

CBSE TEST PAPER-01
Class - 10 English Communicative
(A Shady Plot)

1. Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow:

“You know I bought the loveliest thing this afternoon. Everybody’s wild over them.”

- (a) Who is the speaker?
- (b) Who is she speaking to?
- (c) What did he/she buy?
- (d) Why was everybody wild over them?

OR

“And when I got back to the office from my last case and was ready for you, didn’t you switch off to something else and sit there driveling’ so I couldn’t attract your attention until just now?”

- (a) Who is the speaker?
- (b) What was she ready for and why?
- (c) What is the meaning of the word ‘drivelling’?
- (d) Which case is she talking about?

2. Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

- a. What genre of stories does Jenkins want the narrator to write?
- b. What makes Helen, the ghost and her other co-ghosts, organize The Writer’s Inspiration Bureau?
- c. How does the ghost undermined the narrator’s faith in his ability to write ghost stories?
- d. Why does the narrator hesitate to be a partner to Laura Hinkle during the Ouija Board party?

3. Answer any one of the following questions in 80-100 words:

Describe the Ouija board party and how did it affect the domestic life of John and Lavinia Hallock? **OR**

How does the lesson, ‘A Shady plot’ remind us that man has no right to invoke supernatural powers through Ouija Boards, Tarot cards etc., to solve his problems and that one should face life boldly and overcome difficulties using his wit and intelligence?

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[Answers]

1.
 - i.
 - a. Wife of the narrator, Lavinia Hallock, is the speaker.
 - b. She is speaking to her husband John Hallock.
 - c. She bought an Ouija board.
 - d. Everybody was wild over them as the Ouija boards are duckiest and darlingest.
 - ii.
 - a. Helen, the ghost, is the speaker.
 - b. She was ready to inspire the author to write stories because she was a member of the Writer's Inspiration Bureau.
 - c. 'Drivelling' means speak nonsense.
 - d. She is talking about her last case to inspire an upcoming author.
2.
 - a. Jenkins wants the narrator to write stories on the supernatural this time. He wants the narrator to do so because that is what the public wants. His stories are interesting and mysterious and his ghosts are propositions.
 - b. Helen and her other co-ghosts organize the Writers Inspiration Bureau for which they scout around until they find a writer without idea and with a mind soft enough to accept impression. The case is brought to the attention of the main office and one of them is assigned to it.
 - c. The ghost thinks that the narrator cannot write ghost stories but the ghosts give him the idea. Helen tells him that many a time it is she who has learnt on his shoulder when he is thinking hard for an idea.
 - d. The narrator hesitates to be a partner to Laura Hinkle during the Ouija Board Party, because the ghost has asked him not to use it, then only she would help the narrator with ideas for ghost stories and Laura Hinkle is also very flirtatious.
3. Lavinia organized an Ouija board party in the little parlour of her home. Many of her friends were invited, most of them were elderly ladies. The invited women were sitting in two's. Between each couple was an Ouija board, Lavinia came to John and persuaded him to be a partner of Miss Laura Hinkle. A lady at the last moment had shown her inability to come.
Unwillingly John had to be Laura's partner. She held his hands and held them in the

desired position. The little board began to slide around. Laura asked the board to tell something. On the board the word “traitor” appeared. The board continued to spell. It indicated that the traitor was John and her name was Helen. Five Ouija boards started calling John by name. Lavinia looked at John as if he was an insect. John got up and fled from there. He did not know that party ended. He came to his room and went to sleep at 3 o’ clock.

Next morning Lavinia was not present at the breakfast table. John went to the library for another try at a ghost story. There he got a slip of paper. Lavinia had written to John that she was going back to her grandmother. She also conveyed to John that her lawyer would communicate with him later.

OR

The lesson ‘A Shady Plot’ revolves around the theme of conjuring up the spirits of dead people using Ouija boards in order to know the unknown. Events, forces or powers which are beyond the reach of humans is called ‘Supernatural’. Man in his quest of the unknown has devised many ways to reach or communicate with supernatural powers. There are many from all over the world who claim that they use many mediums like Ouija boards, Tarot cards etc., to link with the supernatural beings. It is their personal belief and they spend their lives in search of acquiring supernatural powers. Ouija boards or Tarot cards never solve the problems. Moreover they lead us to unnecessary troubles. The man who has faith in these supernatural powers forgets his own strengths, intelligence and creativity and starts depending on these superstitions which stunts the creativity, inner strength and intelligence. Sometimes they ignore their own strength and go into deep mental agony. Man is gifted with wit and intelligence. Man should use them to solve his problems and get a self-control over his life. He has to work hard to reach his goals than to depend on supernatural elements for help. The man who has no self-confidence and faith in himself is called a weak minded fellow. Such men only try to depend on supernatural powers to fulfill their wishes. But it is impossible for anyone to achieve something without hard work. So, be away from superstitions. Believe in yourself. Do your best and leave the result.