

The City School

**Unified Mid-Year Examinations
2018 - 2019
Class 10**



ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Paper 2

1123/22
1 hour 45 minutes

INSERT

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the **two** reading passages.

This document consists of 5 printed pages and 3 blank pages.

Passage 1

- 1 We are content to take television for granted as a fact of life in the twenty-first century. But does television bring us nothing but good?
- 2 It is clear that television has brought advantages which could never have been envisaged by our great-grandparents. World news is relayed to us within minutes. Think of the horror of the tsunami on 26th December 2004 – the whole world was able, by watching television, to know of it immediately. Television also enabled people to respond to the tragedy with practical support, as they were encouraged through the medium of television to send donations to help the victims. Furthermore, television gives ordinary people knowledge of a wide range of topics which would have been inaccessible to them before. Wildlife programmes, for example, might allow us to look for probiscus monkeys along the Brunei River, or to explore the marine life around Mauritius. Often it is easier to absorb such information through watching television than it is to learn it from books, because the pictorial nature of television is easier for people who find the written word daunting. Through watching foreign television programmes, we can also learn other languages. This can be of great assistance to students, who can improve their skills in a language which might not be spoken in the home but which is used in school.
- 3 On a more mundane level, watching television is the greatest way to relax. What could be better after a hard day at the office, factory or school, than to sink into a chair and watch an episode of our favourite drama or game show? It also provides a ready-made opportunity for entertainment at the push of a button, and this form of entertainment can be cheaper than a night out at the cinema. In the highly competitive world of work, television might help to prevent all stress-related illnesses. Sometimes television enhances family life as it offers an opportunity for parents and children to spend time together watching a favourite programme.
- 4 However, although the image of the twenty-first century family gathered companionably around the television is an attractive one, the reality is often very different. Indeed, television is sometimes blamed for being partially responsible for the breakdown of family life in some countries. Instead of chatting round the dinner table, some families sit in a stupefied silence watching programmes which can often best be described as banal. Thus, the experience of eating together as a family, that tradition beloved of so many cultures, is lost. Worse, sometimes the family members disperse to separate rooms with their meals on trays to watch television programmes of their choice. The ready-made 'TV dinner' has come to represent solitude and anti-social behaviour (as well as unpalatable food lacking in real nutritional value). The modern expression 'couch potato', which conjures up the image of an inactive, usually overweight individual sprawling in front of some dreadful imported soap opera, is far from complimentary. And although television brings us knowledge of world events almost as they happen, there is worrying evidence to suggest that overexposure to tragedy can make us insensitive to it.
- 5 Television is sometimes criticised for the adverse effect it has on young people. Football pitches and games halls are not always fully utilised because young people

are engrossed in television. How can countries produce athletes able to compete in international competitions if they prefer television to training? Research shows that physical activity improves mental alertness; therefore, if young people are inactive because of too much television viewing, this might have a detrimental effect on their academic performance. The subject matter of some television programmes is often criticised as inappropriate, especially for vulnerable young people, whose values can be warped by watching such programmes. In extreme cases, screen violence has been linked to some real-life 'copycat' crimes.

- 6 At the end of the day, we all have to make our own judgement on the role of television in the world and in our own lives. What we do with it – whether we choose to be dominated by it or regulate it to be a force for good in the world – is very much in our own hands.

Passage 2

A teenage boy called Philip tells the story of a night when he found something extraordinary.

- 1 My family lived in a tiny, metal-roofed house facing the Pacific Ocean. Behind the house was a detached garage, over which I had my bedroom. One of the good things about this was its low, slanted ceilings, which kept the adults away. That night I stepped unnoticed down the dark outside stairway from my room. It was 2.15am, an hour before low tide, with a full moon. I could hear the sea hissing faintly, and was aware of the fishy reek of living, dead and dying seaweed, clams and crabs. 5
- 2 It was my first summer collecting marine specimens for money. I sold starfish, crabs, and other tidal creatures to public aquariums. Almost everything had a market, I was discovering – I offloaded at a local restaurant the clams I had collected, and for more unusual types of sea life, I dealt with a private aquarium dealer. Full moon was when I often had my best haul, which complicated things because I wasn't allowed on the mudflats after dusk. 10
- 3 I walked along the edge of the water, the light of my flashlight bouncing ahead of me, picking my way to avoid crushing clam shells. I saw a massive moon snail, its undersized shell riding high on its body like the cab of a bulldozer, below which its mound of oozing flesh hunted for any clam unlucky enough to be in its path. I thought about grabbing it, but it was too big. So I went out toward the oyster farm belonging to Judge Stegner. That was my rather weak alibi if I was caught out there, that I was tending the judge's oysters. He paid me twenty dollars a month to help maintain them, though not at night, of course. Still, it could be useful if someone asked what I was doing there at that hour. I knew how everyone felt about Judge Stegner. My father tucked his shirt in whenever he came around. And when the judge spoke in his deep, easy rumble, nobody interrupted. 15 20
- 4 There were dozens of shore crabs near the low mesh fence around the judge's oyster beds. Crabs amused me in small numbers, but when they crowded together like this they unhinged me, especially when they were in water where they moved twice as fast as on land. I heard their pincers clasp the fence, pushing their bodies higher. The oysters were under siege, but I couldn't bring myself to interfere. I rounded the oyster beds to the far side, relieved to find them relatively crab free. 25 30
- 5 And that's where it happened. I heard it long before I saw it. It was the sound of something exhaling. Was a whale stranded again, I wondered. We had a young minke whale stuck out there once, and it made similar noises until the tide rose high enough for rescuers to help free it. I waited, but there were no more sounds. Still, I went toward what I thought I'd heard, avoiding stepping into the mud unless I had to. I knew the flats well enough to know the danger. The general rule was you didn't venture out onto the mud with an incoming tide, or you were in mortal danger. I sank up to my knees twice, but I kept stepping toward the one sound I'd heard, a growing part of me hoping I'd find nothing at all. 35 40

6 Then my flashlight crossed it. My first thought? A massive octopus. But when I saw the long tubular shape of its upper body, I knew it was something else. I came closer, within twenty metres, close enough to see its body quiver. I couldn't tell if it was making any sounds at that point because it was impossible to hear anything over the roaring of the blood in my ears. It was hard to be sure exactly where it all began or ended. The creature's body was triangular, with narrow fins that lay flat on the mud like wings. I was afraid to prise my eyes off its jumble of tentacles for more than half a second. I didn't know whether I was within its reach, and its tentacles were as thick as my ankles and lined with suckers. If they had even twitched, I would have run. Then I gradually realised the dark shiny disc in the rubbery mass was an eye, thirty centimetres across. I knew that this creature could only be one thing. It was a giant squid, one of the largest and rarest of all sea creatures. And it was still alive.