all, expertly infused with fragrant cardamom, and resembling refrozen snow.' (lines 67–71)?

[2]

(e) Identify **one example** of how the writer uses language effectively to convey his feelings once he begins his double life, in this extract from the text:

'So began a period in which I lived a double life. By day, I followed Ahmad's instructions dutifully. But by night I was a kind of alchemist, the kitchen my laboratory as I experimented wildly, without method or purpose, trying increasingly outlandish and ridiculous combinations of flavours and ingredients. I froze soft cheeses, vegetable juices, even soups, hoping to chance on something – some method, some key – something that could unlock the deepest, frozen secrets of ice cream.' (lines 82–89)



ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

(b) It marked a turning point in their relationship. He was growing bolder and had chosen to deliberately ignore his master, a risky move. His addiction to the ices was intensifying, and he knew he'd be in serious trouble with Ahmad if he were discovered.

(c) Ahmad was dismissive of him, considering the writer as inhuman, lacking the power of thought, inferior or worthless.

- (d)
- One had to be really skillful to make them.
 - It was unique and extraordinary.
 - It seemed wizardry.
 - It was beautiful, appealing, mesmerising and sparkling.
 - It smelt lovely.

JUNE 2024 PaPeR 2

(2 hours)

Answer both *Section A* and *Section B*.

Section A: Directed Writing

Read *both* texts and answer *Question 1*.

Text A

Santina, 14 years

2

Status

Photo

Log in

2 comments

Like

Comment

Share

S

Santina

3d

Nothing is better than a trip to the zoo! It is a great chance to see lots of animals that you might not be able to see in the wild without expensive overseas travel. A visit to the zoo is also the perfect family outing for all ages. Compared to many other family activities, it's great value for money, because you can spend all day there, and it's fun too. The zoo is also a great place for a school trip because activities can be linked to what is being studied in class.

As well as the chance to see lots of exotic animals, zoos can help to raise awareness of environmental problems which are causing some species to become endangered. This can help visitors to change any shopping or eating habits which may have a negative impact on these endangered species.

Zoos help to protect animals and can also give scientists the ability to study animal behaviour in a way that would be impossible in the wild. Often, zoos work together to share knowledge about the animals in their care and to help protect endangered species. The money you pay to visit helps to fund all this.

So, why not visit the zoo today? You're sure to have a great day out!

Like

Comment

Share

Text B

Raj, 15 years

3

Status

Photo

Log in

3 comments

Like

Comment

Share

R

Raj

1d

A trip to the zoo might be a great day out, but have you ever thought about what it is like for the animals that live there? Zoos are often overcrowded, with lots of animals kept close together. They have much less space than in the wild and this can lead to changes in their behaviour.

Some animals are taken from the wild to be kept in a zoo. These animals know what it is like to be free and to live in their natural environment, so they will never be happy. They often live much shorter lives than if they stayed in the wild.

Staff in zoos often don't have specialist knowledge about the animals they care for – this can mean that animals are treated badly.

Zoos are businesses and their main aim is to make money. They put human entertainment first, and their animals often have poor living conditions. While some zoos make a lot of money, others rely on money from the government. Surely there are better ways of spending public money than on zoos?

So, while a trip to the zoo might be a great day out for you, it certainly isn't great for the animals you go to see.

Like

Comment

Share

Question 1

You have read two comments about zoos on an online blog. You have been asked to take part in a classroom debate on whether or not zoos should be banned.

Write a **speech** for your classmates about whether or not you think zoos should be banned.

In your speech you should:

- evaluate the ideas and opinions in **both** texts
- give your own views about whether or not zoos should be banned, based on what you have read in the texts.

Base your speech on what you have read in **both** texts but be careful to use your own words.

Address both of the bullet points.

Begin your speech with 'Good morning, everyone'.

Write about 250 to 350 words.

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

[25]

Section B: Composition

 *Answer one question*

 *Write about 350 to 450 words on **one** of the following questions.*

 *Up to 10 marks are available for the content and structure of your answer and up to 15 marks for the style and accuracy of your writing.*

EITHER**Descriptive writing**

2. Describe the scene at an important cultural event both before it starts **and** during the event. [25]

OR**Descriptive writing**

3. Describe the scene at a local park or public garden both early in the morning **and** in the afternoon. [25]

OR**Narrative writing**

4. Write a story in which someone unexpectedly receives a very nice gift. [25]

OR**Narrative writing**

5. Write a story which includes the sentence: 'We opened the door and excitedly stepped inside.' [25]



Section A: Directed Writing

"Good morning, everyone,

Today, I want to discuss whether zoos should be banned, a topic that has sparked significant debate. There are strong arguments on both sides, so it's important to carefully consider these perspectives.

Supporters of zoos argue that they offer a unique opportunity to see a wide variety of animals without the need to travel abroad. Zoos are an affordable and enjoyable way for families to spend time together, providing fun and educational experiences for all ages. They are also popular destinations for school trips, offering students a chance to learn about animals and ecosystems in ways that go beyond textbooks. Moreover, zoos play a crucial role in raising awareness about endangered species. By showcasing these animals, zoos educate the public about conservation issues and the importance of protecting wildlife. Additionally, zoos contribute to scientific research by studying animals and sharing knowledge that can help with species conservation efforts worldwide.

On the other hand, there are compelling arguments against zoos. Critics highlight that keeping animals in captivity often leads to significant behavioural changes. Animals that would normally roam vast territories in the wild are confined to small enclosures, causing stress and unnatural behaviours. Zoos are also criticised for prioritizing human entertainment over animal welfare, with the primary focus sometimes shifting to drawing crowds rather than ensuring the well-being of the animals. Opponents argue that public funds spent on zoos could be better used to preserve natural habitats and support wildlife conservation in the wild, where animals can live freely. There is also concern that zoo staff may not always have the expertise to properly care for the wide variety of species, which can result in reduced life expectancy and overall happiness for the animals.

I believe that while zoos offer educational and conservation benefits, the ethical concerns are too significant to ignore. The stress and unnatural living conditions imposed on animals for human entertainment are major drawbacks. Instead of keeping animals in captivity, we should focus on protecting their natural habitats and supporting conservation efforts in the wild. Therefore, I believe that zoos should be phased out in favour of more ethical alternatives that prioritise animal well-being.

Thank you."

(361 words)



COMMENTS ON THE ESSAY

A good speech must be clear, meaningful, and confident. Keep it concise, engaging, and conversational, with a semi-formal tone. Start with impactful language, elaborate points with purpose, and connect with your audience. Use jargon and logic for motivation or ensure relevance for informational content. Conclude with a strong call to action to leave a lasting impression.



Section B: Composition

2. Describe the scene at an important cultural event both before it starts and during the event.

The sun begins to dip below the horizon, casting a warm golden light over the bustling streets leading to the heart of the city. It's the evening of the annual Lantern Festival, an event deeply rooted in cultural tradition. Before the festival begins, the atmosphere is charged with anticipation. Vendors line the streets, their stalls brimming with colorful lanterns, handcrafted trinkets, and an array of delicious street food.

The scent of grilled meat and sweet pastries fills the air, mingling with the soft chatter of families and friends who have come to witness the spectacle. Children, dressed in vibrant traditional attire, tug at their parents' hands, their faces glowing with excitement as they choose their lanterns for the evening. Musicians set up in the corner, tuning their instruments and exchanging smiles, knowing they will soon fill the air with melodic tunes that will resonate through the night.

As the sky darkens, a hush of anticipation falls over the crowd. The festival begins with a ceremonial lighting of the first lantern by an elder, a figure of great respect in the community. The crowd watches in silence as the lantern is gently released into the air, its soft glow soon followed by hundreds of others. The sky transforms into a sea of floating lights, each lantern carrying a wish, a prayer, or a memory.

The musicians begin to play, their music weaving through the crowd, adding to the magic of the moment. People dance gracefully, their movements synchronized with the rhythm, creating a mesmerizing flow of energy. The sounds of laughter and joy echo through the night as families release their lanterns, watching them rise higher and higher until they blend with the stars.

The festival is more than just a visual spectacle; it's a celebration of community, heritage, and hope. As the night deepens, the air is filled with a sense of unity, and for those few hours, everyone is connected by the shared experience of this cultural tradition.

(329 words)



COMMENTS ON THE ESSAY

Descriptive writing includes sensory details, figurative language, a dominant impression, precise language, and careful organisation. Begin with an introduction that establishes purpose and sets an appropriate tone. The body should include sensory, factual, and figurative details, thoughts, feelings, and sequential ideas with smooth transitions.

NOVEMBER 2024

PAPER 2

(2 hours)

Answer both *Section A* and *Section B*.

Section A: Directed Writing

Read *both* texts and answer *Question 1*.

Text A

Hamza, student

I love my mobile phone and couldn't give it up. It helps me to feel safe when I'm walking to school because I know I can call my parents if I need them. They are happier to let me go out on my own because they can contact me at any time.

When I'm in school, it is easy to use my phone to do research, so I don't have to waste time going to the library or carrying around lots of heavy books. I can also set reminders on my phone for when homework is due, and I have a picture of my timetable as my screensaver, so I am always on time for class.

Photography is one of my hobbies and I like to use my phone to take photos and videos while I'm out and about. I can edit these quickly and share them with my friends. I really enjoy being able to look back on these memories.

I also think that the fact that my phone is expensive has made me more responsible. I know that my parents won't pay for a new one, so I am always careful not to lose it.

I definitely couldn't live without my phone!

Text B

Rachna, student

Although I have a mobile phone, I choose not to take it to school. I don't want to be distracted in class – checking my messages and social media accounts, instead of focusing on the lesson. This distraction isn't just a problem in class; students trip on steps and walk into doors while looking at their phones rather than watching where they are going.

Although mobile phones can be useful for schoolwork, they limit creativity when students look for ideas on the internet rather than thinking of their own. It is also difficult for teachers to know when a student has used their phone to help them do the work and this makes it hard for them to know what help students need.

Mobile phones are expensive and when students lose them, this causes a lot of stress. Having such expensive items in school encourages envy, which can lead to friendship issues.

My biggest concern is that it is easy to become addicted to your mobile phone, which has a negative impact on learning and on relationships with peers. Without mobile phones, students are free to fulfil their academic potential and to build long-lasting friendships – the two most important aspects of school life.

Question 1

Your school principal is considering banning mobile phones in school and has asked students for their views. You have read the views of two students.

Write an **email** to your principal saying whether or not you think mobile phones should be banned.

In your email you should:

- evaluate the ideas and opinions in **both** texts
- give your own views about the proposed ban, based on what you have read in the texts.

Base your email on what you have read in **both** texts but be careful to use your own words.

Address both of the bullet points.

Begin your email with 'Dear Principal' and supply a suitable ending.

Write about 250 to 350 words.

Up to 10 marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to 15 marks for the quality of your writing. [25]

Section B: Composition

 *Answer one question*

 *Write about 350 to 450 words on **one** of the following questions.*

 *Up to 10 marks are available for the content and structure of your answer and up to 15 marks for the style and accuracy of your writing.*

EITHER**Descriptive writing**

2. Describe the scene in your home when your family is preparing to go away somewhere together, for example on holiday or on a day trip, **and** when they arrive home. [25]

OR**Descriptive writing**

3. Describe **two** very different people, apart from your parents, who are important role models for you. They could be relatives, friends or famous people. Say why they are important to you. [25]

OR**Narrative writing**

4. Write a story in which someone receives an unexpected telephone call with some exciting news. [25]

OR**Narrative writing**

5. Write a story which includes the sentence: 'What do you mean, you forgot it?' [25]



Section A: Directed Writing

Subject: Perspective on Mobile Phone Usage in School

Dear Principal,

I hope you are well. I am writing to share my thoughts on the proposal to ban mobile phones at school, based on the views of my peers in Texts A and B.

In Text A, Hamza argues that mobile phones are important for safety, allowing him to contact his parents if needed, which also makes them more comfortable with him walking to school alone. He also points out that phones make research faster and more convenient, saving time. The ability to set reminders and keep a timetable on his phone helps him stay organized, which is crucial for academic success. Additionally, Hamza enjoys using his phone for photography, capturing memories and pursuing hobbies, which many students, including myself, can relate to.

Text B, on the other hand, presents Rachna's concerns about mobile phones. She argues that phones can be distracting, particularly in class, as students may check messages or social media instead of focusing on lessons. She also mentions that phones can limit creativity, as students might rely on the internet for ideas rather than thinking for themselves. Rachna also highlights the stress caused by losing an expensive phone and the potential for envy among students. Additionally, she raises the issue of phone addiction, which can harm both learning and personal relationships.

Considering both views, I believe mobile phones should not be banned altogether. While I agree that they can be distracting, they also offer significant benefits, such as safety, organization, and personal interests. A compromise could be the best solution-introducing stricter guidelines on phone use during school hours, allowing them for emergencies, research, and hobbies, but restricting use during lessons. This would help maximize the benefits while minimizing distractions.

I hope a solution can be found that balances both the benefits and concerns of mobile phone use in school.

Yours faithfully,

Ibrahim Ahmad



COMMENTS ON THE ESSAY

When writing an email, consider the audience, context, and tone. For a formal or semi-formal email, structure it with a clear subject, a focused body, and a concise closing. Avoid slang or informal abbreviations unless writing to close friends. Break down the content into short, clear paragraphs, and use appropriate connecting phrases. Ensure readability with headings or lists. Choose a suitable greeting and sign-off based on the recipient and your relationship.

(316 words)



Section B: Composition

2. Describe the scene in your home when your family is preparing to go away somewhere together, for example on holiday or on a day trip, and when they arrive home.

The morning of our family trip is always a whirlwind. The house buzzes with excitement and urgency. In the kitchen, the smell of coffee mingles with the faint scent of toast as my parents rush to prepare breakfast. My father double-checks his travel bag for essentials – phone charger, passport, wallet – while my mother makes sure no one forgets anything. She's reminding my younger sister to pack her favorite books and adjusting the suitcase one last time.

Every room is filled with open suitcases and scattered items. Shoes, jackets, and toiletries are strewn across the living room as we all scramble to get everything together. The sound of zippers, bags being stuffed, and clothes being folded fills the air. My younger brother is lost in play, oblivious to the rush, while I try to keep track of everyone's belongings. We each have a task: I pack snacks, my sister handles entertainment for the car, and my brother insists on bringing all his stuffed animals.

As time runs out, the excitement mixes with the pressure of being ready. My mother calls out to make sure we have everything, and I feel a sense of urgency building. In the final moments, there's a rush of goodbyes to pets, last-minute packing, and locking up the house. My father shouts, "Everyone in the car now!" and we spill out the door in a chaotic rush.

The journey to the car is hectic but full of anticipation. Bags, snacks, and a few forgotten items are tossed in the car, and we all chat excitedly about what we are most looking forward to on the trip. The engine hums to life, and with a final glance at the house, we drive off into the unknown.

Returning home after the trip is always a bittersweet moment. The car rolls into the driveway, and the noise and excitement from the journey home slowly fade away. The quiet of home feels comforting after the chaos of travel. The front door opens, and we step inside, greeted by the familiar sights and sounds of home, now a welcoming haven after the whirlwind of our trip.

Tired but happy, we gather in the living room to share stories from the journey. Bags are dropped in the hallway for a moment as we chat about our favorite moments. Slowly, unpacking begins. Clothes and souvenirs are sorted, and my parents get to work on practical tasks like sorting groceries and emails. The house slowly returns to its usual calm, and the day ends with the comforting routine of home, leaving me with a smile as I look forward to our next adventure.

(437 words)



COMMENTS ON THE ESSAY

In descriptive writing, focus on shifting perspectives, from close-up details to distant views, or from detailed to impressionistic descriptions. Set the atmosphere, whether welcoming or foreboding, and consider sensory elements like sight, touch, hearing, and smell. Use contrast, figurative language, and sound devices such as alliteration and onomatopoeia. Link all elements together to create a cohesive, vivid picture of the scene and characters.