Aga Khan University Examination Board

Notes from E-Marking Centre on SSC-I English Compulsory Examination April/May 2019

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Part I English Compulsory. It contains comments on candidates' responses to the 2019 SSC-I English Compulsory Examination; indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses. The examination was conducted based on the syllabus for revised English Compulsory (2017).

E-Marking Notes

This includes overall comments on candidates' performance on every question and *some* specific examples of candidates' responses which support the mentioned comments. Please note that the descriptive comments represent an overall perception of the better and weaker responses as gathered from the e-marking session. However, the candidates' responses shared (where deemed necessary) in this document represent some specific example(s) of the mentioned comments.

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in a manner that require candidates to respond by integrating knowledge, understanding and application skills they have developed during the course of study. Candidates are advised to read and comprehend each question carefully before writing the response to fulfil the demand of the question.

Candidates need to be aware that the marks allocated to the questions are related to the answer space provided on the examination paper as a guide to the length of the required response. A longer response will not in itself lead to higher marks. Candidates need to be familiar with the command words in the SLOs which contain terms commonly used in examination questions. However, candidates should also be aware that not all questions will start with or contain one of the command words. Words such as 'how', 'why' or 'what' may also be used.

The following is a description of the tasks and skills required for fulfilment of those tasks.

Question No	Question Type	Skills Assessed
1 (a, b, c(i), c(ii), d)	CRQs on a reading passage	 Literal understanding of a reading text Inferential understanding of a reading text Reasoning skills Ability to synthesise information from outside the text.

2 (a, b)	Letter or email	 Ability to write an informal letter/email Ability to use accurate sentence structure, connective devices, spellings, etc. Ability to develop and organise information in a familiar everyday context
3 (a, b, c)	Essay Writing	 Ability to develop a piece of writing with appropriate focus, organisation and purpose Ability to persuade, analyse, express and reflect on familiar, everyday life situations and ideas Ability to use accurate sentence structure, connective devices, spellings, etc.

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spellings or factual information.

Detailed Comments:

Question 1

Comprehension skills are essential for scoring high marks in the English Compulsory examinations. Candidates are exposed to various types of reading comprehension passages and to demonstrate their ability to retrieve information, draw inferences from the passages, interpret contrasting perspectives and question or critically evaluate it, as required.

Question 1 was based on a reading passage. It had five sub-parts. Candidates were required to understand the reading passage and answer the questions asked on various aspects of the passage. The criteria against which marks were on the basis of the demands of the questions asked. The questions were aimed to assess the candidates' detailed understanding of the passage validated through their respective responses through the discussion of different aspects of the passage.

The reading passage was an article titled, 'Call to Enforce Law to Stop Cruelty to Animals' by Faiza Ilyas published in Dawn.

Question 1a:

The author reports that experts 'criticised the recent campaign carried out in the city in which a large number of stray dogs were killed with poisonous capsules'.

Identify the MAIN argument of the experts against the campaign.

In *better responses*, the candidates correctly identified the argument. Such responses included answers such as 'the rallying of experts against the campaign as killing of the stray dogs is an inhumane approach to the problem'.

Example:

The question proved to be challenging for most of the students who failed to identify the argument. In *weaker responses*, the candidates mixed the agenda of the campaign, i.e. they wrongly interpreted the experts' suggested solution to the monitoring of the stray dog population to be that of killing them.

Example:

Question 1b:

Suggest any FOUR strategies that the government should take in order to protect animals in Pakistan.

In *better responses*, it was observed that the candidates suggested practical strategies the government can implement to protect animals in Pakistan as highlighted in the image below. Other responses also included suggestions to create special interest website and advertisements to promote conservation of animals and educating people by conducting awareness campaigns all over the country.

of 18903,50 H	would be effective to proted animals.
(ib Government	should introduce "police team" in certain
	they would work to protect the animals.
(iii) Bakistonii g	sucroment should arrange seminour and a gatherin
	ple would be motivated to protect the animals.
	should construct or build 'animals haspitals

In *weaker responses*, instead of suggesting strategies, candidates stated what was already mentioned in the aforementioned passage. Such responses mentioned the importance of the welfare society for animals as presented in the passage. This displayed the candidates' inability to suggest strategies as demanded by the question. Some responses stated that 'the animals should be neutered' or 'killed to control their population' which were incorrect responses to the question.

Example:

Marachi used to have such a society in the 1970s, but right now there is no custodian of the 1890 act to implement it in Sindh. It has its office on the premises of University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, labore and its Functional in 17 districts with the government support. I) The Society provided treatment to injured and diseased animals and sent the offender to judicial magistrate for Further proceedings ander the law. The resources, both human and financial are unived.

Question 1c(i):

The author has included references from legal articles. Identify TWO purposes that this serves.

In *better responses*, candidates were able to comprehend the author's purpose. Most answers centred on the authentication of the author's findings and the legal nature of the article. Key

words the students used were 'to introduce people to legal articles that aim at protecting animals and wildlife', 'to validate his/ her opinion', and 'building people's interests/ curiosity'.

Example:

In *weaker responses*, the candidates demonstrated their confusion regarding the purpose of the addition of the legal references. They restated the legal articles and the importance of the welfare society already mentioned in the passage.

Example:

Question 1c(ii):

Narrate any ONE form of animal abuse other than that mentioned in the passage. In your narration, include,

- what happened and who was involved.
- which action was taken OR should have been taken to stop the abuse.

In *better responses*, the candidates showed the ability to narrate a form of animal abuse they have witnessed/ heard. It was also observed that some candidates described an imagined animal abuse. These were also awarded marks. They also demonstrated the appropriate action that should have been undertaken to stop the abuse by meaningful and insightful suggestions. Such suggestions included 'the call to police and law and enforcement agencies', 'inform the media about such incidents' and educate people about the importance of respect and warmness towards animals'.

A while again a contest was organized where a flock of chicken were teleased and about too of hundred of People randition them to cotch them. In the Process, come chickend were killed as they came under the feet of the People. It seemed like a fun game to People but It was actually a form of abuse. It whole compitee who set up the contest was involved in this inhumane act as well as the People who Perticipated in it but no action was taken against it as it was considered a fun and harmless game. What The game should be been stopped or releable on allowed to be played in the first Place or the People who organized it should be been held tespecite for their peinascot and should be been acted for fines or compensation.

In *weaker responses*, the candidates – as in question 1b – displayed the inability to narrate the animal abuse. Instead of the directed task, they paraphrased some parts of the passage that informed of a welfare society for animals, A Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), and its agenda. Some showed confusion regarding the term 'abuse' mistaking it for animals torturing humans and inflicting harm upon each other.

Example:

As in the Passage cor society they are animals softwarms which above animals. It in the Basage "Karachi is used to have such society in 1970's which give hoper facilities to animal-like Cats. Cats are also involved in animal above-Cats also billed by humans because of their exprohibated ound like (mem). Government should take action and to stop the above. Government make laws and Protections.

and the weekly vaccinate cals togarinst germs and Society or government should Provide treatment to injured animals (cuts) at dieaced animals (cuts)

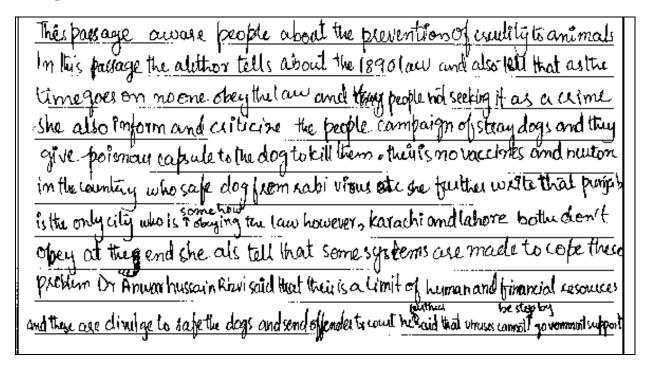
Question 1d:

Summarise the passage in no more than 100 words.

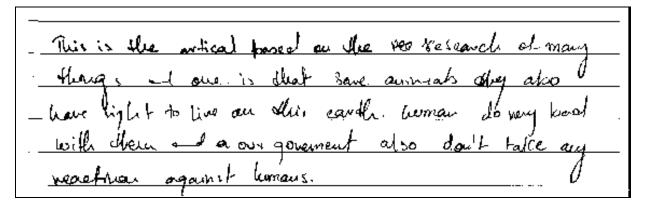
In *better responses*, the candidates fulfilled the requirement of a summary by using appropriate vocabulary and organisation in their answers. They were able to develop a well-written summary by rephrasing the key ideas presented in the reading passage. Such candidates showed the skill of interpreting the main idea of the given passage and therefore, selecting important and relevant points from the passage to include in their summaries. The points to be included in the summary were:

- Importance of animal welfare society
- Importance of legal articles aimed towards protecting animals
- Need for government to protect animals

Example:



Weaker responses demonstrated a limited understanding of the contents of the passage. Such responses were observed to include points that were not in the passage by writing their own opinion regarding the article and misquoting the issue of animal abuse as presented in the passage. In other weaker responses, the candidates had copied whole paragraphs from the text.



Question 2

Question 2 had two parts. The candidates were directed to write an informal letter/ email on either of the given situations. In both the options, marks were granted for including content points which were relevant to the prompt, situation and context of the question and the language proficiency. A well planned letter should consist of a brief introduction, followed by body paragraphs, each pursuing a viewpoint or opinion and conclusion.

Ouestion 2a:

Your friend wants to get a part-time job after school or on weekends to earn extra pocket money.

Write a letter to your friend. In the letter, suggest

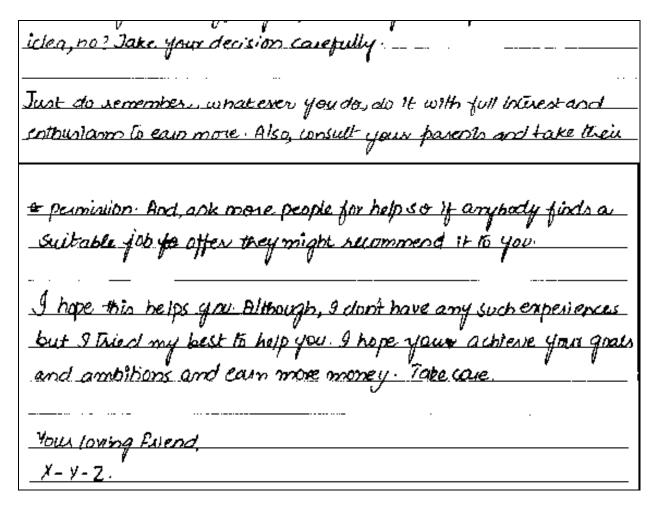
- possible jobs based on your friend's personality and situation.
- at least TWO necessary steps he/ she should take in order to get a part-time job.

Most candidates attempted this question. It was observed that the situation was relatable to them and they showed moments of nostalgia while invoking a real/ an imagined situation of their friend in search of a part-time job. Mostly block style format of a letter was followed.

In *better responses*, the candidates were able to compose a realistic and well-structured letter by keeping in mind the personality of their respective friends. The suggestions of jobs as per the friend's personality were also given appropriately. The question also demanded the candidates to propose two steps the friend can take in order to get the job. Most candidates displayed a maturity with respect to the proposals. In some responses, attestation of required documents for the job and asking career counsellors were suggested.

Note: It was observed that even in better responses, a few candidates wrote their real names, schools and/ or addresses. It is prohibited to reveal your identity as mentioned in the English Compulsory syllabus. Teachers need to inform the candidates to avoid using their real names, schools and/ or addresses in the examination.

Option &
Examination Hall
ABC Rood
Karachi.
30 th April, 2019
Dear Friend.
I hope you are doing well It was meditations to receive your
letter. I am truly grateful for your kind gesture of seeking the
suggestions to get part-time jobs. I will surely volunteer the an
helpfully as 9 cap.
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Since, I've known you for around 8 good months, I am particularly
well-exiented to your personality. I'm sure this will help me suggest
jobs based on your personality. You can look for some online for
ways of earning money, including blogging. You are a good influence
and a blogger why don't you try to blog? Also, you can teach children
as a Tutton teacher, since you are a remarkable student You can
also look for some affice-jobs, like being a receptionist isn't a bad



Weaker responses, lacked organisation and proper grammar. It was also observed that some candidates misinterpreted the question by assuming that it was them who were in search of a part-time job. Abbreviations for certain words such as 'b/c' for because and the '&' symbol in lieu of 'and' were also observed. It should be communicated to the candidates that the use of such abbreviations is not preferred by the AKU-EB and to use full forms of words. Abbreviations for organisations can be used after using their full forms. Such responses also showed weak grammar skills by using incorrect tenses and verb forms.

Option
Examination Hou
A.B.C Road
Kagochi
Date: 30-4-2019
Dear hierd.
I hope you are fine . I am also
fine what about you I telling about Past time tob you infortering me can you do this
time tob you uplotelling me can you do this
Tob.
4 and confised because after School
I am very treed, for extra for ket money the
4 and confused because after School 4 and very tired, for extra tocket money the Part line Job is good my idea in, join Job
so some Problem is face the school & timed
and go Part line Job the School Pressure is
very high and the Tob Premure 9 Join the Job
4 not care my health and then my health in
Pour extra Pocket money the Job is very
good the Part Line 105 Thelp my
Samily to Pay my brother and my fees I was
lamily to Pay mybrother and myfeer 9 was
hope you wil be Join this Job & Jace my
hope you wil be Join this Job & face my
, v,

situation for family. 1 Toin Part -time Job
My family Patholem is low the income in come
1, tration for family 1 Toin Part -time Job My family Particles is low the income in come for & Part line Job
Your Regards
Your Regards x-y-z
Note: See you soon tommonow.

Question 2b:

Your school holds a science exhibition each year. However, there is no exhibition for students of commerce and humanities. This year, you want your school to hold a combined exhibition representing all subjects.

Compose a letter to your Principal. In your letter, convince him/ her by giving at least THREE ways in which a combined exhibition will benefit everyone, including students, teachers and the institution.

Better responses reflected the candidates' understanding of the underrepresentation of students enrolled in commerce and humanities groups. The responses

- used correct format of the letter that includes (To/ From/ Subject/ Date), body paragraphs and conclusion.
- used vocabulary and their knowledge of grammar to good effect. Most candidates showed their grammar skills by incorporating various sentence types in their letter.
- connectors were also used to show organisation in the letter.
- high scoring candidates wrote on the inclusivity of the mentioned groups in the exhibition by justifying their opinion through logical reasoning.
- also highlighted the importance of humanities and commerce subjects in promoting a global and in depth understanding of society and its development/ infrastructure.

Option
The examination hall,
ABC school,
<u>Karachi</u>
30th April 2019
Respectable principal,
Assalam - v - Alaikum ! I would start off by thanking you Mam
for taking out your time to read this request from the batch of year
nine, science group students. I sincerely apologize for sending this letter so
ungently and asking for immediate response, but there is a very significant
region to this.
As we all know, that the schools schence exhibition is just at
the end of this week and every student in excited for the exhibition where
we would be able to display our projects, innovative ideas and will also
necieve the awards for future pioneers but this year, I would like to
raise a question that has been bethering me frompast two years. Why is
it so that only the science students get the spotlight and are given the
right to recieve the awards fobore pioneers whereas the homanities

and commerce students aren't invited? According to my point of view, it may be possible that a combined exhibition in which all the subjects' students play a role by can be arranged this year, to show that it is our school that lays the foundation of the future pioneers who opt in all fields of life and are given opportunities since childhood by their school In addition to this, I think that it has plenty of benefits for the school, the staff and especially the students. A combined exhibition will allows the students to share the idean of different subjects, it will also destroy the barrier between the students which has formed due to the subject differences and we will gather on a platform where we will exist as one unit. Another benefit is that the achool will redere financial benefits. As the number of audience will increase, the more number of puty passes will be purchased which will eventually benefit the school. And last but not the least point, I think that the teachers will also get a day to relax and communicate with the parents, thus a hordle of organizing a parent-beacher meeting will also be removed. According to my perspective, I think that the commerce and humanities students will also get a chance to display their interests and ideas about making new firms, Industries and more topics related to their subjects. In the end, I hope that I have been able to convey my message to you and I hope for a positive response. Thank you! Sincerely XYZ stodent.

In weaker responses, the candidates

- failed to completely understand the requirement of the question by suggesting the importance of science subjects in the Pakistani society, decorative measures the school could take, etc.
- responded by composing letters addressed to the wrong recipient(s).
- did not display comprehension of the organisational pattern of a letter.
- displayed errors of punctuation and spelling.
- used incorrect grammar.

Example:

Option b(paxt)
Examination Hall
City A. B.C
April 30, 2019
Deax Mother,
1 recesive your letter yester day
I am glad to know that your fine your way men
happy with me. I and perfectly aller right.
I amd good case of my health, to 4 don't
pay my ragards
your affectionaly.
x . 7x . 7

Ouestion 3:

The candidates were directed to write an essay on any of the three choices given. Candidates were assessed on their understanding of the prompt, situation and context of the question and the language proficiency. The vast majority of candidates chose to attempt parts 'a' and 'b', whereas, part 'c' was chosen by fewer candidates. The candidates were assessed on the basis of the

- topics of the essay.
- desired development in the composition on the respective writing prompts.
- clarification of their narration in the composed texts.
- usage of appropriate vocabulary/ grammar/ cohesive devices.

Question 3a:

You reunite with your primary school friend after many years.

Narrate an account of the occasion. In your account, describe

- the importance of the friend.
- the details of the reunion, including activities and discussion.
- your feelings about the meeting.

In *better responses*, the candidates attempted the writing task by presenting new and interesting scenarios of reuniting with their respective childhood friends. Some responses described how the encounter changed their lives and created a new way of seeing the world. It was also observed that the essays were well organised, using appropriate language structures and using adjectives in a myriad of ways. In some responses, candidates also used literary devices such as flashbacks, metaphors and similes.

Option@-
I am sitting in the car waiting impatiently for the traffic lights
to turn green, thinking about how depressed twould be
without my friends, who would be there to enjoy small treats of
life with me and who will be the shoulder I would cryon. The
element of trust would be in complete without the because you
trust them with your darkest and deepest secrets.
With the jost of the car I come back to reasity and the
butterfles which were long gone reappear. Reculizing that am back
to my second home after three years I ring t move towards
the door.
Pinging the bell I could hear the car Iwas sittingin a
Second ago moving away. The smile on my face was still undisturbed
as the excitment was the same. As the door swings open
I am embraced in an extremely warm hug and myear
Could feel Slight pain due to the screams I am Somounded
to by
As time passes in the lounge of my best friends home we
fill each other about the missed time. We exchange the bits
und peeces of information that were not exchanged through
_Phone -
Remembering how we used to be with classmakes,
teachers and in all competitions while watching higherhoo!
musical in the dark room was the like the
old times was the best thing during the whole stay.
· • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
twould have been nothing without this girl is my lost
thought before I start shedding tears on her shoulder before
due to my departure.
•

In weaker responses, the candidates

- wrote vague or superficial descriptions by missing key details of the reunion and/ or ridiculing the friend after the reunion.
- used slang words to describe the reunion.
- demonstrated a lack in organising the essay.
- wrote incorrect language, i.e. errors of spellings, tenses, sentence structure and run on sentences.

Option [A]
perimory school briend offer many year.
and I so miss you and performary
school and other things.
· Ves the most importance of the Procus.
without faired the no enjoyment life
and no shading feeling. Narrate an count
of the occasion and so very happy you
ade ull friend
· your feelings about the meeting
· My balter felling of the meeting.
and the first meeting we.
so amaing and very cerrfull
humans and other activities so
there was very comfoused but
some from e early feeling of the
meeting, and batter thing different
noamen, sosoundong thing new
information.

Question 3b:

"The initial pain had disappeared, so had my cell phone ..."

Write a story based on the given scenario. In your story, narrate

- when, where and how did the incident happen.
- how did you react when you realised that your cell phone was missing.
- what did you learn from this incident.

Better responses were observed to have

- a strong beginning that drew attention of the reader by creating an atmosphere of suspense and drama.
- sensory details that made the reader feel like they are sharing in the author's experience.
- numerous emotions through the use of dialogue between characters as well as through the internal thoughts of characters. The candidates included descriptive words meant to show rather than describe the emotions they were going through the imagined situation.
- showcased a remarkable understanding of the organisation/ structure of a narrative essay by observing a proper beginning, climax and conclusion.
- accuracy of grammar and spellings.

Option ____ b

Topic: Where It led me.

I knew it was dangerous, I knew it wasn't rate, but did I have a choice? Was there any other way than to walk along late at hight, down a creepy lane? No there wasn't. I knew I should beared listened to what mamwas sawing. I knew she way right that no one would drop me off, this late at night. But I really wanted to go to this connect!

My phone had no signals so I couldn't call Mom. Further ahead was the an area, closed with the yellow tape, they use for crime scenes in movies I was so dured in my own thoughts that I didn't realise that it was a crime area in real life and that I wash't allowed there. But I ducked and slipped under the tape. Litark There was no living soul inside, I kept walking and as I left that area I took out my phone to check signals and that's when it happened.

I felt a starp pain in my head and a loud scream. I realised that the scream was coming from my own mouth.

My vision blurred and I fainted. When I woke up
the initial pain had disappeared and so had my phone
I also realized that I was no longer on the road, inhor

I was in a room, with a huge mirror in front of me.
The interegultion room! A voice boomed "What was
your buishess in the crime scene?" "Nothing! I way
just passing "I replied. After a long series of question
and answers. They let me go but kept my phone.
They did call my parents to pick me up. Why did
they keep my phone? I wasnt a criminal!

My Parents weren't happy about this. No one would be! I didn't know that disobeying can lead to a problem so serious! One good thing that came but of this was that never to disobey Mom again Also imnever attending late night concerts alone!

Because you never know when you endopin a crime new as a criminal!

In weaker responses, the candidates

- lacked organisation in their essays.
- wrote incorrect language, i.e. errors of spellings, tenses, sentence structure and run on sentences.
- had mediocre responses to the situation in the writing task by suggesting that it was a learning experience without mentioning the reason for their opinion.
- did not focus on a proper conclusion to the narration, instead the endings were abrupt or unintelligible.

because	He	love	his	Ce	Uphone	so much
and He be atte	Lear	10 \$	rom	th	is - in	cident
be atte	ntive	and	dox	n1+	foogot	Heir
504× 5 000 U					7 3	

Question 3c:

A time capsule is a container used to hold objects from the present to be reopened in a specified time in the future. The objects in the time capsule remain undisturbed for many years, providing a window into the past.

Imagine you have been given a chance to bury any ONE object in a time capsule to share with people a hundred years from now. Elaborate upon

- what that object would be.
- TWO reasons for choosing it.
- what you want to convey to the people of the future through it.

This writing task was the least attempted, perhaps due to the fact that the candidates were not exposed to narrative genres such as science-fiction and fantasy.

In better responses, some candidates who did attempt the writing task were observed to

- describe the time capsule/ the object to be placed in the time capsule with appropriate indicators.
- began their essays with a quotation or a melancholic phrase to set the mood/ atmosphere.
- include objects, in the time capsule, considered mundane, such as books, letters, teaching tools.
- advise the future generations who would open the time capsule on the importance of time.
- use proper cohesive devices to showcase the progression in their essays such as 'afterwards', 'during', 'furthermore', etc.

Option ___ C Time is a thing with feathers it flies ever with no wind, no soul. Toolay there is a new phobia generating in our population and its rates are increasing with the speed of light. The fear of being forgotten. Many people would like to build their figuries and holien biographies and store them in these time capsules. But whats the point of death if people have to be remembered If I ever get a chance to bury a time capsule Han it would contain & two things a book of all the epecies endangred and worn out and a book containg every verse of whole poetry. I want to save these things for future because I don't want people to jorget about how brutal they have been to animals and how foreign and exotic mankind has been to its nature. I want the fullure to moun the same way we did because of our impulsivity and vindictiveness. They say you have Lo breale a few eggs to make an omellete but how many eggs are we going to break . The virtue of a man and not of an angle is that it can improve > I don't want the people of

Weaker responses were observed to

- be poorly executed, offering mere generalities.
- have typographical and grammatical errors.
- show no understanding of the writing task by suggesting that the time machine is a machine which measures time.
- misunderstand the demand of the question by only describing the time machine and the importance it serves rather than mention the object to be places in it.
- show repetitiveness and use of inappropriate dialogues.

OptionC
on 15 May 2017 a women come towards
me and when she come near to me she
asked e If you have a chance to bory anyone
object on a time capsule to share with
people a hundred years from now. @ 9
still stand and something the
She shouted my name and asked are you
not heared what I sayed. I asked here ?
listen completely but I am very nervous
to listen your
Anyways firstly & well think than
I will tell you. Then I come lowards my
have and entered the house to continuosy
think about the thing. My mother come in
the youn and let me you
test temmorou so you will wearn out rusts
your teacher should gave a punishment.
Suddenly, the thing is found
that I will bury in a time capsule of
Shouted budly wow! then I ran
towards the study room and pick my
has and asked my mother that am
going to group study with my friends"

I alked the women that I found a thing that of bury in time captule She asked " what PS the thing"? opened my tog and told the thing is my books and I also write a letter for the childens of that time. I write a Letter and write in this that "this is called books which we study after passing a class this you are study by robots. We are studied by a man or women to who is alled The reason for choosing the spect is that the Students of the future will not teached by teachers and study on the books. They are are teached a robote and Study on the mobile phones or computers and laptops etc. May students Interested in my time capsule of was thinking Suddenly, & hear a sound wake up unkeup the sound of my mother. I wake up and see that all is a dream. I small and go towards washroom