



**Advanced skills  
Set 14**

**The Write Tribe**

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# **PAPER 2 TECHNIQUES SECTION B**



## Section B

[20 Marks]

### Text 2

The text narrates a short journey of a crippled beggar who meets an unfortunate end as he goes along his way, begging for alms, in a farming neighbourhood. Read it carefully and answer Questions 5 – 13.

1 It was December. A cold wind blew over the fields, combing through the long grass with her icy fingers and then, turning more masculine, whistled through the bare branches of the trees-a regular piper; and in the sky, the wind, like a bully, buffeted the clouds about in a dark, sombre sky. The cripple's eyes, not missing a fleck of dust, followed the movement of the clouds above as they surged clumsily along, deluging the sky. 5

2 Fearing a thunderous storm, the crippled beggar dragged himself slowly along, raising one crutch after the other with a painful effort, propping himself on the one distorted leg which remained to him. Now and then he sat down beside a ditch for a few moments' rest. Hunger was gnawing his vitals, and in his confused, slow-working mind he had only one idea – to eat – but how this was to be accomplished he did not 10 know. For three hours, he continued his painful journey when at last, the sight of the trees of the village inspired him with new energy.

3 The first peasant he met, and of whom he asked alms, replied:  
"So it's you again, is it, you old scamp? Shall I never be rid of you?"  
And the beggar went on his way. At every door, he got nothing but harsh words 15 that cut him; hard words he could have tolerated. Still, he made the round of the whole village, but received not a cent for his pains.

Then he visited the neighboring farms, toiling through the muddy land, so exhausted that he could hardly raise his crutches from the ground. He met with the same reception everywhere. It was one of those cold, bleak days, when the heart is stone-like and the 20 temper irritable, and hands are held in tight grips that no wrench may loosen.

4 When he had visited all the houses he knew, the beggar sank down in the corner of a ditch running across a farmyard. Letting his crutches slip to the ground, he remained motionless, tortured by hunger, but hardly intelligent enough to realize to the full his unutterable misery. He awaited he knew not what, possessed with that vague hope 25 which persists in the human heart in spite of everything. He awaited in the corner of the farmyard in the biting December wind, some mysterious aid from Heaven or from men, without the least idea whence it was to arrive. A number of black hens ran hither and thither, seeking their food in the earth which supports all living things. Every now and then they snapped up in their beaks a grain of corn or a tiny insect; then they 30 continued their slow, sure search for nutriment.

5 The beggar watched them at first without thinking of anything. Then a thought occurred rather to his stomach than to his mind. He did not reflect that he was going to commit a theft. He took up a stone which lay within reach, and, being of skilful aim, killed at the first shot the fowl nearest to him. The bird fell on its side, flapping its 35 wings and the beggar, picking up his crutches, limped across to where his victim lay.

6 Just as he reached the little feathered body, he received such a blow in his back, it made him lose hold of his crutches and sent him flying ten paces away. And Farmer Chiquet, beside himself with rage, struck and kicked the marauder with all the fury of a plundered peasant as the beggar lay defenceless before him. 40

The farm-hands came up also and joined in this inhumane act of striking the lame beggar. Then when they were tired of beating him they carried him off and shut him up in the woodshed, while they went to fetch the police.

7 So there the beggar laid, like a lump of clay. Evening came—then night—then dawn. About midday the next day, when the police arrived, they found him dead on 45 the floor and his story, like the syllables of an unknown tongue, went with him.

5. (i) With reference to paragraph 1, what is the wind compared to? [1]

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(ii) From paragraph 1 (line 4), what does the phrase 'not missing a fleck of dust' imply? [1]

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6. In paragraph 2 (line 6) 'Fearing a thunderous storm, the cripple dragged himself slowly along, raising one crutch after the other with a painful effort, propping himself on the one distorted leg which remained to him.'

Identify the word or phrase in the given sentence which suggests:

(i) something loud and menacing \_\_\_\_\_ [1]

(ii) a movement made with great effort \_\_\_\_\_ [1]

7. At the end of paragraph 3 (line 21), ' ...and hands are held in tight grips that no wrench may loosen.'

(i) Which two phrases/words suggest that the hands were like tools? [1]

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(ii) Why does the writer describe the people's hands in this way? Support your answer with evidence from the paragraph. [1]

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8. In paragraph 3 (line 15) 'At every door, he got nothing but harsh words that cut him; hard words he could have tolerated.'

Why do you think the beggar would have tolerated 'hard' rather than 'harsh' words? [1]

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9. The writer uses similes like 'like a lump of clay' (line 44) and 'like the syllables of an unknown tongue' (line 46).

What do these similes suggest about the writer's view of what was happening to the beggar? [2]

Similes	Writer's view
like a lump of clay	
like the syllables of an unknown tongue	

10. In paragraph 6 (line 39), '...kicked the marauder with all the fury of a plundered peasant as the beggar lay defenceless before him.' [1]

How is the use of the word 'plundered' an exaggeration?

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11. At the beginning of paragraph 6, 'Just as he reached the little feathered body, he received such a blow in his back, it made him lose hold of his crutches and sent him flying ten paces away'.

(i) What is implied by this sentence pertaining to the beggar's act of killing the chicken? [1]

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(ii) What kind of attack did the beggar receive? Give evidence from the sentence to support your view. [1]

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12. In paragraph 6 (line 39), we are told that the farmer was 'beside himself with rage'.

To what extent did the farmer and his farmhands go to satisfy this rage? [2]

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13. The structure of the text reflects the main feelings – both physical and emotional, that the beggar experienced as he went about, hoping for alms. Complete the flow chart by choosing one word from the box to summarise the main feeling described in each part of the text. There are some extra words in the box you do not need to use. [4]

#### Beggar's feelings

dreamy	battered	jubilant	illuminated
humiliated	withered	benumbed	

#### Flow Chart

