

Short Stories 2nd Year (Intermediate)

1. The Women on Platform No 8 (Ruskin Bond)

5. Answer the following in 100 Words each. [2×4=8Marks]

- a) Describe the character of Arun, the boarding school boy.
- b) What did Satish's mother advise him about strangers? How did Arun and Satish react to her advice?
- c) What made Arun call the strange woman "mother" at the end?
- d) Give any four reasons to explain why Arun developed an instant liking for the strange woman in a white sari on Platform No 8.

The Woman On Platform No. 8 written by Ruskin Bond, is an interesting story. He is an Indian author of British descent. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award and was awarded, Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan. He has written several novels, short stories, and books for children.

The Woman on Platform No 8 by Ruskin Bond is a story about love and affection that transcends all barriers of Kinship. It is narrated in the first person by a schoolboy named "Arun". It narrates the experience of a young boy.

Arun is a twelve-year boy studying in a boarding school. He is confident and independent and is not afraid to travel alone at midnight. When Arun is sitting on platform number 8 at Ambala Station for the northern Bound train. He meets a woman in a white sari on the platform. Though he is suspicious of the woman, he notices her sadness, her soft voice kindness and concern make him trust her.

She takes him into the station dining room and orders tea, samosas, and jalebis. At once he begins to take interest in the woman. He relaxes and shares all his details with her. He responds to the care and affection showers on him.

After eating they both go back to station No 8. To his delight, his school friend Satish, a boy about his age, is in the station with his mother. Satish's mother thinks that the woman in the white sari was Arun's mother. Satish mother's

advises Arun not to talk to strangers.

She says that there are so many dishonest people in the world, she warns him to be very careful about strangers and never to talk to them. She advises Arun's supposed mother to watch her children carefully or they will walk straight into trouble. Arun stared resentfully at her and Satish who was behind his mother smiled at Arun in approval of Arun's honesty.

Arun does not like Satish mother's behavior. She considers Arun and the woman in white Sari to be from a poor family. When Arun gets in to train, the woman smiles at him in a gentle and understanding way. Arun leans out of the window and kisses her cheeks. Arun said, "Goodbye, Mother..." and watched until he could see her no more.

Arun's calling her mother at the time of parting is a sweet gesture of recognition of a loving and relationship

(OR)

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She takes him into the station dining room and orders tea, samosas, and jalebis.. He relaxes and shares all his details with her.

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2. A Gift for Christmas (O Henry)

5. Answer ANY Two of the following question in about 100 words each [2×4=8Marks]

- a) "Love, sacrifice, and generosity are the essential elements for happy living." Explain this statement with reference to the story A Gift for Christmas.
- b) Analyse the character of Della.
- c) Sketch the character of Jim.
- d) A Gift for Christmas is an example of O. Henry's comic irony. Justify.

The story "A Gift for Christmas" is written by "William Sydney Porter" known as "O. Henry" an American Short Story writer. His stories are remarkable for their wit and surprising end. They mainly deal with human emotions. His works include A Gift for Christmas and The Ransom of Redchief.

The story is about the Passionate, Pure, and Sacrificial love of a Couple Jim and Della, a young married couple, who live in a small flat.

Della is a young, affectionate, and selfless woman. She has a passionate love for her husband Jim. The most attractive feature of Della's beauty is her long, brown, and Silky hair.

Jim is logical, compassionate, intelligent and above all loyal to Della's love. Jim is Della's twenty-two-year-old husband who can barely afford a cheap apartment. The narrator describes Jim's appearance as thin and serious a poor fellow due to the burdens he faces on a low salary that is \$20 per week. Despite these burdens however, he is described as content, quiet, and good-natured. He loves his dear wife Della intensely. Jim possesses a gold watch passed down from his grandfather.

It's Christmas time, and Della has been planning for a long to buy a worthy gift for Jim for Christmas. She saves \$1.87 throughout the year to buy a gift for her husband. As she has very little money to buy a present for Jim, she sells her proud Possasian- long brown hair- to buy a beautiful Platinum watch chain for her husband for \$21 to see a smile on her husband's face on Christmas evening.

On the other hand, Jim sells his most prized belonging the gold watch in order to buy fancy ivory combs for Della's beautiful silk hair.

O. Henry uses situational irony to emphasize surprise and the unexpected outcome of the story. Clearly, Della cannot make use of these decorative combs in her very short hair and Jim lacks the watch, as he has sold. He has no need for the expensive chain, the irony is that both gifts are useless to the recipients.

Thus both of them show the true meaning of love, sacrifice, and generosity for happy living. It highlights the valuable possessions of mankind.

OR

The short story A Gift for Christmas is written by William Sydney Porter, an American short story writer. He is popularly known as O. Henry. He wrote nearly 600 stories about life in America.

The story A Gift for Christmas narrates the story of a young married couple, Della and Jim, who love each other in a small flat. Jim's gold watch and Della's long, beautiful hair are what they consider their treasures.

It's Christmas time, Della in order to buy a gift for Jim, sells her long and beautiful hair, and she buys a platinum watch-chain for Jim. And Jim sells his gold watch to buy expensive ivory combs for Della.

Thus, both of them show the true meaning of love, sacrifice, and generosity for happy living.

3. The Doctor's Word (R K Narayan)

5. Answer ANY Two of the following question in about 100 words each [2×4=8Marks]

- i. Sketch the character of Dr.Raman.
- ii."People came to him (Dr.Raman) when the patient was on his last legs" why?
- iii. Describe Gopal's health condition and his anxiety about the will.
- iv."If my word can save his life, he shall not die," said Dr.Raman to himself. Explain the situation that makes the doctor say so.

The Short story "The Doctor's Word", is written by R.K Narayan.

Rasipuram Kruhnaswami Narayan's a leading writer of early Indian Literature in English. His works were so popular that his readers spread from New York to Moscow. Malgudi, his fictional creation, forms the setting of his works. He won Padma Bhushan, The Padma Vibhushan, and The Sahitya Akademi award.

Dr.Raman is the lead character in the story "The Doctor's Word". He is practicing as a medical doctor. He is an expert in his profession. He is truthful hard working and very dedicated and never left any stone unturned to save the lives of his patients. His patients hold him in high regard. He is more a man of deeds than of words. He maintains a high standard of ethics He never believes in soothing lies. However, if there is a slight possibility of a cure, he would compel Yamaraj to give back life. The patients and their relatives know well that Dr.Raman was an expert doctor, yet they visit him at the eleventh hour because Dr.Raman demands twenty-five rupees per patient as his visiting fee. Secondly, Dr.Raman made straightforward remarks on the Patient's condition without hiding anything which frightened patients and relatives.

Gopal is Dr.Raman's childhood friend. One day Dr. Raman is in the hospital. There comes Gopal's son and informs him that his father is seriously ill. Immediately he rushes to Gopal's house and examines him. He gives an injection and prepares to perform an operation. Dr.Raman returns after some time with a nurse and an assistant. Indeed it is his anxiety that has led to the heart problem. After 5, Gopal opens his eyes. The assistant is overjoyed. But Dr.Raman looks worried. He says that it is a false flash. If the pulse goes on till the next morning, he would be out of danger, otherwise, anything might happen at night. Hearing this Gopal's wife

wept bitterly. He asks the Doctor why is she crying and doubts- "Am I going to die?" if so please arrange my will paper, otherwise, after my death, Subbiah and his gang would take all the property and my family would be ruined. Dr.Raman decides to break his principles and tells a lie that he will be alright. This gives Gopal, hope, and recovers fully. But how he has survived will remain puzzled by the doctor all his life.

Thus R.K. Narayana's story "The Doctor's Word" is remarkable for its gripping narration.

OR

The short story "The Doctor's Word" is written by R. K. Narayan. He wrote stories, novels, and essays. He won many awards like the Padma Bhushan, the Padma Vibhushan, and Sahitya Akademi Award.

Dr.Raman is the lead character in the story. He is truthful, hardworking, and very dedicated. He never believes in soothing lies. However, if there is a slight possibility of a cure, he would compel Yamaraj to give back to life. The patients visit him at the eleventh hour because he demands twenty-five rupees fees and remarks on the patient's condition without hiding anything which frightened patients and relatives.

One day there comes Gopal's son informs that his father is seriously ill. Immediately he rushes to Gopal's house and finds a heart that is very weak. He gives an injection and prepares to perform an operation. In fact, it is his anxiety that has led to the heart problem. After 5 Gopal opens his eyes. The assistant is overjoyed. But Dr. Raman looks worried. He says that it is a false flash. If the pulse goes on till the next morning. He would be out of danger. Otherwise, anything might happen at night.

Gopal asks the Doctor why his wife is crying and doubts "Am I going to die?". If so please arrange my will paper. Dr. Raman decides to break his principle and tells a lie that he will be alright. This gives Gopal, hope and recovers fully. But how he has survived will remain a puzzle to the doctor all his life.

R.K. Narayan's short story "The Doctor's Word" is remarkable for its gripping narration.

4. Lost

5. Answer ANY Two Of the following in 100 Words each.

- a) Attempt the character sketch of the lady in the story Lost.
- b) Narrate the incident that led to the agreement between the lady and the baron.
- c) What was the baron's wish? Was it fulfilled? Explain.
- d) Write about the character of the baron.

The short and interesting short story 'Lost' is written by "Guy de Maupassant"

"Guy de Maupassant" is a French writer, remembered as the master of the short story form. He represented the Naturalist school. His stories depict human lives, destinies, and social forces in disillusioned and often pessimistic terms.

The baron in the story "Lost" is a young good looking man. He is from Palestine. He is a baron of the ghetto. He visits the universal exhibition in Vienna. He is not a man of good character. The arrogant baron sees a beautiful married lady in the exhibition in Vienna, he developed an immoral liking for her. The lady in the story is very beautiful and clever with the integrity of her character. She married a man who had a modest income. She values self-respect more than anything else. She ignores his advances. Yet, he continues to follow her.

One day she stood in a fur store and looks at a beautiful coat. She knows it well that it's beyond her reach. The baron offers to buy it for her. The lady refuses. But he insists on her. When the baron from the ghetto advances toward her, she tries politely and firmly to keep him away.

He continues to make advances regularly. Animal desire in him started overpowering him, though she refuses him. But he wishes to have her somehow. He was blindfolded by lust, at last he opened his dirty intention. And thought that she would yield to him as she had a modest income. But she felt insulted and embarrassed by his secret overtures, when the baron was prepared to do anything to have her, she proposed that she would listen to him if he was ready to receive twenty-five lashes. The agreement was made between the lady and the baron.

On the scheduled day, she mercilessly beat him twenty-four times with a whip and she cleverly skipped the twenty-fifth and called out her husband and two other men, found behind the curtain living the baron in shock and grief.

Thus the woman is loyal to her husband. When he crosses the limits, she teaches him a lesson. So he is punished aptly. He says "Lost".

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5. An Interview (Richard Gordon)

5. Answer ANY Two of the following question in about 100 words each
[2×4=8Marks]

- a) The narrator thought that his interview was superfluous. Why?
- b) "The Dean began to look interested." What was he interested in? Why?
- c) Why do you think the old man visited the waiting room?
- d) "His face suddenly lightened....." Do you think the Dean was really happy with the narrator? Why?

The Short Story "An interview" is written by Richard Gordon.

Richard Gordon was an English surgeon and anesthetic. He wrote numerous novels and screenplays for films and television mostly dealing with medicine. The narrator came to attend an interview with Dr. Lionel Loftus, The dean of St Swithin's Medical school. He sits nervously in the waiting room, pre-creating his interview with the dean. Then, a very old man meets the narrator in the waiting room. He says he is the Secretary of that school. He examines the narrator critically. He asks a few questions about the narrator's ability to pay the fees.

Then the dean interviews the narrator, but he didn't ask any medical questions. The Dean asked him about his interest in football. The narrator replied that he plays Rugby. Then the dean asks the narrator about his position in the Rugby football game. The narrator says he plays wings three quarter. Players in that position are in good demand in that school. That Seems to be the only reason for the Dean being happy with the narrator.

The narrator got admitted into St Swith's. Later, he got to know that all that was unnecessary. The dean generally admits students whom the secretary approved of and rejected those whose looks the secretary didn't like. So, he thinks the interview is Superfluous.

The story discusses the narrator's experience of facing an interview. It exposes the flaws in admission interviews.

(OR)

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Richard Gordon was an English surgeon and anesthetic. He wrote numerous novels and screenplays for films and television mostly dealing with medicine.

The narrator came to attend an interview with Dr. Lionel Loftus, The dean of St Swithin’s Medical school. The secretary of the medical school scanned him carefully and asked a few question about himself. The dean didn’t ask any medical questions but asked only about his rugby experience.

The narrator got admitted into St Swithin’s Medical school. Later he got to know that all that was unnecessary. The dean generally admitted students whom the secretary accept and rejected those whose looks the secretary didn’t like. So he thinks this interview is superfluous.