

SECTION A: ESSAY [20 MARKS]

A Brief History of Writing Instruments

1 The development of writing instruments is closely connected to the growth of human civilisation. As societies changed over time, the ways people wrote and recorded information also changed. Writing was not only a tool for communication but also a way to organise knowledge, conduct trade, and preserve culture. Each stage marked not only a technical improvement but also a change in the way people understood and shared information.

2 The earliest form of communication through markings can be traced back to prehistoric humans who drew symbols on cave walls. These pictographs were mainly connected to activities such as hunting and farming. Gradually, the symbols gained shared meanings within communities. Over time, they became more organised and developed into simple systems for keeping records.

3 As settled societies and trade networks expanded, the need for proper documentation increased. People began using clay tokens marked with simple signs to keep track of goods such as grain and livestock. Later, these markings were inscribed on clay tablets. Eventually, the symbols started to represent not only objects but also sounds and abstract ideas. This development became an important step towards the creation of true writing systems.

4 A major advancement came with the emergence of the Greek alphabet around the first millennium BCE. In contrast to earlier pictographic systems, the alphabet introduced a limited set of symbols representing phonetic sounds, thereby increasing efficiency and adaptability. This made writing more efficient and adaptable. People commonly wrote on wax tablets using styluses made of metal or ivory, allowing temporary but practical record-keeping.

5 At the same time, other civilisations were also improving writing methods. In China, ink-making techniques using soot and plant oils became more refined. In Egypt, papyrus provided a lighter and more portable writing surface than clay. The Romans later introduced reed pens, which improved the smoothness of writing. Together, these developments helped spread and standardise writing practices.

6 For many centuries, the quill pen was widely used in Europe. Although it was fragile and needed regular sharpening, it allowed writers to produce precise work. Quills became important tools for scholars, religious leaders, and administrators. Writing materials such as parchment, a specially prepared animal skin used for writing, further reinforced **the labour-intensive nature of producing texts** during this period.

7 **A decisive transformation occurred** in the fifteenth century with Gutenberg's invention of the printing press. The introduction of movable type, where individual letters could be arranged and reused for printing, made it possible to reproduce texts in large numbers. As a result, written knowledge became available to more people, contributing to increased literacy and the exchange of ideas.

8 From cave markings to mechanised printing, the history of writing shows how humans continuously improved the ways they recorded and shared knowledge. Each technological change reflected not only innovation in tools but also deeper changes in human communication and social organisation.

Adapted from Mary Bellis, *A Brief History of Writing*, ThoughtCo.

Part A

For each question, there are **FOUR** responses, A, B, C and D. Choose the corresponding letter of your response and **CIRCLE** it neatly. **NO** score will be awarded if you circle more than **ONE** response. [4]

1. Based on the second paragraph, how did prehistoric symbols change over time?

- A Replaced by clay tokens
- B Adapted to represent sounds
- C Simplified for inscribing on tablets
- D Moved to shared and organised systems

2. The Greek alphabet improved on earlier pictographic systems by

- A carving writing into stone
- B removing written symbols
- C restricting records to scholars
- D using symbols to represent sounds

3. What advantage did papyrus have over clay tokens as a writing surface?

- A It was cheap
- B It was smooth
- C It was lightweight
- D It was temporary

4. What does the phrase 'labour-intensive' mean when it describes the process of producing texts?

- A It requires skilled work.
- B It requires substantial of manual work.
- C It involves the use of specialised tools.
- D It involves several stages of production.

Part B Answer ALL the questions in 50–70 words in the space provided.

1. In the first paragraph, the writer states that writing was “not only a tool for communication but also a way to organise knowledge, conduct trade, and preserve culture.” [3]

What does this suggest about why writing became increasingly important to early societies?

2. Explain what the phrase “a decisive transformation occurred” (paragraph 7) suggests about the significance of this change and the writer’s attitude towards it. [3]

Part C

3. Summarise how writing developed from early pictographs to the printing press, including the key stages and major changes in writing systems and tools mentioned in the passage. Use your own words as far as possible. Write your summary in no more than 120 words. [10]

SECTION B: Unseen Poetry [10 MARKS]

Read the poem carefully and answer the questions that follow.

Time does not bring relief (Sonnet II)

(Edna St. Vincent Millay)

Time does not bring relief; you all have lied
Who told me time would ease me of my pain!
I miss him in the weeping of the rain;
I want him at the shrinking of the tide;
The old snows melt from every mountain-side,
And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;
But last year's bitter loving must remain
Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide!
There are a hundred places where I fear
To go,-- so with his memory they brim.
And entering with relief some quiet place
Where never fell his foot or shone his face
I say, "There is no memory of him here!"
And so stand stricken, so remembering him!

Part A Answer the following question in 80-100 words the space provided.

1. Identify two images the speaker uses to describe the people she has lost. [2]

2. The poem's octave and sestet each contain a moment where the speaker directly addresses or quotes someone. According to the text, who is addressed in line 1, and who is quoted in line 13? [2]

Part B: Answer the following question in 80-100 words in the space provided.

3. Explain how the speaker shows that memories of the loved one cannot be escaped. Give **three** points. [6]

[illegible]

Answer all the questions in 200-250 words with reference to the short story *Too Bad* by Isaac Asimov.

- [illegible]

SECTION D: PLAY [25 MARKS]

Answer all the questions in 200-250 words with reference to *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare.

1. How is Shylock presented as a victim in two moments of *The Merchant of Venice*?

[10]

[illegible]

2. How does Shakespeare present justice in *The Merchant of Venice*? Support your answer with evidence.

[10]

[illegible]

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