



B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

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

ENGLISH COMMUNICATIVE

SET - 2

Class: IX

Date: 23.02.26

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 (20 marks)

1. Read the following passage carefully:

10

THE POWER OF ONE SEED

In the heart of Rajasthan's arid landscape, where sand stretches endlessly under a merciless sun, Sarita Devi transformed a barren patch of land into a thriving forest. What began as a single neem tree planted during a family picnic twenty years ago has now become the "Green Hope Forest"—a 10-acre oasis that cools the village, attracts birds, and provides shade for weary travelers. Sarita, a homemaker with no formal training in forestry, simply couldn't bear seeing children walk kilometers under the blazing sun to fetch water.

Her journey started small. Neighbors laughed when she carried saplings on her bicycle, watering them with whatever rainwater she could collect. "Trees won't survive here," they said. But Sarita persisted, learning from trial and error. She discovered which plants could thrive in sandy soil, how to create natural windbreaks using thorny bushes, and the importance of mixed planting to prevent pests. Slowly, her single tree became ten, then a hundred.

Today, the forest tells its own success story. Underground water tables have risen by three feet, making hand pumps work again after years of failure. Monsoon rains linger longer in the area, reducing flood risks downstream. Schoolchildren now study under tree canopies instead of cramped classrooms, and the forest provides free medicinal herbs that save families hundreds of rupees monthly. Most remarkably, the forest has created jobs—women collect and sell honey, men serve as guides for eco-tourists, and youth learn sustainable farming techniques.

Sarita's work challenges the belief that environmental restoration requires experts or government funding. She used recycled tires for water conservation, old cloth bags for mulch, and community labor instead of machinery. Her philosophy is simple: "One seed, one life. Plant it, nurture it, watch it multiply." Local authorities now recognize her as a "Green Ambassador," but Sarita remains a village woman in a faded sari, tending her trees each morning.

The forest stands as living proof that individual action can reverse ecological damage. Sarita didn't wait for permission or resources; she started where she stood with what she had. In a world obsessed with large-scale solutions, her story reminds us that true change often begins with one person's quiet determination and a single seed in parched soil. When communities unite around shared purpose, even deserts can bloom.

A. Answer the following questions based on the passage given.

- i. What inspired Sarita Devi to start planting trees initially?
 - a) A government training program in forestry
 - b) Seeing children walk long distances under harsh sun to fetch water
 - c) Pressure from environmental NGOs
 - d) Desire to create a tourist attraction
- ii. How did neighbors initially react to Sarita's tree-planting efforts?
 - a) They immediately joined her enthusiastically
 - b) They organized community planting drives
 - c) They provided financial support for saplings
 - d) They laughed and doubted trees could survive in arid conditions
- iii. Which environmental benefit resulted directly from the forest's growth?
 - a) Increased tourist revenue for the village
 - b) Underground water tables rose by three feet
 - c) Construction of new school buildings
 - d) Installation of solar panels
- iv. What makes Sarita's approach to afforestation particularly remarkable?
 - a) She used expensive imported equipment
 - b) She received international funding
 - c) She succeeded using local, recycled materials and community effort
 - d) She hired professional foresters
- v. What core message does Sarita's story convey about environmental action?
 - a) Only governments can solve ecological problems
 - b) Individual determination with limited resources can create lasting change
 - c) Large-scale funding is essential for success
 - d) Expert training is mandatory for environmental work

B. Answer the following questions in one sentence each (approximately 15-20 words):

- i. What practical techniques did Sarita learn through trial and error?
- ii. How has the forest economically benefited the local community?
- iii. Why does Sarita reject the need for experts or government funding?
- iv. What does Sarita's philosophy "One seed, one life" signify?
- v. How does the forest improve children's education environment?

THE NEIGHBORHOOD MEAL TRAIN

When Mrs. Lakshmi fractured her hip last monsoon, her family worried about meals during her recovery. Little did they know this accident would birth the "Neighbourhood Meal Train"—a community network that has fed over 2,000 families during illness, childbirth, or loss for the past five years. What started as neighbours dropping off rice khichdi and dal has evolved into an organized system of care that strengthens community bonds like never before.

Ravi, Lakshmi's son, created a simple WhatsApp group with 25 neighbours. Each person volunteered to cook one extra portion during their weekly meal prep and deliver it hot to families in need. No money changed hands; only steel tiffins and handwritten notes of encouragement. The system proved so effective that during COVID lockdowns, the group expanded to 150 members, delivering 50 meals daily to frontline workers and quarantine households.

The Meal Train's genius lies in its simplicity and sustainability. Volunteers cook what their families eat—no special menus, no professional chefs. A working mother might send idli-sambhar one day, while a retired uncle contributes his famous vegetable biryani the next. Children decorate tiffin covers with cheerful messages, turning food delivery into moments of joy. Recipients return clean tiffins with thank-you notes, creating a cycle of gratitude.

Beyond nutrition, the initiative heals emotional wounds. New mothers feel less isolated knowing hot meals arrive daily. Elderly living alone receive not just food but conversation during delivery. During festivals, the group coordinates special sweets distribution, ensuring no one celebrates alone. Remarkably, the system self-regulates—families "graduate" from the train once recovered, making space for others in need.

Local authorities tried replicating the model with government funding, but bureaucratic delays and menu standardization killed the warmth. The Meal Train thrives because it's neighbor-to-neighbor, imperfect but genuine. Tiffins occasionally arrive late or slightly overcooked, but they carry love that no restaurant can replicate.

Mrs. Lakshmi, now recovered, coordinates the schedule from her balcony chair. "Food connects hearts," she says. "When we share what we eat, we share our lives." In an era of food delivery apps and nuclear families, the Meal Train proves that steel tiffins and willing hands can rebuild community in ways technology never could. One broken hip led to thousands of mended hearts.

A. Answer the following questions based on the passage given.

- i. What triggered the creation of the Neighborhood Meal Train?
 - a) Mrs. Lakshmi's hip fracture and meal concerns during recovery
 - b) A government welfare program
 - c) A community festival celebration
 - d) Competition with food delivery services
- ii. How did the Meal Train sustain itself during COVID lockdowns?
 - a) Government provided free ingredients
 - b) Group expanded to 150 members delivering 50 meals daily
 - c) Partnered with local restaurants

- d) Received corporate sponsorships
- iii. What makes the Meal Train emotionally significant beyond nutrition?
- a) Professional chefs prepare gourmet meals
 - b) Standardized menu ensures variety
 - c) Children decorate tiffins; recipients send thank-you notes
 - d) Delivery boys receive tips
- iv. Why did government attempts to replicate the model fail?
- a) Lack of community participation
 - b) Bureaucratic delays and loss of personal warmth
 - c) Insufficient funding allocation
 - d) Poor menu planning
- v. What does Mrs. Lakshmi mean by "Food connects hearts"?
- a) Cooking requires emotional investment
 - b) Sharing home-cooked meals builds genuine community bonds
 - c) Festival foods have special significance
 - d) Professional catering strengthens relationships

B. Answer the following questions in one sentence each (approximately 15-20 words):

- i. How does the Meal Train operate without financial transactions?
- ii. Who coordinates the meal schedule currently?
- iii. How do children contribute to the Meal Train?
- iv. What happens when families recover from their crisis?
- v. Why does the Meal Train succeed where apps fail?

SECTION B WRITING SKILLS (24 marks)

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

3. You are Aryan Mehta, Class X-A, Coordinator of the school's "Skill India Youth Hub". Your school is organizing a "Future Skills Carnival" featuring robotics workshops, coding hackathons, and AI art creation sessions for students from nearby schools to spark interest in emerging technologies. You need permission to use the computer labs, auditorium, and multipurpose hall for four days of activities.

Write a formal application to the Principal (not more than 50 words) requesting permission to use these school facilities, mentioning the dates (22nd-25th March), purpose, and expected participants (150 students from 6 schools).

4M

4. Your neighbourhood launched "Rainwater Warriors" – a community initiative where residents collectively harvest rainwater using rooftop systems, recharge groundwater, and maintain public recharge pits to combat water scarcity during summer months.

Write a factual description (not more than 100 words) of this rainwater harvesting initiative, explaining:

Its objectives and target beneficiaries (water-stressed households, apartment complexes, schools)

The methods used (rooftop collection, filtration systems, community recharge pits)

The outcomes achieved so far (30 households water-independent, groundwater levels up 4 feet, 25% reduced water bills) **5M**

5. Attempt any ONE of the following in about 120 words: 7M

A. Street lighting in many residential areas remains inadequate, creating safety hazards for women and children walking after dark, limiting evening activities, and increasing crime rates. As Saumya Iyer, 16, Sunshine Apartments, Pune, write a letter to the editor of Indian Express (not more than 120 words), addressing:

Safety risks due to poor street lighting and limited evening mobility

Impact on women's independence, children's playtime, and community safety

Importance of well-lit public spaces as basic urban infrastructure

Recommendations for solar streetlights, community monitoring committees, and municipal accountability

OR

B. Urban heat islands are making cities unlivable during summers, with concrete surfaces absorbing heat and raising temperatures by 4-6°C compared to green suburbs. As Rohit Kapoor, 16, Skyline Colony, Mumbai, write a letter to the editor of Times of India (not more than 120 words), discussing:

Rising urban temperatures due to concretisation and loss of green cover

Health risks (heat strokes, dehydration, power overloads during peak summer)

Need for cool roofs, urban forestry, and heat-reflective pavements

Urgent call for "Green City Master Plans" with mandatory tree cover ratios

6. Attempt any ONE of the following in about 150 words: 8M

A. You are Nisha Verma, Class X. Your school adopted three government schools in nearby villages, providing teacher training, library books, and digital smartboards through CSR partnerships. Write an article for your school magazine titled "Adopted for Excellence: Transforming Rural Education Through School Partnerships" (not more than 150 words), exploring:

Learning gaps between urban opportunity schools and rural under-resourced schools

How teacher training and resource sharing elevates teaching quality

Real transformation stories (improved board exam results, confident rural students)

Sustainability through alumni mentorship and peer learning programs

Sustainable Development Goal alignment (quality education for all)

OR

B. You are Kabir Khan, Class X. Your community created "Skill-Sharing Saturdays" where professionals (doctors, electricians, chefs, digital marketers) teach practical life skills to teenagers and unemployed youth through free weekend workshops. Write an article for your local newspaper titled "Skill-Sharing Saturdays: Building Tomorrow's Workforce Today" (not more than 150 words), discussing:

Academic education vs practical life skills gap in modern youth

Diverse skills offered and their immediate employability value

Social impact (youth employment, women re-entering workforce, elder engagement)

Breaking "blue-collar stigma" and promoting dignified livelihoods

Model for nationwide community skill ecosystems (SDG decent work and growth)

SECTION C GRAMMAR (10 marks)

7. Fill in the blanks (i) – (iii) with the appropriate option from those in brackets. (3×1=3 marks)

Community running clubs contribute significantly to public health and help participants achieve (i) _____ (fit/fitness/fitter) lifestyles. Regular group running not only (ii) _____ (improves/improved/improving) cardiovascular endurance but also (iii) _____ (builds/build/building) strong social support networks among members.

8. The following paragraph has not been edited. There is one error in each line. Write the error and its correction in the space provided. (1 × 4 = 4 marks)

	Error	Correction
Is money the more important	(a) _____	_____
thing of life ? Money is certainly	(b) _____	_____
something what is often discussed	(c) _____	_____
in today's world. Hardly the day	(d) _____	_____
goes without a discussion on this topic.		

9. Do as directed

I. Rearrange the following jumbled words/phrases in the given dialogue to create a meaningful sentence. (1 mark)

NEHA: Ma'am, why do we celebrate this festival?

TEACHER: (i) symbolises / harvest season / and gratitude / our festival / towards nature / brings communities together / and joyfully celebrates.

II. Report the conversation given below by filling in the blanks to complete the following paragraph. (2 marks)

Kavya: Look Ankit! The solar study room lights are working perfectly tonight!

Ankit: Amazing! Children can study till 9 PM without power cuts now!

Kavya told Ankit (i) _____. Ankit exclaimed (ii) _____ without power cuts now. Then, Kavya added that the battery backup would last through monsoon blackouts.

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. “A piece about it in the Mail, with a photograph of me. And you know Harold reads his Mail regularly. And then, don’t you see, the fat would be in the fire. “That’s what Percy pointed out to me, and I seen what he meant, so I hopped it.”

“You see, Jane—” Mr. Bramble was beginning, when there was a knock at the door, and a little, ferret-faced man in a woollen sweater and cycling knickerbockers entered, removing as he did so a somewhat battered bowler hat. “

Beg pardon, Mrs. Bramble,” he said, ” coming in like this. Found the front door ajar, so came in, to ask if you’d happened to have seen-“

“I thought so!” he said, and shot through the air towards Percy.

“Jerry !” said Bill.

“Be reasonable,” said the Major, diving underneath the table and coming up the other side like a performing seal.

i.. Why did Mr. Bramble believe that reading about his fight in the “Mail” would upset Harold?

- A. Harold was embarrassed by his father’s boxing career.
- B. Harold would disapprove of a profession rooted in violence and fighting.
- C. Harold was jealous of his father’s fame.
- D. Harold believed his father was a bad influence.

ii. What is the Major’s response as he sees Jerry?

- A. He welcomes Jerry and invites him to join the conversation.
- B. He remains calm and tries to de-escalate the situation.
- C. He panics and hides under the table.
- D. He confronts Jerry and demands an explanation.

iii. What do you understand by the phrase “fat would be in the fire”

- A. To be critical
- B. Very expensive
- C. There would be trouble
- D. Get out of control

iv. Which of the following is true about Jerry Fisher’s appearance?

- i.He is a little, ferret-faced man
- ii.He wore a woollen sweater and cycling knickerbockers .
- iii.He wore a bowler hat.

- A. i,ii and iii

- B. Only i and ii
- C. Only ii and iii
- D. Only i and iii

B. *“The voice of thunder declares my arrival;*

The rainbow announces my departure.

I am like earthly life, which begins at

The feet of the mad elements and ends

Under the upraised wings of death.

I emerge from the heard of the sea

Soar with the breeze. When I see a field in

Need, I descend and embrace the flowers and

The trees in a million little ways.”

1. What is the purpose of the voice of thunder in the poem?
2. What does the rainbow symbolize in this context?
3. How does the image of the rain “soaring with the breeze” contribute to the overall theme of the poem?
4. The rain “descends and embraces the flowers and the trees in a million little ways.” What literary device is used here?

C. “Bishop: Now tell me about the prison ship, about Hell.

Convict: I was a man once. I’m a beast now, and they made me what I am. They chained me up like a wild animal, they lashed me like a hound. I fed on filth, I was covered, with vermin, I slept on boards, and I complained. Then they lashed me again. For ten years, ten years. Oh God! They took away my name, they took away my soul, and they gave me a devil in its place. But one day they were careless, one day they forgot to chain up their wild beast, and he escaped. He was free. That was six weeks ago. I was free, free to starve.

Bishop: To starve ?

Convict: Yes, to starve.”

1. What is the main theme explored in the conversation between the Bishop and the Convict?
2. What specific detail highlights the dehumanization experienced by the Convict?
3. When the Convict says “they gave me a devil in its place,” what does he likely mean?
4. How does the Convict describe his experience on the prison ship?

11. Answer the following six questions in about 30–40 words each. (2 × 6 = 12 marks)

- i. How had the narrator planned to surprise her grandmother? How was she herself surprised?
- ii. What did the men who came to see Chuck in the hospital say to him?
- iii. How did Private Quelch respond to mistakes made by his colleagues in the army training camp in the lesson ‘The Man Who Knew Much’?

- iv. What is the reason behind Pescud's decision to get off the train at Coketown?
- v. How does the poet convey a sense of timelessness in the line "Somewhere ages and ages hence," and what does it suggest about the lasting impact of the speaker's choice?
- vi. "But up-and-down brushing and pokin' and fussin". What do you understand by the line?

12. Answer any one of the following two questions in about 150 words. (1 × 6 = 6 marks)

"The Road Not Taken," "The Brook," and "Song of the Rain" all use journeys to share deep life lessons. How does the poet in "The Road Not Taken" show choices as life's turning points, while "The Brook" teaches steady persistence and "Song of the Rain" celebrates giving back to nature? Compare these journeys and what they suggest about facing life's challenges.

OR

Loyalty and hidden truths bring surprising twists in "A Dog Named Duke," "Keeping It From Harold," and "The Bishop's Candlesticks." How does Duke's devotion help his injured owner recover, like how Harold's parents hide boxing to protect him, and the Bishop's kindness transforms the Convict? Compare the characters' secret efforts and how loyalty leads to positive change in each story.

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