

CBSE CLASS X
English Language & Literature (184)**QUESTION PAPER***From previous CBSE Board Exam questions***Code: ZDTYAO****Questions: 17****Maximum Marks: 78****Generated: 2026-06-15 13:05****SELECTIONS USED**

Source	Previous-year board
Subject	English Language & Literature
Lessons	The Thief's Story
Year	2022-2026
Questions selected	17

Composition — Types: 7 literature_long · 7 Short · 3 literature_extract

Q1.**[6]**

Answer any one of the following two questions in 100–120 words:

Anil's acceptance and forgiveness of the thief demonstrates empathy and generosity. Elaborate.

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/2/1 Q11 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q2.**[6]**

Answer in about 100-120 words :

Trust and compassion can reform a person. Justify this statement in the light of the lesson 'The Thief's Story'.

Previously asked in: 2023 2/4/1 Q11(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q3.**[6]**

Hari Singh says – "He knew it but neither his lips nor his eyes showed anything." Anil successfully addressed the situation by not addressing it at all. Elaborate based on your reading of The Thief's Story.

Previously asked in: 2024 2/1/1 Q11(ii)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q4.**[3]**

What does the thief say about the different reactions of the people when they are robbed?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/5/1 Q9 (c)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q5.**[3]**

How was the Hari Singh's 'appealing smile' at the end different from similar smiles of his on earlier occasions ? (The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/5/1 Q9 (iii)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q6.**[3]**

How did Hari Singh justify his action of returning to Anil?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/2/1 Q9 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q7.**[3]**

Why does Anil not hand over Hari Singh to the police?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/1/1 Q9 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q8.**[3]**

Why does Hari Singh find it pleasant to work for Anil, though he was a thief? (The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2026 2/2/1 Q9 (i)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q9.**[6]**

Answer in 100-120 words.

Hari Singh says – "He knew it but neither his lips nor his eyes showed anything." Anil successfully addressed the situation by not addressing it all. Elaborate based on your reading of 'The Thief's Story'.

Previously asked in: 2024 2/3/1 Q11(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q10.**[3]**

Why did Hari Singh smile in his most appealing way towards the end of the story ?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/6/1 Q9 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q11.**[6]**

Imagine that Hari Singh from 'The Thief's Story' by Ruskin Bond, writes a diary entry, exploring the theme of human values and relations that are essential in life and can transform a person in the context of his own experience. Write this diary entry as Hari Singh.

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2024 2/4/1 Q11(a)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q12.**[6]**

Hari's character evolves from being deceitful and opportunistic to remorseful and seeking redemption.

In the light of the above information, describe how his decision to return the money signifies a moral awakening in him and a newfound appreciation for Anil's kindness and mentorship.

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/3/1 Q11(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q13.**[3]**

How do Anil's initial reaction to Hari Singh's cooking and his subsequent actions reflect Anil's evolving relationship with Hari Singh?

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/3/1 Q9 (i)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q14.**[6]**

Anil's love, trust and compassion influenced Hari Singh's inner conflict and played a crucial role in transforming him.

Elucidate. (The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2026 2/3/1 Q11(a)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q15.**[5]**

I went back to the bazaar and sat down in the shelter of the clock tower. The clock showed midnight. I felt for the notes. They were damp from the rain.

Anil's Money. In the morning he would probably have given me two or three rupees to go to the cinema, but now I had it all.

I couldn't cook his meals, run to the bazaar, or learn to write whole sentences any more.

I had forgotten about them in the excitement of the theft. Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees. It was a simple matter to steal- and sometimes just as simple to be caught.

Read the given extract and answer the questions:

(i) Which of the following is NOT a reason why Hari Singh thinks he would not be able to write whole sentences? [1]

- (A) Anil would not be there to teach him.
- (B) He had robbed Anil and left.
- (C) He would not go back to Anil to learn.
- (D) He had no money to take admission in school.

(ii) Why is it fair to say that Hari Singh's tone, when he says "I couldn't cook his meals, run to the bazaar or learn to write whole sentences any more," is filled with remorse and regret? Answer in about 40 words. [2]

(iii) What do you infer about Hari Singh from this statement? "Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees." [1]

(iv) State True or False with reference to the given extract. The reason Hari Singh was filled with a feeling of guilt was because Anil trusted him. [1]

Previously asked in: 2024 2/2/1 Q6(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q16.

[5]

There was a fifty rupee note between his fingers. My heart sank. I thought I had been discovered. "I made some money yesterday," he explained. "Now you'll be paid regularly." My spirits rose. But when I took the note, I saw it was still wet from the night's rain. "Today we'll start writing sentences," he said. He knew. But neither his lips nor his eyes showed anything.

Read the given extract and answer the questions.

- (i) In the context of the given extract : What was the feelings UNLIKELY to have been on seeing 'a fifty rupee note between his fingers'? [1]
- (A) joyous
(B) sad
(C) unhappy
(D) worried
- (ii) How does the prospect of being paid regularly affect the narrator's motivation and hope for the future? Answer in about 40 words. [2]
- (iii) Fill in the blank with the correct word from the bracket : The person spoken about did not let the narrator realise that his act of stealing was caught. It reflects the _____ (nobility / dishonesty) of his character. [1]
- (iv) Compare the meanings of the expressions : "My heart sank", and "My spirits rose". [1]

Previously asked in: 2025 2/6/1 Q6(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

Q17.

[5]

Later, he patted me on the head and said never mind, he'd teach me to cook. He also taught me to write my name and said he would soon teach me to write whole sentences and to add numbers. I was grateful. I knew that once I could write like an educated man there would be no limit to what I could achieve. It was quite pleasant working for Anil. I made the tea in the morning and then would take my time buying the day's supplies, usually making a profit of about a rupee a day. I think he knew I made a little money this way but he did not seem to mind.

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

- (i) What does the following line tell us about the character of Anil ? "I think he knew I made a little money this way but he did not seem to mind." [1]
- (ii) Which of the following best describes the realization Hari Singh had while working for Anil ? [1]
- A that he would become a rich person one day
B that Anil was a very intelligent master but a miser
C that he would be able to accomplish a lot if he gets educated
D that Anil made a lot of money from his job
- (iii) What did Anil promise to teach Hari Singh, and how did Hari Singh feel about the opportunity to learn ? Answer in about 40 words. [2]
- (iv) Fill in the blank with the correct word from the brackets. The narrator earned extra money by making a/an _____ (profit/investment) of about a rupee a day. [1]

Previously asked in: 2025 2/1/1 Q6(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

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CBSE CLASS X

English Language & Literature (184)

ANSWER KEY

From previous CBSE Board Exam questions

Code: ZDTYAO

Questions: 17

Maximum Marks: 78

Generated: 2026-06-15 13:05

Q1.

[6]

Answer any one of the following two questions in 100–120 words:

Anil's acceptance and forgiveness of the thief demonstrates empathy and generosity. Elaborate.

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/2/1 Q11 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Anil's treatment of Hari Singh clearly reflects his empathetic and generous nature throughout the story.

From the very beginning, Anil shows generosity by taking in a stranger with no verifiable background, offering him food, shelter, and even education — teaching him to cook, write his name, and form whole sentences — without any salary.

When Hari Singh steals ₹600 and returns the money by slipping it back under the mattress, Anil quietly demonstrates that he knows. The next morning, he hands Hari a fifty-rupee note — still wet from the rain — saying he will now pay him regularly. He says nothing about the theft. His lips and eyes show nothing.

This silent forgiveness is the most powerful expression of empathy. He understands that punishing or exposing Hari would destroy the boy's chance of reform. Instead, he chooses to continue teaching him — "Today we'll start writing sentences" — showing that he values Hari's future over his own loss.

Anil's forgiveness is not weakness; it is a conscious, compassionate choice that ultimately transforms a thief.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, *Ruskin Bond* — Chapter 2

Explanation

- **Examiners look for:** a clear argument + specific textual evidence + a brief conclusion showing insight.
- **Key evidence to cite:** teaching without pay, the wet fifty-rupee note, the silence about theft, the sentence about writing sentences the next morning.
- **Don't just retell the plot** — show how each action proves empathy/generosity.
- The wet note is the clincher: it proves Anil *knew*, yet chose forgiveness. Always mention it.
- Word count here is ~150 words — acceptable for a 6-mark answer that asks you to "elaborate."

Q2.

[6]

Answer in about 100-120 words :

Trust and compassion can reform a person. Justify this statement in the light of the lesson 'The Thief's Story'.

Previously asked in: 2023 2/4/1 Q11(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

In 'The Thief's Story,' Ruskin Bond powerfully demonstrates that trust and compassion have the power to reform a person.

Anil, a struggling writer, employs Hari Singh — a young thief — without demanding credentials. He teaches him to cook and promises to educate him, trusting him completely. This unconditional trust plants a seed of conscience in Hari Singh.

When Hari steals ₹600 from under Anil's mattress, he hesitates at the railway station and cannot board the Lucknow Express. He reflects that "whole sentences could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees." He realises that education and respect matter more than easy money.

He returns the notes undetected. The next morning, Anil hands him a fifty-rupee note — still wet from the rain — yet says nothing, showing compassion rather than anger. His silent forgiveness moves Hari deeply, and his smile "came by itself, without any effort," signalling genuine inner reform.

Thus, Anil's trust and compassion succeed where punishment never could.

Source: 'The Thief's Story', Ruskin Bond — Chapter 2

Explanation

- **What examiners look for:** A clear thesis statement, evidence from the text (the theft, the hesitation, the return of money, Anil's silent forgiveness), and a conclusion linking back to the theme.
- **Key quote to include:** "Whole sentences could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees" — shows Hari's internal change.
- **Wet note detail** is crucial: it proves Anil *knew* but chose compassion over confrontation — examiners reward this specific observation.
- Keep paragraphs tight; one idea per paragraph works best for 6-mark literary answers.

Q3.

[6]

Hari Singh says – "He knew it but neither his lips nor his eyes showed anything." Anil successfully addressed the situation by not addressing it at all. Elaborate based on your reading of *The Thief's Story*.

Previously asked in: 2024 2/1/1 Q11(ii)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

In *The Thief's Story*, Ruskin Bond subtly conveys Anil's wisdom through his deliberate silence when he discovers the theft.

When Hari Singh returns the stolen money and places it back under the mattress, he believes he has gone undetected. However, the next morning, Anil hands him a fifty-rupee note — still **wet from the night's rain** — a clear sign that he knew. Despite this, Anil says nothing about the theft. He simply announces, "Today we'll start writing sentences," quietly reaffirming his commitment to educating Hari Singh.

Anil understood that confronting Hari Singh directly would destroy the fragile trust that had brought him back. Had Anil shown anger or handed him to the police, Hari Singh's chance at reformation would have ended. Instead, Anil's silence communicated forgiveness and faith more powerfully than any words could.

This is why Hari Singh's smile "came by itself, without any effort" — he felt genuine gratitude, not guilt. Anil's non-confrontational approach proved more transformative than punishment, showing that trust and kindness can reform a person where law and fear cannot.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, Chapter 2

Explanation

Examiners look for three things here:

- **Evidence** from the text (wet note, "Today we'll start writing sentences," the smile).
- **Analysis** of *why* Anil stays silent — he values trust and Hari's future over money.
- **Effect** on Hari Singh — the genuine, effortless smile signals real inner change.

Avoid retelling the whole plot. Focus on the *morning scene* and its significance. The wet note is the key detail that proves Anil *knew* — always mention it.

Q4.

[3]

What does the thief say about the different reactions of the people when they are robbed?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/5/1 Q9 (c)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

The thief, Hari Singh, says that in his short career as a thief, he had carefully studied men's faces when they lost their goods. He observed three distinct reactions:

- The **greedy man** showed **fear**.
- The **rich man** showed **anger**.
- The **poor man** showed **acceptance**.

However, he believed Anil's reaction would be different from all these. Anil's face would show only **a touch of sadness** — not for the loss of money, but for the **loss of trust**.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, Chapter 2

Explanation

Examiners look for all three reactions (greedy/rich/poor man) with their corresponding emotions, plus Anil's contrasting reaction and the reason (loss of trust, not money). Missing Anil's reaction would cost marks. Keep it concise — three bullet points plus one explanatory line works perfectly for 3 marks.

Q5.

[3]

How was the Hari Singh's 'appealing smile' at the end different from similar smiles of his on earlier occasions ? (The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/5/1 Q9 (iii)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Earlier, Hari Singh used his "appealing smile" as a **deliberate tool** — a calculated act to win Anil's trust and gain entry into his house. It was a conscious, manipulative gesture used for selfish motives.

At the end, however, the smile "**came by itself, without any effort**." It was natural and spontaneous — born out of genuine warmth, gratitude, and relief. Hari had returned the stolen money and chosen honesty and education over crime. The smile now reflected a changed heart, not a thief's trick.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, *The Theft and Its Aftermath*

Explanation

The examiner looks for a **contrast** between the two smiles — one deliberate/manipulative, one genuine/spontaneous. Quote or paraphrase the line "the smile came by itself, without any effort" for full marks. Link it to Hari's inner transformation (choosing education and trust over theft). This earns all 3 marks.

Q6.

[3]

How did Hari Singh justify his action of returning to Anil?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/2/1 Q9 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Hari Singh justified his return to Anil through several reasons. First, he realised that stealing only a few hundred rupees was a small gain compared to the lifetime benefits of education. He thought, *"Whole sentences could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees."* Second, he feared being caught, knowing "it is simple to steal but sometimes just as simple to be caught." Third, he valued Anil's trust and felt guilty knowing Anil's face would show "sadness not for money, but for loss of trust." He returned the money, choosing education and a respectable future over a petty theft.

Source: *"The Thief's Story", Chapter 2 — The Theft and Its Aftermath*

Explanation

Examiners look for **three clear reasons** in a 3-mark answer — one point per mark. The key reasons are: (1) value of education over money, (2) fear of being caught, and (3) guilt over Anil's trust. Quote briefly to support your points. Avoid padding — keep it within 3 tight points.

Q7.

[3]

Why does Anil not hand over Hari Singh to the police?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/1/1 Q9 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Anil does not hand Hari Singh over to the police because he understands that the boy has already returned the stolen money and feels genuine remorse. Anil is a kind, trusting, and forgiving person. He realises that punishing Hari would destroy any chance of the boy's reform. Instead, he quietly signals that he knows about the theft — by handing him a note still wet from the rain — yet chooses to focus on Hari's future by promising to teach him to write sentences. His concern is for the loss of trust, not the loss of money.

Source: *"The Thief's Story," Chapter 2*

Explanation

- Examiners expect **two or three clear reasons**: Anil's forgiving nature, the fact that the money was returned, and his belief in Hari's reform/education.
- Mention the **wet note detail** — it proves Anil knew, making his silence a deliberate, meaningful choice.
- Avoid retelling the whole plot; stay focused on *why* Anil does not report him.
- The question carries 3 marks, so give 3 distinct points in roughly 3 sentences.

Q8.

[3]

Why does Hari Singh find it pleasant to work for Anil, though he was a thief? (The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2026 2/2/1 Q9 (i)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Hari Singh finds it pleasant working for Anil for several reasons. Anil teaches him to cook, write his name, and promises to teach him whole sentences and arithmetic. Hari realises that education could bring him far more than theft ever could — "there would be no limit to what I could achieve." Besides, Anil is kind and trusting; he lets Hari keep a daily profit on shopping without complaint. This genuine care and the opportunity to better himself make the arrangement pleasant despite Hari being a thief.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, "The Thief Meets Anil" section

Explanation

The examiner expects **three clear points**: (1) Anil teaches Hari valuable skills (literacy/cooking), (2) Hari sees education as a path to a better future, and (3) Anil's kind, non-judgmental nature makes the environment comfortable. Avoid just retelling the plot — connect each point to *why* it feels pleasant to Hari. Use a brief quote if possible; it shows textual evidence and impresses examiners.

Q9.

[6]

Answer in 100-120 words.

Hari Singh says – "He knew it but neither his lips nor his eyes showed anything." Anil successfully addressed the situation by not addressing it all. Elaborate based on your reading of 'The Thief's Story'.

Previously asked in: 2024 2/3/1 Q11(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

In *The Thief's Story*, Anil handles the situation of being robbed with remarkable wisdom and silent understanding. When he hands Hari Singh a fifty-rupee note — still wet from the night's rain — he makes it clear he knows about the theft, yet says nothing directly. His lips and eyes reveal no accusation, no anger, no confrontation.

Anil's silent acknowledgement is more powerful than any punishment. He neither hands Hari over to the police nor confronts him with harsh words. Instead, he offers regular wages and immediately says, "Today we'll start writing sentences," reaffirming his commitment to Hari's education and future.

This approach preserves Hari's dignity and trust simultaneously. Anil understands that Hari returned the money on his own — a sign of the boy's inner change. By addressing the theft through kindness rather than confrontation, Anil ensures Hari's reformation far more effectively than punishment ever could. The smile Hari gives "without effort" confirms this genuine transformation.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, *The Theft and Its Aftermath*

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to focus on **Anil's silent wisdom** — the wet note as proof he knew, yet chose forgiveness over punishment.
- Link Anil's response to **Hari's transformation** — the smile "without effort" shows it is genuine reform, not just fear.
- Mention the promise to teach "whole sentences" — it shows Anil re-invests in Hari's future rather than punishing the past.
- Avoid retelling the whole plot; analyse *why* Anil's silence works better than confrontation — that is what the question asks.

Q10.

[3]

Why did Hari Singh smile in his most appealing way towards the end of the story ?

Previously asked in: 2023 2/6/1 Q9 (a)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Towards the end of the story, Hari Singh smiled in his most appealing way because he felt relieved and grateful. Anil had discovered the theft — the fifty-rupee note was still wet from the rain, proving he knew — yet he said nothing and even offered Hari regular pay. Hari realised that Anil had forgiven him silently. The smile also reflected Hari's inner transformation; he had returned the money and chosen honesty and education over theft. The smile came naturally, without effort, unlike the calculated, manipulative smile he had used earlier to win Anil's trust.

Source: "A Thief's Story" (*The Theft and Its Aftermath*), Chapter 2

Explanation

- The examiner expects two key points: (1) Hari's relief at Anil's silent forgiveness (wet note = Anil knows), and (2) the contrast with the earlier calculated smile — this one is genuine/effortless.
- Quoting or closely paraphrasing "the smile came by itself, without any effort" strengthens the answer.
- Don't just retell the plot — link the smile to character development (reformation/gratitude).

Q11.

[6]

Imagine that Hari Singh from 'The Thief's Story' by Ruskin Bond, writes a diary entry, exploring the theme of human values and relations that are essential in life and can transform a person in the context of his own experience. Write this diary entry as Hari Singh.

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2024 2/4/1 Q11(a)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Date: November, 19—

Dear Diary,

Tonight I did something I never thought I would — I returned the money I had stolen from Anil. Six hundred rupees. I had it in my hands and nearly boarded the Lucknow Express. Yet I couldn't go.

Sitting alone in the rain near the clock tower, I kept thinking about Anil's face. He would not show anger like a rich man or fear like a greedy one. He would show only sadness — sadness at losing *trust*. That thought hit me harder than anything ever had.

I also thought about the lessons — writing whole sentences, adding numbers. Stealing is simple, but being a truly respected, educated man is something far greater. No amount of rupees can buy that.

When I crept back and slipped the notes under his mattress, I felt something unfamiliar — relief. This morning, Anil handed me a fifty-rupee note, wet from the rain. He knew. But he said nothing. Only: "*Today we'll start writing sentences.*"

His trust, freely given again, transformed me more than any punishment could have. I realise now that human values — trust, kindness, and the belief in another person's goodness — can change a thief into something better.

— Hari Singh

Source: *The Thief's Story*, Chapter 2

Explanation

- **Diary format** earns structure marks: date, salutation, first-person voice, signature.
- Examiners look for **theme of trust and transformation** — Anil's unconditional kindness vs. Hari's growing conscience.
- Quote or closely echo textbook lines ("sadness for loss of trust," "whole sentences," wet note) to show textual grounding.
- Keep the emotional arc clear: temptation → hesitation → realisation → return → renewal.
- About 150 words is ideal for 6 marks in this format — don't exceed or pad.

Q12.

[6]

Hari's character evolves from being deceitful and opportunistic to remorseful and seeking redemption.

In the light of the above information, describe how his decision to return the money signifies a moral awakening in him and a newfound appreciation for Anil's kindness and mentorship.

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/3/1 Q11(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

Hari Singh's decision to return the stolen money marks a clear moral turning point in *The Thief's Story* by Ruskin Bond.

Initially, Hari is a 15-year-old experienced thief who befriends Anil with deliberate deceit, using flattery to gain his trust. He steals ₹600 from under Anil's mattress and plans to board the Lucknow Express. Yet he hesitates and misses the train — a hesitation he himself cannot explain, hinting at a conscience beginning to stir.

Sitting alone in the cold, rainy night, Hari realises what he truly stands to lose: "*Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees.*" Education and respect — gifts only Anil offered — outweigh the stolen money.

When he quietly slips the notes back under the mattress, it is not fear of the police but genuine remorse that guides him. Anil's silent acknowledgement — handing Hari a damp fifty-rupee note with the promise "*Today we'll start writing sentences*" — shows his forgiving nature. The smile that comes to Hari "*without any effort*" reflects authentic gratitude, signalling that his moral awakening is real and his bond with Anil is now built on trust, not deception.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, Ruskin Bond — *Moments* (NCERT Class 10)

Explanation

What examiners look for in a 6-mark character-analysis answer:

- A clear **thesis** in the opening line (moral evolution).
- **Textual evidence** — quote or closely paraphrase the story (the missed train, the rain scene, the "whole sentences" thought, the damp note). Examiners reward direct references.
- Cover **both sides**: Hari's past deceit AND his change — don't write only about the theft or only about the return.
- End with **Anil's role** as mentor/catalyst; the question specifically asks about "Anil's kindness and mentorship."
- Keep paragraphs tight; ~130 words is the sweet spot for 6 marks. Avoid listing bullet points for a "describe/discuss" question — flowing paragraphs score better.

Q13.

[3]

How do Anil's initial reaction to Hari Singh's cooking and his subsequent actions reflect Anil's evolving relationship with Hari Singh?

(The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/3/1 Q9 (i)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

When Hari Singh cooks a terrible meal, Anil gives it to a stray dog and asks him to leave. However, instead of dismissing him permanently, Anil laughs at Hari's persistence, pats him on the head, and decides to teach him to cook, read, and write. This initial generosity shows Anil's kind and trusting nature. By the end, when Anil knows Hari has stolen the money yet still pays him and promises to teach him sentences, their relationship transforms from employer-servant to one built on silent understanding, forgiveness, and genuine care.

Source: *The Thief's Story, Chapters — The Thief Meets Anil & The Theft and Its Aftermath*

Explanation

- **3-mark focus:** Examiners want a connected answer covering (1) Anil's reaction to the bad cooking, (2) his subsequent teaching/trust, and (3) his silent forgiveness at the end — showing *evolution*.
- Don't just retell the plot; show *how* these actions reflect a *changing/deepening relationship*.
- Key phrase to remember: Anil's response moves from tolerant amusement → genuine mentorship → silent, dignified forgiveness — that arc is the "evolution."
- The wet fifty-rupee note is the crucial detail proving Anil *knows* but chooses trust over accusation.

Q14.

[6]

Anil's love, trust and compassion influenced Hari Singh's inner conflict and played a crucial role in transforming him. Elucidate. (The Thief's Story)

Previously asked in: 2026 2/3/1 Q11(a)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

In *The Thief's Story*, Anil's love, trust, and compassion act as a mirror that forces Hari Singh to confront his own conscience and ultimately choose an honest life.

Anil's Trust: Despite knowing Hari lies about cooking, Anil employs him, gives him a room, and even a key to the door. He also overlooks the daily rupee Hari makes on shopping. This unconditional trust makes the theft emotionally difficult: "It's difficult to rob a careless man — sometimes he doesn't even notice he's been robbed."

Anil's Compassion: Anil teaches Hari to cook, write his name, and promises to teach him whole sentences — expecting nothing in return. This kindness plants the seed of transformation.

Hari's Inner Conflict: After stealing ₹600, Hari misses the Lucknow Express because he hesitates. Sitting in the cold rain, he realises that stealing is easy but "to be a really big man, a clever and respected man, was something else." Education offered by Anil promises a better future.

The Return: Hari returns the money silently. Anil's response — paying him a (still-wet) fifty-rupee note and saying "Today we'll start writing sentences" — shows he knew but chose forgiveness over punishment.

Anil's silent compassion transforms Hari from a calculating thief into someone capable of honesty and genuine gratitude.

Source: *The Thief's Story*, Ruskin Bond — Chapter 2, *Footprints Without Feet*

Explanation

- Examiners look for **three elements — trust, compassion, and inner conflict** — with textual evidence for each.
- Quote or closely paraphrase the text (e.g., the wet note, the missed train, "whole sentences") to earn full marks.
- End with a concluding line showing transformation — examiners reward clear cause-and-effect reasoning.
- Avoid padding; 5–6 tight points with evidence score better than vague general statements.

Q15.

[5]

I went back to the bazaar and sat down in the shelter of the clock tower. The clock showed midnight. I felt for the notes. They were damp from the rain.

Anil's Money. In the morning he would probably have given me two or three rupees to go to the cinema, but now I had it all.

I couldn't cook his meals, run to the bazaar, or learn to write whole sentences any more.

I had forgotten about them in the excitement of the theft. Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees. It was a simple matter to steal- and sometimes just as simple to be caught.

Read the given extract and answer the questions:

(i) Which of the following is NOT a reason why Hari Singh thinks he would not be able to write whole sentences? [1]

- (A) Anil would not be there to teach him.
- (B) He had robbed Anil and left.
- (C) He would not go back to Anil to learn.
- (D) He had no money to take admission in school.

(ii) Why is it fair to say that Hari Singh's tone, when he says "I couldn't cook his meals, run to the bazaar or learn to write whole sentences any more," is filled with remorse and regret? Answer in about 40 words. [2]

(iii) What do you infer about Hari Singh from this statement? "Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees." [1]

(iv) State True or False with reference to the given extract. The reason Hari Singh was filled with a feeling of guilt was because Anil trusted him. [1]

Previously asked in: 2024 2/2/1 Q6(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

(i) (D) He had no money to take admission in school.

(ii) Hari Singh realises that by stealing and leaving, he has lost the chance to cook for Anil, run errands, and most importantly, learn to write whole sentences. He feels remorse because he valued these opportunities and now understands he has thrown them away for a few hundred rupees.

(iii) Hari Singh is aware that education has far greater long-term value than theft. He understands that literacy could open doors to a better, more respectable future, showing he is not just a petty thief but a boy with ambition and the ability to think ahead.

(iv) **False.** According to the extract, Hari Singh's guilt stemmed from the realisation that he had lost the chance to learn — "I couldn't ... learn to write whole sentences any more." The extract does not directly state that Anil's trust was the cause of his guilt.

Source: *The Thief's Story, The Theft and Its Aftermath*

Explanation

- **(i)** The extract mentions no school or school fees; all other options are implied by "I couldn't cook his meals, run to the bazaar, or learn to write whole sentences any more."
- **(ii)** The 2-mark answer needs two clear points: what he loses + why it hurts him. Avoid repeating the quote without analysis.
- **(iii)** 1-mark inference: focus on his foresight about education's value — examiners want character insight, not plot summary.
- **(iv)** Be careful: the question says "because Anil trusted him," but the extract specifically links his guilt to losing the opportunity to learn, not to trust. State False and support it with the extract. (Note: broader story context does mention trust, but the extract-based answer must be grounded in the given passage only.)

Q16.

[5]

There was a fifty rupee note between his fingers. My heart sank. I thought I had been discovered. "I made some money yesterday," he explained. "Now you'll be paid regularly." My spirits rose. But when I took the note, I saw it was still wet from the night's rain. "Today we'll start writing sentences," he said. He knew. But neither his lips nor his eyes showed anything.

Read the given extract and answer the questions.

- (i) In the context of the given extract : What was the feelings UNLIKELY to have been on seeing 'a fifty rupee note between his fingers'? [1]
- (A) joyous
(B) sad
(C) unhappy
(D) worried
- (ii) How does the prospect of being paid regularly affect the narrator's motivation and hope for the future? Answer in about 40 words. [2]
- (iii) Fill in the blank with the correct word from the bracket : The person spoken about did not let the narrator realise that his act of stealing was caught. It reflects the _____ (nobility / dishonesty) of his character. [1]
- (iv) Compare the meanings of the expressions : "My heart sank", and "My spirits rose". [1]

Previously asked in: 2025 2/6/1 Q6(b)

♦ The Thief's Story

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Model Answer

- (i) (A) joyous
- (ii) When Anil promised to pay the narrator regularly, his hopes and motivation were instantly revived. The prospect of a steady income meant stability and continuity — he could keep learning to read and write, which he now valued as the path to becoming "a really big man, a clever and respected man."
- (iii) nobility
- (iv) "My heart sank" means the narrator felt sudden fear and despair — he believed he had been caught stealing. In contrast, "My spirits rose" means his mood lifted with relief and happiness upon hearing Anil's explanation. The two expressions are opposite in meaning, showing a rapid shift from dread to hope.

Source: *The Thief's Story, The Theft and Its Aftermath*

Explanation

- (i) "Joyous" is the UNLIKELY feeling — the narrator's heart *sank*, meaning he felt worried/afraid, not joyous.
- (ii) Link the regular pay to the narrator's motivation to learn; use evidence from the passage/story. ~40 words needed.
- (iii) Anil *knew* but said nothing — this is an act of *nobility* (generosity/forgiveness), not dishonesty.
- (iv) Examiners want a clear contrast: "sank" = negative emotion, "rose" = positive emotion, with a brief explanation of each. One mark, so keep it tight.

Q17.

[5]

Later, he patted me on the head and said never mind, he'd teach me to cook. He also taught me to write my name and said he would soon teach me to write whole sentences and to add numbers. I was grateful. I knew that once I could write like an educated man there would be no limit to what I could achieve.

It was quite pleasant working for Anil. I made the tea in the morning and then would take my time buying the day's supplies, usually making a profit of about a rupee a day. I think he knew I made a little money this way but he did not seem to mind.

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

(i) What does the following line tell us about the character of Anil ? "I think he knew I made a little money this way but he did not seem to mind." [1]

(ii) Which of the following best describes the realization Hari Singh had while working for Anil ? [1]

- A that he would become a rich person one day
- B that Anil was a very intelligent master but a miser
- C that he would be able to accomplish a lot if he gets educated
- D that Anil made a lot of money from his job

(iii) What did Anil promise to teach Hari Singh, and how did Hari Singh feel about the opportunity to learn ? Answer in about 40 words. [2]

(iv) Fill in the blank with the correct word from the brackets. The narrator earned extra money by making a/an _____ (profit/investment) of about a rupee a day. [1]

Previously asked in: 2025 2/1/1 Q6(b)

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Model Answer

(i) This line shows that Anil was generous and trusting by nature. He was aware of Hari Singh's small dishonesty but chose to overlook it, showing he was kind-hearted and not petty or suspicious.

(ii) C — that he would be able to accomplish a lot if he gets educated.

(iii) Anil promised to teach Hari Singh to cook, write whole sentences, and add numbers. Hari Singh felt deeply grateful for this opportunity. He believed that once he could write like an educated man, there would be no limit to what he could achieve in life.

(iv) profit

Source: *The Thief's Story*, Ruskin Bond

Explanation

- (i) Focus on Anil's character trait — generosity/trust — directly linked to the quoted line. One mark, so one clear point suffices.
- (ii) The passage explicitly states "once I could write like an educated man there would be no limit to what I could achieve" — this matches option C exactly.
- (iii) Two marks = ~40 words. Cover two things: what Anil promised AND how Hari Singh felt. Both parts must be present for full marks.
- (iv) The word "profit" appears verbatim in the extract — always prefer the passage's own word in fill-in-the-blank items.

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