

## Grade XII ENGLISH NOTES AND ASSIGNMENT : EVANS TRIES AN O LEVEL

**Introduction** Evans was put in the Oxford Prison at Carfax for his criminal records including the three jail breaks that he had successfully committed. We do not exactly know what the charges against him were. It is most likely he was the master brain of a gang of robbers or was just a one man robber who was greatly skilled at impersonating other people and thus made an income out of that. However, London Police had no other choice than putting him in the most secure Oxford Prison where jail breaks were not at all common. Evans was aware of it, too. Seeing that he was in all sense trapped for life, Evans made a new plan to escape, outwitted the police authorities and managed to slip out of the prison. James Roderick Evans is a boy of deep intelligence, planning, resourcefulness, wit and wisdom and is put in the Oxford Prison. He starts learning German and is permitted to appear for O Level test in a separate and well guarded cell. All the unauthorized items are taken away from him. He is put under a strict invigilation duty by the prison staff. The Governor goes on making enquiries at every short intervals. The examination passes smoothly but Evans pretends to be the bleeding parson. He is taken to the hospital. But for all his careful and cunning strategies he is arrested by the Governor in a hotel. Even then he succeeds to slip out from the clutches of the gullible Governor.

**Theme** This story depicts a clash of wit between a criminal and the law enforcing authorities in which the prisoner Evans befools the jail authorities and manages to escape from the prison. If the government and law enforcing officials are vigilant, crime can be detected and criminals can be booked. But officials are vigilant, crime can be detected and criminals can be booked. But criminals like Evans can hoodwink the authorities and escape punishment as long as the officials are slow and lack alertness and wit.

**Summary** It is the month of early March. The secretary of the Examination Board receives a call from the Governor of the H.M. Prison, Oxford. He tells that a prisoner named Evans has started night classes in O Level German. Now he wants to attain some academic qualification. The Secretary replies that there is no need to worry. All the necessary forms and other requisite material will be sent. They will give him a chance. He enquires about Evans. The Governor tells him that Evans has no record of violence. Rather he is an amusing fellow. He is one of the stars at the Christmas concert. The Secretary asks him if they can arrange a room where Evans can sit in for the examination. The Governor tells that the room of Evans can be used for this purpose. The Secretary agrees and tells that they could get a parson from St. Mary Mags to invigilate. The Governor takes utmost care to see that he would not be fooled. Every care was taken to make Evans prepare for the exam. He was tutored by a German teacher for 6 months. The day before the exam the teacher wishes good luck but makes it clear that he had hardly any 'chance of getting through.' But Evans gives an ironical twist to the tutor's observation by saying "I may surprise everybody." On the day of the exam Jackson and Stephens visited Evan's cell and took away everything that may help him injure himself. Evans was insisted to take away the hat but he refused saying that it was lucky charm. Evan's cell was bugged so that the Governor could himself listen to each and every conversation in the cell. The invigilator Rev. S. Mc Leery too was searched and left him to complete the task. Stephen sitting outside the cell every now and then peeped into the cell. The exam went on smoothly. Stephen escorted the invigilator to the main gate and looked into Evan's cell and found the invigilator (actually Evans) wounded, informed the Governor. The latter was to be hospitalized but informed that he was alright and asked them to follow Evans. Thus he escaped the prison. When the invigilator was not found in the hospital they went to the residence of Rev. S. Mc Leery only to find him 'bound and gagged in his study in Broad Street". He has been there, since 8.15 a.m. Now everything was clear to the Governor. Evan escaped the prison the fourth time. Evan escaped the prison the fourth time. But

by taking the hint from the question paper the Governor reached the hotel where Evans was staying. He captured him and came to know how he planned his escape. The Governor said that his game was over. Evans surrendered himself to the Governor. Evans was handcuffed and sent away with a prison officer in the prison van. But here again he befools the Governor. Both the prison officer and the prison van were part of the plan devised by Evan's friends. Once again he was a free.

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

- Q1. Who was James Roderick Evans? Why was he put in the Oxford Prison?
- Q2. How was Evan's presence in the prison felt by the authorities?
- Q3. Why did the Governor apply for an examination for Evans?
- Q4. Who met Evans on the eve of the examination? What did he say?
- Q5. What were the precautions taken for the smooth conduct of the examination?
- Q6. Who was Mc Leery?
- Q7. Why was Evans particular about keeping his hat on his head during his exam?
- Q8. What instructions did the invigilator issue to the examinee before the examination
- Q9. The examination was scheduled to begin at 9.15 a.m. but it started at 9.25 a.m. Why was there the delay in starting the examination?
- Q10. Why did the Governor think of frisking Mc Leery?
- Q11. What were the contents of the small brown suitcase McLeery carried'?
- Q12. What was the intention behind the call from the Examinations Board?
- Q13. What had Mc Leery brought with him to the prison to help Evans' escape?
- Q14. What request did Evans make about half an hour before the end of the examination?
- Q15. What made Governor aware that someone from the examination board was involved in the escape of Evans?
- Q16. What information did the Governor get from the hospital about McLeery?
- Q17. Why the Governor was angry with the prison officers after Evans had escaped?
- Q18. Why did the Governor doubt the phone call from the Examination?
- Q19. What did Stephens see through the hole of the cell of Evans after leaving McLeery at the main gate of the prison?
- Q20. What clues did the question paper of Evans provide to the Governor?
- Q21. How did Stephens feel when he was asked to accompany Mc Leery out of the prison?
- Q22. Where did Evans go? Ans. Evans went to a hotel called 'The Golden Lion,' which was located in Chipping Norton.
- Q23. How did Evans escape from Detective Carter?
- Q24. How did Evans manage his final escape?
- Q25. In what way did the friends of Evan arrange his escape from the prison?