



B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

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

ENGLISH COMMUNICATIVE - Code No. 101

TERM 1 EXAMINATION (2026-27)

CLASS - X

SET A

Class: X

Date: 09.09.26

Admission no:

Time: 3hr

Max Marks: 80

Roll no:

General Instructions

Read the following instructions carefully and follow them:

- i. This question paper has 12 questions. All questions are compulsory.
- ii. This question paper contains four sections:
 - Section A: Reading Skills
 - Section B: Writing Skills
 - Section C: Grammar
 - Section D: Literature
- iii. Attempt all questions based on specific instructions for each part. Write the correct question number and part thereof on your answer sheet.
- iv. Separate instructions are given with each question/part, wherever necessary.
- v. Adhere to the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (22 marks)

1. Read the following passage carefully:

12

1 When we imagine a forest, we usually picture the trees reaching toward the sky. Scientists studying forest ecosystems, however, have discovered something remarkable hidden underground: a vast, interconnected web of fungal threads linking trees together, allowing them to share water, nutrients and even warning signals. Ecologists have nicknamed this network the 'wood wide web', and it is transforming how we understand forests altogether.

2 At the centre of this network are mycorrhizal fungi, thread-like organisms that wrap around or penetrate tree roots. In exchange for sugars produced by the tree through photosynthesis, the fungi extend the root system for kilometres, drawing water and minerals from soil the roots alone could never reach. 'A single teaspoon of healthy forest soil can contain several kilometres of fungal thread,' notes forest ecologist Elena Kovac, who has spent over a decade mapping these underground connections in temperate woodlands. Through this fungal web, a young sapling struggling in the shade of older trees can receive carbon and nutrients from its neighbours, effectively being kept alive by the very trees competing with it for sunlight.

3 Perhaps the most surprising discovery is that trees appear to use this network to communicate. When a tree is attacked by insects, it can release chemical signals through the fungal threads that prompt neighbouring trees to begin producing defensive compounds before the pests arrive. Some researchers have also observed that

large, old trees, sometimes called 'mother trees', act as hubs within the network, funnelling extra resources to younger or weaker trees nearby, including their own offspring, which they somehow appear to recognise.

4 This discovery has practical implications for how forests are managed. Logging practices that remove large, mature trees may unintentionally sever the hubs that keep entire networks functioning, leaving young trees isolated and more vulnerable to drought or disease. Foresters in several countries have begun leaving 'mother trees' standing during harvests, and some reforestation projects now deliberately preserve patches of old growth to anchor the fungal network for newly planted saplings. Without such measures, replanted forests can take decades longer to establish the below-ground connections that mature ecosystems rely on.

5 Not every scientist agrees on how far this 'communication' extends, and some caution against over-interpreting tree behaviour as intentional. Still, the evidence for cooperation and resource-sharing underground is difficult to dismiss. 'We used to think of a forest as a collection of individual trees competing for the same resources,' says Kovac. 'Now we understand it more as a single, cooperating superorganism, held together by threads too thin for the eye to see.' As deforestation continues to threaten woodlands worldwide, this hidden network is a reminder that protecting a forest means protecting more than what is visible above the ground.

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

- I.** Why do ecologists call the underground fungal system the 'wood wide web'? (Paragraph 1) **1**
- a) Because it connects trees directly to the internet.
 - b) Because it links trees together into an interconnected network, much like the internet connects computers.
 - c) Because it was discovered using web-based mapping software.
 - d) Because it only exists in web-shaped patterns underground.
- II.** Complete the following with the correct option from those given in the brackets.
In the line 'trees appear to use this network to communicate', the word 'appear' suggests that ____ **1**
(the trees definitely communicate / scientists are completely certain of this behaviour / this is an observed possibility rather than a proven certainty). (Paragraph 3)
- III.** Give two reasons why a young sapling growing in the shade of older trees might still survive with the help of the fungal network. Answer in 30-40 words. (Paragraph 2) **2**
- IV.** What does the phrase 'mother trees' most likely emphasise about large, old trees in the forest? **1**
(Paragraph 3)
- a) They are the oldest trees and therefore the most valuable for timber.
 - b) They compete more aggressively than younger trees for resources.
 - c) They no longer need sunlight to survive.
 - d) They nurture and support younger or related trees within the network.
- V.** Complete the following with the appropriate option. **1**
The phrase 'sever the hubs' brings up the imagery of _____. (Paragraph 4)
- a) a bridge slowly weakening over time.
 - b) connections in the network being abruptly and forcefully broken.
 - c) a lifeline being gently loosened.
 - d) a network expanding to include new members.
- VI.** What would be the most suitable title for paragraph 4? **1**
- a) The Economics of Modern Logging
 - b) Why Mother Trees Should Never Be Cut Down
 - c) How Forest Management Can Protect Underground Networks
 - d) The Global Decline of Forests

- VII.** Which phrase from paragraph 2 bears evidence to the fact that fungi extend a tree's access to resources beyond what its own roots could reach? 1
- VIII.** Fill in the blank by choosing the appropriate option from those given in the brackets.
Paragraph 5 includes a ____ (fact / caution / celebration) regarding how far tree behaviour should be interpreted as intentional communication. 2
- IX.** Why does the writer describe the forest as 'a single, cooperating superorganism'? Answer in 30-40 words. (Paragraph 5) 2

2. Read the following passage carefully: 10

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE	5 - 6 Oct	WORKSHOP	18 - 19 Oct
RIVERSIDE RESTORATION DRIVE - 2025		URBAN FARMING WORKSHOP - 2025	
The Riverside Restoration drive is a community-led initiative held every October along the banks of the Neelum river. Volunteers gather in groups of ten to clear plastic waste, plant native reeds, and test water quality using simple kits provided by local environmental groups. Over 3,000 volunteers participated last year, removing nearly 12 tonnes of waste in a single weekend. Participants are encouraged to bring gloves, reusable water bottles and comfortable footwear.		Held annually at the Greenfield Community Centre, this two-day workshop teaches residents how to grow vegetables and herbs in small urban spaces using containers, vertical planters and compost bins made from kitchen waste. Now in its fourth year, the workshop has helped over 600 families start their own balcony or terrace gardens. Local horticulturists lead hands-on sessions, and each participant takes home a starter kit of seeds and compost.	

Answer the following questions, based on your reading of the above information.

- I.** Why might the tag 'Reviving Our Waterways' be more suitable for the Riverside Restoration drive than 'A Weekend of Fun by the River'? 2
- II.** Complete the following with the correct option. 1
The Riverside Restoration drive is held ____.
- a) every month
 - b) once in two years
 - c) annually
 - d) twice a year
- III.** State which of the following is True. 1
- a) The Urban Farming Workshop is being held for the first time this year.
 - b) The Urban Farming Workshop has been running for four years.
 - c) The Urban Farming Workshop lasts a single day.
- IV.** What does the writer wish to convey by stating that the workshop 'has helped over 600 families start their own balcony or terrace gardens'? 1
- V.** What might be the most likely reason volunteers are asked to bring gloves and reusable water bottles to the clean-up drive? 1
- a) To promote a particular clothing brand.
 - b) To ensure safety and encourage sustainable practices during the event.
 - c) To make the event look more organised.
 - d) Because the organisers do not provide any equipment.
- VI.** Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option from those given in the brackets. 1

The workshop provides participants with a starter kit of seeds and compost most likely to ____ (sell surplus produce commercially / encourage them to continue gardening independently after the workshop ends).

VII. If the clean-up drive focuses on restoring the river, what does the urban farming workshop most likely focus on? **1**

- a) Promoting sustainable food production at home.
- b) Encouraging tourism in the city.
- c) Reducing traffic congestion.
- d) Protecting endangered wildlife.

VIII. What might be the most likely reason the clean-up drive spans two days while volunteers are grouped into teams of ten? **2**

SECTION B: WRITING SKILLS (22 marks)

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

3. Write an application, in not more than 50 words, requesting permission to organise an inter-house science quiz in the school auditorium next week. You are Aarav Malhotra, Class X-B, Secretary, Science Club. **3**

4. Write a factual description of a public park near your home in not more than 100 words, highlighting its key features and facilities. **4**

5. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in 120 words **7**

A. Every year, tonnes of electronic waste from old phones, chargers and batteries end up in landfills instead of being recycled safely, releasing toxic substances into the soil and water. Most households remain unaware of authorised e-waste collection centres in their city.

As Riya Sharma, 45 Lake View Colony, Bhopal, write a letter to the editor of a national daily highlighting the issue of growing e-waste, its effects on health and environment, and suggesting practical measures to manage it responsibly.

Use your own ideas along with those from MCB Unit 4: Environment, to write this letter.

OR

B. Several Indian cities are facing acute water scarcity during the summer months, with residents depending on tankers for daily needs while old pipelines and unchecked groundwater extraction worsen the crisis.

As Kabir Nath of 12, Civil Lines, Kanpur, write a letter to the editor of a national daily highlighting the causes of urban water scarcity and suggesting measures citizens and authorities can take to conserve water.

6. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in 150 words **8**

A. Imagine you are Sanya R of class X. Write an article for your school magazine on the topic 'Mental Well-being in the Age of Screens', discussing how excessive screen time affects the mental health of teenagers and suggesting healthy habits to maintain balance.

OR

B. You are Devansh K, class X. Write an article on the topic 'Artificial Intelligence in Everyday Life: Convenience or Over-dependence?', discussing the benefits AI brings to daily tasks and the risks of relying on it too heavily. Conclude with your opinion on how young people should use such technology responsibly.

SECTION C: GRAMMAR (10 marks)

7. Fill in the blanks (i) - (iii) with the appropriate option from those given in the brackets. 3x1=3

Community libraries across the country are helping people (i) _____ (discover / discovering / discovered) the joy of reading again. Many readers say that (ii) _____ (a / an / the) local library nearest to their home has become a second home. Today, more than sixty new libraries (iii) _____ (has opened / have opened / opens) in small towns over the past two years.

8. In the following paragraph, one word has been omitted in each line. In your answer sheet, remember to write the missing word along with the word that comes before and the word that comes after it, as shown in the example. (4×1=4)

S.No.	Text	Word Before	Omission	Word After
e.g.	The children were waiting for the school bus.	waiting	for	the
i	Community gardens are becoming increasingly popular many Indian cities.			
ii	Volunteers spend weekend mornings planting vegetables herbs together.			
iii	Every plot now yields rich harvest for the neighbourhood.			
iv	Local schools encourage students participate in gardening activities.			

9. The following passage has not been edited. There is one error in each line. Write the incorrect word and the correction against the correct question number in your answer sheet. Remember to underline the correction. One has been done as an example. (3 × 1 = 3)

Q.No.	Line as Printed	Error	Correction
(a)	Teachers has noticed that students enjoy these sessions.	has	have
(b)	Students who practise yoga regularly shows better concentration.		
(c)	Doctors believe this exercises reduce stress effectively.		
(d)	Yoga helps children develop healthy habits since an early age.		

SECTION D: LITERATURE TEXTBOOK (26 marks)

10. Read the given extract and answer the questions briefly, for any two extracts, of the three given. 2x4=8

A. "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look upon my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.
(Ozymandias)

- I. What does the phrase 'king of kings' reveal about Ozymandias' perception of himself? 1
- II. Who is being addressed in the line 'Look upon my works, ye Mighty, and despair!' and what does it reveal about Ozymandias' intentions? 1
- III. How does the imagery of 'boundless and bare' and 'lone and level sands' undercut Ozymandias' boast? 1
- IV. What larger message about human ambition does the phrase 'Nothing beside remains' convey? 1

B. "Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
(*Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments*)

- I. What is the poet comparing 'this powerful rhyme' to in these lines? 1
- II. Why does the poet believe marble monuments will not 'outlive' his poem? 1
- III. What does the phrase 'unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time' suggest about the fate of physical monuments? 1
- IV. What does this extract suggest about the power the poet believes poetry holds over time? 1

C. MRS. JORDAN: What bureau was that, Father?
ABEL: Why, my bureau — the one I bought —
MRS. JORDAN: (pointing to the bureau) Was it that one, Father?
ABEL: Ah, that's it. What's it doing here? Eh?
(A pause. The clock on the mantelpiece strikes six. Everyone looks at it.)
Drat me if that isn't my clock too! What the devil's been going on in this house?
MRS. JORDAN: I'll tell you what's been going on in this house, Father. Nothing short of robbery.
(*The Dear Departed*)

- I. What does Abel's reaction on finding his bureau and clock suggest about his state of mind at this point? 1
- II. Why does Mrs Jordan use the word 'robbery' to describe the situation? 1
- III. What does the stage direction '(A pause. The clock...strikes six. Everyone looks at it.)' add to the dramatic effect of the scene? 1
- IV. What does this extract reveal about the family's underlying attitude toward Abel's belongings? 1

11. Answer any five of the following six questions in about 30-40 words each. 5x2=10

- I. How does AJ Cronin use the encounter with Nicola and Jacopo in 'Two Gentlemen of Verona' to comment on innocence and hidden maturity?
- II. Explain briefly how villagers' behaviour reveals the theme of flattery and self-interest in 'Mrs Packletide's Tiger'.
- III. How does the twist at the end of 'The Letter' change the reader's understanding of the postmaster's earlier actions?
- IV. What role does irony play in the resolution of 'A Shady Plot'?
- V. How does Patol Babu's final realisation in 'Patol Babu, Film Star' reflect the story's theme of dignity in one's work?

VI. How does the story 'Virtually True' use its futuristic setting to comment on the dangers of manipulated information?

12. Answer any one of the following two questions in about 150 words.

1x8=8

I Both 'Ozymandias' and 'The Frog and the Nightingale' explore how pride and self-importance eventually lead to downfall. Compare how the two poems use their central characters to convey this theme.

OR

II Compare how humour is used as a narrative device in 'A Shady Plot' and 'Patol Babu, Film Star' to comment on human vanity and self-importance.

The End of the Question Paper