

Zamani College, Kaduna
Holiday Assignment
SS2 English Language

Section A

Answer **one** question **only** from this section. Both questions carry equal marks. Your answer should not be less than **450 words**.

1. The state of facilities and equipment in your school has gone very bad and has adversely affected learning. As the senior prefect, write a letter to the chairman of the old students association of your school explaining the condition of things to him and how it has affected academic and co-curricular activities. Also request that the old students come to your assistance.
2. Your elder sister who has gone abroad for an in-service training is returning to your country and she has written to you asking what present you would like her to bring. Write a letter to her naming what you would like and giving reasons why you have chosen.

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions that follow.

I quickly told my mother everything I knew. We saw ourselves in a difficult and dangerous situation.

About one thing my mother was determined. She would not lose the money the captain owed her. 'It belongs to me and it belongs to you, Jim. We'll have the chest open. So we must get the key.'

On the floor close to the captain's hand was a little round of paper, blackened on one side. It was the 'black spot' and on the other side, somebody had written:

You have till ten o'clock tonight.

I began to look for the key. It was on a bit of dirty string round his neck. I cut it with his own knife and we hurried upstairs to the little room where he had slept so long, and where his box had stood since the day he arrived.

'Give me the key,' said my mother and she quickly turned it and threw open the chest.

Inside we found all sorts of things: a bar of silver, a pair of very fine pistols, an old clock and some jewelled pins. The last things in the chest were some things looking like papers, tied up in cloth and a bag of coins that sounded like gold.

'I'm an honest woman,' said my mother. 'I'll have what is owed me and not a penny more. Hold my bag.' And she began to count over the amount of the captain's debt from the sailor's bag

into the one that I was holding. It was difficult because the coins were of all countries and sizes. There were few English pounds.

When we were about half way through, I suddenly put my hand on her arm. I had heard a sound that filled me with fear: the tap-tapping of the blind man's stick on the frozen road. It drew nearer and nearer, while we sat holding our breath. Then it sounded sharp on the inn door. We could hear the handle being turned and the bolt shaking as the blind man tried to enter. Then there was a long silence. At last the tapping began again and died slowly away. 'Mother', I said 'take the whole bag and let's go.'

But my mother would not take more than was owed her. She went on counting.

A low whistle sounded at a distance. That was enough for both of us.

'I'll take what I have,' she said, jumping to her feet.

'And I'll take this for my share,' I said, and I seized the papers.

We left the candle by the open chest, opened the door and ran away from the house as fast as we could move. We had not started a moment too soon. Less than half way to the village, the sounds of several running footsteps came to our ears. We looked back and saw that one of the newcomers carried a lamp.

'My dear,' said my mother suddenly, 'take the money and run on. I feel faint.'

Fortunately, we were just at a little bridge. I helped her to the edge of the bank. There, she did faint and fell on my shoulder. I do not know how I found the strength to do it but I dragged her down the bank and under the arch.

Questions

- a. Who is the writer of this story?
- b. Where is the captain? What happened to him? How do you know?
- c. What five things are contained in the chest?
- d. What proof was there that the woman was honest?
- e. Which currency would the woman have preferred? How do you know?
- f. How do you know they were not captured or harmed?
- g. '.....while we sat holding our breath'
 - i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - ii) What is its function?
- h. For each of the following words find another word or phrase which means the same and can replace it as used in the passage.
 - i) Situation
 - ii) Determined
 - iii) Chest
 - iv) Sorts
 - v) An honest
 - vi) Started
 - vii) Fortunately