



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (2020-21)  
**Question Bank**

**ALBERT EINSTEIN AT SCHOOL - by Patrick Pringle**

Class: XI

Sub: ENGLISH

---

**I. Short Answer Type Questions:** Answer the following questions in not more than 30-40 words.

**Q1. Why did the History teacher dislike Albert?**

Ans. The History teacher, Mr Braun, never liked Albert who said frankly that there was no point in learning dates. He could not tell the year when the French were defeated at Waterloo. Mr Braun called the boy a disgrace and told him to leave school at once.

**Q2. Who was Mr Koch? What did he think about Albert?**

Ans. Mr Koch was Albert's Maths teacher at the Munich school. He had a very high opinion about Albert's brilliance. He even admitted that Albert would soon be able to teach him. He gave a glowing letter of reference to Albert that he was good enough to study higher Math.

**Q3. Who was Yuri? How did he help Albert?**

Ans. Yuri was Albert's friend and the only person who stood by Albert when he was feeling miserable at school and also at his lodging. He helped Albert with his sincere advice. He introduced him to his doctor friend who agreed to give him a medical certificate. He was the only person in Munich whom Albert had seen before he left.

**Q4. In what context and in what sense did Yuri call Albert- The world's worst liar?**

Ans. Albert felt so miserable in Munich that he wanted to get away from there at any cost. He sought his friend Yuri's help to get a medical certificate. He asked Yuri if he had a doctor friend who could certify that he (Albert) was suffering from a nervous breakdown and needed a break from school. But Yuri said that Albert looked quite cheerful, and the doctor would guess that he was fine because he was not good even at telling a lie. Yuri called Albert the world's worst liar and told him to be frank with the doctor.

**Q5. What reason did the headmaster give for expelling Albert from school?**

Ans. The head teacher charged Albert with creating problems in the class. His presence in the classroom made it impossible for the teacher to teach and for the other students to learn. He said that Albert refused to learn and he was always in a rebellious mood. No serious work could be done while he was there. So he must leave school.

**Q6. Why did Albert see no point in learning dates and facts?**

Ans. Dates and facts are parts of knowledge which are content based. Albert thought that there was no point in learning dates and facts because firstly, these could be, ascertained from the books any time by just looking them up. Secondly, for him, learning facts was not education.

**Q7. What was the history teacher's opinion of Albert?**

Ans. The history teacher had a very low opinion of Albert. He called Albert an ungrateful boy who ought to be ashamed of himself. He suggested that Albert should ask his father to take him away from school.

**Q8. What punishment did the history teacher give to Albert for not answering his questions?**

Ans. The history teacher's eyes got cold and cruel. He said he didn't want a lecture from him. He punished Albert by making him stay in for an extra period that day. He told him that he was a disgrace. Moreover, he didn't know why he continued to come to school.

**Q9. 'Going back to his lodgings did not cheer him up'. Why?**

Ans. Albert felt miserable when he returned to his rented room in the locality of the poor. There was dirt, bad food and noise. But what he hated the most was its slum-like atmosphere. His landlady beat her children regularly. Every Saturday her husband came drunk and beat her. The wailing and howling of kids got on his nerves. He couldn't stand the incessant loud noise.

**Q10. Why does the biographer refer to Albert's interest in music as a 'comfort'?**

Ans. Albert's lodgings as well as school made him feel miserable. He hated the school. Going to the lodging didn't cheer him up as he hated the atmosphere of slum violence. He soothed his tired nerves by playing on his violin. So music was a source of comfort for him.

**Q11. Who is Elsa? What does she think is enough to pass the examination?**

Ans. Elsa is Albert's cousin. She normally lives in Berlin where her father has a business. She thinks that one can pass the examination simply by learning things by heart and repeating them in the exams. A student doesn't have to understand what he is taught.

**Q12. How did Albert hope to convince the doctor?**

Ans. Albert declared humorously that he was going to have a real nervous breakdown. It would make it easier for the doctor to certify his illness. The next time Yuri saw Albert he found that the latter had lost his high spirits. Albert confirmed that he would really have a nervous breakdown which would satisfy any doctor.

**Q13. What did Albert tell Dr Ernest Weil about his plans if the latter certified that he had a nervous breakdown?**

Ans. Albert told the doctor that he would go to Milan in Italy. His parents lived there. Dr Weil asked him what he would do there. Albert told him that he would try to get admission into an Italian College or institute.

**Q14. How, according to Yuri, could the medical certificate help Albert?**

Ans. Yuri thought that the medical certificate would help Albert to enjoy six month's leave from the school. He would not actually be leaving the school and if the worst befell, he could return and continue studies for the diploma.

**Q15. How did Albert hope to get admission to an Italian college without a diploma from the German school?**

Ans. Albert hoped to get a testimonial from his mathematics teacher about his work. He had learnt all the maths that is taught at school and a bit more. He hoped that this certificate

would help him to get admission to an Italian college without a diploma from the German school.

**II. LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS:** Answer the following questions in 100-120 words:

**1. What do you understand of Einstein's nature from his conversations with his history teacher, his mathematics teacher and the head teacher?**

Albert Einstein At School by Patrick Pringle makes us reflect on the purpose of education – is it information gathering or insight formation. Einstein was an intelligent student but not good at rote learning of dates and facts in history, only his mathematics teacher acknowledged his brilliance. Young Einstein hated learning dates and openly confessed that he did not see any point in learning dates as it could be looked up in books. Exchanges between Einstein and History teacher show that Einstein is honest and truthful. He admits his shortcomings frankly. He has firm and well defined opinions and explains precisely what he thinks. thus his basic intelligence, logical reasoning and lucid expression are highlighted. It is important to see that he showed no disrespect to his teachers in spite of provocation. Einstein's conversations with his mathematics teacher show the sparks of genius at a young age. He excelled in mathematics in which he had a natural inclination. His Mathematics teacher praises him and says that he couldn't teach Einstein more and probably he would soon be able to teach him. He further says that Albert was ready to enter a college or institute for the study of higher mathematics. The encounter with the head teacher shows how Einstein kept his cool and confidence in grave situations. Einstein was a thinker and an articulate student who was self-confident, candid, humble and strong willed.

**2. What circumstances led to Einstein's expulsion from his school in Munich?**

(introduction - got into a school in Munich - In spite of his best efforts - failed to cope with the circumstances - did not bother about poor food, lack of comfort or even the dirt and squalor - strong views about learning - annoyed almost all his teachers - wanted to know the reason or reasons about everything he was taught – un-satisfying curiosity hampered the teaching process in his classes -Only his mathematics teacher recognized his ability - spoke highly Very soon Einstein realized - wasting his time and his father's money - procured a medical certificate testifying to his nervous breakdown - recommending six month's absence from the school - before he could use it, - summoned him - told Einstein - go of his own accord, otherwise - formally expelled)