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English — Class 12

Chapter(s): A Wedding in Brownsville

Maximum Marks: 39 **Time Allowed: 1 Hour 10 Minutes**

Section A — MCQ & Assertion-Reason (1 mark each)

Q1. Dr Margolin's irritation at the Brownsville wedding culture is best inferred as a conflict between which two impulses within him? [1 mark]

A) His desire to appear Anglo-Saxon and his craving for Jewish ritual authenticity

B) His commitment to scientific medicine and his belief in miracles

C) His jealousy of Abraham Mekheles and his rivalry with the Tereshpolers

D) His fear of public speaking and his dislike of music

Q2. Which detail most strongly foreshadows Dr Margolin's later eerie suspicion about his own condition? [1 mark]

A) Gretl's insistence on doing housework herself like a mania

B) The taxi driver's silence and refusal to speak

C) The wounded man on the stretcher in a bloodspattered shirt and bow tie

D) The Israeli march described as a hodge-podge of jazz with Oriental flourishes

Q3. At the wedding, Dr Margolin becomes 'half-drunk' without clearly drinking. Which narrative technique best explains this effect? [1 mark]

A) Free indirect discourse blending his inner state with sensory overload

B) Flashback that interrupts the wedding scene with childhood episodes

C) Epistolary narration through letters read aloud at the ceremony

D) Objective reportage that avoids any access to thoughts

Q4. When the Senciminers repeatedly call him 'Schloime-Dovid' and recall his childhood prodigy, the most reasonable inference is that they function as _____ for Dr Margolin. [1 mark]

A) a moral tribunal that forces him to confront his perceived squandered genius

B) a legal authority that can annul his civil marriage to Gretl

C) a scientific community that validates his medical research

D) a hostile mob whose primary aim is to steal his wallet

Q5. In the chapel scene, which statement best captures the irony in Dr Margolin's claim, 'According to Jewish law, I'm a single man'? [1 mark]

A) He treats religious law as convenient despite calling himself an agnostic/atheist

B) He has forgotten Jewish law completely and misquotes it knowingly

C) He intends to become a rabbi immediately after the wedding

D) He believes civil law is superior to all religious law

Q6. Assertion (A): Dr Margolin's decision to travel to Brownsville by taxi reflects his preference for safety and control over convenience.
Reason (R): The heavy snow made driving hazardous and he was unfamiliar with Brooklyn. [1 mark]

A) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.

B) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation of A.

C) A is true but R is false.

D) A is false but R is true.

Q7. Assertion (A): Dr Margolin's disgust at American Jewish weddings stems only from his medical diet and health anxieties.
Reason (R): He believes Jewish laws and customs at such celebrations are distorted and that religious figures imitate Christian ministers. [1 mark]

A) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.

B) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation of A.

C) A is true but R is false.

D) A is false but R is true.

Q8. Assertion (A): The repeated listing of deaths and atrocities at the wedding functions as a counterpoint to the celebratory setting.
Reason (R): The survivors carry 'death in the hearts,' so even communal joy is haunted by collective trauma. [1 mark]

A) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.

B) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation of A.

C) A is true but R is false.

D) A is false but R is true.

Q9. Assertion (A): Dr Margolin's sense of being a failure is tied to both intellectual and emotional losses.
Reason (R): Although once praised as a prodigy, he believes he squandered his talents, and his one great love, Raizel, was lost to him. [1 mark]

A) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.

B) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation of A.

C) A is true but R is false.

D) A is false but R is true.

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Q10. Assertion (A): The story presents the Brownsville wedding as a purely assimilated, non-Jewish event.
Reason (R): The hall is marked by a neon Jewish sign and Star of David, and the ceremony involves benedictions under a wedding canopy. [1 mark]

A) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.
B) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation of A.
C) A is true but R is false.
D) A is false but R is true.

Section B — Very Short Answer (2 marks each)

Q11. Answer in exactly TWO sentences. Explain why Dr Margolin calls the wedding invitations and gatherings a 'burden' even before he leaves home. Your answer must include one point about his marriage and one point about his social position among Senciminers. [2 marks]

Q12. Answer in exactly TWO sentences. What does Dr Margolin's attitude to Jewish identity reveal through the contradiction between his self-description (agnostic/atheist) and his actions? Use one concrete example of an action from the text. [2 marks]

Q13. Answer in exactly TWO sentences. Give two textual cues that the Raizel episode may be liminal (between reality and hallucination) rather than straightforward realism. [2 marks]

Section C — Short Answer (3 marks each)

Q14. Answer in EXACTLY 3 numbered points with headings (total 130-160 words). Analyse how the wedding scene blends celebration with historical trauma. Use (i) one structural device, (ii) one recurring phrase or lexical pattern, and (iii) one behavioural detail of guests as evidence. [3 marks]

Q15. Answer in EXACTLY 3 numbered points with headings (total 130-160 words). Evaluate Dr Margolin as a character who is both 'honourable to an extreme' and morally compromised. Base your response on (i) his professional ethics, (ii) his personal life, and (iii) his self-perception. [3 marks]

Q16. Answer in EXACTLY 3 numbered points with headings (total 130-160 words). Interpret the taxi journey as a case-based moment of existential thinking. Explain how (i) the external cityscape, (ii) the accident, and (iii) the 'cosmic destination' metaphor work together to reveal Dr Margolin's worldview. [3 marks]

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Section D — Long Answer (5 marks each)

Q17. Dr Solomon Margolin is introduced as a successful doctor and community figure, yet he carries a persistent sense of failure and dread. Analyse how the author builds this inner conflict through (a) Margolin's public roles and private habits, and (b) the Sunday-to-wedding journey structure. Answer in the following format: Introduction (1 sentence) + 5 numbered headed points (2 sentences each) + Conclusion (1 sentence). [5 marks]

Q18. The wedding hall scenes mix celebration with traumatic collective memory. Evaluate how Singer uses sensory details (sound, smell, movement) and dialogue fragments (names, repeated words, toasts) to show the community's attempt to survive loss without truly resolving it. Answer in the following format: Introduction (1 sentence) + 5 numbered headed points (2 sentences each) + Conclusion (1 sentence). [5 marks]

Section E — Case Study (4 marks each)

Q19. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow: [4 marks]

A school counsellor designs a 'memory-and-identity' workshop after students read a story about an immigrant doctor who reluctantly attends a community wedding. The counsellor surveys 60 participants before and after the workshop.

Results (number of students):
- Before: 22 say community events feel "meaningless noise"; 18 say they feel "guilty refusing invitations"; 20 say they feel "both at once."
- After: 14 say "meaningless noise"; 26 say "guilty refusing invitations"; 20 say "both at once."

In a reflective note, one student writes: "The wedding scenes are so loud and crowded that the main character stops thinking clearly; yet the same chaos pulls him back into belonging. He remembers deaths in broken fragments while everyone toasts 'to life.' I can't decide if the story is judging the community or showing how people survive."

The counsellor wants to connect these reflections to the writer's craft choices (sensory detail, fragmented dialogue, and sudden shifts from the mundane to the uncanny).

(i) Using the survey data, identify one trend that supports the idea that the story presents community participation as emotionally complicated rather than purely positive or negative. (1 mark)

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(ii) In one sentence, explain how the student's phrase "deaths in broken fragments" links to a craft technique used in the wedding hall scenes. (1 mark)

(iii) Answer in two points: (a) one reason the story can be read as 'judging' the community, and (b) one reason it can be read as 'showing survival,' each supported by a specific detail from the story's world. (2 marks)

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English — Class 12

Chapter(s): A Wedding in Brownsville

Section A — MCQ & Assertion-Reason (1 mark each)

A1.

Answer:

Correct option: (A)

His desire to appear Anglo-Saxon and his craving for Jewish ritual authenticity

Explanation:

The narration shows him priding himself on passing for an Anglo-Saxon, yet he is also ashamed of how Jewish laws and customs are distorted and how rabbis 'ape' Christian ministers. This points to an inner tug-of-war between assimilationist self-fashioning and a demand for authentic Jewish identity. Hence, option (A) is correct.

A2.

Answer:

Correct option: (C)

The wounded man on the stretcher in a bloodspattered shirt and bow tie

Explanation:

The accident scene is described with unusual vividness and includes the thought that the victim might be going to the same wedding. Later, Dr Margolin recalls this collision and suspects he may have been more than a witness, linking directly back to the stretcher image. Hence, option (C) is correct.

A3.

Answer:

Correct option: (A)

Free indirect discourse blending his inner state with sensory overload

Explanation:

The text moves seamlessly from external sensations (odours, noise, crowd) into his mental loosening and depression lifting, reporting his inner shifts without quotation marks. This is characteristic of free indirect discourse where the narrator's voice merges with the character's consciousness. Hence, option (A) is correct.

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A4.

Answer:

Correct option: (A)

a moral tribunal that forces him to confront his perceived squandered genius

Explanation:

Their familiar address collapses his present status back into the remembered prodigy, activating his private sense of failure about wasted talents. The effect is evaluative and conscience-stirring rather than legal, scientific, or criminally targeted. Hence, option (A) is correct.

A5.

Answer:

Correct option: (A)

He treats religious law as convenient despite calling himself an agnostic/atheist

Explanation:

Earlier he refers to himself as an agnostic and even an atheist, yet at a crucial emotional moment he reaches for Jewish legal categories to reframe his marital status. The irony lies in pragmatic reliance on a system he claims not to believe in. Hence, option (A) is correct.

A6.

Answer:

Correct option: (A)

Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.

Explanation:

He explicitly chooses a taxi because the snow makes driving dangerous and because he does not know Brooklyn, which are safety-and-control considerations overriding the convenience of using his own car. The reason directly explains the assertion. Hence, option (A) is correct.

A7.

Answer:

Correct option: (D)

A is false but R is true.

Explanation:

His irritation is not limited to dietary concerns; it also includes cultural and religious discomfort with distorted customs, mixed language, and imitation of Christian forms. The

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reason is true and provides one major basis for his disgust, while the assertion's 'only' makes it false. Hence, option (D) is correct.

A8.

Answer:

Correct option: (A)

Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.

Explanation:

The scene's cheer is repeatedly interrupted by refrain-like words-'died, shot, burned'-creating a stark contrast with music and dancing. The stated idea that survivors carry death in their hearts explains why the wedding talk is saturated with trauma. Hence, option (A) is correct.

A9.

Answer:

Correct option: (A)

Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.

Explanation:

The narration explicitly connects his private failure to wasted intellectual promise (changing fields, wandering) and to the emotional wound of losing Raizel. The reason states both strands and directly accounts for the assertion. Hence, option (A) is correct.

A10.

Answer:

Correct option: (D)

A is false but R is true.

Explanation:

The wedding is visibly and ritually Jewish (Star of David, skullcaps, canopy, cantor's benedictions), even if it is hybridised and distorted in Dr Margolin's view. Therefore the assertion is false, while the reason is firmly supported by details. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Section B — Very Short Answer (2 marks each)

A11.

Answer:

He sees the wedding as a burden because it steals the only shared Sunday evening he and Gretl could have had, repeating a pattern where his community obligations take time that 'belonged to her.' He also anticipates being pestered and reproached by Senciminers

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for growing aloof and being a 'snob,' which makes the event socially suffocating rather than joyful.

A12.

Answer:

Although he calls himself an agnostic and even an atheist, he continues to behave as someone tethered to Jewish communal and ritual life. For example, he drags Gretl to Seders at Abraham Mekheles' and later invokes Jewish law in the chapel to claim he is 'a single man.'

A13.

Answer:

Dr Margolin notices discrepancies-Raizel seems 'too young' and his wallet vanishes without explanation-making him suspect a mistake he cannot locate. He then feels 'deflated' as if a physical dimension is missing, cannot find pulse or breathing, and connects the scene to the earlier accident, all of which destabilise reality.

Section C — Short Answer (3 marks each)

A14.

Answer:

1) Structural juxtaposition: The narrative places music, dancing and overflowing food side by side with sudden reports of annihilation, so the wedding's rhythm is repeatedly interrupted by grief. This back-and-forth structure makes joy feel unstable and haunted.

2) Lexical refrain: The repeated words-"died, shot, burned"-work like a refrain cutting through the chatter, turning casual introductions into an obituary-list. The recurrence prevents the wedding from becoming a clean 'new beginning' story.

3) Behaviour under pressure: Guests laugh, drink and dance more wildly, yet their talk circles back to camps, Auschwitz and family extinctions. Even 'Lechayim' toasts carry despair, implying celebration is a survival performance rather than pure happiness.

A15.

Answer:

1) Professional ethics: He never breaks the Hippocratic Oath and treats rabbis, refugees and writers without charge, even supplying medicines and beds when needed. He also avoids 'cant' and refuses dubious careerist associations, showing principled integrity.

2) Personal contradiction: He continues to pursue women 'more than was good' for him, signalling a private moral weakness that conflicts with his public honour. His irritation with community rituals also coexists with dependence on communal approval.

3) Inner verdict: Despite visible success-wealthy patients and respect-he brands himself a

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failure for squandering early genius and for losing Raizel. This harsh self-judgment drives his restlessness and makes him vulnerable to the chapel episode's temptation and confusion.

A16.

Answer:

1) Cityscape as emptiness: The wet, dirty, 'impenetrably dark' streets and the industrial neighbourhood that could be any city mirror his sense that modern life lacks stable meaning. Even human figures appear punished and hopeless, matching his cynicism about humanity.

2) Accident as fragility: The stretcher scene makes mortality concrete-one wrong turn cancels all plans-triggering his medical mind and fear of death. It injects randomness into the journey, reinforcing his belief that human control is an illusion.

3) Metaphor as doubt: Comparing the world to a taxi 'plunging' toward an unknown 'cosmic Brownsville' turns travel into a philosophical problem. His questions about Hitler, Stalin, wars and disease show a worldview dominated by the problem of evil, not comfort.

Section D — Long Answer (5 marks each)

A17.

Answer:

Singer presents Margolin as a man whose outward stability is steadily undercut by inward fragmentation.

1) Public stature vs private emptiness: Margolin is respected-wealthy patients, a good practice, and influence in Jewish circles-so society reads him as "successful." Yet he privately calls himself a failure, measuring life against early prodigy expectations and feeling he squandered potential.

2) Community duty vs marital intimacy: His committees, editorial work, and unpaid care for rabbis and refugees look like ethical commitment. At home the same obligations become a theft of shared time, making Gretl's resentment reasonable and making Margolin's guilt sharper.

3) Rational agnostic vs haunted believer: He labels himself atheist/agnostic, but keeps orbiting rituals and Jewish spaces, dragging Gretl to Seders and feeling shame at distorted customs. This split shows a mind that rejects faith intellectually while needing it emotionally after historical catastrophe.

4) Body-as-battleground: His fat-free diet, high blood pressure, hypochondria, and fear of death convert ordinary living into constant self-surveillance. The physical details (bags under eyes, meticulous shaving) mirror a psyche trying to control decay through ritualised

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routines.

5) Journey as philosophical descent: The taxi ride becomes a moving chamber for cosmic questions-Hitler, Stalin, war, cancer-so the plot's "travel" is also an inward plunge. The accident scene interrupts abstraction with mortality, foreshadowing the later uncertainty about whether he is witness, victim, or something in-between.

Conclusion: By yoking social realism to a journey that keeps tightening into metaphysical dread, Singer makes Margolin's success feel like a thin costume over unresolved grief, guilt, and terror.

A18.

Answer:

Singer turns the wedding into a noisy refuge where joy and bereavement occupy the same breath.

1) Sound as emotional overload: The relentless music-drum, bass, saxophone-creates a wall of noise that prevents sustained reflection. This sonic excess becomes a coping mechanism: grief is drowned, not healed.

2) Smell as belonging and disquiet: The "amalgam of odours" (food, perfume, garlic, sauerkraut) intoxicates Margolin and signals ethnic intimacy. At the same time it hints at physicality and crowding, suggesting comfort can feel suffocating when trauma is unresolved.

3) Movement as denial and compulsion: The frantic dancing, stamping, and romping children resemble life insisting on itself. Yet the description of the floor nearly breaking and the guests' drunken abandon implies desperation-motion used to outrun memory.

4) Dialogue as broken testimony: Conversation arrives as fragments-faces half-recognised, names swallowed by tumult-mirroring how catastrophe shatters coherent narrative. The repetition of "died, shot, burned" turns remembrance into a chant, showing that the past returns compulsively.

5) Toasts and irony of 'Lechayim': 'Lechayim' ("to life") becomes bitterly double-edged when paired with stories of extermination and the idea that "even survivors carry death in the hearts." The wedding performs continuity, but the language exposes a community living with an unclosed wound.

Conclusion: By fusing sensory saturation with staccato testimonies, Singer shows celebration as a survival ritual that keeps the dead present-proof of endurance, but also evidence of grief that will not settle.

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Section E — Case Study (4 marks each)

A19.

(i) Using the survey data, identify one trend that supports the idea that the story presents community participation as emotionally complicated rather than purely positive or negative.

Answer:

The "both at once" category stays constant at 20 students before and after, showing that many readers continue to experience community events as simultaneously supportive and overwhelming rather than shifting to a single clear judgement.

(ii) In one sentence, explain how the student's phrase "deaths in broken fragments" links to a craft technique used in the wedding hall scenes.

Answer:

It points to Singer's use of fragmented, overlapping dialogue-names and fates ("died, shot, burned") delivered in snippets amid noise-to mimic how trauma surfaces in incomplete, repetitive flashes.

(iii) Answer in two points: (a) one reason the story can be read as 'judging' the community, and (b) one reason it can be read as 'showing survival,' each supported by a specific detail from the story's world.

Answer:

(a) Judging: The narration highlights distortions and performative religiosity-Anglicised/Yiddishised language, skullcaps worn without regard for Jewishness, and rabbis/cantors 'aping' Christian ministers-suggesting moral and cultural dilution.

(b) Survival: The same space functions as refuge where survivors reconnect through recognition, toasts ('Lechayim'), and shared memory, using music/food/dance to keep communal continuity alive after destruction.

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