



B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

SARALA BIRLA GROUP OF SCHOOLS
A CBSE DAY-CUM-BOYS' RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

TERM 1 2026-27

ENGLISH

SET II

Class: XI

Date: 04.09.26

Admission no:

Time: 3 hrs.

Max Marks: 80

Roll no:

General Instructions:

1. The question paper contains FOUR sections-READING, GRAMMAR & WRITING and LITERATURE.
2. Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part.

SECTION A READING SKILLS

(22 marks)

I. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow:

12M

Every living creature has a time machine that regulates activities. It tells men or animal when to wake up when to sleep, when to slow down psychological activities, it also deals with regulating the body temperature and release of specific hormones at the proper time. A few call it biological clock while others refer to it as the circadian clock. Its study is known as 'Chrono-biology'.

To prove that humans possess an internal, self-sustaining clock and do not simply adjust their behaviour in response to environmental time cues, it was essential to create a 'time-free' environment. The first experiments of this kind were carried out in the late 1970s and 1980s by groups in Europe and the US. During the experiment, which continued for months, the subject chooses when he or she eats and sleeps, but no information is given about time--- no TV, no radio, no social contacts and no clock. It emerged that subjects placed in such an environment do not slip into random habits but maintain a routine, powerful evidence for the existence of an internal body clock in humans. All the subjects in the experiments, regardless of whether they were interested in what they were doing, tended to wake up at regular times.

Every person, to an extent, has an alarm clock fitted in the mind. Give it a try. Think and set the time in your brain before you set off to sleep. To your assignment, your brain will transmit signals and you will wake up at the required time. Our biological clock is set accordingly and that's the reason that counsellors suggest students not to disturb their clock during their exams as it disturbs the whole metabolism. The 24 hour body clock should start at the regular time to have optimum performance during the exams. If we are regular and keep our routine under check we hardly need reminders for day-to-day activities. We need not see the clock for our lunch, dinner or other times.

Scientists have discovered that a healthy biological clock plays a vital role in maintaining both physical and mental well-being. When this natural rhythm is disturbed by irregular sleeping habits, excessive use of electronic devices, night shifts, or frequent travel across different time zones, people may experience fatigue, poor concentration, mood swings, and reduced immunity. Therefore, maintaining a consistent daily routine, getting adequate sleep, eating meals on time, and limiting screen exposure before bedtime help keep the biological clock functioning efficiently. A well-regulated body clock not only improves productivity and learning but also contributes to a healthier and more balanced lifestyle.

I. Which of the following habits is most likely to help maintain a healthy biological clock according to the passage?

- A. Sleeping at different times every day and using electronic devices before bed
- B. Following a consistent daily routine, eating meals on time, and getting adequate sleep
- C. Frequently travelling across different time zones without adjusting sleep schedules
- D. Staying awake late at night to complete work or studies

II. Which of the following statements can be inferred from the passage?

- I. The biological clock functions even without external time cues.
- II. Regular routines improve physical and mental health.
- III. Watching television before bedtime strengthens the biological clock.
- IV. Human behaviour depends entirely on clocks and reminders.

Choose the correct option.

- A. I and II only
- B. II and III only
- C. I, II and IV only
- D. I, III and IV only

III. Complete the Analogy.

Biological Clock: Regulates body functions:: Chrono-biology : _____.

IV. State whether the following statement is True or False. People living in a time-free environment eventually develop random sleeping and eating habits.

V. Counsellors advise students not to disturb their sleep routine during examinations because _____.

VI. Find the word from the passage that means the same as 'best or most favourable'.

VII. Assertion (A): Scientists created a time-free environment during their experiment.

Reason (R): They wanted to determine whether humans possess an internal biological clock independent of external time signals.

Choose the correct option.

- 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.

VIII. A student stays awake till 2:00 a.m. every night using social media during examination week. Although the student studies hard, he feels sleepy during exams and finds it difficult to concentrate. Using information from the passage, explain two reasons why this is happening.

IX. Why did scientists remove clocks, television, radio, and social contact during the experiment?

X. According to the passage, mention any two habits that help maintain a healthy biological clock.

II. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow:

10M

Cancer has become one of the most serious health challenges facing the world today. It is not a single disease but a group of diseases in which abnormal cells grow uncontrollably and may spread to other parts of the body. Once considered a problem mainly affecting developed nations, cancer now impacts people across every continent, irrespective of age, gender, or economic background. As populations grow older and lifestyles change, the number of cancer cases continues to rise, making it a major concern for governments and healthcare systems worldwide.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), cancer caused nearly 10 million deaths globally in 2022, making it one of the leading causes of death. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) estimated that around 20 million new cancer cases were diagnosed during the same year. Experts predict that by 2050, the annual number of new cases could exceed 35 million, an increase of more than

75% compared to current levels. Much of this rise is expected in low- and middle-income countries, where healthcare facilities often struggle to meet growing demands.

Scientists have identified several factors that increase the risk of developing cancer. Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause, followed by unhealthy diets, obesity, lack of physical activity, excessive alcohol consumption, and exposure to pollution and harmful radiation. Certain infections, including the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and Hepatitis B virus, can also increase the risk of specific cancers. Health experts estimate that 30–50% of all cancers can be prevented through healthier lifestyles, vaccination, regular exercise, and early medical screening.

Medical science has made remarkable progress in the fight against cancer. Modern treatments such as immunotherapy, targeted therapy, robotic surgery, and artificial intelligence-assisted diagnosis have improved survival rates for many patients. Early detection through screening programmes has also proven highly effective, as cancers diagnosed in their initial stages are often easier to treat successfully. However, access to these advanced treatments remains unequal across the world.

Experts believe that defeating cancer requires more than scientific breakthroughs. Public awareness, affordable healthcare, timely diagnosis, and equal access to treatment are equally important. While cancer continues to pose a global challenge, informed choices, healthy habits, and international cooperation can significantly reduce its impact and improve the quality of life for millions of people worldwide.

I. According to the passage, approximately how much is the projected increase in annual global cancer cases by 2050 compared to current levels?

- a) 35% b) 50% c) More than 75% d) Nearly 100%

II. Which of the following statements is **NOT TRUE** according to the passage?

- a) Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of cancer.
b) Early-stage cancers are generally easier to treat successfully.
c) Access to advanced cancer treatments is equal across all countries.
d) Healthy lifestyles and vaccination can help prevent many cancers.

III. Which of the following combinations correctly identifies **preventable risk factors** mentioned in the passage?

1. Tobacco use
2. Obesity
3. Genetic inheritance
4. Physical inactivity

Choose the correct option:

- a) 1, 2 and 4 only b) 1 and 3 only
c) 2 and 3 only d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

IV. Complete the sentence by choosing the most appropriate option.

Experts believe that defeating cancer requires not only scientific breakthroughs but also _____.

V. Why does the passage suggest that cancer is not merely a medical issue but also a global development challenge?

VI. The overall tone of the passage is (Informative & cautiously optimistic/ Humorous & entertaining/ Emotional & nostalgic)

VII. Which statement best reflects the central idea of the passage?

- a) Cancer can be completely eliminated through modern technology.
b) Cancer is primarily a problem of developed countries.
c) Combating cancer requires prevention, early detection, scientific innovation, and equitable healthcare.

d) Medical treatment alone is sufficient to reduce global cancer cases.

VIII. Why are low- and middle-income countries expected to face a greater cancer burden in the coming decades? (*Answer in about 40–50 words.*)

SECTION B

CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (18 marks)

All the names and addresses used in the questions are fictitious. Resemblance, if any, is purely coincidental.

3. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 50 words. (4 Marks)

A. You are relocating to another city due to a job transfer. Draft a notice for the notice board of your residential society informing residents that your newly renovated independent house is available for rent. Include all essential details in not more than 50 words.

OR

B. The *Helping Hands Youth Club* has decided to organise an **e-waste collection drive** to promote responsible disposal of old electronic gadgets. As the Secretary of the club, draft a **notice** informing the residents of your locality about the drive, mentioning the date, collection point, timings and purpose, in **not more than 50 words**.

4. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 50 words. (4 Marks)

A. You have recently launched your first book of short stories titled *Beyond the Horizon*. To celebrate the occasion, you are hosting a book launch and interaction session on 12th November 2026. Draft an informal invitation inviting your former school teachers. Give necessary details.

OR

B. You are the Cultural Secretary of Sunrise Public School, Jaipur. Draft a formal invitation to Dr Nandini Rao, an environmental scientist, requesting her to be the Chief Guest and deliver a keynote address during the school's Environment Awareness Week. Mention the date, time, venue and purpose of the programme in a card format.

5. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 120–150 words. (5 Marks)

A. You are **Aarav/Aarushi**, residing at Green Meadows Society, Indore. Street lights in your locality remain non-functional for weeks, creating inconvenience and raising safety concerns, especially for senior citizens and school-going children. Write a letter to the Editor of a national daily highlighting the issue, explaining its impact on residents and suggesting practical measures that the municipal authorities and Resident Welfare Association (RWA) can adopt to resolve the problem.

OR

B. Despite growing awareness, many historical monuments continue to suffer due to vandalism, littering and negligence by visitors. As a responsible citizen, write a letter to the Editor of *The Indian Express* expressing your concern over the poor maintenance of heritage sites. Suggest measures that citizens and government authorities can take to preserve the country's cultural heritage. You are **Nikhil/Nikita**.

6. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 120–150 words. (5 Marks)

A. You are Rohan/Riya, a student of Class XII. Write an article for your school magazine on the topic: "The Power of Volunteering: Young Minds Creating Positive Change" Use the following cues along with your own ideas.

Clues

- volunteering develops empathy and leadership
- helping the elderly, underprivileged and local communities

- participating in cleanliness and awareness drives
- learning life skills beyond the classroom
- building responsible citizenship
- small acts of kindness inspire lasting change

OR

B. In today's competitive world, students often chase success without paying enough attention to their emotional well-being. Write an article in 120–150 words on the topic: "Emotional Intelligence: The Key to Success beyond Marks" You are Mehak/Mohit.

Use the following clues:

- understanding and managing emotions
- developing empathy and healthy relationships
- handling stress and setbacks positively
- effective communication and conflict resolution
- emotional intelligence in academics and careers
- balancing achievement with personal well-being

SECTION C LITERATURE (40 MARKS)

7. Read the given extract and answer the questions that follow: -

1x6=6

A. A suddenness, a startlement, at a branch end.
Then sleek as a lizard, and alert, and abrupt,
She enters the thickness, and a machine starts up
Of chitterings, and a tremor of wings, and trillings —

(The Laburnum Top)

I. Which poetic device is used in the expression "**sleek as a lizard**"?

- a. Simile b. Metaphor c. Oxymoron d. Personification

II. Why does the poet compare the bird to a **lizard** as it enters the tree?

III. What effect does the bird's arrival have on the laburnum tree?

IV. The expression "**a machine starts up**" suggests that the tree becomes

_____.

V. Which aspect of the bird's behaviour is highlighted through the phrase "**alert, and abrupt**"?

VI. How does this extract reinforce the idea that nature is interconnected?

OR

B. "In fact, radioactivity was one of the ways in which Howard Carter tried to separate the truth from the legend. He collected a resin sample from the mummy and had it analysed. Archaeological evidence, however, has never confirmed the belief that anyone connected with the excavation met an untimely death because of the so-called curse." *(Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues)*

I. What does Howard Carter's decision to analyse the resin sample suggest about his approach?

- a. He relied mainly on myths and rumours.
b. He preferred scientific investigation over superstition.
c. He wanted to increase the mystery surrounding the tomb.
d. He avoided examining historical evidence.

II. What conclusion does the passage draw about the so-called curse of Tutankhamun?

- a. It has been scientifically proven.
b. It was responsible for every death after the excavation.

- c. There is no archaeological evidence to support it.
- d. It remains an undisputed historical fact.

III. Why did Howard Carter analyse the resin sample taken from the mummy?

IV. Which central idea of the chapter is best reflected in this extract?

V. The phrase "separate the truth from the legend" highlights the importance of:

- a. preserving ancient myths
- b. accepting popular beliefs without question
- c. ignoring historical records
- d. relying on evidence and scientific enquiry

VI. What lesson does this extract convey about the importance of evidence while studying history?

8. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B) (4x1=4)

A. Mrs. Pearson: "I've been with you a long time and done everything for you. I've run your home, cooked your meals, washed your clothes and looked after you. And what do I get? Nothing except orders and complaints. Well, that's going to change." (*Mother's Day*)

I. What does Mrs. Pearson's tone in the extract primarily convey?

- a. Fear and hesitation
- b. Confidence and determination
- c. Humour and amusement
- d. Regret and disappointment

II. What does Mrs. Pearson realise about her role in the family?

- a. She has always been respected by everyone.
- b. She has failed to fulfil her responsibilities.
- c. Her efforts have been taken for granted.
- d. She no longer wishes to live with her family.

III. What change does Mrs. Pearson announce in the extract?

IV. Choose the correct option with reference to the two statements given below.

Statement 1: Mrs. Pearson decides to demand the respect she deserves from her family.

Statement 2: The extract marks a turning point in Mrs. Pearson's relationship with her family.

- a. Statement 1 is true but Statement 2 is false.
- b. Statement 1 is false but Statement 2 is true.
- c. Both Statements 1 and 2 can be inferred.
- d. Neither Statement 1 nor Statement 2 can be inferred.

OR

B. "One day back there in the vineyards of our village, I saw my cousin Mourad sitting on a beautiful white horse. I rubbed my eyes and looked again. It wasn't a dream. It couldn't be true." (*The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse*)

I. What does Aram's reaction in the extract primarily suggest?

- a. He was surprised because his family could never afford a horse.
- b. He was frightened of horses.
- c. He believed the horse belonged to his family.
- d. He wanted to avoid meeting Mourad.

II. Why does Aram initially think that what he sees is a dream?

- a. He had never seen Mourad before.
- b. The horse appeared injured.
- c. He was asleep in the vineyard.
- d. Owning such a horse was beyond his family's means.

III. What does this incident reveal about Aram's understanding of his family's financial condition?

IV. Which quality of Mourad is reflected in his decision to take the horse for riding despite knowing it did not belong to him?

9. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B) (1x6=6)

"At dawn, Mary found that her head had swollen alarmingly and there were deep cuts on her arm and leg. The children, however, showed remarkable courage. Sue had a big bump on her head, while Jonathan had minor injuries. They never complained and instead tried to cheer us up with their smiles and reassuring words." (*We're Not Afraid to Die... if We Can All Be Together*)

I. What does the behaviour of the children in the extract reveal?

- a. They were unaware of the seriousness of the situation.
- b. They displayed courage and emotional maturity during the crisis.
- c. They wanted to hide their injuries from their parents.
- d. They expected immediate rescue.

II. How did the children contribute to keeping the family's morale high during the storm?

III. The extract suggests that inner strength is often reflected through _____.

IV. Why does the narrator describe the injuries suffered by each family member?

V. Which quality of the children is most evident from their actions despite being injured?

VI. What does this extract suggest about the role of optimism during times of adversity?

OR

B. "Even before we left their village, my grandmother had been distressed that there was no teaching about God and the scriptures in the school. She did not believe in the things they taught at the English school and was unhappy that I was learning music. To her, music had lewd associations and was not meant for respectable people." (*The Portrait of a Lady*)

I. What can be inferred about the grandmother's outlook from the extract?

II. The grandmother disapproved of the English school mainly because _____.

III. What does the word "**distressed**" mean in the context of the extract?

IV. Why was the grandmother unhappy when the narrator started learning music?

V. Which literary device is used in the expression "**music had lewd associations**"?

- a. Irony b. Personification c. Symbolism d. Hyperbole

VI. If you were the narrator, how would you have respected your grandmother's beliefs while continuing your education? (*Answer in one sentence.*)

10. Answer any five of the following six questions in 40–50 words each. (5 × 2 = 10)

I. The grandmother never complained about the changing circumstances of her life. What does this reveal about her character? (*The Portrait of a Lady*)

II. The poet says, "*Its silence silences.*" Explain how silence becomes a powerful means of expressing grief in the poem. (*A Photograph*)

III. Why did modern archaeologists prefer a CT scan instead of disturbing Tutankhamun's mummy further? What does this suggest about present-day archaeological practices? (*Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues*)

IV. Why did the grandmother stop talking to the narrator after he joined the English school? How did this affect their relationship? (*The Portrait of a Lady*)

V. How does the poet use the contrasting images of silence and activity to emphasise the significance of the goldfinch in *The Laburnum Top*? (*The Laburnum Top*)

VI. Despite severe damage to the Wavewalker, the narrator refused to lose hope. What qualities helped him and his family survive the crisis? (*We're Not Afraid to Die... if We Can All Be Together*)

11. Answer any two of the following three questions in 40–50 words each. (2 × 2 = 4)

I. Why does the narrator decide not to take back her mother's belongings from Mrs. Dorling's house? What does this decision reveal about her emotional growth? *(The Address)*

II. Mourad believed that a horse had a natural right to enjoy freedom. How does this belief reflect his unique personality despite his questionable actions? *(The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse)*

III. How does Mrs. Pearson's behaviour at the tea table surprise each member of her family? What effect does it have on them? *(Mother's Day)*

12. Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words (1x5=5)

A. What do you understand by the statement, “Archaeology has changed substantially...” Discuss with reference to the chapter ‘Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues.’ What do you learn from modern technology? *(Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues)*

OR

B. Both chapters 'The Portrait of a Lady' and 'A Photograph' explore the theme of recollections of memories of their loved ones. With reference to these chapters, describe the commonality between the main Idea and characters.

13. Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words (1x5=5)

A. The play ‘Mother’s Day’ is a humorous and satirical depiction of the status of the woman in a family. Bring out briefly the elements of humour and satire. *(Mother’s Day)*

OR

B. Can stealing be justified for any reason? Discuss Aram and Mourad’s stealing of a horse in the light of this statement? *(Summer of a beautiful white Horse)*

*****ALL THE BEST*****