



A.READING COMPREHENSION (15 marks)

THE TEXT

1. I remember vividly when I got “the look”. My hair was grimy and my clothes smelled from having been worn for three straight weeks. I buried my unshaven face into my jacket as I stepped onto the train in New York. It was holiday time and the train was packed, but it was my home at night during the winter of 1983-84. I was exhausted from walking so much, searching for a job. A seat opened up between two passengers and I sat down. A well-dressed woman gave me “the look.”

that told the person that he or she wasn’t fit to move normally in society. I was conditioned at a very young age to view all homeless people as worthless alcoholics and drug addicts. They were not human—they were thugs and murderers and a burden to society. Or so I thought. Until I got “the look.” I was desperate. I begged and applied for any part-time job, even washing my hair in a toilet so I would look presentable for an interview.

3. Some 27 years later, Anthony Ziccardi, the Vice President of a publishing house, felt strongly enough about my story that he agreed to publish the semi-autobiographical *Necessary Heartbreak: A Novel of Faith and Forgiveness*, which I had based in part on my experience. Since the publication of the book, I have been stunned to hear from so many people who have suffered the degradation of homelessness. I sit here in front of my laptop, with a roof over my head. I hear their cries and worries through e-mails and letters.

4. Despite great efforts, like many others, I was no longer able to pay rent. Uncontrollable circumstances led me to the shelter of the train those winter nights: the loss of my mother from cancer just before I graduated from college the year before and a falling-out with my father with whom I’d always had a difficult relation. So before you give anyone “the look”, take a moment to glance inside that human being’s soul. He or she has a story to tell, but it might not necessarily be the one you’ve been conditioned to believe.

Michael Sullivan (adapted)



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Tick (✓) the right alternative (1 mark)

The text is mainly:

- a) narrative ☐ b) descriptive ☐ c) argumentative ☐

2. Tick (✓) the most appropriate title to the text. (1 mark)

- a) A success story ☐ b) A mocking stare ☐ c) A hard winter ☐

3. The following statements are false. Correct them with details from the text. (3 marks)

- a) The writer used to sleep in a park. (paragraph 1)
.....
- b) When he was homeless, Michael was totally careless about his appearance.(paragraph 2)
.....
- c) Michael had no school degrees.(paragraph 4)
.....

4. Focus on paragraph 4 and list three facts that led Michael to homelessness .(3 marks)

- a).....
- b).....
- c)

5. Find a word in the text that nearly means: (2 marks)

- a) crowded (par.1) b) amazed (par.3).....

6. What do the following underlined words in the text refer to? (2 marks)

- a) their (par.3) refers to.....
- b) one (par.4) refers to

7. Answer the following question. (1 mark)

After the publication of the book, how did Michael communicate with the homeless people?
.....

8. Circle the appropriate option. (1 mark)

When Michael says:" Before you give anyone the look, take a moment to glance inside that human being's soul"; he is expressing:

- a) advice b) warning c) reproach

9. Give a personal justified answer to the following question.(1 mark)

Do you think that homeless people are a burden to society?

I think that homeless people
because.....