

Aga Khan University Examination Board

Notes from E-Marking Centre on SSC I English Compulsory Examination May 2015

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of SSC Part I (Class IX) English Compulsory. It contains comments on candidate responses to the 2015 Secondary School Certificate examination, indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

E-Marking Notes

This report includes overall comments on students' performance on every question and *some* specific examples of students' responses which support the mentioned comments. Please note that the descriptive comments represent an overall perception of the better and weaker responses as gathered from the e-marking session. However, the candidates' responses shared (where deemed necessary) in this document represent some specific example(s) of the mentioned comments.

The following is a description of the tasks and skills required for fulfillment of those tasks.

Question No	Question Type	Skills Assessed
1 (a,b,c,d,e)	CRQs on a reading passage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Literal understanding of a reading text- Inferential understanding of a reading text- Reasoning skills
2 (a,b)	Letter/ Email Writing (informal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ability to write an informal letter/ email to friends/ family- Ability to use accurate sentence structure, connective devices, spellings, etc.- Ability to develop and organise information in a familiar everyday context
3 (a,b,c)	Essay Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ability to develop a piece of writing with appropriate focus, organisation and purpose- Ability to narrate and describe- Ability to use accurate sentence structure, connective devices, spellings, etc.

Teachers and candidates should know that examiners may ask questions that address the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating knowledge, understanding and application skills they have developed by studying the course.

Candidates need to know that the marks allocated to the question are related to the answer space which is a guide to the length of the required response. A longer response will not in itself lead to higher marks. Writing far beyond the indicated space may reduce the time available for answering other questions.

Candidates need to be familiar with the Command Words in the student learning outcomes which contain terms commonly used in examination questions. However, candidates should also be aware that not all questions will start with or contain one of the key words. Questions such as ‘how?’, ‘why?’ or ‘to what extent?’ may also be used.

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

Detailed Comments

Question 1

Question 1 was based on a reading passage. It had five sub-parts. Candidates were required to understand the reading passage and accordingly answer the questions asked on various aspects of the passage. The criteria against which marks were allotted are detailed understanding of the contents of the passage demonstrated appropriately in the responses and authentic interpretation and discussion of different aspects of the passage. The careful reading of a question, or essay topic, is vital if a student is to attain high marks.

The reading passage was an extract from a famous children's novel, 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer'. In the chosen extract, the main character Tom completes a task given to him by his Aunt Polly.

Part a:

Describe Tom's personality with reference to the text.

Most of the candidates answered the question correctly. *Better responses* displayed a clear understanding of Tom's personality. Textual evidences were cited for the identified personality traits. In most of the responses, candidates cited three personality traits and gave at least two textual evidences to substantiate the mentioned personality traits. Most students identified Tom as lazy, clever, thoughtful, and a fun loving person who has an understanding of human nature. Specific textual evidences were cited, some of which were as follows: Tom's desire to go outside and play, Aunt's mistrust and his thoughts about the nature of work and play. A few of the candidates mentioned five personality traits along with five evidences. Both types of responses were considered for full marks.

Example:

Tom is a clever bad boy as he ~~understood~~^{discovered} the great human law but could not fully understand it as he was still amused. Tom seems to be lazy or not a trustworthy person as when he told Aunt Polly that he'd finished his task and she didn't trust him until she saw it with her own eyes. There could be few reasons as he lied in the past since she seem annoyed or he was too lazy to work. Tom seemed to be fun person as he was desperate to go out and play. On the other hand he was also very mischievous since he stole the doughnut.

In *weaker responses* of 1a, candidates mentioned that Tom discovered a great law of human action. However, candidates did not explain what it shows about his personality. Some of the candidates mentioned that Tom spoke truth and he was a good person, and that he discovered something about human nature, however, marks were deducted for the lack of details and textual evidences.

Example:

Tom is discovered a great law of human action without knowing it namely that in order to make a man or boy covet a thing. Tom is a great philosopher and the writer of books.

Part b:

Does Tom appear to be a likeable person? Why or why not?

In *better responses*, candidates displayed their opinion about Tom stating whether he is likeable or not. Opinion swayed in both directions, and both opinions were acceptable. Candidates supported their answers with appropriate reasons for liking or disliking Tom. Mostly, the stated reasons were as follows: Tom was a clever, intelligent, fun loving and adventurous; OR the reasons of disliking him were mentioned as follows: he was a lazy person; aunt is annoyed / mistrustful of him; he works only when he wants. As the question asked for a personal interpretation of Tom's character, both opinions (supported by two reasons) were considered for full marks.

Example:

Tom appears to be a likeable person as he seems to be fun. He being a lazy person but being responsible is another ye. He may not impress the elders much, as he seems to be the mischievous one. And he's also lazy but again he's responsible since he completed his work and even managed to please Aunt Polly. He's a clever boy. And could trick the elders. But at the end of the day he was a nice body who did his chores and listened ~~listened~~ or obey his aunt.

Tom doesn't appear to be a likeable person because he is a lazy person which was as lazy as a turtle and delay everything which he does not like. Tom only made ~~his~~ his wishes to be accomplished and made every one to allow him what he wants to do. He always like playing outside the house and assume work as a burden. According to this he was not a likeable person, and didn't have any ideal personality that a likeable person should possess.

In weaker responses, a few candidates wrote that 'Tom was a good person' and 'Aunt was overcome by the splendour of his achievement'. In weaker responses, candidates mostly displayed lack of understanding of the question. Many of the candidates copied irrelevant text about Aunt Polly enjoying the breeze and sleeping in her chair.

Example

Because Tom is a good personality b/c find 20% of statement is ~~the~~ true and she was the white washed and she was so overcome splendor his achievement.

Part c:

“In order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain.” Explain the meaning of this sentence from paragraph 1. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

In *better responses*, candidates explained the meaning of the mentioned sentence from the passage. Most candidates wrote that it is a part of human nature that we feel greater satisfaction and contentment with those accomplishments that are achieved after quite a bit of hard work. Interesting examples were quoted by the candidates for supporting this stance; a few candidates mentioned that if they study really hard and achieve success, the happiness they feel is far greater. Some mentioned the example of parents’ working hard for upbringing of their children and the contentment they feel upon witnessing their children’s success.

Example:

Yes I agree with this statement. When a person is kept away from what he desires, he urges himself to work harder to achieve his goal. If we make something difficult for a person to attain, his life starts revolving around the motto “Try, try, try and you will succeed”. It is also a saying that ~~keep~~ ‘distance from your goal makes your heart grow fonder’. As said in the saying in the text, if you want somebody to covet a thing, you must make it difficult for him to achieve. Only then does the person realise the true worth and importance of that thing. Thus, this tells us that we need to work hard for what we want to achieve because hard work is the key to success.

In *weaker responses* of question 1c, candidates misunderstood the meaning of the quote and wrote incorrect explanations; for instance, few responses mention ‘it is best to ignore wrong things’, ‘few things are unhelpful’, ‘boys don’t like difficult problems’ etc. However, most of the candidates did mention whether they agree/ disagree with the statement and hence got 1 mark.

Example:

Ans:- The statement means that it is very easy to make the thing but it is very difficult to attain it. I agree with this statement because it is a natural phenomenon. A person can make any thing very easily but he finds very difficulty to attain it.

Part d:

According to the passage, what kind of relationship do Tom and Aunt Polly have? Explain with textual evidences.

In *better responses*, the candidates reflected different perceptions about the relationship/ bond that exist between Tom and Aunt Polly. Few responses mentioned that the relationship between Aunt Polly and Tom was awkward/ uncomfortable. The evidences mentioned were mainly that Aunt Polly did not trust Tom's word which shows Tom has been a troublesome child; she also expected that Tom must have fled from the house; Tom did not like the way he was rewarded. A few other responses mentioned that the relationship between Tom and Aunt Polly was good/ loving but they lacked mutual trust. The evidences mentioned were that even though Aunt Polly did not trust Tom, she rewards him when she sees that Tom has actually finished his work and compliments him as well.

Example:

According to the passage, Tom and ~~his~~ Aunt Polly have a good and pleasant relation. They care for each other. Aunt Polly makes Tom whitewash the fence, in order to let him go to play, because she wants him to become a hardworking boy. When he completes the work, his aunt gives him a treat which tells us that his aunt really loves him and that they are happy with each other. Like a family does, they take care of one another and live happily. Aunt Polly even let Tom go out to play. This also shows that Aunt Polly wants Tom to have fun but to work hard too.

Weaker responses revealed the lack of understanding and depth in the answers. Candidates mentioned Aunt Polly was Tom's aunt and that she was a great person as she used to stop Tom from doing bad things. Lack of specific evidences made students lose marks.

Example

Ans:- Their relationship is ~~not~~ very good. Because the aunt ~~do~~ ~~not~~ trusts Tom. The Tom ~~do not~~ ~~do~~ does all the work which the aunt say him to ~~do~~ do. They have good relations ~~not~~ ~~not~~ and very good.

Part e:

How was Tom rewarded by Aunt Polly for finishing his work? Do you think he likes that reward? If you were in his place, would you like to have such a reward?

Better responses reflected various perceptions of the candidates with which they approached the passage. Few candidates mentioned that Tom was rewarded with an apple by Aunt Polly and he did not show much interest in apple as he 'hooked a doughnut' instead. These candidates also opined that they too would not like to have an apple as a reward; various candidates mentioned that Tom had white washed the fence/ completed his chore meticulously and hence the reward should have been something else/ something which he genuinely likes.

A few of the better responses reflected an altogether different perspective. Candidates mentioned that after completing his chore, Tom finally got the permission to go out and play, this was a reward in itself. Candidates also mentioned that Tom likes this reward and if they were in his place, such a reward would have been received well by them as well.

Both perspectives were accepted and candidates were rewarded with full marks in both cases if all three parts of the question were answered.

Example

Aunt Polly gave Tom an apple of her choice from the closet along with a long lecture about the value and joy of the work that has been done with great passion and effort without committing any sin. I think Tom wasn't much pleased by the reward because when Aunt Polly closed the closet and turned back, he took out a doughnut from the cupboard. If I would be in his place I wouldn't be very happy because rewarding someone for his hardwork with just an apple is unfair. Instead the apple should have been replaced by any other valuable thing.

In *weaker responses*, the candidates copied irrelevant text from the passage; for instance, a few candidates copied the conversation between Tom and Aunt Polly. Some candidates mentioned that 'Tom is thankful to Aunt Polly as she cares for him.' As the aforementioned answers were irrelevant; marks were deducted. Very few candidates mentioned correctly that Tom was rewarded with an apple and later 'hooked a doughnut' but failed to mention that his desire for doughnut means that he does not like apples, hence, such candidates failed to answer the other two parts of the answer. Such candidates scored less marks.

Example

When Polly was splended by Tom's achievement she "crik" open her closet and chose an apple and delivered him. along with an improving lecture she added. and while she was closing the door he hooked a doughnut all by himself.

Question 2 (a, b)

Question 2 had two parts. Candidates had to write an informal letter/ email on either of the given situations.

Part a:

You have recently returned home after participating in a week-long summer camp with the students and representatives of different schools. You have met many students from different cities and befriended them. While unpacking your bag, you discovered that you have mistakenly brought home a book that belongs to one of your friends from a different city.

Write a letter explaining this situation to him/ her. You should:

apologize for the inconvenience caused;

discuss how and when can you return the book

In better responses for Question 2a the candidates

- elaborated on the given situation by mentioning how a book was mistakenly taken. Few candidates mentioned a plausible situation (a book was borrowed for reading and the candidate forgot to return it). A few answers named the book and expressed the usefulness of it; a few others described the contents of the book, how and when the book could be returned was also mentioned.
- used the correct format of informal letters.
- expressed vivid imagination and created plausible everyday scenario.
- satisfied the requirements of the bullet points fully;
- displayed logical progression of ideas within context.
- displayed correct use of subject-verb agreement.
- used accurate spelling and punctuation.

Example:

Option a

Examination Halls

ABC Road,

Karachi.

May 14, 2015.

Dear friend,

Hope you and your family are having a good time together. I am also well here. I anticipate you are having a great time after the summer camp.

I am writing this letter to inform you that while unloading unpacking my bag after returning from the summer camp I found that one of your book was with me. I mistakenly kept it in my bag during departure because of all the hustle bustle going on over there.

I apologize for the inconvenience from the depth of my heart. I know this was one of your favorite favourite book and you would have been very dishearted on losing it.

But you don't need to worry now because your book is safe and sound in my hands. I'll keep there very safely with me until I meet you and return it to you.

It would be very convenient for me if tell me that how should I return your book. Should I post it to your address? or should I drop it at your home when I visit Lahore in a couple of weeks?

I hope you have accepted my apology. I'll pray for your better future and I'm waiting. Hope you have a good day. Reply soon.

Yours truly,

XYZ.

In weaker responses for Questions 2a, the candidates:

- misunderstood the question/ stimuli and wrote irrelevant details; for example: a few responses elaborated the activities of a summer camp and in some other responses the candidates invited their friends to attend a summer camp with them.
- used an incorrect or incomplete format of informal letters.
- used clichés, slangs or internet language.
- wrote incorrect sentence structure with serious grammatical errors.
- used incorrect spelling and punctuation.

Example:

Option a

Examination Hall.

A, B, C

May 13/15/2015

Dear Ali,

It's been a long time, you haven't written a letter everything is correct. How are you I am fine. I am said you I am brought the books mistakenly why because I am not return the bag back home then when can you return the book then when we are go go to the summer camp and I am participate in the summer camp and then this reason is make to return the books at home. you pay the reward at home.

Your's Greind.

XYZ

Part b:

A cousin of yours suffers from an irrational and excessive fear of heights. Your extended family is planning to visit an amusement park at the weekend. You want to convince your cousin to take various rides with you. Write an email to your cousin and give him/ her a few tips to overcome that fear. Explain how the weekend could be fun if he/ she would participate in the activities with everyone.

In better responses for Question 2b, the candidates

- discussed the upcoming trip with their cousin and advised them to overcome the fear. A few creative responses also showed a sequence of details/ events leading up to cultivation of an irrational fear in the mind of their cousin; the responses emphasised on the psychological aspect of the fear and provided useful tips about how that fear could be overcome.
- used appropriate language, adjectives to describe the difficulties and problems.
- displayed correct use of tenses and subject-verb agreement.
- used accurate spelling and punctuation.

Example:

Option b

To: ABC123@yahoo.com

From: XYZ AB@hotmail.com

Date: 14 May 2015

Subject: Tips to overcome the fear of heights.

Dear Cousin

Assalamu'alaikum, how are you? I hope you are fine. We are also fine here. How is the weather in Hyderabad? In Karachi it is very hot. I just got free from my exams and I am so excited about going to the amusement ^{Park} with you next week. In your previous e-mail you told me you were afraid of heights, I found it weird but I would love to help you so that your trip could become unforgettable and enjoyable.

We ~~have~~ ^{still have} still a week to overcome your fear. I would give you ^{some} easy and gradual tips which would help you and you would have ~~fun~~ ^{fun}. 1) Firstly, you don't need to fear because I would be there for you and I would protect you. 2) Secondly, ^{if} you still fear a lot, ^{then} during taking a ride which would be very tall or huge than you should close your eyes and avoid looking down and just enjoy the ride. 3) You could practice climbing a tall building and looking down but you should have a friend or an expert with you too so that he could supervise you. 4) Mostly, you should have confidence in yourself that you can

do it because God is there for you. You should believe in yourself and let it go then you will see you ^{will} have no problem with excessive heights and you would happily climb any building or take any dangerous or extensive ride. I feared heights myself too but ~~to~~ followed these tips and now look I can take any ride I want very easily. My cousin, if you would work on these tips and practice you would definitely overcome your fear because that is when you will enjoy the trip. Usually in amusement parks there are extensive rides and I know our cousins will definitely experience ^{them} so throw out the fear and embark on an adventure or taking rides. I am always there to help you and believe me even the family members will praise you will enjoy a lot and we would have the fun for a lifetime.

My favourite TV show is about to come so its time to say goodbye now. I hope my tips will help you. Hope to see you soon. Do take care of yourself and don't fear anything. Say ~~my~~ hello to your family from my side. Take care. Bye.

Your loving cousin

XYZ

In weaker responses for Question 2b, the candidates

- described the plan of a picnic and how fun it could be if the cousin comes; such responses did not mention enough details about the irrational fear the cousin harbours which was the requirement of the prompts.
- reflected serious and persistent grammatical errors in their essay.

Question 3(a,b,c)

The candidates were directed to write an essay on any of the three choices given. Most of the candidates attempted 3a.

Part a:

Describe an occasion when, at the request of your aunt, you agreed to baby-sit 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?

Most of the candidates attempted this question well. In better responses for Question 3a, the candidates

- showed a clear understanding of the stimuli by using real and imaginary information. Candidates elaborated on the cause(s) which led an aunt of theirs to allot this responsibility to them. Most of the candidates explained the events that took place with the baby in a sequence. A few candidates incorporated humour and dialogues as well. Most essays portrayed a naughty and difficult child; the beginning of the essay (in most cases) was developed in an interesting manner.
- used relevant vocabulary, connectors and cohesive devices.
- displayed correct use of tenses and subject-verb agreement and tenses, except for occasional slips.
- used correct spelling and punctuation.

Example:

Option a

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. 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 ~~two~~^{three}-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 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 mothers 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~~ ^{quiet} him but he won't shut. ~~Well,~~ ^{he} ~~he~~ ^{intelling me} succeeded, 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 ^{Cartoons} Cartoons" 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 didn't know any bedtime story so I had to make up one, myself. He didn't look really pleased ^{with it} but I am not much good of a ^{story-teller} ~~writer~~! The lesson I got? Never babysit any kid. And I mean ANY KID!

In weak responses for Question 3a, the candidates

- showed correct understanding of the prompt; however, expression and language were not up to the mark.
- used clichés, slangs or internet language.
- presented random ideas with no connective devices, the essay lacked any organisation.

Example

Option A

I am telling many occasion, But I like most very this type of occasion. I am agreed and request the adnt. I am agreed to baby sit her three-year-old child for a few hours. the child and baby are ~~the~~ the gifted of god. Baby Brain have to not get Manner. child also not get Manner Because This are small child which gift from by god.

The Baby which are small ~~the~~. Baby are friend and Brother for me. Baby gift from god. I am telling you that I am seen this occasion is that I am agreed and request the adnt. when baby sit her three-year-child for a few hour. The child behave is not good Because the ~~the~~ child slap their baby and child catch the hair of baby. child are small person. It don't have Manner. child fight with baby very easily.

I am telling the situation that baby are small and child also small. we don't take ~~the~~ to sit on the child. Because child baby

Question 3b

On the eve of every festival, the streets come to life as they become a hub for various activities and enjoyment. Describe the sights, sounds and details of one of the streets of your city on the night before a big event or celebration

In better responses for Question 3b the candidates

- mentioned a vivid description of a famous/ decorated street/ a neighbourhood on the occasion of a festival (mostly Eid or Chand Raat celebration). Some of the high scoring responses showed the use of sensory description; candidates mentioned how a street was decorated, how people dressed, what and how many colours beautified the scene, arrangement and taste of eatables, happy chatter/ announcements, etc., interesting similes/ comparisons to describe their situation/ feelings and specific details of that occasion (mostly in a chronological sequence).
- used appropriate adjectives and adverbs to describe the sights, sounds and feelings.
- displayed considerable accuracy in the use of tenses and subject-verb agreement.
- used appropriate vocabulary and correct spellings.
- inserted punctuation marks where needed.

Example:

Option b

Cheers to me for being a part of the Eastern culture one of the most colourful and majestic of all and with all that being a total Desi person doubles up the fun of our traditional festivals. Where everything is just so blindingly colourful and glamorous, everybody is soaked in the spirit of the festival and for once let go of their grievances and losses and are up and about to make up the most ~~of~~ the fun. May it be any festival ~~Chand Raat~~ the mighty 'Chand Raat' or the night of sacrifice 'the night before 'Eid-ul-Azhan' or may it be the day of celebrating independence '14th August' my streets offer the most scenic beauties which are nowhere else to be found. From the fancy lights on our own customized balconies or the group supported lights glimmering on every part of the street making it look like a fairyland. The amazing aromas of delicious food wafting from our house or ~~is~~ just the smile that comes to my face when I see my dress all ready to

worn. The street full of people giving the best examples of our brotherhood and fraternity and making it all look just so beautiful. Sounds mostly of the extreme traffic and ~~often some~~ if its Eid-ul-Azha then the sounds of our beloved cows, goats and sheep and sounds of children who tend to enjoy the festival the most. For me its like watching a ~~Dis~~ Disney Pixar Movie where everything is picture perfect as we all have blended into perfection and loveliness in the spirit of the festival & making it look splendid and a gift to the eyes or actually all this is just beyond ~~words~~ words its like ^{a mixture} infinite happy souls and ~~imagine~~ ^{that} emotions have coloured a picture beyond imagination on a dreamland of colour, perfection and happiness.

In weaker responses for Question 3b the candidates

- showed a limited understanding of the stimuli. Mostly, candidates wrote about a birthday party which they attended which cannot be counted as a festival. Most of the candidates just elaborated how a surprise birthday party was arranged in someone's home, surprisingly there were little or no description of a street/ neighbourhood. The writing resembled a simple narration of an event.
- displayed inaccurate sentence structure.

Example:

Option B

Last year our society celebrated 14 August with very large resources and before two day our society is well decorated and many eco sounds in our society and play 14 august songs and every one is very happy because 14 August is coming and every one is very ~~happy~~ excited because our society do very things in 14 August we do many things in 14 August like play 14 August songs and many things because in 14 August 1947 Quaid-e-Azam gives Pakistan to us and we have an own country after two day 14 August is coming and in our society we play many games, paint with our faces and celebrated

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Question 3c

A noise outside your home awakened you one night. When you went out to see what happened, you found a surprising phenomenon outside your house...

Explain what you saw and how you reacted to the situation

In *better responses* for Question 3c the candidates

- began the essay by outlining a context which was appropriate and relevant to the prompt. They elaborated interesting scenarios which had a vivid description of a dark night, how a unique sound (a low beep, a sharp-pitched siren/ whistle, the sound of an abrupt thunder were a few examples), the candidates mentioned how that sound disturbed the peace and what followed. Usually, the responses had a shock value. A number cited a theft/ robbery or sighting of strange animals/ aliens, a strange dream followed by humorous or serious actions.
- used appropriate sentence structure, tenses and accurate subject-verb agreement.

Example:

Option C

Sometimes in life we face some situations that are not easy to understand. They may be boring, emotional, exciting, adventurous or even horror. Also sometimes we react to some situations very cleverly but sometimes we rush to get the conclusion and even take wrong decisions. One such situation came in my life as well when I reacted immediately without thinking what the situation was all about.

During summer vacations, in June, it was a cold, windy night. Everyone in our house ^(including me) was fast asleep ^{under} their warm, comfortable blankets. Suddenly, a ~~noise~~ ^{sound} broke the ~~pin drop~~ ^{broke the pin drop} silence and awakened me. The noise was of some people talking loudly. It was 4'o'clock in the morning. I went to see what was going on. I saw a number of people, all of them doing some work or drinking coffee or simply talking. I went at the door ^{of my house} and opened it. To my surprise, I saw a group of people just outside my house. On the other hand, some people were crying and others were laughing. Two of them were just talking and three young girls were fighting over a necklace. I was ~~st~~ shocked to see a rollercoaster of emotions at 4 o'clock and just outside my house! Then suddenly a boy came running and took hold of one of the girls' hands. The boy was wearing a fit black shirt with jeans. He took the girl by ^{her} hand and forced her ^{all of} in a car nearby. The girl was shouting and crying for help but ^{all of} the people were

either just staring at her or taking video of this scene. I was shocked. The kidnapper was taking the beautiful girl with him in front of me and I'm just staring at them like all the other people! I immediately ran inside, dialled the police and told them the scene. The police assured that they ~~will~~ ^{would} reach here any minute from then. Until then, the girl was forced into the car and the car sped as fast as the lightning. I was confused. Why ~~was~~ ^{had} the police not shown up ^{at} ~~will~~ ^{yet} now? I ran ^{towards} ~~to~~ my parents' room and woke them up to tell the scene. They also ran downstairs ~~and~~ in their night dress, now shocked by the scene I had told them. Then I heard the screaming sirens of the police cabs. I was very angry and shouted at the police; "Why have you come now? The girl is kidnapped already. And these silly people were just looking at them and making video, instead of helping the girl." As soon as everyone heard that, they started laughing loudly. I was angry as well as confused. Then a man showed me the girl and told that she was safe. My eyes wide open, and mouth also opened. What was all this going on?

My parents told me that they ~~are~~ ^{were} not ordinary people. They ~~are~~ ^{were} T.V directors, writers, producers, actors etc. Now I understood: the kidnapping scene which I thought was real, was actually acting! There was shooting going on and I created a ~~big~~ mess. I also started laughing but in my heart, I was ashamed. But this incident taught me a lesson; "Never react to situations without ^{knowing the} ~~caus~~

In weaker responses for Question 3c the candidates

- failed to address the requirement of the prompt: they mentioned an ordinary incident, i.e. a sudden visit of a neighbour/ cousin, etc. The elaboration of the incident was done without any creative insight.
- displayed serious errors of grammar i.e. tenses were incorrectly used, many words were misspelled etc.

Example:

Option C

A noise outside our home awakened one night. When I went out to see that happened, I found a surprising phenomenon outside our house. I saw a small catten and picked up the catten in my hands and call my small sister as well. We both come back in our room and the the catten is very hungry and she lost her mother also me and my sister give some milk and also some meat and left the catten behind the door. After that the small catten make friendship with us and we give food and milk every day and night.