Q. 1. (Do not spend more than 35 minutes on this question.)

Write a composition (350–400 words) on any one of the following:

(a) Write an original short story entitled 'The Gift'.

(b) "Money is important for happiness." Express your views either for or against this statement.

(c) Narrate an incident from your own experience when you helped to prepare a meal. Explain what you did and what you gained from the experience.

(d) You had been waiting outside the examination hall. Describe what you saw and the sounds you heard when you arrived at the place.

(e) Study the picture given below. Write a story or a description or an account of what it suggests to you. Your composition may be about the subject of the picture or you may take suggestions from it; however, there must be a clear connection between the picture and your composition.

Ans. (a) Eliza possessed an extraordinary ability to see beauty in the simplest things, a gift that had been bestowed upon her at birth. She saw vibrant colours in the dewdrops on leaves, heard melodic whispers in the wind and felt the warmth of love in every act of kindness.

One bright summer morning, a young boy named Thomas came to Eliza with a heavy heart. He had lost his way in the forest while searching for a special flower to heal his ailing grandmother. Eliza listened intently to his story, her compassionate eyes filled with understanding.

"Don't worry, Thomas," she reassured him with a gentle smile. "I will guide you to the flower you seek."

They reached a secluded glade adorned with vibrant blooms of every colour imaginable. Nestled among them was a single flower, radiating an ethereal glow. Thomas gasped in awe, for he had never seen such a beautiful flower before.

"Is this the one?" he asked, his voice filled with hope.

Eliza nodded, "Yes, Thomas. This is the flower you seek. But remember, the true power lies not in its petals but in the love and intention with which it is given."
Thomas plucked the flower gently and held it in his hands, feeling its energy coursing through him. He thanked her profusely and hurried back to his grandmother.

As Thomas presented the flower to his ailing grandmother, a miraculous transformation began to unfold. The flower’s delicate aroma filled the room, and a soft light enveloped his grandmother, casting away the shadows of illness. With every passing moment, her face regained colour and her frail body grew stronger.

Overwhelmed with joy, Thomas hugged his grandmother tightly. Tears of gratitude streamed down their faces as they realized the power of the gift they had received—a gift that went beyond the physical healing of the body, touching the depths of their souls.

Word of the miraculous flower spread throughout the village, and people flocked to Eliza, seeking her guidance and the healing touch of her gift. Eliza, humbled by the outpouring of gratitude, continued to share her ability with others, teaching them to see the extraordinary in the ordinary and reminding them of the inherent magic within themselves.

(b) A For the statement:

Some argue that money is indeed crucial for happiness. Financial stability allows individuals to fulfil their basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare. It provides a sense of security, which contributes to a person’s overall well-being. Additionally, money can offer opportunities for personal growth, education, and experiences that can bring joy and fulfilment. It enables individuals to pursue their passions, travel, and engage in leisure activities that can enhance their quality of life. Financial resources can also create a safety net during challenging times, reducing stress and anxiety.

Without sufficient money, quality of life suffers. If we want to live in a fairly spacious house in a convenient locality, it requires money. Travelling in convenience is another area where money plays an important role. And more importantly, quality education is the right of every child but nowadays, education has become so expensive. Without a good bank balance, essential needs like this cannot be met with.

Many a crime is committed due to poverty. When people cannot afford a square meal, they steal. In many cases, this becomes their life style. A vicious cycle is formed where life is built around want and depravity. Ask these people the importance of earning well and living well, and they will vouch on the importance of money.

It is an old saying, ‘Money makes the mare go’. In many situations, this holds true. Today, if we want any service, it costs a lot. Whether it is holidaying, renting houses, staying in hotels and even for recreation, one has to spend through one’s nose. A financially backward person has to forego many such pleasures for want of money. People adjust somehow or the other, but it requires a lot of compromise, cutting corners and a philosophical acceptance of one’s situation. Sometimes, lack of resources takes a toll on basic human rights.

In short, adequate amount of money is an absolute must for a comfortable life. Even as money can fend for one’s own needs, it can also fend for the needs of other less fortunate ones. Society thrives when there is enough to spend.

B. Against the statement:

There are many who believe that money is not the sole determinant of happiness. They argue that happiness is a multifaceted concept, encompassing various aspects of life, including relationships, personal growth, purpose, and overall life satisfaction. While money can provide comfort and convenience, it does not guarantee genuine happiness. Numerous studies have shown that once basic needs are met, the correlation between wealth and happiness diminishes. Other factors, such as strong social connections, meaningful work, and a sense of purpose, play significant roles in fostering happiness and well-being. In fact, excessive focus on wealth accumulation can sometimes lead to negative consequences, such as a lack of contentment, strained relationships, and a loss of connection to one’s values.

If money is the sole criterion for happiness, where do we place great souls like Mother Teresa and Mahatma Gandhi? They were the people who derived happiness by doing noble services. One made a heaven on earth for the needy by alleviating their pain and suffering. The other restored respect for his nation by devoting himself to the national cause of freedom. Will it be possible for us to imagine the amount of contentment and happiness people like them enjoy? This makes me believe money is not the sole criterion of happy living. Achieving a goal set for oneself can bring oodles of happiness for oneself and others. Reaching one’s potential is the greatest form of happiness one can ever achieve. It all depends on one’s mind set.

Even a rich, wealthy person with palatial houses, a fleet of cars, and a healthy bank balance may remain unhappy if personal relationships are broken. Many a person has adopted extreme steps in spite of their financial and social accomplishments. This proves money cannot always buy happiness.

I think, above all, a positive outlook, a give and take attitude, and an encompassing love for life...
are the biggest requirements for the wonderful feeling of having lived well.

In summary, while money can contribute to happiness by fulfilling basic needs, providing security and offering opportunities, it is not the sole determinant of true and lasting happiness. Other factors, such as meaningful relationships, personal growth and a sense of purpose, are equally important. Striking a balance between financial stability and these other aspects of life can lead to a more holistic and fulfilling sense of happiness.

(c) Once, during a family gathering, I decided to offer my assistance in preparing a meal. The occasion was a special one, and I wanted to contribute to the joyful atmosphere by helping create a delicious feast. With the guidance of my family members, I took on the task of making a homemade lasagna.

I began by carefully chopping fresh vegetables, including bell peppers, onions, and mushrooms, while the aroma of garlic filled the air. As I sautéed them in a pan, the vibrant colours and sizzling sounds ignited a sense of anticipation. The harmony of flavours started to intertwine, creating a symphony of scents that made my mouth water.

Next, I prepared the tomato sauce, adding herbs, spices, and a pinch of love. The sauce simmered gently, releasing its rich fragrance throughout the kitchen. As I stirred the pot, a sense of pride welled up inside me, knowing that I was contributing to the creation of a mouth-watering meal.

With the sauce ready, it was time to assemble the lasagna layers. I carefully spread a thin coat of sauce at the bottom of the baking dish, followed by a layer of lasagna noodles. Then, I layered it with a mixture of Ricotta cheese, Mozzarella, and Parmesan, along with a sprinkle of fresh basil. I repeated this process until the dish was full, creating a beautiful mosaic of flavours and textures.

As the lasagna baked in the oven, its tantalizing aroma enveloped the kitchen, drawing the attention of my family members. Their smiles and words of appreciation filled me with a deep sense of satisfaction. It was a small act of contribution, but it brought joy and togetherness to the table.

When the lasagna was finally ready, we gathered around, eager to savour the fruits of our collective effort. The first bite transported us to a realm of culinary delight. As we shared laughter and stories over the meal, I realized the true value of my contribution. It was not just about the physical act of preparing the lasagna; it was about creating a moment of connection and nourishment for my loved ones.

From that experience, I gained a profound insight: how the power of food can bring people together. I learned that even a small act of helping in the kitchen can contribute to the overall enjoyment of a meal and foster a sense of unity among family and friends.

(d) As I arrived outside the examination hall, I took a moment to observe my surroundings. The hallway was bustling with students, all wearing expressions of anticipation and nervousness. Some were engaged in last-minute revisions, flipping through their notes, while others were engaged in hushed conversations, seeking reassurance from their peers.

The walls were adorned with motivational posters and notices, offering words of encouragement. The air was thick with a mixture of tension and determination, and the atmosphere buzzed with a sense of purpose.

As I stood there, I heard a symphony of sounds. The shuffling of papers and the rustling of bags filled the air. Occasionally, a nervous giggle or a deep sigh escaped from someone's lips, a reflection of the collective anxiety that permeated the hallway.

Amidst this flurry of activity, I couldn't help but feel a mix of emotions. Excitement and nervousness intertwined within me, creating a knot in my stomach. I was eager to showcase my knowledge and perform well, yet I couldn't shake off the anxiety that accompanied such high-stakes moments.

As the time for the examination drew near, I made my way into the hall. The transition from the bustling hallway to the hushed interior of the examination room was striking. The room was filled with neat rows of desks and chairs, each with an exam paper placed upon it. The silence was almost tangible, punctuated only by the sound of the clock ticking away and the occasional creaking of chairs.

As I took my seat and the examination started, a deep focus settled over the room. Pens scratched against paper, filling the room with the rhythmic sound of writing. The tension that had filled the air outside had transformed into a laser-like concentration within the confines of the hall. The only sounds that remained were the thoughts racing through my mind and the steady progression of time.

In that moment, the external world faded away, and I immersed myself in the questions before me. The scene changed from one of anticipation and restlessness to one of singular purpose. With each passing minute, the examination became my sole focus, and my feelings of nervousness were replaced by a sense of determination and resolve.

The scene inside the examination hall remained unchanged until the final moments when the invigilator called for the pens to be put down. As we exited the hall, the atmosphere once again shifted. The students were animated,
discussing their answers, and reflecting on the questions. There was a mix of relief and uncertainty, as we eagerly awaited the results that would define our academic progress.

(e) In the heart of a picturesque village, nestled among rolling green fields, three young girls embraced the joyous spirit of childhood. Their laughter echoed through the village square as they gathered on the vibrant village ground, their tiny forms adorned in colourful attire. In their hands, they held the emblem of a timeless game, a cricket bat, ready to embark on an adventure filled with camaraderie and shared dreams.

As the warm sunlight bathed the village ground, casting a golden glow upon their surroundings, the girls stood with determination etched upon their faces. Their eyes sparkled with a twinkle of excitement, reflecting the infinite possibilities that awaited them on this hallowed ground.

The village ground, an open canvas, offered a stage for these girls to cultivate their skills, resilience, and teamwork. It became a sanctuary where their laughter reverberated against the backdrop of ancient trees, and the cheers of imaginary crowds echoed in the distance. Each swing of the bat carried a sense of purpose, every stride marked a step closer to empowerment and self-belief.

In their spirited game, I saw more than just the physical act of playing cricket. I witnessed the embodiment of courage, resilience, and the breaking of stereotypes. These young girls challenged the norms of a society that often sought to confine them, proving that their dreams could soar as high as their ambitions allowed.

As the hours passed and shadows stretched across the village ground, their game evolved. They learned to adapt to challenges, strategising their plays, and celebrating each small victory. In their teamwork, they discovered the strength of unity, recognizing that supporting one another led to greater achievements.

The picture of these village girls playing cricket whispered a tale of empowerment, reminding us of the boundless potential that lies within every young heart. It offered a glimpse into a world where dreams take flight, where the spirit of youth is nurtured, and where obstacles are conquered with unwavering determination.

And as the sun began its descent, casting a warm glow upon the village ground, the girls bid farewell to their spirited game. But the essence of their play lingered, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of those who witnessed their radiant spirits. The picture painted a tale of resilience, camaraderie, and the unwavering spirit of youth, forever inspiring us to embrace our passions, break barriers, and chase our dreams, no matter how big or small.

Q. 2. (Do not spend more than 20 minutes on this question.)

Select any one of the following:

(a) Your uncle has offered to get you a pet for your birthday. Write a letter to him telling him what you would like, give reasons for your choice and tell him how you would take care of your pet.

(b) The traffic outside your school is very heavy and chaotic. Write a letter to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) pointing out the danger of such heavy and chaotic traffic in a school zone. Suggest possible solutions for the problem.

Ans. (a)

Subash Nagar, Agra
10 June, 20XX

Dear Uncle,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I am thrilled to hear about your generous offer to get me a pet for my upcoming birthday. The thought of having a furry companion fills my heart with excitement and joy.

After much consideration, I have decided that I would absolutely love to have a Labrador Retriever as my pet. Labrador Retrievers are known for their friendly and affectionate nature, which I believe would be a perfect match for me. Their playful and loyal ‘personalities’ make them wonderful companions for both children and adults alike.

One of the main reasons I choose a Labrador Retriever is their exceptional temperament. They are known to be patient and gentle, making them ideal for families. Their friendly nature and sociability mean they get along well with other pets and are also great around children.

In terms of taking care of my new pet, I understand the responsibility it entails, and I am fully committed to providing the love, care, and attention it deserves. Besides, I will ensure my pet receives nutritious diet, regular exercise, grooming, training and veterinary care.

Once again, thank you so much for this incredibly thoughtful offer, Uncle. I eagerly look forward to celebrating my birthday and welcoming this delightful addition to our family.

Sending my love and gratitude,

Tia

(b) St Stephen School
Agra
26 February, 20XX

The Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic)
Hariparvat, Agra
Subject: Concerns Regarding Heavy and Chaotic Traffic in School Zone
Dear Deputy Commissioner,

I am writing to bring to your attention a matter of utmost concern regarding the heavy and chaotic traffic conditions outside our school premises. As a concerned student of [School Name], I believe it is crucial to address the potential dangers posed by this situation and explore possible solutions for the well-being and safety of the students, staff, and the community as a whole.

The traffic congestion in the immediate vicinity of our school has reached alarming levels, especially during peak hours. The situation is characterized by haphazard parking, reckless driving, and a lack of adherence to traffic rules. This chaotic scenario poses a significant threat to the safety of students and other pedestrians.

I humbly request your intervention to address this pressing issue. Here are a few suggestions for possible solutions.

1. **Increased Police Presence:** Deploying additional traffic police personnel during peak hours can help regulate traffic flow, discourage violations, and ensure the safety of pedestrians.

2. **Traffic Awareness Campaigns:** Organising targeted awareness campaigns aimed at educating the community about traffic rules and safe driving practices. This can be achieved through workshops, seminars, and distribution of educational materials.

3. **Pedestrian Safety Measures:** Installing well-marked zebra crossings, speed bumps, and proper signage to guide pedestrians and ensure their safety.

I firmly believe that implementing these suggestions will not only enhance safety in our school zone but also contribute to the overall improvement of traffic conditions in the surrounding area.

I kindly request your urgent attention and action in addressing this pressing issue. Here are a few suggestions for possible solutions.

Q. 3. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow:

Granny knew I’d been in the train for two nights, and she had a huge breakfast ready for me.

Later she told me there’d been a letter from Uncle Ken.

“He says he’s the manager in Firpo’s hotel in Simla,” she said. “The salary is very good. It’s a steady job and I hope he keeps it.”

Three days later Uncle Ken was on the veranda steps with his bedding roll and battered suitcase.

“Have you given up the hotel job?” asked Granny.

“No,” said Uncle Ken. “They have closed down.”

“I hope it wasn’t because of you.”

“No, Aunt Ellen. The bigger hotels in the hill stations are closing down.”

“Well, never mind. Come along and have your lunch.”

Over lunch, Uncle Ken talked very seriously about ways and means of earning a living.

“There is only one taxi in the whole of Dehra,” he mused. “Surely there is business for another?”

“I’m sure there is,” said Granny. “But where does it get you? In the first place, you don’t have a taxi. And in the second place, you can’t drive.”

“I can soon learn. There’s a driving school n town. And I can use Uncle’s old car.”

“I don’t think it will run now,” said Granny.

“Of course, it will. It just needs some oiling and greasing and a spot of paint.”

“All right, learn to drive.”

So, Uncle Ken joined the driving school.

After a month Uncle Ken announced that he could drive and that he was taking the car out for a trial run.

“You haven’t got your license yet,” said Granny.

“Oh, I won’t take it far,” said Uncle Ken. “Just down the road and back again.”

He spent all morning cleaning up the car. Granny gave him money for a can of petrol.

After tea, Uncle Ken said, “Come along, Ruskin, hop in and I will give you a ride. Bring Mohan along too.” Mohan and I needed no urging. We got into the car beside Uncle Ken.

“Now don’t go too fast, Ken,” said Granny anxiously. “You are not used to the car as yet.”

Uncle Ken nodded and smiled and gave two sharp toots on the horn. He was feeling pleased with himself.

Driving through the gate, he nearly ran over a cat. Miss Kellner, coming out for her evening rickshaw ride, saw Uncle Ken at the wheel of the car and ran indoors again.

Uncle Ken drove straight and fast, tootling the horn without a break.

At the end of the road there was a roundabout.

“We’ll turn here,” said Uncle Ken, “and then drive back again.”

He turned the steering wheel, we began going round the roundabout, but the steering wheel wouldn’t turn all the way, not as much as Uncle Ken would have liked it to... So, instead he went on and straight through the Maharaja of Jetpur’s garden wall.
It was a single-brick wall, and the car knocked it down and emerged on the other side without any damage to the car or any of its occupants. Uncle Ken brought it to a halt in the middle of the Maharaja’s lawn.

Running across the grass came the Maharaja himself. When he saw that it was Uncle Ken at the wheel, the Maharaja beamed with pleasure.

“Delighted to see you, old chap!” he exclaimed. “Jolly decent of you to drop in again. How about a game of tennis?”

(a) Give the meaning of the following words as used in the passage: [3]

(i) battered (line 7)
(ii) mused (line 15)
(iii) emerged (line 48)

(b) Answer the following questions briefly in your own words.

(i) Why did Granny hope Uncle Ken would keep his job at Firpo’s hotel? [2]

(ii) When Uncle Ken arrived with his luggage, Granny remarked that she hoped the hotel had not closed down because of him. What does this remark tell you about Uncle Ken? [2]

(iii) Why did Uncle Ken think that driving a taxi in Dehra would be profitable? [2]

(iv) Which sentence tells you that the narrator and his friend were waiting to be invited for a drive in a car? [2]

(v) Why did Miss Kellner run indoors when she saw Uncle Ken at the wheel of the car? [2]

(vi) What was Uncle Ken’s intention at the roundabout? [2]

(c) In not more than 60 words, describe what happened after the car went through the wall. [8]

(ii) Give a title to your summary in 3(c)(i). Give a reason to justify your choice of the title. [2]

Ans. (a) battered-damaged, broken, worn out

(ii) mused-spoke thoughtfully, spoke dreamily, thought aloud

(iii) emerged-appeared, came out,

(b) (i) Granny hoped that Uncle Ken would keep his job at Firpo’s hotel as it was a steady job with a good salary

(ii) The remark of Granny implies in a humourous way that Uncle Ken with his streak of irresponsibility or eccentricity must have caused some problem for the hotel that it has been forced to shut down. Granny may also be alluding that he being a rolling stone, must have done something to be forced out, as he cannot stick to one job for a long time.

(iii) Uncle Ken thought that Dehra had only one taxi for the use of the people over there; so, there is scope for doing a profitable business for others in the same line.

(iv) The sentence, ‘Mohan and I needed no urging’ amply proves that they were eager to be invited to have a drive in the car.

(v) Driving through the gate, Uncle Ken nearly ran over a cat and seeing this, the lady got frightened and ran indoors. Surely, she must have got the impression that the one at the wheel was a rash driver or could not control the car properly, and she did not want to take the risk of being run over.

(vi) He wanted to turn around + (return home/drive back/go back) (Any one in bracket to be accepted).

(c) (i) Points to look for:

1. Knocked it down
2. Emerged on the other side.
3. Brought it to a halt.
4. Maharaja runs to greet them.
5. Beams with pleasure.
6. Invites Ken for a tennis game.

Detailed Answer:

The car rammed into the wall and emerged on the other side. Uncle Ken brought it to a halt in the middle of the Maharaja’s lawn. No one was hurt. Hearing the commotion, the Maharaja came to inspect. Seeing it was Ken, his old friend, he beamed with pleasure, and invited him to play tennis.

(ii) The suitable title for the given extract is “Everything is possible.” Looking at Uncle Ken’s attitude we understand that he was a man who never loses hope or gives up. Even after losing his job, his willingness kept him going and he learned to drive and thought of another business. He had a never give up attitude.

- Any apt title to be accepted (for Precis)

Justification for choice of the title.

Q. 4. (a) Fill in each of the numbered blanks with the correct form of the word given in brackets. Do not copy the passage, but write in correct serial order the word or phrase appropriate to the blank space. [4]
Example:
(0) **beginning**
Alice was **(0)_________** (begin) to get very tired of **(1)_________** (sit) by her sister on the bank and of having nothing to do; once or twice she had **(2)_________** (peep) into the book her sister was reading, but it **(3)_________** (have) no pictures or conversations in it, “and what is the use of a book,” **(4)_________** (think) Alice, “without pictures or conversations?”
Alice wondered whether the pleasure of **(5)_________** (make) a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes **(6)_________** (run) close by her.
Alice did not think this was very remarkable, until the Rabbit actually **(7)_________** (take) a watch out of its waistcoat-pocket, and **(8)_________** (look) at it, and then hurried on.

(b) **Fill in each blank with an appropriate word:**

(i) The poet’s mother was stung **_________** a scorpion.
(ii) “Please write **_________** what I tell you otherwise you will forget,” the teacher said.
(iii) The dog was hiding **_________** the bed, barking at the stranger.
(iv) Sheila’s grandmother found it difficult to climb **_________** the steep staircase.
(v) The soldier fought bravely **_________** his country.
(vi) There is no use crying **_________** spilt milk.
(vii) I don’t know what they were arguing **_________** but I could hear angry voices.
(viii) The school playground is out **_________** bounds for the pupils of the primary school.

(c) **Join the following sentences to make one complete sentence without using and, but or so:**

(i) They have to go to bed early every night. They are allowed to stay up late on Saturdays.
(ii) The children were delighted. The exams had been cancelled.
(iii) We are not allowed to play in the sun. We are not allowed to play in the rain.

(d) **Re-write the following sentences according to the instructions given after each. Make other changes that may be necessary, but do not change the meaning of each sentence.**

(i) She laid the table after she had finished the cooking.
   **(Begin: When ..........................)**

(ii) He is old but still he works hard.
   **(Begin: Despite .........................)**

(iii) The delivery boy was requested to bring the parcel the next day.
   **(Rewrite using direct speech)**

(iv) I prefer playing a game to watching television.
   **(Begin: I would rather ..................)**

(v) Every family has a black sheep.
   **(Begin: There is no ......................)**

(vi) I have never worn a more ill-fitting suit.
   **(End: ......................... ever worn.)**

(vii) Anil is too fast a runner not to come first in the race.
   **(Begin: Anil is so ......................)**

(viii) As soon as the sports meet ended, the children ran on the field.
   **(Begin: Hardly .........................)**

**Ans.**

(a) 0. **beginning**
1. **sitting**
2. **peeped**
3. **had**
4. **thought**
5. **making**
6. **ran**
7. **took**
8. **looked**

(b) **(i) by**
   **(ii) down**
   **(iii) under**
   **(iv) up / down**
   **(v) for**
   **(vi) over**
   **(vii) about / over**
   **(viii) of**

(c) **(i) (Although / Though / Even though) they have to go to bed early every night, they are allowed to stay up late on Saturdays.**
   **(iv) This is the place. The dog was rescued from its cruel owner.**
(ii) The children were delighted (that/as/since/ because) the exams had been cancelled. / The exams had been cancelled therefore the children were delighted.

(iii) We are neither allowed to play in the sun nor in the rain. / we are not allowed to play either in the sun or in the rain. / Neither are we allowed to play in the sun nor in the rain.

(iv) This is the place where the dog was rescued from its cruel owner. / The dog was rescued from its cruel owner(in/at) this place

(d) (i) When she had finished the (her) cooking she laid the table.

(ii) Despite being old, he works hard.

(iii) “Please bring (deliver) the parcel, tomorrow” (he/she/I/We/they said to the delivery boy).

(iv) I would rather play a game than watch television.

(v) There is no family that (which) does not have a black sheep.

(vi) This is the most ill-fitting suit (that) I have ever worn.

(vii) Anil is so fast a runner that he (cannot fail to/has to/will/is sure to/will surely) come first in the race.

Anil is so fast a runner that he cannot but come first in the race.

(viii) Hardly had the sports meet ended when the children ran on the field.

Hardly did the sports meet end, when the children ran on the field.