

5. The Night Mail

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

- | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (c) | 3. (a) | 4. (d) | 5. (d) |
| 6. (c) | 7. (d) | 8. (b) | 9. (a) | 10. (d) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) The Night Mail is moving towards Scotland. It carries letters, cheques, postal orders and other such documents.
- (ii) The mail train carries letters, for the rich as well as poor. It shows that the postal service is non-discriminating.
- (iii) The mail train starts its journey by a steady climb up the hills. It is a long journey through several regions.
- (iv) The train passes through hills, plains and moor land. It passes through farm houses. It passes by the narrow sea-strips and the industrial area of Glasgow.
- (v) The poet describes Glasgow area where huge buildings, machinery like cranes can be seen lying on open grassy fields.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) The figure of speech used in Line 1 is personification. Birds turn their heads, like human beings, to see what was coming.
- (ii) The train-coaches pulled along by the train are personified as persons with no expression or will of their own. They just follow where they are being lead.
- (iii) The sheep-dogs run along the track. They want the train to change its course but they fail in their intention.
- (iv) The sleeping people remain unaware of the passing train. They seem to have become habitual to its arrival.
- (v) The train carries many kinds of letters : love letters, official letters, job applications, letters of invitations, letters from relatives, condolence messages, so on and so forth.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) The train is heading for Scotland. The train starts its slow but steady ascent as it passes through the hilly area. Though the slope is sharp, the train is on time.
- (ii) Glasgow is an industrial area. Huge cranes and furnaces have been set on the grassy lands. It shows how industries are fast coming up, harming the peaceful countryside and agriculture.
- (iii) The figure of speech used in line 5 is simile. Huge machinery and furnaces are compared to huge chessmen, pawns in the game of earning more and more money by the industrialists.

- (iv) The things carried by the train are letters of all kinds, messages, invitations, cheques, postal orders, etc.
- (v) The poet tells us that the people of Scotland are still asleep, having nightmares and pleasant dreams. When they wake up, they will long for letters carried by the train. They wait for some knock at the door by the postman.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) The train starts climbing hills slowly but steadily. It passes through hills, plains and the moor land.
- (ii) Glasgow is described as a region dotted with huge machinery and furnaces, as it is an industrial area.
- (iii) Besides letters the train carries many things, like cheques, postal orders, receipts and newspapers.
- (iv) The train is carrying official letters, love letters, letters of invitation, letters from relatives, etc.
- (v) People wait anxiously for the train because all of them long to be remembered by someone somewhere.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) The train has passed through various regions before reaching Glasgow. It has passed through hills, plains and moor land.
- (ii) The train is carrying letters of all kinds, cheques, postal orders, newspapers, etc.
- (iii) The line tells us that some letters are informal and friendly, some are spiteful, some are simply boring and some written in an adoring matter to some loved ones.
- (iv) Letters are written on paper of all colours – pink, violet, white, blue etc. Some of them are typed, some others are hand written with spelling mistakes. Each letter from the way it is written and the paper on which it is written reveals some trait of the letter writer – whether he/she is friendly, formal, careless, spiteful, etc.
- (v) Glasgow's people are still sleeping as the train reaches its destination. When they wake up, they expect to receive some letter. They anxiously wait for the knock of the postman at their door.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) During the night the train starts its journey by a slow but steady climb up the hills. Then it passes by farm houses in the plains and the moorland. Despite the difficult climb and slow speed, it is still on time.
- (ii) It has carried all types of letters, cheques, postal orders, newspapers, job applications, official receipts etc.
- (iii) The people have been dreaming of horrible monsters or friendly tea parties at famous restaurants – Cranston or Crowford. When they wake up, they expect to receive a letter from someone dear to them.

- (iv) Rhetorical question is used in the last line. It is used to make a point rather than to get an answer.
- (v) The poet emphasises the importance of human connections – the need to be remembered by someone – by asking a rhetorical question.