



ENGLISH
QUESTION BANK
LITERATURE

Name: _____

Date: _____

Class: XII Sec: ____

MY MOTHER AT SIXTY SIX by Kamala Das

- 1 What is the kind of pain and ache that the poet feels?
- 2 Why are the young trees described as 'sprinting'?
- 3 Why has the mother been compared to the 'late winter's moon'?
- 4 What were the fears of the poet as a child? Why do they surface at this stage?
- 5 What are the thoughts of the poet as she is driving from her parent's home to the airport?

AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM IN A SLUM by Stephen Spender

- 1 What is the classroom in the elementary school like?
- 2 What does the world of the slum children consist of?
- 3 The poet suggests that the children of the slums are caught in a web from which there is no escape? Why does he think so?
- 4 How does the world depicted in the pictures on the walls differ from the world of the slum children?
- 5 Why is the map on the wall referred to as a window, which is shut for these children of the slums?

KEEPING QUIET by Pablo Neruda

- 1 What is the 'sadness' that the poet refers to in the poem?
- 2 How can the idea of wars and the vanquished be negated?
- 3 What does the fishermen not harming whales actually symbolize?
- 4 What symbol from nature does the poet invoke to say that there can be life under apparent stillness?
- 5 How, according to the poet, can our state of mind be changed if we maintain silence and suspend activity for a while?

A THING OF BEAUTY by John Keats

- 1 What makes human beings love life inspite of troubles and sufferings?
- 2 What image does the poet use to describe the beautiful bounty of the earth?
- 3 What is the 'endless fountain' a reference to? What are its effects?
- 4 What is it that makes humans forge deeper bond with the earth and with life?
- 5 Why does the poet say that 'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever'?

A ROADSIDE STAND by Robert Frost

- 1 What did the occupants of the stand put up for sale and what was the response to this from the people driving past?
- 2 What do the social service agencies and the governments wish to do for the rural poor and why does the poet think that their actions smack of double standards?
- 3 What was the plea of the folk who had put up the roadside stand?
- 4 What is the sadness that the poet refers to? What is it that the occupants of the stand hope for?
- 5 The poet sympathizes with the rural poor. How has this sentiment been expressed in the poem?



INDIAN SCHOOL NIZWA - WORKSHEET

AUNT JENNIFER'S TIGERS by Adrienne Rich

- 1 How do 'denizens' and 'chivalric' add to our understanding of the tiger's attitudes?
- 2 Why do you think that Aunt Jennifer created animals that are so different from her own character? What might the poet be suggesting through this difference?
- 3 What does the poetess suggest by saying that the tigers that she has embroidered will forever go on prancing proudly?
- 4 What is suggested by the image 'massive weight of Uncle's wedding band'?
- 5 Describe the tigers on the panel?

THE LAST LESSON by Alphonse Daudet

- 1 How did the teacher describe the French language?
- 2 How did Franz's feelings about M Hamel and school change?
- 3 What changes did the order from Berlin cause in the school that day?
- 4 Why was M Hamel kind to Franz even though he was late for school?
- 5 What unusual sight met Franz's eyes when he entered the classroom? What was the mood of the classroom?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- 1 'My children, this is the last lesson I shall give you'. What was the impact of M Hamel's words on the assembled class and why?
- 2 'It seemed almost as if the poor man wanted to give us all he knew before going away, and to put it all into our heads in one stroke'. Explain why Franz experienced these feelings.

LOST SPRING, STORIES OF STOLEN CHILDHOOD by Anees Jung

- 1 What makes the city of Firozabad famous?
- 2 'A hole in them does not bother him'. What does this refer to and what does it tell you about the circumstances of the person in question?
- 3 'Together they have imposed the baggage on the child that he cannot put down'. Who do 'they' refer to? What is the 'baggage' and why can the child not get rid of it?
- 4 How is Mukesh's attitude to his situation different from that of his family?
'Seemapuri is on the periphery of Delhi, yet miles away from it metaphorically.' Explain what the author means by this.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- 1 Dreams are often far removed from reality. Discuss with reference to, 'Lost Spring, Stories of Stolen youth'.

DEEP WATER by William Douglas

- 1 Why was Douglas determined to get over his fear of water?
- 2 What were his first thoughts as he went down the deep end of the pool?
- 3 'The instructor was finished but I was not finished'. What does this refer to?
- 4 What thoughts of Roosevelt deeply impacted Douglas? How did the thoughts apply to his own life?
- 5 What was the immediate effect of Douglas's experience of nearly drowning in the pool? What was the long term effect?

THE RATTRAP by Selma Lagerlof

- 1 Why was the crofter so friendly and talkative with the peddler?
- 2 What doubt did Edla have about the peddler?
- 3 What were the precautions that the peddler took to remain undetected as the thief?
- 4 What were the peddler's feelings as night fell in the woods?
- 5 When did the ironmaster realize his mistake?

INDIGO by Louis Fischer

- 1 Why is Rajkumar Shukla described as being 'resolute'?



INDIAN SCHOOL NIZWA - WORKSHEET

- 2 'He had read our minds correctly', said Rajendra Prasad. What does this refer to?
- 3 What made the British realize that the Indians could challenge their might, hitherto unquestioned?
- 4 Why did Gandhi agree to a settlement of 25 percent refund to the farmers?
- 5 Why did Gandhi chide the lawyers who represented the interests of groups of sharecroppers of Champaran?

POETS AND PANCAKES by Asokamitran

- 1 What does the writer mean by 'the fiery misery' of those subjected to make-up?
- 2 The English poet who visited Gemini Studios was as baffled as the audience. Why was that?
- 3 What role did the canteen at the studio play in creating a literary ambience in the studio?
- 4 What does, 'The God that Failed', refer to? Why did it suddenly assume great significance for the writer?
- 5 Why was the legal advisor referred to as the opposite by others?

THE INTERVIEW by Christopher Silvester

- 1 Why do you think the writer regards the interviewer as a person with power and influence?
- 2 Who was Roland Barthes and in which context does Umberto Eco mention him?
- 3 How did he explain the huge success of his novel, 'The Name of the Rose'?
- 4 Why do most celebrity writers despise being interviewed?
- 5 Why was Eco bothered by the fact that most people identified him as a successful novelist?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- 1 The writer says that it is hardly surprising that opinions of the interview vary considerably. Elaborate with reference to the essay, 'The Interview', by Christopher Silvester.
- 2 An interview is an apt tool for eliciting information from the interviewee through a process of questions and answers. Discuss with reference to the interview of Umberto Eco by Mukund Padmanabham?

GOING PLACES by A R Barton

- 1 How does Sophie include her brother Geoff in her fantasy of her future?
- 2 Why did Sophie's friend Jansie discourage her from entertaining the thoughts such that Sophie had?
- 3 Why was Sophie relieved to find her father's bicycle outside the pub as she returned home from the canal? What does this indicate about their relationship?
- 4 Which was the only occasion when Sophie got to see Danny Casey in person?
- 5 What was her father's reaction to the story as opposed to her brother Geoff's reaction?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- 1 'I can see the future and now I will have to live with this problem,' says Sophie. What is the burden being referred to? What light does this throw on Sophie's life?
- 2 Describe Sophie's world. How did she mean to escape it?

THE THIRD LEVEL by Jack Finney

- 1 You have read 'Adventure' by Jayant Narikar in Hornbill class XI. Compare the interweaving of fantasy and reality in the two stories?
- 2 The Third Level is the eerie shadow land between desire, dreams and reality. Elucidate with reference to the story, 'The Third Level'.
- 3 'But now we are looking for it....'. What does this refer to and what made Charley and his wife seek it?
- 4 Do you see an intersection of time and space in the story?
- 5 What do you infer from Sam's letter to Charley?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- 1 Why was Charley overcome with desire to visit Galesburg?
- 2 What made Charley believe that the Third Level did exist?

TIGER KING by Kalki



INDIAN SCHOOL NIZWA - WORKSHEET

- 1 Do you think the prophecy was indisputably disproved?
- 2 How did the tiger king make up for the shortfall of tigers in his kingdom?
- 3 What did the tiger king proceed to do when he reached the age of twenty?
- 4 What was the reaction of the infant to the predictions of the astrologers? What did he demand to know?
- 5 Why did the British officer wish to hunt a tiger? How did the tiger king deal with the problem?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1 'Man proposes, God disposes', is a saying that has been aptly proved in the story The Tiger King. Elaborate.
- 2 Describe how the prediction made by the astrologers at the birth of the tiger king came to pass.

JOURNEY TO THE END OF THE WORLD by Tishani Doshi

- 1 'To visit Antarctica now is to be part of that history'. What does the author mean? Explain.
- 2 'And for the humans the prognosis is not good'. In what context and on what basis does the writer make this observation?
- 3 What are Geoff Green's reasons for including high school students in the Students on Ice Expedition?
- 4 How do geological phenomena help us to know about the history of humankind?
- 5 What was Gondwana? For how long and where did it exist?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is it considered crucial that Antarctica remains intact? What loss would global warming cause to this context?
- 2 Describe the writer's feelings after she had spent two weeks in the Antarctica?

THE ENEMY by Pearl S Buck

- 1 How did Sadao happen to meet his wife Hana and why did he not marry her in America?
- 2 At what point did Sadao decide that it was time to get the enemy out of their house?
- 3 How did the doctor ensure that the American sailor left his house but was yet safe and secure?
- 4 What explanation did the General tender for his lapse in sending the assassins to the doctor's house? What insight do you get into his character?
- 5 What were the first thoughts that entered the minds of Sadao and Hana when they discovered the wounded man who had got washed ashore?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1 Dr Sadao was compelled by his duty as a doctor to help the enemy soldier. What made Hana, his wife, sympathetic to him in the face of open defiance from the domestic staff?
- 2 While hatred against a member of the enemy race is justifiable, especially during war time, what makes a human being rise above narrow prejudices?

SHOULD WIZARD HIT MOMMY by John Updike

- 1 How does the reader get the impression that Jo was bored with the stories?
- 2 How is Jack's childhood interwoven in the story of the stinky skunk?
- 3 Why does Jack think that the end of the story should not be changed?
- 4 What was the sequence that all the stories that Jack told his daughter follow?
- 5 How did Jo feel about his stories?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1 It is important that children be allowed to furnish their views and offer their opinions. How does the story 'Should Wizard Hit Mommy?' contradict this tenet of good parenting?
- 2 The adult tendency to quell the questioning mind of a child and to impose the adult viewpoint as the only valid one, find mention in the simple yet powerful story, 'Should Wizard hit Mommy?' Elucidate with examples from the story.

ON THE FACE OF IT by Susan Hill



INDIAN SCHOOL NIZWA - WORKSHEET

- 1 The play ends tragically, yet leaves one with a sense of hope. Explain.
- 2 How are Derry and Mr Lamb different in their attitudes to their respective disabilities?
- 3 Why does Mr Lamb leave his gate always open? Why does he live in a house without curtains?
- 4 What qualities of the old man does Derry seem to have an admiration for, despite himself?
- 5 Why does Derry decide to come back to Mr Lamb's house?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1 'You look at me...and then you look at my face, and then you think, that is bad,' says Derry to the old man. What makes him say this? Elucidate.
- 2 The play is an apt depiction of the loneliness and the sense of alienation experienced by people on account of a disability. Elaborate.

EVANS TRIES AN O-LEVEL by Colin Dexter

- 1 What precautions had the prison authorities taken to ensure that the exam was conducted smoothly?
- 2 How did the Governor try to outwit Evans in the end? Did he succeed?
- 3 What were the Governor's misgivings regarding the exam? How did he put his fears to rest?
- 4 How did Evans and his friends ensure that the coast was clear for Mcleery to exit the prison without any trouble?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1 The story leaves one agreeing that the Governor was just another good-for-a-giggle-gullible Governor that was all'. Why?
- 2 Evans had evaluated and assessed the weaknesses of the prison system and that of the prison officers and this aided his escape from the prison. Elaborate with examples.

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD by Zitkala Sa and Bama

- 1 Why did Zitkala-Sa feel that early mornings at the school were discordant?
- 2 Why was the author so averse to having her hair cut? What did she do to escape this ordeal?
- 3 What did Zitkala-Sa notice when they were walking in a single file to the dining hall?
- 4 What was the reaction to the way the people of her community were treated?
- 5 What advice did Bama's brother give her so that she may overcome the humiliation of being born an untouchable?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1 What was the incident that shattered the innocence of Bama's childhood? How did the incident impact her feelings then and in later life?
- 2 'No, I will not submit. I will struggle first', said Zitkala-Sa. Describe the circumstances that incited her to feel this way.