National Curriculum and Textbook Board
69-70, Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka

Guidelines for question setters and markers For XI-XII English 1st Paper

1. A. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ)

MCQ can be set for testing a number of strategies and skills related to reading such as scanning, skimming, reading for gist, inferencing (guessing the meaning from the context) comprehension check etc. Each MCQ will carry 1 mark.

In preparing MCQ questions, question setters will make sure that learners will have to apply certain skills or strategies of reading in order to be able to choose the right options. Depending on the level of the learners, items will be set to test learners' lower order thinking skills (knowing and understanding) as well as higher order thinking skills (comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating). In stead of quoting directly from the original passage, synonyms or paraphrases should be used.

For example: Text: The Great Wall of China, one of the greatest wonders of the world, was first built between 220–206 BC.

Question: When was the Great Wall first built? (It does not test students' understanding. They will just lift some words from the text to answer the question)

Question: When did the construction of the Great Wall begin? (The students cannot answer this question without understanding it)
The same text can be used for open ended questions where the students will guess the meaning from the text.

Please note the following points while setting MCQ test items:
- Phrase stems as clearly as possible.
- Avoid redundant word/words.
- Avoid lifting phrases directly from text. Use new language as much as possible.
- Options should be parallel to one another in terms of grammatical structure and length.
- The number of options should be 4-5.
- Distracters must be incorrect, but plausible.
- To make distracters more plausible, use words that are familiar to students.
- If a recognizable key word appears in the correct answer, it should appear in some or all of the distracters as well.
- Avoid vague words in the answers.

1. B. Open-Ended Questions

Open ended questions are designed to measure the higher level skills like comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating.

While preparing open-ended questions, it is better to keep the following points in mind:

- Be sure that the test question clearly states the answer that you are seeking from the student. For example, "Discuss the outcomes of environment pollution" is a poor test question. But, worded as "Describe the potential positive and negative impacts of the environment pollution on the people of coastal regions in Bangladesh" is a better test question as it clearly gives the student something to compare and contrast within a focused area.
- If you want to test comprehension, a good opening phrase might look like this: "Explain the following..."

If you want to test the student's ability to analyze a concept, a good opening phrase for your test question is, "Compare and contrast...."

2. Information Transfer/Flow Chart

For Information Transfer, the question setter should make it sure that the students can't just copy chunks without understanding them when they put written texts into another form, such as a grid or table – or vice-versa. Moreover, he/she has to keep in mind that this test item/task should encourage deep processing of information.

For Flow Chart, first of all, the students should choose the objectives of a flow chart. The next thing to do is to decide on the start and end points. Once that is decided the students should break it down into multiple flows. While drawing, the students should keep it in their mind that a flow chart should be as simple as possible so that the readers make sense of the complex patterns and forces. For the sake of simplicity, detailed information is kept to a minimum leaving a framework upon which readers can later attach details as the patterns of events become clear. However, each flowchart's design is also determined by the nature of the text.

3. Writing summary

In a summary, the original text is usually cut to about one third. Therefore, please choose the text carefully so that the students can answer the question in the given time. They should mention only the main ideas without examples, repetitions, or quotations. If you have to take it from the textbook, modify or tailor it to your need, if necessary.

4 and 5. Cloze test with/without clues

There should be no gap in the first sentence. From the second sentence, delete every 5th/ 6th/ 7th/ 8th word indiscriminately except proper nouns. As the test with clues is easier than the test without clues, delete every 5th and 6th words in it. 7th and 8th words should be deleted in the test without clues. Please remember that a cloze test is designed to measure students' vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. While answering the question, an examinee does not need to reproduce the text in the answer script. Writing the missing word with the corresponding question number is enough.

6. Rearranging

Select or write a text of 10 sentences where they are sequenced in an unchangeable order. Write them incoherently in the form of detached sentences. The students will rearrange them in proper order. While answering the question, an examinee does not need to reproduce the text in the answer script. Writing the letters or marks (such as b. d. a, f or v, iii, vi etc.) is enough.

7. Writing paragraph answering questions

The students will write the paragraph in the usual format using topic, support, and concluding sentences. The answers to the questions will give them the content only. They have to organize the materials on their own.

8. Completing a story

The question setter will begin the story in a few lines. The students will develop the idea and complete the story using their imagination and creativity. As this item is designed to test the students' creativity, the answer will vary. In fact, in the examiner's checklist imagination and ideas should be given more importance than the linguistic items.

9. Writing letters/e-mails

In an informal letter, the examinees should be careful about appropriate greeting. She/he has to check whether the introductory sentence states the reason of her/his writing which will be developed in the main body of the letter into one or two paragraphs. The concluding paragraph can be very small which sums up the letter and expresses the writer's willingness to continue the correspondence. She/he can also thank her/his recipient for a favor, prompt reply, etc. Finally, there should be a suitable ending. In an informal letter, putting a date or signature is optional.

For e-mails, students must write the e-mail id, subject, and content as written in a genuine e-mail. Students should be taught in the class that there should be a considerable margin at the answer script. However, there should not be any penalty for any examinee if the answer script has no margin. Margin has nothing to do with assessment of the answer.

10. Describing graphs and charts

Graph/chart should be authentic. Teachers may collect charts from various sources such as newspapers, magazines, books or from the Internet. However, they can make simple charts by themselves using authentic data.

Charts and graphs should be made in such a way so that the students may ask themselves most of the following questions:

    a.   What exactly does the chart/graph show?

    b.   What are the axes and what are the units?

    c.   Are there any obvious trends?

    d.   Is there any significant information?

    e.   Are there any obvious exceptions to general trends?

    f.   What conclusions can be drawn from the information presented in the graphs / / charts?

In answer to the above questions he can use following phrases:

i. The data suggest / show that ...
ii. The most significant fact is that ...
iii. In spite of this increase / decrease,...
iv. This could well be due to ...
v. This is supported by the fact that ...
vi. An important point to note is that ...
vii. It is quite clear form this data that ...
viii. The chart indicates that ...

11. Appreciating short story/ poem

While appreciating a short story or a poem, the students will find out the theme only. Therefore the size of the answer does not matter. The theme in a text is the underlying message. Hence the students will try to find out the author's critical belief about life which transcends cultural barriers.

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