

MIZORAM PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
MIZORAM CIVIL SERVICES (COMBINED COMPETITIVE)
MAIN EXAMINATION, 2023

GENERAL ENGLISH

Time Allowed : 3 hours

FM : 100

Marks for each question is indicated against it.

Attempt all questions

1. Read the passage carefully and answer the questions given below.

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going on a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone. “The fields his study, nature was his book.”

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room and fewer encumbrances’. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for “a friend in my retreat, whom I may whisper solitude is sweet.”

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do, just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

“May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair’d,”

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours’ march to dinner — and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. *I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy.* From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like “sunken wrack and sumless treasuries,” burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. “. . . Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone.

You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for this synthetical method on a journey in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomise them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet.

I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveler has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud, which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way and in the end probably produces ill-humour. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you — these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. (William Hazlitt)

Answer the questions:

- (a) What did the writer mean by saying; '*I am then never less alone than when alone.*' (2)
- (b) Explain what the writer means by saying '*Contemplation*' in your own words. (2)
- (c) What made the writer say he is himself again (*be myself again*)? (2)
- (d) Why did the writer prefer being alone? (2)
- (e) The writer says: '*For once, I like to have it all my own way*' explain his reason. (2)
- (f) What actions produce ill-humour to the writer? (2)
- (g) Explain in your own words the meaning of: (2)
 - (i) watering-places
 - (ii) elbow-room
- (h) Give a title to the passage. (1)

2. Write a précis of the following passage: (15)

It is an old saying that knowledge is power. Education is an instrument which imparts knowledge and, therefore, indirectly controls power. Therefore, ever since the dawn of civilization, people in power have always tried to supervise or control education. It has been the hand-maid of the ruling class. During the Christian era the ecclesiastics controlled the institution of education and diffused among people the gospel of the Bible and religious teachings. These gospels and teachings were no other than a philosophy for the maintenance of the existing society. It taught the poor man to be meek and to earn his bread with the sweat of his brow, while the priests and the landlords lived in luxury, fought duels for the slightest offence. During the Renaissance, education passed more from the clutches of the priests into the hands of princes. In other words, it became more secular. It was also due to the growth of the nation state and powerful monarchs who united their country under their rule. Thus, under the control of the monarch, education began to devise and preach the infallibility of its master, the monarch or king. It also invented and supported fantastic theories like the Divine Right Theory and that the king can do no wrong. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, education took a different turn and had to please the new masters. It now no longer remained the privilege of the baron class but was thrown open to the new rich merchant class of society. Yet education was still confined to the few elite. The philosophy which was in vogue during this period was that of '*Laissez Faire*' restricting the function of the state to mere keeping of law and order while, on the other hand, in practice the law of the jungle prevailed in the form of free competition and the survival of the fittest.

3. As a concerned citizen, write a letter to the Chairman of your Local Council requesting him/her to improve the drainage system of your locality before the Monsoon season so as to avoid flooding of streets which can result in minor and major disasters in the vicinity. (furnish necessary details) (20)

4. Write correct sentences with each word to show their differences. (5×2=10)
- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) ingenuous, ingenious | (b) attenuate, extenuate |
| (c) facilitate, felicitate | (d) avenge, revenge |
| (e) metal, mettle | |
5. Make correct sentences with the following idioms and phrases. (10×1=10)
- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) vis-à-vis | (b) dead to the world |
| (c) zip it | (d) with open arms |
| (e) at sixes and sevens | (f) up the creek |
| (g) go cold turkey | (h) cash cow |
| (i) boil the ocean | (j) milk and water |
6. Make new sentences as directed. (10×1=10)
- (a) A *wounded* tiger is very fierce. (change the italic word into adjective clause)
 - (b) Circumstances obliged me to do so. (change the sentence into passive voice)
 - (c) He is poor. He is honest in spite of it. (form a complex sentence using *though*)
 - (d) "Give all the help you can." (form indirect speech)
 - (e) He had many friends. He also had several enemies. (combine the sentences using correct conjunctions)
 - (f) If only I could dance! (Convert into assertive sentence)
 - (g) She says, "Tea is ready." (Change to Indirect Speech)
 - (h) The sun is rising in the east. (use the correct form of verb)
 - (i) The man works hard for his living. (write in the future continuous tense)
 - (j) He is greater than I. (change to negative sentence)
7. Give one word for the following sentences. (5×1=5)
- (a) A fictitious name used by an author.
 - (b) One who never touches strong drink.
 - (c) The day to celebrate an event every year
 - (d) A person who entertains his guests well
 - (e) Order for the people to keep indoors during certain hours
8. Fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions: (5×1=5)
- (a) Do you agree _____ his decision to quit?
 - (b) We agree _____ most things.
 - (c) We arrived _____ New York in the afternoon.
 - (d) The river flows _____ the bridge.
 - (e) Mawii came to school _____ foot.
9. Expand the idea contained in *any two* of the following : (2×5=10)
- (a) People living in glass houses should not throw stones.
 - (b) A rolling stone gathers no moss.
 - (c) Make hay while the sun shines.