

# Three Hours in the Examination Hall

Or

## Inside an Examination Hall

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Essay No. 01

“Examination are formidable even to the best prepared, for the greatest fool may ask more than the wisest man can answer.”

— Charles Colton

Examination are held every year to test the ability of students. These days, examinations are a game of chance, a mere gamble, held in the hot season when the examinees feel the worst and the weakest. The young blooming buds of this human garden can often be seen with wearied looks tense and worried expression and pale faces, with a heap of books by their side, preparing for the examination. Truly speaking, an examination for three hours cannot be a sure test of one's knowledge gained within a year. They are the test of cramming not of one's ability. But so long as the present system of education exists, these examinations are inevitable and unavoidable.

Examinations are a horror for the young students. They are the ghosts that take away human happiness, mental peace and calmness and keep an examinee in the grip of tension, worry, agony and disappointed. They sap the energy, take away the joy and peace of mind. Most of the students start feeling feverish on hearing the name of the examination hall.

An examination hall is that terrifying big hall where seating arrangement for the examinees is made. Students come at least half an hour early and, as instructed by the invigilators, enter the hall. They get the answer sheets. Sitting silently in their seats, they remember God and pray to help. In the meantime, the students recollect their ideas as the invigilators collect the question paper from the superintendent. The superintendent does the essential preparation for the commencement of the examination.

At the exact time, the invigilators distribute the question and start taking rounds in between the rows. Most of the students bow their heads to pray for God's blessings and start reading the question paper. The intelligent students who know the answers become happy and have a relieved expression. The dull

students who do not get the crammed questions feel bad, tense and worried. They look about here and there to see what others are doing or feeling. The intelligent examinees start are seen busy with their own work. For them, time seems to pass within minutes. They ask for more and more continuation sheets to finish their work quickly.

A dull student with no creative ideas in his mind remains tense and thinks of using some unfair means to get through the examinations. He curses his own fate, the examiners; the invigilators and everyone linked with the examination. He looks forward and behind and whenever he gets an opportunity, asks for some help. When caught red-handed, he is punished by the invigilators and a case of using unfair means is framed against him.

The invigilators and the superintendent have a very tough time because they have to keep a vigilant eye on the examinees and fulfill their demands. The invigilators are on their toes all the time distributing continuation sheets on demand. The waterman serves water to the examinees. The attendants have also a tough time putting stamps, getting the signatures of the students and giving the necessary equipment to the examinees.

Fifteen minutes before the scheduled time of three hours is over, the invigilators ask the students to stitch up their answer-books properly. The examinees become quite active, revise their answer-sheets hurriedly and pack up their things. At the stroke of the bell, they hand over their answer-books and leave the hall.

After leaving the hall, they discuss the questions amongst their friends, tally their answers with the books and create a lot of noise. They are now free birds. They have little to bother about till the result is declared.

Essay No. 02

### Three Hours in an Examination Hall

An Examination hall is a place where we are, in three hours, tested for our knowledge, acquired through the year, that has passed by. All the papers are for the length of three hours that implies that these simple three hours are worth a fortune.

The future of each individual in the hall depends on his total performance in these three hours. No matter how well or badly a student may have performed through the year, but, what really matters to him is the sum total of his achievements in these three hours. Oh! how crucial and important these three hours can be is beyond any dispute.

These hours in an examination hall are a mixed atmosphere within the hall, as, some children who have genuinely studied throughout the year, and the paper also happened to be as per their expectations are seen to be very relaxed in spite of being at the hall's mercy. Others, who may have studied through the year but the paper has been a disappointment to them, are seen as though struggling with their memories and scratching their brains. This they seem to be doing in the hope as if, by scratching their heads, information about the questions in front of them may pop out of their heads. There is here, in the hall, still another category of students who have trifled with their studies all through and thus probably expected nothing in the paper and also got nothing in their favor. Such students can be very easily spotted in the hall, within a few minutes of distribution of the papers. They just fidget with things as if that could help.

Considering how important these three hours in the hall can be and really are, one does at times feel the absurdity of this method of judging the knowledge of students that they have acquired in the process of a year. After the whole year of 365 days, these three hours are going to fix the destiny of the student sounds really awkward. These three hours are, as if a tight rope walk for the examinees, or Walking on a razor's edge for, it is these hours which can and will make or mar the future of the student.

Even though at the face of it these three hours in an examination hall appear to be a hoax of an examination system, it appears as though there is no other practical method of testing the knowledge of students that is of course a must. Until a new method of examining is evolved, I am afraid this dreaded three hours business year after year will continue to haunt the children and disturb their stability of thought and action. The awe of the hall shall continue to disturb the children and nothing precious can be done to stop it.

The scene in an examination hall is just a medley of reactions. At the sight of the paper, some are very happy while others look sad and disappointed. All this shows in the behaviour of each child. An amount of satisfaction is written on some of the faces and others are crestfallen, while still others seem to be restless as though planning some mischief if possible.

Essay No. 03

In the Examination Hall

Outline: The atmosphere in the examination hall, I started writing an essay on 'examination reforms' the spirit of the subject possessed me, I walked out of the examination hall.

It was the first day of the S. S. C. Examination. There was an atmosphere of suspense and tension in the examination hall. As the last bell rang, the perfect silence was broken by the rustle of the question papers in English which were being handed to the candidates, and the tense atmosphere gave place to one of excitement.

I was considered to be a bright student, a promising scholar. I used to study regularly throughout the year and was not at all scared of examination. On this particular day I was unruffled and confident, and placidly read the question paper, as though it was a newspaper.

I always made it a point to attempt the essay first. While the other questions could be disposed of quickly, the essay demanded leisure, imagination and freshness of mind. One of the essay topics happened to be 'Examination Reforms,' and in a fateful moment I plumped for it. After arranging my ideas on the subject, I started writing on the defects of the examination system. Can the work done by a student throughout the year be judged by a single final examination? Are not our examinations a test of memory rather than of intelligence and understanding? Do they not put a premium on cramming? As I went on writing, I was possessed by the spirit of the subject. I lost myself in exposing the defects of the examination system and wrote with a fervor and sincerity quite unusual in an essay of this kind. An invigilator looked at me curiously, as if I was a poet composing a poem in a state of inspiration.

I finished the essay in an hour, an unusually long time. But the arguments against examinations which I had so sincerely put forward continued to trouble me. I looked at the pale faces of some of my companions, and something within me cried for action. I had not merely written an academic essay on examination reforms; I felt that I was engaged in a crusade against an evil. I felt that I must express protest against examinations in a concrete, practical form. To the inexpressible astonishment of my fellow-candidates and the invigilators, I surrendered my answer book two hours before the end of the examination and walked out of the hall!

Difficult Words: Unruffled-undisturbed. placidly- calmly. plumped for – chose. to put a premium on – make advantageous. possessed -dominated or controlled as by a spirit. to lose oneself in – to be engrossed in. fervor-deep feeling. crusade – struggle or movement against something bad.