

2. THE CATSNAPPER:

Conflict Type: *Humourous/ Mistaken Identity*

Example:

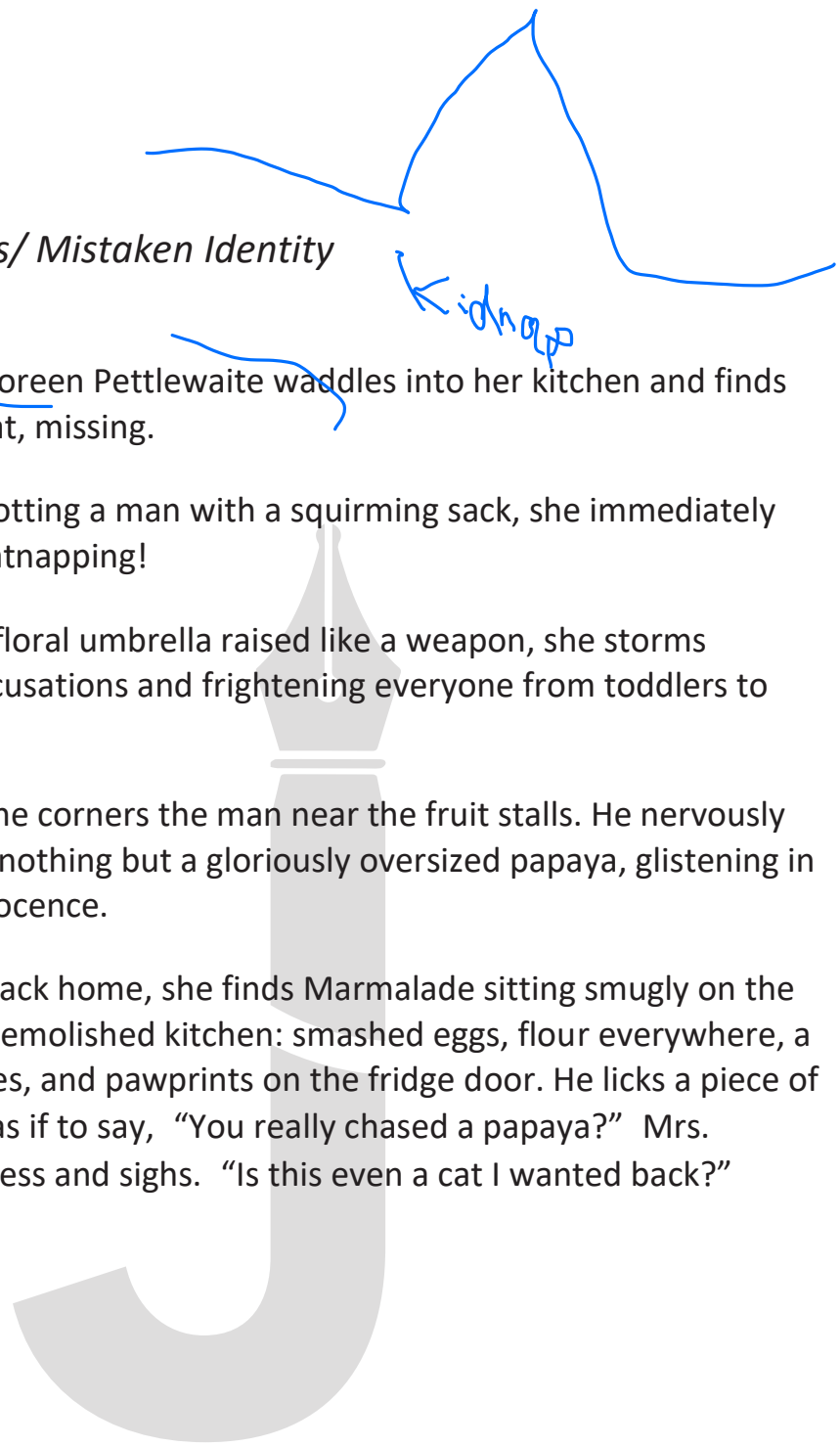
1. Problem Begins: Mrs. Doreen Pettlewaite waddles into her kitchen and finds Marmalade, her beloved cat, missing.

2. Mistaken Suspicion: Spotting a man with a squirming sack, she immediately jumps to the conclusion: catnapping!

3. Comic Chase: With her floral umbrella raised like a weapon, she storms through town, shouting accusations and frightening everyone from toddlers to market vendors.

4. Climax & Realization: She corners the man near the fruit stalls. He nervously opens the sack... revealing nothing but a gloriously oversized papaya, glistening in all its harmless tropical innocence.

5. Funnier Twist Ending: Back home, she finds Marmalade sitting smugly on the counter, surrounded by a demolished kitchen: smashed eggs, flour everywhere, a trail of cereal across the tiles, and pawprints on the fridge door. He licks a piece of ham and meows at her — as if to say, “You really chased a papaya?” Mrs. Pettlewaite stares at the mess and sighs. “Is this even a cat I wanted back?”



The Great Papaya Rescue - Sample Essay 1:

The shadows were closing in, and his eyes—usually so full of judgment—were filled with tears. He held up a tiny, shaking hand, looking skinny and weak, and gave me a look that broke my heart. "You forgot dinner," his eyes seemed to scream. "I am fading away." I woke up with a loud gasp, clutching my chest as if I had just run a race. The guilt was heavy. I had forgotten the most important member of the household.

I threw off the blanket and scrambled out of bed, nearly tripping over my own slippers in a rush to get downstairs. I needed to open a tin of the best salmon pâté immediately. I needed to apologize. But when I burst into the kitchen, expecting to see him waiting impatiently by his bowl, the room was empty. The silence was heavy. My boy was gone.

Panic didn't just hit me; it shook me. I rushed to the window and scanned the street with sharp eyes. You have to understand, Marmalade is not a wanderer. He is a cat who hates any kind of exercise. He prefers to stay flattened against his cushion for eighteen hours a day. If he wasn't in his bed, he hadn't left on foot. That was when I saw him. A man in a suspicious grey coat was walking quickly down the pavement with a burlap sack over his shoulder— a CATSNAPPER! My stomach dropped. The sack was lumpy. It bumped against the man's back, and I swear I saw it move. It made perfect sense. Someone had spotted my prize-winning, lazy boy and stuffed him into a bag like laundry.

I didn't waste time on a plan. I grabbed my floral-print umbrella from the hallway stand, holding it like a weapon. I marched out the front door, shouting, "Stop! Thief!" The man didn't hear me, which I took as a sign he was a professional criminal. I walked faster, my slippers slapping loudly against the pavement. I must have looked like a crazy woman, waving my umbrella and scaring the pigeons. I knocked over a stack of magazines outside the shop and frightened a small child eating an ice cream, but I didn't stop. Making a scene was acceptable when a life was at stake.

I finally cornered the man near the fruit stalls, breathing so hard I thought my lungs were on fire. I planted my feet and pointed the metal tip of my umbrella at his chest. "Let him go," I wheezed, trying to look scary despite my dressing gown. "I know he is in there." The man looked terrified. He blinked at me, then at the umbrella, and slowly lowered the sack to the ground. I got ready to catch a crying, scared cat. The man untied the knot, and out rolled a papaya. It was huge. It was green. It wobbled on the pavement, mocking me. The "movement" I had seen was just the lumpy fruit rolling against his back.

I walked home with the umbrella tucked under my arm, wishing the ground would open up and swallow me. I had just threatened a man over a tropical fruit. All I wanted was to lock the door and hide. But when I stepped into the kitchen, the nightmare continued. The floor was slippery with smashed eggs.

A bag of flour had fallen, coating the room in white dust like snow. And there, sitting on the counter in the middle of the mess, was Marmalade. He was calmly licking a slice of stolen ham. He paused, looked at me, and let out a loud meow, as if asking why breakfast was late. I looked at the disaster, then at the cat I had almost gone to jail for, and realized that maybe—just maybe—the kidnapper would have been a better owner for him.

12 ✓

2

Sample Essay-2

"Mom, why is the sky crying today?" asked Sarah, her big brown eyes gazing up at her mother, who was stirring a pot of watery soup on the stove. The rain tapped relentlessly on the windowpane, as if sharing the girls melancholy.

"Sometimes, the sky cries to remind us how lucky we are," Sarah's mother replied with a faint smile, her voice trembling as she tried to hide the worry that clouded her face.

Sarah was a young girl of remarkable spirit. She had seen her family face hardship after hardship in their small, weather-beaten cottage on the outskirts of the village. Her father had fallen ill, and work had become scarce. The pittance her mother earned from odd jobs barely covered the cost of bread and a few vegetables. Their savings had dwindled to nothing.

As days turned into weeks, their situation grew dire. Sarah's father's cough grew worse, and the shackles of poverty tightened around their lives. The fire in the hearth had long since gone out, and the only warmth left in their home was the love that bound them together.

One stormy evening, as the rain continued to pour down, Sarah's father took a turn for the worse. His fever spiked, and he could barely breathe. Sarah's mother rushed to his side, tears mixing with raindrops on her cheeks.

With trembling hands, Sarah went to the cupboard, hoping to find something, anything, that could help her father. But all she found was an empty jar and a feeling of desperation that threatened to drown her.

As she sat by her father's bedside, Sarah's eyes wandered to the window. The raindrops raced down the glass, and a glimmer of hope flickered in her heart. Gathering her courage, she told her mother, "I'm going out, Mom. I have an idea." Braving the cold and rain, Sarah ventured into the woods surrounding their cottage. She had heard tales of a rare medicinal plant that could cure the stubbornest of illnesses. It was said to bloom only in the harshest conditions, deep within the heart of the forest.

The journey was treacherous, but Sarah pressed on, driven by her love for her family. Her clothes clung to her like a second skin, and her small hands trembled with cold and fear. The woods seemed to swallow her, and the dense undergrowth made her path nearly impassable. Yet, she persevered, guided by a glimmer of hope that shone like a beacon in her heart.

After what felt like an eternity, Sarah stumbled upon a clearing, and there, in the midst of the storm, she found it—the elusive medicinal plant, its leaves shimmering with a healing energy. She gathered as much as she could carry, clutching it tightly in her wet hands.

With the plant in tow, Sarah retraced her steps through the unforgiving forest. Every step was a battle against exhaustion and despair, but she refused to give up. Her family needed her, and she would not let them down.

When she finally reached home, her father's condition had worsened. Sarah's mother wept at the sight of her daughter's disheveled appearance, but Sarah wasted no time. She brewed a potion from the medicinal plant, and with trembling hands, she fed it to her father.

Miraculously, the next morning, her father's fever broke. Color returned to his cheeks, and he smiled weakly at Sarah, tears of gratitude shining in his eyes.

Sarah had rescued her family from the brink of despair, her courage and determination proving that even in the toughest conditions, love and hope could shine through like a ray of sunlight breaking through the stormy clouds. The sky may have cried that day, but it was Sarah who had brought warmth and light back into their lives.



Miss Jaweria

SAMPLE ESSAY # 3

****Write a Story Where a Phone Call Plays an Important Part****

Aileen woke up to the sound of her alarm blaring. She shut it off and got up. Another day. Nothing felt different. It had been six years since it happened—since her life had changed forever. She walked to her closet, pulled out her clothes, and stepped into the shower. By now, she was used to her routine. She had grown accustomed to this mundane lifestyle. Her frail body shivered as she stepped out of the warm bathroom into the sudden, unfamiliar chill of the morning. She got dressed and went downstairs for breakfast, greeting her aunt. After a quick meal, she headed off to school. Aileen didn't have many friends. People pitied her too much. "Poor girl, must be so hard without her parents," they'd whisper. "It was tragic, really." She'd just smile—an empty, joyless smile—and decline. She remembered that day with painful clarity, like it had happened only yesterday.

"Be back before dinner, okay? Now be a good girl and don't fight. Your aunt will be looking after you," her mom had said with a kiss on the forehead. "Liar," Aileen had thought. She had waited all night. Waited and stayed up till dawn. The next day, they told her that her parents were lost at sea. For "security reasons," they refused to share the details. All she received was an envelope of ashes and a quiet, final condolence. Every day after that had felt the same. Wake up. School. Chores. Sleep. Repeat. But that day, something unusual happened. The phone rang.

She picked it up.

"Hello?"

"Is this Aileen Smith?"

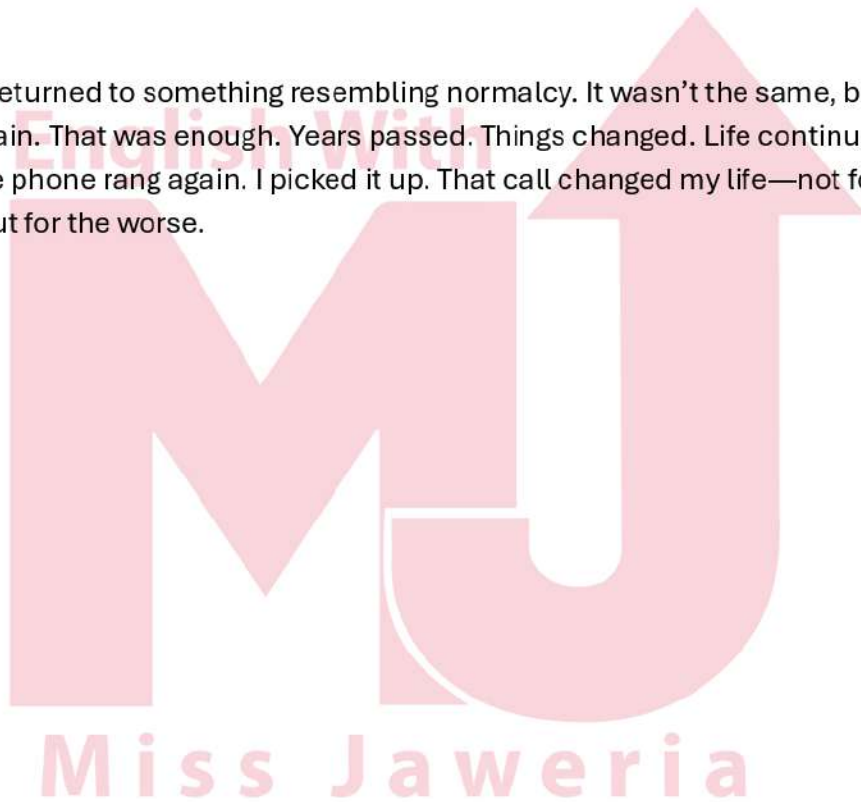
"Yes," she replied, cautiously.

A pause. Then:

"Your parents have been found."

Hope—fragile and buried—rose within her. She had tried to forget. Had told herself they were gone. But something in her heart had never let go. And now, they were alive. After years of silence, they were coming home. It took them exactly twenty-three minutes to arrive. Aileen watched as they stepped out of the car—older, thinner, unfamiliar, but alive. She counted each moment worth it. Seeing them in front of her, hugging them tightly, she never wanted to let go. "What happened?" she sobbed. Her mother gently whispered, "It's over now, darling. Don't worry." They explained that their ship had wrecked during the storm. Everyone believed they had drowned. But a few survivors, including her parents, had found refuge on a remote island. It took years for them to be rescued and return.

Life slowly returned to something resembling normalcy. It wasn't the same, but they were together again. That was enough. Years passed. Things changed. Life continued. Then, one evening, the phone rang again. I picked it up. That call changed my life—not for the better this time, but for the worse.



Sample Essay- 4

The watch on my wrist ticked precariously as the curtains rolled to reveal the vast stage — and me, sitting by the piano, adorned in a floral gown. I was a nervous wreck. The stage lights above me flickered arrhythmically, as if it highlighted my heightened self-consciousness. From the corner of my eyes, I could see the piercing, expectant gaze of the audience. Intimidated, I tried to move my outrageously rigid vocal cords, but, to my horror, no sound came out. I clenched my fists out of frustration. My core vibrated with trepidation and my hands shook uncontrollably as I tried to direct them towards the piano keys — but to no avail. I looked at the audience again; their faces unforgiving. “This would not do — it is exactly like last year,” I mused frantically. I knew I had to overcome my fear if I was going to win.

My mind rushed back to last year’s talent show, when I developed this stage fright of mine. Unlike this time, I was confident in my abilities and believed I would win, for my pride would not permit otherwise. However, fate had something else in store for me. When it was my turn to perform, my bravado vapourised, rendering me helpless. An uncanny fear gnawed at my heart as I tried to sing. Nothing came out, however, save for a shrill whistle. Disappointed, the judge scowled and ordered me to leave the stage. With tears streaming down my cheeks, I ran outside the auditorium as a flurry of hyena-like laughter followed. “What a loser,” even my juniors seemed to mock me from then on. I did not dare to sing ever again. At least, that is how I expected things to go.

Slam. I pressed multiple keys at once to bring myself back to reality, stunning the crowd. I no longer intended to be someone plagued by an irrational fear; after all, it was I who returned on their volition. “What is she even doing?!” I heard someone yell in annoyance, but I frankly did not care. “I must overcome this fear and win,” I placated myself. “I cannot be the laughing stock anymore.”

Adrenaline coursed through my veins as I gathered the last reserves of my mental strength and let my fingers seamlessly glide over the glossy keys. The audience fell into a stupefying silence as a soft yet sombre melody ricocheted through the room. My lips quivered as I cajoled the lyrics; my eyes glistened as I looked up from time to time. I became one with the piece.

The crowd erupted in applause like never before as my performance came to an end. My lips curled into a thin smile as I descended from the stage. In my judgement, I had already won. I looked past the rain-stained hall window; the rain continued its steady patter against the windowpane, a soothing backdrop to the quiet redemption in the room.

Word	Meaning
Precariously	In an unstable or uncertain manner.
Adorned	Decorated; made more attractive.
Flickered	Shone or moved unsteadily; flashed briefly.
Arrhythmically	Without a regular rhythm; unevenly.
Heightened	Increased; made stronger or more intense.
Self-consciousness	Awareness of oneself, often causing nervousness.
Piercing	Very sharp or intense (a look or sound).
Expectant	Showing anticipation; waiting for something to happen.
Intimidated	Made to feel frightened or less confident.
Outrageously	Extremely; shockingly.
Rigid	Stiff or inflexible; difficult to move.
Vocal cords	The folds in the throat that produce sound.
Clenched	Closed tightly due to tension, anger, or fear.
Trepidation	A feeling of fear or anxiety about something that may happen.
Uncontrollably	In a way that cannot be controlled.
Unforgiving	Harsh; not gentle or easy.
Frantically	In a hurried or desperate manner.
Fate	A power believed to control future events; destiny.
Bravado	A bold manner intended to impress or intimidate others.
Vaporised	Disappeared suddenly; vanished completely.
Rendering	Causing; making someone become a certain way.
Uncanny	Strange or mysterious in an unsettling way.
Scowled	Gave an angry or displeased facial expression.
Streaming	Flowing continuously.
Flurry	A short burst of activity or emotion.
Hyena-like	Resembling the loud, wild laughter of a hyena.
Haunt	To trouble or disturb the mind repeatedly.

Sample Essay- 9

“It has been weeks!”, Mary yelled as she collapsed into her sister’s arms, sobbing uncontrollably. “It has been weeks and there is still no sign of her!”, Mary cried. The room fell into silence. The air felt heavier as if it shared the sorrow of a mother separated from her child. It had been a few weeks since the small town of Greenridge woke up to the horrifying news of Jenna—the fourteen-year-old girl adored by everyone—going missing.

Despite their continuous efforts, there was no hint of her whereabouts. Some people suspected that she was lost in the nearby forest since it was the only place they had not looked for her yet, and knowing Jenna’s adventurous spirit, the idea was not entirely unlikely. She was always strolling around the town, either inquiring about people’s work in detail or quietly enjoying nature. Mary never had to worry much about Jenna’s safety as the whole town treated her like their own daughter, still whenever Jenna was not back home by sunset, Mary would anxiously pace in front of their house as she waited for her.

Seeing Mary helplessly cry, Mr. Jo (Jenna’s elderly neighbor) consulted others and they decided to request a search and rescue team to search for Jenna in the nearby forest. Mr. Jo called his nephew, who was a part of the search and rescue team and expressed the urgency of the situation. His nephew confirmed that the team would help and later that evening, a loud droning noise caught everyone’s attention. Mary stared at the helicopter as hope kindled within her. Even after the helicopter flew away, her gaze lingered in the same place where the helicopter was as she prayed for Jenna to return safely soon.

Time passed slowly as Mary waited in her house with her neighbors. Mr. Jo tried to call his nephew several times for any updates but he was unable to get in contact with him. Soon, the bell rang. Mary rushed towards the door and swiftly opened it to see her daughter standing before her. She embraced Jenna as a wave of relief washed over everyone. Mr. Jo stepped outside to talk to his nephew.

“I apologize it took so long, I couldn’t catch any of your calls either due to poor signals, “ his nephew spoke. “That’s okay, thank you so much for bringing her back!”, Mr. Jo replied as he turned to see Mary and Jenna. Mary nodded her head and mouthed, “Thank you.” She looked at Jenna in her arms and the people around her, gratitude filled her and it was not long before the news spread and everyone came to meet the two, showering them with love and care.

Sample Essay- 10

The sunset outside the orphanage was a fleeting masterpiece streaked with fiery oranges and wistful pinks, but its beauty mocked the bleakness within. Saqib and Hamna, two frail twelve-year-olds, sat on a splintered bench beneath the fading light. The orphanage had been their home for as long as they could remember, but it was no sanctuary. Its crumbling walls seemed to echo the hopeless cries of countless forgotten children. Saqib's sharp features, sunken cheeks, and perpetually bruised arms spoke of battles fought in silence, while Hamna's wide eyes, framed by long lashes, carried an innocence that had been eroded by years of hunger and reprimand. They were bound together by their shared suffering, like frail tendrils clinging to each other in a storm.

Life in the orphanage was an unrelenting ordeal. The days began with the shrill clang of the warden's iron stick against the courtyard gate—a sound that shattered sleep like glass hitting stone. Breakfast, if it could be called that, consisted of crusts of stale bread and watery gruel, swallowed under the watchful glare of the warden. Her eyes, cold and unyielding, seemed to pierce their very souls. Every mistake—a dropped plate, a missed chore—was met with sharp slaps or punishments that left their tiny hands red and raw. At night, they huddled together on thin, tattered mats, the cold seeping into their bones as rats scurried in the shadows. Yet, through it all, Saqib and Hamna found solace in whispered conversations, planning a future where they could escape the clutches of the orphanage and the warden's cruelty.

It was this fragile hope that kept them alive when the announcement came: an auction was to be held, and all children twelve and older would be sent to work for strangers. Saqib and Hamna clung to each other that night, their hands tightly intertwined. "It won't be so bad," Saqib whispered, his voice trembling. "We'll be together, wherever we go." Hamna nodded, though fear gnawed at her heart. They both believed, naively, that life beyond the orphanage walls would be kinder. At least they'd have each other, they thought.

The day of the auction arrived like a nightmare made real. The courtyard buzzed with strangers—men and women who inspected the children like livestock, their cold eyes evaluating muscle, height, and posture. Saqib and Hamna stood shoulder to shoulder, their hearts pounding in unison. The warden's barked orders cut through the air, her stick tapping ominously against her palm. Just as the bidding began, the unthinkable happened—Hamna stumbled, her ankle twisting on a jagged stone. She let out a sharp cry as she fell, her face contorted in pain. Blood oozed from a gash on her leg, staining the dusty ground. The warden's eyes narrowed with fury, and she kicked dust over her with a sneer.

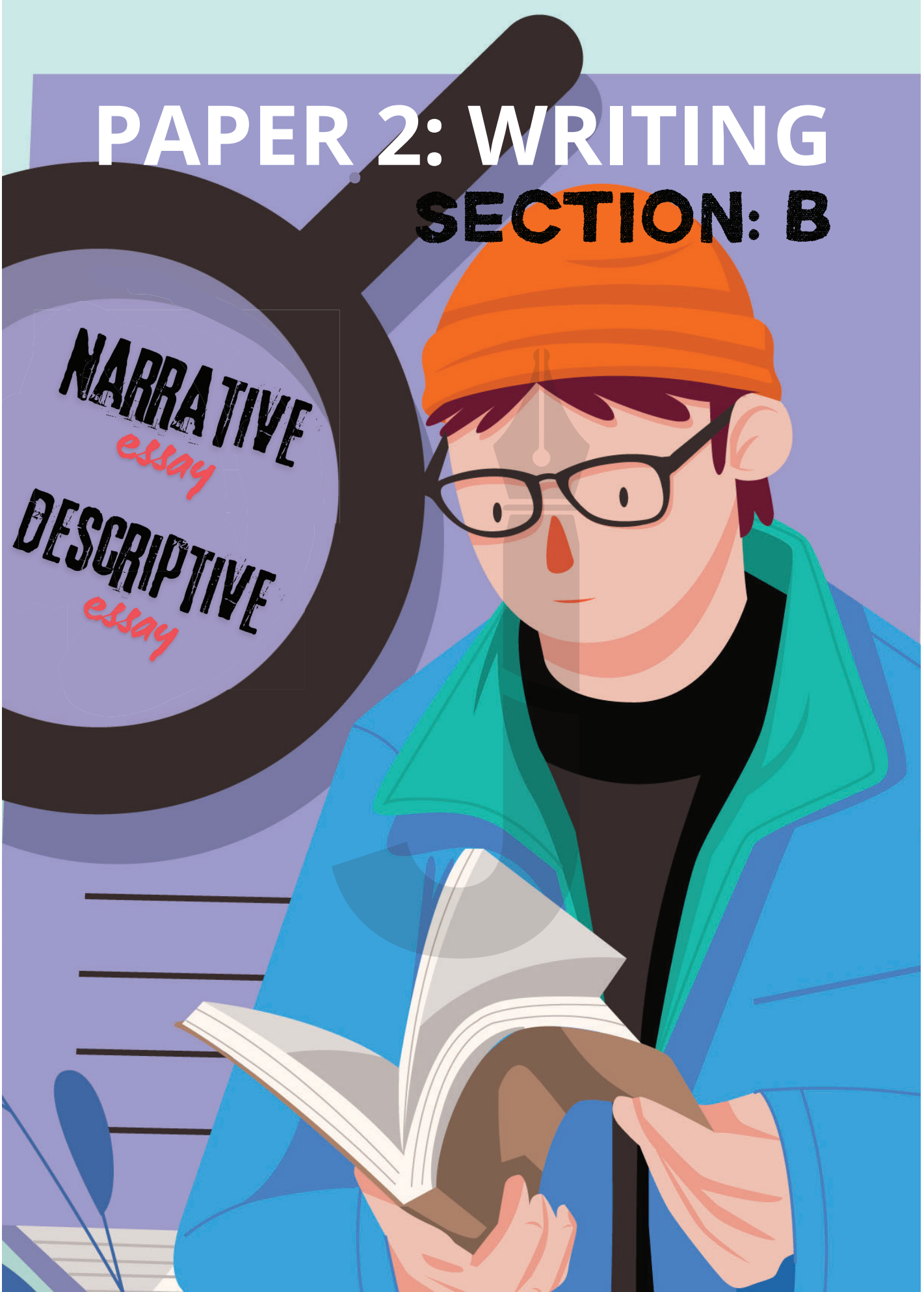
"Saqib," Hamna whimpered, tears streaming down her cheeks. But before Saqib could help her, he was seized by two men and dragged toward a waiting cart. He struggled, his cries drowned out by the chaotic noise of the auction. Hamna reached out weakly, her fingers brushing against the dirt where Saqib had stood. "Survive, Hamna! Don't give up!" his voice was barely audible over the din. The cart rattled away, the sound of its wooden wheels fading as there was a long road ahead.

PAPER 2: WRITING

SECTION: B

NARRATIVE
essay

DESCRIPTIVE
essay



*SAMPLE
DESCRIPTIVE
ESSAYS*

Sample Essay (Descriptive):

EXAMPLE RESPONSE #1:

Question: Describe what the place where you live is like in the early morning and in the early evening. (Remember you are describing the atmosphere, the activities and any people as well as the place.)

• - Neighbours • - Animals
• - Children

In the mornings, the area in which I stayed is always bustling with life, as neighbors constantly rush in and out of their houses, dogs bark loudly at passersby and children laugh and scream as they play in the neighborhood playground. The area is so fully alive you would think that the atmosphere throughout the day would remain the same. However, the atmosphere of the early morning and the early evening could not be any more different.

= Intro!

= Weather

Walking out of the house into the radiance of the morning sun, you are greeted by the loud honks of impatient transporters in white school vans as they wait for children clad in identical crisp white uniforms and matching white sneakers to be ushered out of their homes by their parents. The newspaper deliveryman, wearing a black jacket and a red helmet, rides his motor scooter from house to house, handing out papers much to the excitement of the local dogs, who bark aggressively at him, their tails threateningly erect, like bayonets at the ready.

> Newspaper man + dogs

The office-goers in the neighbourhood, all dressed in smart office attire with matching handbags or briefcases, rush from their front doors to their cars, hoping to avoid the morning traffic jam, most of them with a mug of steaming coffee in hand. The twitters of local birds thrum in the air as they flit among the trees in the neighbourhood, occasionally swooping down to catch their breakfast: oversized, succulent, green caterpillars.

> birds and insects.
(nature)

As the day progresses and the beaming sun softens into a warm glow, ribbons of tangerine and yellow stretch across the sky, signalling the approach of the early evening. Children run into the streets, peals of laughter erupting from their lips as they play games of tag and badminton under the watchful eyes of their parents.

evening

School children going out

officegoers

- School
- office
- Goes

Students return home to the embrace of their parents, their uniforms dishevelled after a gruelling day of lessons. Weary office-goers tiredly drag their way into their respective houses. Sniffing the ground with their round, button-shaped noses, dogs mark any tree in their sight, much to the embarrassment of their owners, who tug them away, sternly using their leashes.

Despite it being the same neighbourhood, there is such a contrast between the ruckus in the morning and the gentle ambience of the early evening. I am glad that I got to experience both of these scenes.

EXAMPLE RESPONSE #2:

One event:

Question: Describe the feelings you experienced leading up to a challenging event and the feelings you experienced afterwards. (The challenging event could be sporting, academic or any other activity.)

Chronological

9 a.m.

I feel sick; I can't do this.

= Minor

Sentence!

fr

As I stand in the corridor furiously trying to cram in last-minute revision, the fear eating at my stomach prevents me from being able to concentrate. Two years of English studies have hurtled by and now it is time for the final reckoning. The last exam. One last test which will determine my fate: pass and I can head to university; fail and a future in fast food awaits.

event

destiny

9.15 a.m.

inevitable

Convinced I have forgotten everything that I have ever been taught (and resigned to imminent failure), I shuffle into the hall. Why do I feel like a death row prisoner walking to their doom?

bad destiny

smile

9.20 a.m.

Taking my allocated seat right in the centre of the room, I'm exposed. My heart is pounding like an inmate determined to break free of their prison. It's a furnace in the exam hall and the backs of my legs stick to the uncomfortable plastic chair. The air is heavy with tension. Sweat blooms through the back of my shirt and my tie is stifling me.

↳ suffocating

9.25 a.m.

Silence. The only sounds are the tick of the clock and the tap of the invigilator's shoes as she moves among the desks. My paper is slid onto the desk. The urge to be sick intensifies. Shaking, I fill in my details in the required spaces. My hand feels tight; my writing is already a mess.

9.29 a.m.

The clock sluggishly inches nearer to 9.30 a.m. I don't want to open the paper, but simultaneously need to know what is inside. The anxious anticipation is almost unbearable. The minute hand crawls towards the 6 and with one final, protracted click signals the start of the exam.

"You may begin."

"You have five minutes remaining."

After two hours of non-stop writing, as the invigilator gives the five-minute warning, I finish my final sentence. Closing the paper, I want to cry. The emotion of the last two hours seems determined to spill over and I take some steady breaths.

As I hand over my paper, a wave of relief washes over me as I realise that my exams are complete. I have done my best and feel the paper has gone as well as it could. The theme I revised the most thoroughly came up and I feel lucky.

Walking out into the warm embrace of the sunshine, a whole summer free of work stretching ahead, a glow of blissful contentment envelopes me; the joy I feel in this moment as I listen to my friends' excited chatter is unrivalled. Freedom is finally ours.

short

prisoner

Before

After

personalisation

content

= unparalleled

EXAMPLE RESPONSE #3

Question: Describe how you feel the night before an important day and how the morning of the day goes

The soft glow from the digital display flickered as the minutes sluggishly passed. The pale green cast an eerie shadow across my bed, while outside was as dark as a raven's pupil. Nothing moved, apart from me, anxiously turning and fidgeting my blankets into a tangle. I heard a faint hum from downstairs; the sound of the dishwasher automatically starting, churning and rumbling the plates from dinner until they sparkled. My mind churned like the machine, impossible to turn off now it had started. I checked the clock again. The night felt endless.

I shuffled over to turn on the light. Silhouetted against the inside of a shade, a fly lazily crept to the top, balancing on the rim. I watched as it fluttered its wings slightly, before it took off in a frenzy of buzzing around the top of my bed, going nowhere in particular. I wondered what its purpose was. Why was it here? It hummed close to my face and I swatted it away gruffly. It landed back on the rim, satisfied with its little flurry of activity, as I reached over to turn off the light again.

I straightened out my blankets and turned again.

The clock's mechanical glow informed me that only a few minutes had passed. I sighed and attempted to still my mind. I could see the dim outlines of my post-it notes, meticulously written and ordered; with all of the information I could ever need neatly written in my careful handwriting. But now all of that order had turned to chaos, as I struggled to remember even the simplest of equations. I needed to get some sleep, but my brain point-blank refused to let me. I stared at my curtains, considering whether to go downstairs to make myself a drink.

The light now was different. The glow from the clock was less lurid, more muted, and the darkness of the room less extreme. I lazily looked up at my curtains once again, and my mind registered that the soft light of day had altered the atmosphere in the room from one of suspended animation to action. I turned over and saw the time. I jumped wildly out of bed. What was, just a few seconds ago, stillness and peace, was now urgency and panic.

I was late.

My limbs scrambled with the grace of a puppet on tangled strings. I wrenched open drawers, grabbing whatever clothing my hands first touched. My shirt was inside out, my socks mismatched, but none of it mattered. I ran a toothbrush over my teeth without looking in the mirror, the minty foam clinging to my lip as I pulled on my shoes and dashed out the door. The hallway smelt like toast and furniture polish, but there was no time to enjoy either.

Outside, the air was cool and sharp, like the world itself had only just woken up. The sun was barely stretching across the sky, its fingers of gold creeping along rooftops and pavement. I jogged down the road, breath catching in my throat, my bag thumping at my side. The stillness of the morning had not calmed me—it had only heightened the tension. Today was here, and ready or not, I had no choice but to meet it.

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

Section B: Composition

Descriptive Writing

Describe the scene at a local park or public garden both early in the morning and in the afternoon.

Early in the Morning:

The sun was still barely conspicuous in the distant horizon. Its rising rays gilded the magnificent park. Antiquated trees (appeared) with its gnarly branches appeared quite skeletal against the gloomy and velvety sky. Myriads of minute ants scurried and scuttled across the damp earth, the redolent petrichor quite palpable. A deafening silence prevailed as the city was still sleeping peacefully. The morning breeze darted down the dreary deserted paths,

Drops of moisture accumulated on the pesto coloured leaves, the added load destroying its once straight posture. Effervescent birds commence to gather on the trees, their mellifluous chirping sounding quite euphonious. Due to the absence of the staccato of car horns, the lively conversations of the birds reverberated throughout the interior of the park. Mesmerizing! Slowly, the smell of freshly mowed grass commenced to tantalize the nostrils as the groundsman exuberantly began his work. Being the first to arrive, a sense of punctuality was clearly visible in his eyes. The crimson painted mahogany benches remained in solitude, eagerly waiting to hear a

1 The candidate immediately uses a descriptive feature to establish the atmosphere of the early morning scene as quiet and almost eerie with the sky being 'gloomy and velvety' against which stand the 'skeletal' trees.

2 Alliteration contributes towards the range of descriptive features with the 'myriad of minute ants'. There is also a shift in focus from an overview to very specific detail as the candidate introduces a sense of dynamism with the further use of alliteration as the ants 'scurried' and 'scuttled'.

3 The personification in the image of the city 'sleeping peacefully' furthers the candidate's range of descriptive features.

4 The candidate uses onomatopoeia as the wind is described as 'hissing angrily', adding again to the range of descriptive features employed.

5 The candidate uses auditory imagery to good effect as the 'lively conversations of the birds reverberated through the park'.

6 The candidate gives an example of olfactory imagery adding to the range of descriptive features used with the mention of the 'smell of freshly mowed grass'.

7 The candidate's response moves from the description of the setting to focus on a person within the setting, giving another example of a descriptive feature.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

8 spectrum of tales ranging from juicy gossip to tragic romance. The water accumulated on the ~~cobblestone~~ ^{preparing for another} cobblestone path reflected the world above.

In the afternoon:

The duckenne smile of the sun was clearly conspicuous, its golden ~~to~~ fingers covering the entirety of the park. Moseying clouds ~~slow~~ moved lazily in the azure sky. The park was now filled to the top ⁹ its every crevice

10 brimming with renewed vigour. While exhausted ~~the~~ workers ^{traipsed} ~~made~~ slowly towards the welcoming benches, lively adolescents ran es ecstatically down the meandering ~~to~~ paths. Families sat peacefully on the emerald green carpet, ~~remis~~ emotionally reminiscing about the good old days. Busy employees with their crisp tucked in shirts ran helplessly to catch business meetings, lack of punctuality ^{being} the only stain on their white shirts uniform. ¹¹

12 Long gone was the pleasant smell of ~~grass~~ ^{grass}. Instead, a blend of the metallic tang of perspiration and acrid smell of saliva got more intense with every passing second. The birds on the ~~(bire)~~ branches contracted their limbs and set off into the ~~pettucid-blue~~ ^{horizon} sky, their resplendent colours juxtaposed against the pellucid-blue sky. It appeared as if a fatigued artist violently dabbed various colours onto his canvas in order to meet the nearing deadline. The moist earth ¹³ had now ~~harded~~ hardened due to being exposed

8 The candidate's use of personification is highly effective, as the bench is described as remaining 'in solitude, eagerly waiting to hear a spectrum of tales'.

9 The candidate establishes contrast, beyond that given in the question, as the park moves from being empty to being 'filled to the top'.

10 The candidate refers to the image of the benches again as 'exhausted workers traipse towards them' showing a careful organisation of the response.

11 The candidate shows evidence of thoughtful organisation using the contrast between the park keeper who was mentioned earlier as having 'a sense of punctuality was clearly visible in his eyes' and the busy employees whose 'lack of punctuality' is 'the only stain on their white uniform'.

12 The candidate gives further evidence of thoughtful structuring, by referring back to the previous image of the 'freshly mowed grass' and establishing a contrast with the 'metallic tang of perspiration' now dominant in the air.

13 The simile describing the sky as a 'fatigued artist' who 'violently dabbed various colours onto his canvas in order to meet the nearing deadline' adds to the candidate's use of descriptive features.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

14 to the ~~swelling sun~~ sweltering sun. Moreover, the raucous laughter of children echoed throughout the park; the cacophonous screech sounding quite exasperating to many. Some decided to hear a few dulcet tones through their air pods while some delicately read about the inspiring lines from his favourite book.

15 The intricate carvings on the bodies of trees attracted the attention of many, each having a story of its own. While many rays of the sun were reflected back by the lush green cover of the trees, some were able to breach the strong defence and paint a unique pattern on the floor. From embracing couples to seasoned veterans quietly spending their last

16 few days, there was one thing in common: everyone ~~were over~~ every person was in awe of

17 the mystic beauty of this splendid park.

18

14 The candidate uses auditory imagery to good effect with a description of the 'raucous laughter of children' which 'echoed throughout the park' furthering the range of descriptive features.

15 The return to the image of the rays of the sun, initially seen at the start of the response, creates a cyclical structure which is effective in conveying the ever-repeating nature of these sorts of days in the park.

16 The candidate concludes the response effectively with a sense of reflection, bringing the piece back to the sense of calm established at the start and showing clarity of structure.

17 Throughout this response, the candidate uses a wide range of well-constructed sentences accurately, including simple, compound, and complex structures.

18 The candidate uses a precise, extensive, and effective range of vocabulary. The spelling is highly accurate, with only occasional slips. Punctuation is highly accurate, aside from the incorrect use of a semi-colon.

Content and structure = 10 out of 10
Style and accuracy = 14 out of 15

**Total mark awarded =
24 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

Style and accuracy

- The use of punctuation was highly accurate, with the correct use of full stops, commas, a colon and an exclamation mark. However, correctly hyphenating compound adjectives, 'pesto-coloured' and capitalising the proper noun 'AirPods' would have improved this response, as would the inclusion of apostrophes (for both omission and possession), brackets, a question mark and using a semi-colon accurately.
- The candidate needed to be consistent with all verbs to ensure tense agreement; for example, in the case of 'commence' this should be 'commenced'. The candidate also needed to ensure greater accuracy in subject-verb agreement, as in the case of 'Antiquated trees with its gnarly branches' which should be 'Antiquated trees with their gnarly branches' to maintain subject-verb agreement between 'trees' and 'their'.
- Overall, this was an ambitious response which firmly demonstrated the qualities required for Level 5; however, the response exceeded the indicative word count by 50 words. The candidate should have stayed within the 350–450 words specified and spent time checking their work for the sort of slips outlined.

Sample Essay

2

2

(DESCRIPTIVE WRITING)

Vanilla, sugar, cinnamon and caramel. That delightfully sweet smell coupled with violent screams of terror is what you can expect when you visit Disney World.

There is definitely something ~~off~~ rather magical about being amongst a crowd of people all out for a thrill. The downside, as I'm sure anyone could guess, is that you have to wait in contrastingly long boring cues before experiencing any one of the array of adrenaline rushes available to you in such a popular theme park. I would not recommend this place to anyone who does not have the patience to stand still for a minimum of 90 minutes before getting a turn. "Hurry up and wait!" - It should've been their slogan! But boy oh boy, let me tell you, those rollercoasters are sure worth the ~~weight~~ wait.

The creators of Disney World spared no expense. The incredible details in rides like "The Tower of Terror" would leave you ~~to~~ engulfed and enchanted while you wait for your nervous system to ~~see~~ be stimulated to a point of near complete shock.

You'll crave that rush for ~~to~~ decades after your visit to that elevator that "falls" faster than the speed of gravity. As you exit that abandoned hotel, you'll be sure to find dust on your finger if you dare to touch the haunted ~~floor~~ ~~costumed~~ walls.

Food. Characters from your favourite movies. Treats. Trinkets to remind you of all the excitement. Even The World. That's right. The World.

Question Part

I bet you didn't even know that you could set foot in 11 countries in one day!

Okay - not really. But you can actually get a taste of the people and places from around the globe when you make the 'completely overpriced' but 'totally worth-it' trip. And I'm telling you to go but my doing so comes with a warning: You will be hooked. You will want to go back and you will have to because it is ~~completely~~ completely 100% impossible - not improbable - impossible, to do everything there is available to you. We love it there. However...

~~Heaven~~ However... Our family loves to go because we love to come back! Just as ~~a~~ incredible a feeling it is to ~~swast~~ swoosh down a roller coaster track in a tiny car, ~~over~~ that's how relaxing it is to crash on the sofa at home. Our living room is a safe haven for everyone and it has one really important factor in common with ~~the~~ Disney World. People who visit our house never want to leave.

~~Big screen TV. Surround S.~~

~~Big S~~

Big screen TV. Surround sound. Comfy sofas. Popcorn for days. And two really cool dogs. The smell of clean laundry always fills the air. Big open spaces (not filled with in-laws). Coffee! Loads of coffee. It's not perfect... in fact there's actually a lot wrong with it. The house needs a bit of work but you are literally just welcome to be snug as a bug in a rug on the couch



Question Part

with a dog or two in ~~the~~ whatever you want to wear. And relative to Disney World ~~there's~~; completely stress free.

You are free to bake in the kitchen. That big country style kitchen. Play ball outside. Ride your bike up and ~~down~~ down the long driveway. The yard is so big and spacious you would get lost if you looked only at the trees.

It would be okay to get lost because you could go chillout in the crystal clear water of my ~~swimm~~ swimming pool.

Ah yes! ~~you~~ You might bump into Dorothy at the completely stimulating parks at Disney World. — but we all know she would agree — "There's no place like home." ~~3~~

It's true, Disney World might be big and thrilling. It is right when you say it's spellbinding and enthralling. ~~Anyone who visits the~~ Anyone fortunate enough to go to a place that is filled to the ~~brim~~ brim with delightfully nuanced characters played by actors would certainly see the craftsmanship of talented "Imagineers". But if you sit still in a corner watching the people go by, you would want some more ~~treat~~ soul...

My home is my heart. That's where you'll find my love. It's where you'll find my shelves ~~or~~ upon shelves of books. It's where I can have fun with my loved ones and where I take care of everyone.

→



Question Part

And when everyone is taken care of, I am ~~atm~~ calm.

~~My~~ I'm at my most relaxed, in my own bed.

My nice firm but comforting bed. In my room.

My big beautifully decorated tranquil room.

In my house, My palace.

Describe the scene at a beach at a time of the day you would like to be there

I inhale deeply, absorbing the familiar scent of the moist, salty sea air. It's early noon and the scorching sun is high up in the sky, turning the vast stretch of glistening golden sand ablaze.

Feeling pleasantly warm and toasty, I take fish out an orange tube and squeeze a thick white blob onto my palm. I then proceed to lean back comfortably on my chair and rub the sunblock up and down my arms lazily. Lively, upbeat tunes from the mini ice-cream van on the pier reach my eardrums, followed by echoes of children's delighted laughter in the distance.

My chair is incredibly comfortable, with a blue and white striped umbrella that towers above me, protecting half my body from the blazing sun. I stretch my right arm and reach for a tall glass of pineapple Piña Colada, which has a straw and a dainty pink umbrella. I love the crushed ice in it. As I sip the drink, the ice cubes crackle and crunch pleasantly against my teeth, sending shivers of delight down my spine.

The beach is tranquil. Peaceful. It appears undisturbed and free. I decide to go for a stroll along the shore. I get up and skip across the dry, hot sand until I reach the water. The sand is cool and moist here. My heels dig into its density as I gingerly step forward on my toes. A low and slow tide reaches me; its tips and edges laced with a beautiful white froth. It washes my ankles and sweeps past me.

When it retreats, it creates an intriguing illusion. I feel like I'm moving backwards while standing still. The next wave comes racing and crashing, so strong that it almost disrupts my balance and I stumble.

This time, I can see tiny black fish swimming and grey tadpoles wriggling as the wave takes them back. After every wave, the ocean surface becomes clear and reflects the beaming rays of sunlight. It looks magnificent and magical. The third wave arrives swiftly and the water reaches my knees. A shy-looking black and white seagull lands near me on the water and looks at me suspiciously before deciding that I can't be trusted and flying off. I can see a small flock of gulls circling above me elegantly and communicating in a series of bird noises only they can understand.

It's almost high tide now and the tranquillity of the beach is shattered by high, powerful, energy-carrying waves as they slam into the shore with all their might. With each incoming wave, the ocean takes more of the beach.

I suddenly feel something cold and wet on my face. I jerk my head up, shocked. It's my mother, sprinkling water droplets on my face to get me to wake up. What was I daydreaming about? She demands to know what exactly I was dreaming about so vividly.

I sigh and tell her I was reminiscing about my last visit to the beach — a perfect early noon visit, the best and most peaceful time to be there.