

# Sikkim Public Service Commission

Main Written Examination for the Post of Sikkim State Civil Service

PAPER - I

GENERAL ENGLISH

Morning Session

Time Allowed : 1.30 Hrs.

Maximum Marks : 100

## INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

*Read the following instructions carefully before answering the questions :-*

1. **IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE EXAMINATION, YOU SHOULD CHECK THAT THIS TEST BOOKLET DOES NOT HAVE ANY UNPRINTED OR TORN OR MISSING PAGES OR ITEMS ETC. IF SO, GET IT REPLACED BY A COMPLETE TEST BOOKLET.**
2. Please note that it is the candidate's responsibility to fill in the Roll Number carefully and without any omission or discrepancy at the appropriate places in the **OMR ANSWER SHEET** as well as on **SEPERATE ANSWER SHEET** for MCQ / SUBJECTIVE PAPER. Any omission/discrepancy will render the Answer Sheet liable for rejection.
3. **Use only Black Ball Point Pen to fill the OMR sheet**
4. Do not write anything else on the OMR Answer Sheet except the required information.
5. **This Test Booklet contains 50 items (questions) in MCQ Mode in Part I to be marked in OMR Sheet and Part II in Subjective Questions, question No. 51 carries 20 marks of Precis and question No. 52 Essay carries 30 marks, which has to be written on seperate answer sheet provided to you.**
6. **All items from 1 to 50 carries 1 mark each .**
7. Before you proceed to mark in the Answer Sheet (OMR), you have to fill in some particulars in the Answer Sheet (OMR) as per given instructions.
8. After you have completed filling in all your responses on the Answer Sheet (OMR) and the examination has concluded, you should hand over the Answer Sheet (OMR) and Seperate answer sheet to the Invigilator only . You are permitted to take away with you the Test Booklet.
9. **Marking Scheme**

**THERE WILL BE NEGATIVE MARKING FOR WRONG ANSWERS MARKED BY A CANDI DATE IN THE OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTION PAPERS.**

- (i) There are four alternatives for the answer to every question. For each question for which a wrong answer has been given by the candidate, one-third of the marks assigned to that question will be deducted as penalty.
- (ii) If a candidate gives more than one answer, it will be treated as a wrong answer even if one of the given answers happens to be correct and there will be same penalty as above to the question.
- (iii) If a question is left blank. i.e., no answer is given by the candidate, there will be no penalty for that question.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS TEST BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE ASKED TO DO SO**





## General English

### Comprehension

**Directions Questions 1 to 10: Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.**

A decade before newspapers launched their Internet editions, Milan Kundera published an insightful book, *The Art of the Novel*, in which he argued that “chasing after the future is the worst conformism of all”. He termed the pursuit “a craven flattery of the mighty”. He wrote: “For the future is always mightier than the present. It will pass judgement on us, of course, and without any competence.” I was intrigued by this argument.

Early this month, Michael Rosenwald, a journalist with *The Washington Post*, tried to find an answer to a question that is hardly heard in newsrooms and boardrooms: “What if everything we’ve been led to believe about the future of journalism is wrong?” In an exploratory essay for the *Columbia Journalism Review* titled “Print is dead. Long live print”, he has come up with some conclusions that challenge a basic business dictum: trend is a friend.

#### Preference for print and digital

Rosenwald’s essay is based on some real number-crunching surveys and three in-depth interviews: with Roger Fidler, who first imagined and created a prototype for reading news on a tablet much before Apple invented the iPad; Iris Chyi, a University of Texas associate professor and new media researcher; and Michael Gerber who launched *The American Bystander*, a humour magazine that is available only in print. In his assessment of the digital world, the reality, he says, is this: “No app, no streamlined website, no ‘vertical integration,’ no social network, no algorithm, no Apple, no Apple Newsstand, no paywall, no soft paywall, no targeted ad, no mobile-first strategy has come close to matching the success of print in revenue or readership.” He is not convinced about the basic assumption that publishers have made about readers’ preference, particularly younger readers’ preference, for digital.

There are four dominant ideas from his essay. The first is about digital advertising. Mr. Fidler, in his interview to Mr. Rosenwald, explained how the idea of interactive advertising has not clearly panned out. Readers are annoyed with and distracted by intrusive advertisements, he said, so many



block it with browser extensions. Unlike print, which offers a limited amount of advertisement space, the infinite online space is driving down advertisement prices and sending publishers “racing around a hamster wheel”, Mr. Rosenwald reasons.

He draws his second point from Ms. Chyi’s monograph, *Trial and Error: U.S. Newspapers’ Digital Struggles Toward Inferiority*. Ms. Chyi’s conclusion is stunning and may send shivers down the spine for news organizations that have invested the better part of their money in digital. For her, the digital shift has been a disaster for media organizations. She was unable to find any evidence to conclude that online news will ever be economically or culturally viable.

#### Time spent on reading news

The third significant point is about reach within a given geographical area and the duration a reader spends on a specific news product. Ms. Chyi studied data collected by Scarborough for 51 of the largest U.S. newspapers. Scarborough is a market research firm owned by Nielsen. The finding is that the print edition reaches 28% of circulation areas, while the digital version reaches just 10%. And more importantly, Pew Research Center data reveal that readers who come directly to news sites stay less than five minutes; those from Facebook are gone in less than two minutes. Citing Ms. Chyi’s research and the Pew findings, Mr. Rosenwald argues that even among young readers, interest in print persists. He draws our attention to the Pew study that puts the percentage of those who only read news via a computer: it was 5% in 2014 and it remained 5% in 2015.

The fourth argument is about the quality of reading. He establishes how one skims and jumps around online not just within individual stories, but also from page to page and from site to site. He then explains the immersive nature of print reading that facilitates better comprehension. He quotes from a 2013 study in the *Newspaper Research Journal* that found that *New York Times* readers recalled more stories and specific details in print than they did online. The results, according to the study, established “the modern role newspapers play in maintaining an informed citizenry.”

There is a Kundera-like intrigue in what Mr. Gerber told Mr. Rosenwald: “There’s this assumption that online is inevitable, that it is like the steam engine or something. Maybe it is. But maybe it’s not. Maybe it can’t be.” In this age, when every political leader is on social media, every institution is sprucing up its digital presence, and a new device is hitting the market every

other day, is it unreasonable to suggest that the tools for the survival of the news industry may be in the past rather than in a technocratic future? Can we afford to overlook facts in this call to look at the relative strengths of print compared to digital? We have often heard that the economy is too important to be left to economists alone. Journalism and informed citizenry are equally important to be left to journalists and media managers alone. Readers' participation is central to find a viable answer to this question. (A.S. Panneerselvam *Is past the key to future?* The Hindu, January 30, 2017)

1. What is the writer intrigued by?
  - a. The future judging the present.
  - b. News reporting with judgement
  - c. Judgement by future
  - d. Judgement by future without competence
2. 'Trend is a friend' means.....
  - a. Follow whatever is the current trend
  - b. Follow whatever suits us in the current times.
  - c. Follow the trend that suits you.
  - d. Follow a friend's trend.
3. Reader often \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. delete the online advertisements.
  - b. block the online advertisements.
  - c. read the advertisements in print.
  - d. read the online advertisements.
4. Print news is still economically viable because \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. it is available to all easily for all.
  - b. one need not go on line to read news.



- c. more percentage of people still read print news than on line news.
  - d. more percentage of people still read online than print news.
5. Print news attempt to 'maintain an informed citizenry' by
- a. offering stories for citizenship.
  - b. offering true reporting.
  - c. offering more access than the online news.
  - d. offering more stories and detailed reporting.
6. 'Maybe it can't be.' What can't be?
- a. Online news becoming inevitable.
  - b. Print news becoming inevitable.
  - c. Online news becoming accessible.
  - d. Print news becoming unpopular.
7. Which word in the passage means 'supposition'?
- a. Preference
  - b. Assumption
  - c. Establish
  - d. Inevitable
8. Which word in the passage means the opposite of 'dissuade'?
- a. Convinced
  - b. Immersive
  - c. Distracted
  - d. Streamlined
9. '.....is it unreasonable to suggest that the tools for the survival of the news industry may be in the past rather than in a technocratic future?'
- a. Print news will survive without digital technology.
  - b. It is difficult for the print news to survive without digital technology.
  - c. Digital technology will take over the print news.
  - d. On line news is the future and print has to digitalize itself.

10. According to the author, which of the following statements is true?
1. Print news has to cope with the online news.
  2. Journalism should be left to Journalists and Media Managers.
  3. It is inevitable that print news will lose its value.
  4. Readers have say in business of journalism and informed citizenry.
- a. 1 & 3 are true
  - b. 2 & 3 are true
  - c. 1, 2 & 3 are true
  - d. 2 & 4 are true

**Directions: Questions 11 to 15. Following statements have a word or phrase underlined. Find the suitable word or phrase that can replace the underlined word or phrase.**

11. The Minister call on the visiting Diplomat.
- a. invited
  - b. visited
  - c. requested
  - d. talked to
12. Suresh puts his staff through it when the deadline is to be met.
- a. scolds his staff
  - b. appreciates
  - c. puts his staff in an unpleasant experience
  - d. puts his staff in good spirits
13. The panel will not be operated in any subsequent activities unless notified.
- a. current
  - b. successive
  - c. preceding
  - d. sequential
14. At the instance of the leader, the government has launched a new scheme for young children.

- a. demand
- b. speech
- c. praise
- d. thinking

15. If you think Rahul will support you, you're **barking up the wrong tree**.

- a. you are expecting help from him.
- b. you are correct.
- c. you are mistaken.
- d. you are happy.

**Directions: Questions 16 to 20: The following five sentences come from a paragraph. First and last sentences are given. Choose from the given four sentences (P,Q,R,S) the order in which they appear to complete the paragraph.**

16. **S1:** The Goods and Services Tax (GST) essentially subsumes all taxes into one.

**S6:** The third is that GST will hopefully remove the cascading of taxes which was endemic in the previous system.

**P:** The second advantage is that it has done away with levies on inter state transaction.

**Q:** It eases the complexity of getting yourself registered with the tax system.

**R:** This instills a degree of certainty in the system.

**S:** This means that whatever activity you are in, there is only one indirect tax that is applicable for your activity.

- a. PQRS
- b. SRQP
- c. SPQR
- d. PSRQ

17. **S1:** My own birthday passed without ceremony.

**S6:** I went back to my house, made myself a cup of tea and read till dinner time.



**P:** Their silence seems more intense than any other silence. The trees were trying to tell me something which I could not understand.

**Q:** I have never been able to discover what it is that gives these woods their mysterious attractiveness.

**R:** They are like no woods I have even known.

**S:** I worked as usual in the morning and in the afternoon went for a walk in the solitary words behind the house.

a. SQRP

b. SRQP

c. RQPS

d. RQSP

18. **S1:** Olive Ridley sea turtles have been making a mysterious pilgrimage for 60 million years.

**S6:** Million of hatchlings from January nesting emerge from the sand.

**P:** This happens usually in the month of January –exactly which date no one can predict.

**Q:** They arrive at a tiny, three kilometers long sandbar off coast of Odisha.

**R:** Responding to some unknown signal or inner urge, hundreds of thousands of dome-shelled sea turtles come from feeding areas thousands of miles apart in the open sea.

**S:** Here they dig pits with their paddle-shaped hind flippers in the dunes, each female lay over 100 soft, white eggs.

a. QPRS

b. RQPS

c. PRSQ

d. SQRP

19. **S1:** Eeducation, in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each one of us that the whole of existence is gathered.

**S6:** We want to make the child first and foremost a specialist, hoping thus to give him a secure economic position. But does the cultivation of a technique enable us to understand ourselves?

**P:** Conflict and confusion result from our own wrong relationship with people, things and ideas, and until we understand that relationship and alter it, mere learning, the gathering of facts and the acquiring of various skills, can only lead us to engulfing chaos and destruction.

**Q:** Such education offers a subtle form of escape from ourselves and, like all escapes, it inevitably creates increasing misery.

**R:** As society is now organized, we send our children to school to learn some technique by which they can eventually earn a livelihood.

**S:** What we now call education is a matter of accumulating information and knowledge from books, which anyone can do who can read.

a. QPRS

b. RQPS

c. PQSR

d. SQPR

20. **S1:** Those of us who live in regions covered with forests and surrounded by hills may find it difficult to imagine what a desert is really like.

**S6:** It is the home of a variety of people, animals and plants that have learnt to live under very hot and dry conditions.

**P:** For those who have studied it, the desert can be a beautiful place.

**Q:** It is dry, hot, waterless and without shelter.

**R:** The popular belief is that it is an endless stretch of sand where no rain falls and, therefore, no vegetation grows.

**S:** But this is not entirely correct.

a. RQSP

b. QRSP



- c. RSQP
- d. PQRS

**Directions 21 to 25 : following is a passage with some words / phrases missing in the middle of the sentences. Choose the correct missing words from the options and mark in the answer (OMR) sheet.**

This fictional character was first seen walking \_\_\_\_\_(21) the Kremlin with his dog in 1929. He is drawn in a unique style, \_\_\_\_\_(22) that the face is made up of \_\_\_\_\_(23) very simple features. It is almost expressionless \_\_\_\_\_(24) because it is neutral, it is the ideal recipient \_\_\_\_\_(25) the emotions felt and projected by reader.

- 21. a. about
- b. around
- c. along with
- d. away
- 22. a. on
- b. to
- c. in
- d. by
- 23. a. few
- b. lot
- c. many
- d. a few
- 24. a. but
- b. for
- c. and
- d. with
- 25. a. for
- b. to

- c. by
- d. with

**Directions 26 to 28 : Find the word which means the opposite of the given word.**

26. **Candid**
- a. frank
  - b. Blunt
  - c. Guarded
  - d. Queer

27. **Prolific**
- a. Barren
  - b. Productive
  - c. Creative
  - d. Writing

28. **Nonchalant**
- a. Still
  - b. calm
  - c. Enthusiastic
  - d. Sleepy

**Directions : Questions 29 & 30. Find the word which means the nearest to the meaning of the given word.**

29. **Ruminate**
- a. Think deeply
  - b. Feeling
  - c. Sad feeling
  - d. Jubilant



30. **Apal**

- a. Shock or upset
- b. Jump with happiness
- c. Diminutive
- d. Stubby

**Choose the correct options :-**

31. After practice the girls' softball team stated, "we're famished!"  
Famished means...

- a. Fatigued
- b. Hungry
- c. Excited
- d. Ready

32. The newborn baby was enamored with the rattle. Enamored means...

- a. Fascinated
- b. Happy
- c. Unsure what to do
- d. Aggravated

33. When having a problem, it is best to dissect the situation, then act.  
Dissect means....

- a. Control
- b. Discuss
- c. Ignore
- d. Analyze

34. The bouncer's countenance discouraged brawls. Countenance means...

- a. Message
- b. Presence
- c. Expression
- d. Strength

35. The child apprised her father's authority and behave herself in church.  
Apprised means...
- a. Appreciated
  - b. Compromised
  - c. Defied
  - d. Noted
36. The aural component of balance is critical for postural control during ambulation. Aural means...
- a. Eyes
  - b. Ears
  - c. Nose
  - d. Hands
37. The wound exhibited signs of copious drainage requiring medical intervention. Copious means...
- a. Minimal
  - b. Clear
  - c. Maximal
  - d. Foul
38. The scientist was able to evoke powerful emotions from her audience.  
Evoke means...
- a. Sell
  - b. Calm
  - c. Call forth
  - d. Exaggerate
39. The official exhibited a heedless attitude when dealing with the dignitaries. Heedless means...
- a. Thoughtless
  - b. Pleasant



- c. Friendly
  - d. Bitter
40. The General tried to instill the hope of victory in his troops. Instill means...
- a. Infuse
  - b. Delay
  - c. Inscribe
  - d. Indict
41. The winning team of the world series often has a jovial attitude. Jovial means...
- a. Merry
  - b. Sad
  - c. Somber
  - d. Laborious
42. A lyre was played in ancient Rome. The lyre is a...
- a. Stringed instrument in the harp class
  - b. Percussion instrument
  - c. Wind instrument in the wind class
  - d. Rhythmical percussion device.

**Choose the option that is closest to the meaning of the sentence:-**

43. French is the only language other than English spoken on five continents.
- a. French and English are the only languages that are spoken on five continents.
  - b. Unlike French, English is spoken on five continents.
  - c. French and English are spoken widely in official and commercial circles
  - d. Before English, French was the only language spoken on five continents.

44. Adults laugh less than children, probably because they play less.
- The reason why adults laugh less than children might be that they play less.
  - Since adults have less time playing games; they don't laugh as much as children.
  - No matter how much adults play, they can't laugh more than children.
  - It seems that adults, who don't laugh much, didn't play much with other children when they were young.
45. Even though the two parties appear united in negotiations,\_\_\_\_\_.
- The level of trust between them will always remain, at best, tenuous
  - They weren't able to agree on the subject
  - They will eventually reach an agreement
  - It is impossible for him to succeed

**Directions :- 46 to 50. Rearrange the words into cohesive sentences.**

46. There is in our times the assessment mechanism to critically examine

A

B

in schools

an urgent need in our times

C

D

- ABCD
- DBAC
- DABC
- BACD

47. Mentoring is since it involves interpersonal interaction, a complex business

A

B

one's intrapersonal functioning coupled with augmenting

C

D

- ACBD
- BDCA



- c. BADC
- d. DBAC

48. This assignment purely in your private capacity is entertained.

A

B

has been offered to you and no correspondence on this matter

C

D

- a. ACBD
- b. CDBA
- c. DCAB
- d. CADB

49. One of the major that we use everywhere – contributors to this sorry state

A

B

at home, in parks, while shopping, etc. is the polythene carry bag

C

D

- a. BDCA
- b. DBCA
- c. DCBA
- d. BDAC

50. The leader that he has become and they should look for a new leader

A

B

a has been told his followers

C

D

- a. DACB
- b. DCAB
- c. DBAC
- d. DACB

51. Read the following passage on investment carefully and write a summary of the same in about 200 to 250 words. Follow the processes of writing a précis. (20 Marks)

Investment advice and strategies always focus on how to invest. You are advised to invest according to the asset allocation suitable to your goals, research investment options thoroughly and invest regularly to make market volatility work in your favour. But buying into investments is just one part of the investment plan. For the plan to be really successful in meeting its objective of getting you to your financial goals, an efficient exit strategy is as important as an entry strategy. The strategy should focus on identifying the situations that warrant exit from an investment and how best to execute it.

An investment portfolio is built to meet goals. The investments need to be liquidated to generate the money required to fund the goals when they are due. This is best done in stages, which would take care of the twin considerations of protecting the corpus that has been created and ensuring that the money is available when the goals have to be funded. In the first stage, redeem the long-term growth investments that have been used to accumulate the corpus and move the funds to less-volatile investments, such as debt products, to protect their value. This is best done 1-2 years before the goal has to be met. In the next stage, when you are closer to the goal, redeem the debt investments and fund the goal.

The asset allocation in a portfolio may have moved away from the desired proportions on account of a run-up in the values of one or more class of assets relative to the others. This may skew the risk-and-return of the portfolio in a manner that may no longer be suitable to the investor's needs and goals. For example, a run-up in equity values may increase the



proportion of equity in the portfolio and make it riskier than what an individual close to retirement is comfortable with. In such a situation, it is financially prudent for the investor to sell a portion of the equity investments to reduce the proportion of equity in the portfolio and invest the proceeds into the other asset classes so that the portfolio's risk and return characteristics are restored.

The advantage of following the policy of selling an appreciating asset class to rebalance is also that you book profits in the investments periodically and at the same time you invest into other suitable investments when their prices may be low. Set an upper limit for deviations from the preferred asset allocation and rebalance when this is triggered.

Investments held in a portfolio may become unsuitable when goals have changed or the risk tolerance of the individual has changed. For example, a change in circumstances, such as greater job security, may now make goals more long-term and increase risk tolerance. The portfolio that may have had a debt-orientation to reflect the lower job security and risk tolerance may no longer be relevant now that income is secure. You may be ready to make your funds work harder for better returns, albeit with greater risk. When goals change, switch funds to more suitable investments by selling the investments that are no longer relevant.

A portion of a portfolio may be held to benefit from an expected appreciation in an asset class in the near-term. This is the tactical segment of the portfolio and the funds are typically not linked to any goal or need. The idea is to sell as soon as the expected profits are made. For this to work efficiently, it is important to have an exit strategy in place.

Waiting for the markets to peak before you sell may be risky since it is impossible to predict or time the markets. You may instead see profits erode as prices decline before you have had a chance to sell. A better strategy is to have a profit target, say 20%, and sell the position when the profits materialize. Or, have a target for a relevant index and sell when that trigger is activated.

Despite going through a rigorous selection process, it is important to track investments to ensure that they are performing as expected. Have a system to check the performance on a quarterly basis against a suitable index as well as peer group investments. Investments that consistently under-perform over 3-4 quarters should be earmarked for sale. Holding on to poorly performing investments will pull down the overall portfolio returns and money will be working less hard than it could for you.

The temptation is high to ignore triggers to sell and stay invested when markets are rising. Similarly, the reluctance to sell at a loss may result in holding on to poor performers even when they are clearly dragging down the portfolio's returns. Executing an exit strategy on investments requires discipline and clearly defined processes. Where possible, liquidate the investments over a period of time to reduce the risk of selling at a point when the price is low. Consider the tax and cost aspects of selling investments and use the provisions provided in the Income Tax Act to set off gains against losses made to maximize post-tax returns. (850 words)

(Source: *Live Mint* 23 June, 2017)



OR

52.

(2x10 Marks = 20 Marks)

- i). So far you have been reading solved examples intended to help you understand precis writing. But it is practice alone which would enable you to grasp the technique in proper way. So write the precis of the following paragraphs and give an appropriate title to each. Misers are generally characterized as men without honor or without humanity, who live only to accumulate, and to this passion scarifies who live only to accumulate, and to this passion sacrifices the most of the joy of abundance, banish every pleasure and make imaginary wants real necessities. But few, very few, correspond to this exaggerated picture; perhaps there is not one in whom all these circumstances are found united. Instead of this we find the sober and the industrious branded by the vain and the idle with the odious appellation: men who by frugality and the idle with the obvious appellation; men who by frugality and labour, raise themselves above their equals and contribute their share of industry to the common stock. Whatever the vain or the ignorant may say, well where it for society had we more of this character among us. In general with these avaricious men we seldom lose in our dealings; but too frequently in our commerce with prodigality.

AND

- ii) We live in an age of great hurry and great speed. Men have lost their inward resources. They merely reflect. Like a set of mirrors, opinions which they get a little leisure, they turn to material diversions from outside rather than to inward resources. This internal vacuum is responsible for mental and nervous troubles. The cure for this is not so much treatment by medicine and surgery but a recovery of faith in the ultimate goodness, truth and the decency of things. If we are able to recover that faith, if we are able to live in this world with our consciousness centered in the intimacy of the spirit, many of the problems to which we are subject today may be overcome. Our people were regarded as aspiring after metaphysical insight, but we seem to forget that it never occurred to them to equate eternal life with either the surrender of the mind or the sacrifice of the body. When an Upanishad writer was asked to define what is meant by spiritual life. He gave the answer that

it consists of the satisfaction of the mind, the abundance of tranquility of the spirit. Body, mind and spirit must be integrated and they must lead to a harmonious developed life. If we get that, we have life eternal.

**53. Write short essay on ANY TWO of the following :- ( 2x 15 = 30 Marks)**

- i. As people rely more and more on technology to solve problems, the ability of humans to think for themselves will surely deteriorate.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

**OR**

- ii. College students should be encouraged to pursue subjects that interest them rather than the courses that seem most likely to lead to jobs.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the recommendation and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, describe specific circumstances in which adopting the recommendation would or would not be advantageous and explain how these examples shape your position.

**54.**

- i. Goods and Service Tax – a boon or a bane. Write your arguments each in favour and against this statement

**OR**

- ii. Linguistic chauvinism is detrimental to social harmony.