

MIZORAM PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
LIMITED DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS FOR PROMOTION TO
JUNIOR GRADE OF MIZORAM FINANCE & ACCOUNTS SERVICE
UNDER FINANCE DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF MIZORAM
FEBRUARY, 2012

DRAFTING & PRÉCIS WRITING

Time Allowed : 3 hours

Full Marks : 150

Figures in the margin indicate full marks for the questions.

Attempt all questions.

1. Make a précis of the following not exceeding one-third of the original words, taking note of specific points. **(35)**

Despite our extraordinary variety of diversions and resources, our frenzy for spectacles and feverish pursuit of entertainment, we are bored. The abundance of efforts made to counter boredom have defeated themselves, and boredom has become the disease of our time. No authority is willing to guess at the number of people, who are bored, but there are millions, and the number is growing.

Young people are particularly subject to boredom. A leading psychiatrist who specializes in problems of the young, estimates that as many as 20 per cent of adolescents are handicapped by significant boredom and depression. This handicap often leads to loss of self-esteem and, in extreme cases, to suicide.

True boredom, of the sort that causes outbursts of violence, aggression, revolt and family upheavals is very different from the momentary feeling everyone gets from time to time that “this will never end”. As psychiatrists see it, severe chronic boredom is a withdrawal from one’s surroundings, a refusal to participate.

Boredom is defined as “the co-existence of dissatisfaction and a disinclination to action; longing and an inability to designate what is longed for; a sense of emptiness; a passive expectant attitude with the hope that the external world will supply the dissatisfaction; a distorted sense of time in which time seems to stand still.” In less scholarly terms, boredom can be described as a state of apathy and unhappiness.

With all the variety of sensations offered us, why is boredom increasing? For one thing people are more demanding of life than they once were. In an earlier, simple time, most people accepted a certain measure of boredom as inevitable. Schools required reams of memorization, temple sermons lasted for hours, entertainment events were presented once a year rather than every 15 minutes, and the working week for many was 60 or more hours instead of 33 or 40.

These days, however, boredom is felt to be intolerable, something that must be vanquished by turning a switch or swallowing a pill or taking off in a car. At the same time, the very abundance we have created for ourselves dulls the senses and makes us more vulnerable to boredom. Except among the very poor or the very strict, few youngsters today have to wait long for that bicycle, they feel they must have. Yet looking forward to something you deeply desire is one of the most satisfying of all experiences; those who are deprived of it are deprived, indeed.

(Contd. 2)

The challenges posed to most citizens in their daily lives have diminished too. There are still hard hikes to make, tough seas to navigate, high mountains to climb – but such challenges have to be sought out. They are no longer part of one’s routine existence. A leading psychiatrist says that life offers only two basic alternatives; a state of constant security and assurance, or one of challenge and risk. “In the first state, you are bored much of the time”, he explains. “In the second, you are often scared. If life is too easy, it’s no fun. You have to take some risks.”

Methods of heading off boredom are available at every age level and in every situation. Parents can help their children by teaching them to be willing to defer satisfaction, to wait and work for what they want. Children should be taught that life cannot be an unending series of happy moments. Says one expert who works with children facing personal problems, “Boredom is often an effort to avoid pain. Many children refuse to accept the fact that pleasure and pain alternate – they refuse the pain part of the cycle and retreat into boredom.”

Employers’ responsibilities towards their employees are similar to those of parents towards their children. They have an obligation to make the jobs they provide as stimulating as possible, both for the sake of the workers and to make their business productive. The worker needs to know that what he does is important, and why. To meet these needs, supervisors and employers have to deal with their workers on a basis of mutual respect, listen to their suggestions, and give them as much control over their time and schedules as possible.

If there is one central, universal prescription for avoiding boredom, it is this: diversify your interests and involvements into areas and activities beyond your normal routine. Making a commitment to some idea or objective outside one’s familiar world – finding a new challenge – can end boredom almost immediately.

Another avenue with great potential rewards for bored people lies in working with handicapped and underprivileged people, teaching, working with prisoners and hospital patients, or devoting time to lonely, elderly people.

2. Make a précis of the following not exceeding one-third of the original words, taking note of specific points. (35)

The greatest results in life are usually attained by simple means and the exercise of ordinary qualities. The road of human welfare lies along the old highway of steadfast well-doing, and they who are the most persistent, and work in truest spirit, will usually be the most successful. Fortune had often been blamed for her blindness, but fortune, in reality is not so blind as men are. Those who look into practical life will find that fortune is usually on the side of the industrious, the hard working, the sincere, as the winds and waves are on the side of the best navigators. In pursuit of even the highest branches of human enquiry, the most common qualities and ordinary abilities such as common sense, attention, application and perseverance generally bestowed to a common man, are often found the most useful. Genius may not be necessary, though even the genius of the highest sort does not disdain the use of these ordinary and natural qualities. The very greatest men have been among the least believers in the power of genius and as wordly-wise and presuming as successful men of the commoner sort. Some have even defined genius to be only common sense intensified. A distinguished teacher and president of a college spoke of it as the power of making efforts. Some scholars held it to be the power of lighting one’s own fire. Others said of genius, ‘it is patience’. Some yet describe it as a refinement of natural talent inherent to a common man. Even military genius like Genghis Khan, Patton, Rommel, McArthur and many others had their failures and blunders. But their persistence and hard work made them great tacticians or strategists. Great inventions happened only after countless experiments, failure and toil, yet deligency always brought success in the long run. Human history revealed time and again, in every walk of life, that a commoner with dedication and hard work could achieve the highest degree in any given field.

(Contd. 3)

In ancient times, might ruled the nations, 'Divine Right Theory' prevailed. Shah, royalties and the Church were considered as the only institution capable of ruling the nations. Divisions in the society was common, like the ruling class, the minor royalties like Duke, Earl, Knight, the working class and the serf. They ruled their subjects with iron hand bordering to barbarism. A common man with intellectual thought dared not advocate his thought for fear of the punishment if such indulgences might provoke the wrath of the upper class. The case of Copernicus and the Church was a good example in the context. But as the saying goes 'Truth always prevails', the brilliance of an intellect or a group of thinkers, even if they were lowly classes could never be contained nor suppressed by tyranny of self-imposed righteousness of an institution.

In modern time, new concepts have emerged; passion, striving for the betterment of the people prevailed the blind faith and belief. The concept of democracy became a reality, toppling the ancient regimes and championed the cause of the general public. This institution, so far, serve best the needs of its people from the lowest to the highest. Knowledge shared only amongst the mighty and the privileged became accessible to the masses. But then every country became better off in the present day than the medieval period because an opportunity opened up several avenues to pursue one's dream to the heart's content without fear or inferiority complex. Now it is open season to seek one's fortune with deligency, hard work and dedication to bring success.

3. Draft letters on behalf of the Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram, addressed to all Heads of Departments on the following **(4×20=80)**
- (a) The need to exercise strict discipline on maintenance of Office Working Hours.
 - (b) The need to prevent wasteful use of stationery and unjustified purchase of computer peripherals.
 - (c) The need to restrict movement of government vehicles during peak traffic hours to avoid excessive consumption of petrol.
 - (d) The need to curtail the practice of unprivileged furnishing of Officers' rooms.

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