



B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

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

PRE-BOARD 1 - 2025-26

ENGLISH

Class: X
Date: 07.11.25
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)

1. Read the following passage carefully:

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Will AI Save Or Harm Us? 3 Ethical Challenges For Businesses In 2025

The top challenges facing businesses in 2025 revolve around whether AI will be, on balance, helpful or hurtful. Most news reports about AI focus on technological issues, such as the nature of AI vulnerabilities. However, unless AI is used as a force for good, it does not matter how technologically sophisticated AI becomes. The harms will overpower the advances. The ethical implications of AI are just as worthy of investigation as the digital nuts and bolts.

Here are three ethical challenges that AI raises for businesses around the world, along with ways businesses can meet these challenges.

1. Why AI Safety Should Be Your Top Concern

The most fundamental ethical principle of all is "Do No Harm." It applies not just to physicians and other health care workers but to leaders in the AI space and everybody else.

At the AI Safety Summit in November 2023, Dario Amodei, CEO of Anthropic, addressed this issue. "We need both a way to frequently monitor these emerging risks, and a protocol for responding appropriately when they occur," he said. Although the summit took place in 2023, Amodei's insights remain critical for 2025.

Examples of some of the harms that AI can cause include: unfair discrimination, in which AI models perpetuate unfair practices in hiring and talent retention; reputational damage through the use of deep fakes, in which videos of real human beings are digitally manipulated to say and do things they never said or did; dissemination of misinformation, which can happen when AI states that something is true when it isn't, and someone posts that false or misleading information on social media.

Anthropic meets this challenge by simulating adversarial attacks to identify weaknesses like biased outputs or harmful behaviors. This simulation ("red teaming") helps Anthropic ensure that its AI system is safe, reliable, and resilient before the company uses it.

2. If You Don't Manage Your AI Systems, Someone Else Will

"If you don't manage your AI systems, someone else will." Elizabeth Kelly, director of the U.S. Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute, notes that in areas like cybersecurity, it can be easy to bypass AI security measures. These workarounds are known as "jailbreaks."

IBM's Precision Regulation Policy addresses three components of AI ethics: accountability, transparency, and fairness. On a broader level, the European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act), which went into effect on August 1, 2024, bans AI with unacceptable risks, like "social scoring," in which individuals are given scores based on their behavior and actions. Such uses of AI can make it difficult for people to gain access to financial services, employment, travel, education, housing, and public benefits.

3. What Does AI Mean for the Future of Work?

Letting loyal, hardworking employees go causes harm, even if there are financial benefits for the companies that do this. "The IMF said that about 40 percent of global jobs could be affected," noted Andrew Yang. "That's hundreds of millions of workers around the world."

AT&T has prepared for this challenge by creating a \$1 billion internal initiative called Future Ready. The goal was to prepare over 100,000 employees for roles that were being transformed or replaced by technology that eventually included AI.

In 2025, businesses will have to answer the crucial question, "How can we use AI as a force for good and prevent abuse?" If your organization takes this question seriously, you will go a long way toward ensuring that your own AI systems don't become humanity's worst nightmare.

(Adapted from Forbes, December 11, 2024 – projected for 2025 relevance)

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

I. Why does the passage emphasize that "ethical implications of AI are just as worthy of investigation" as technical aspects? (Paragraph 1) (1 mark)

- a) Technical advances alone guarantee ethical outcomes.
- b) Harms from misuse could overshadow technological benefits.
- c) Ethics are secondary to innovation speed.
- d) Businesses prioritize profits over principles.

II. Complete the following with the correct option from those given in the brackets.

The phrase "Do No Harm" in the line "The most fundamental ethical principle... is "Do No Harm"" evokes ____ (medical oath / corporate slogan / legal mandate / philosophical ideal). (Paragraph 2) (1 mark)

III. Give two examples of AI-induced harms mentioned in the passage. Answer in 30-40 words. (Paragraph 2) (2 marks)

IV. What does Dario Amodei mean by "a protocol for responding appropriately when they occur"? (Paragraph 2) (1 mark)

Select the correct option to complete the answer.

It refers to ____.

- a) Ignoring minor risks for efficiency.
- b) Structured measures to address emerging AI dangers.
- c) Delaying implementation until risks vanish.
- d) Relying solely on government regulations.

V. Complete the following with the appropriate option. (1 mark)

The phrase "jailbreaks" brings up the imagery of _____. (Paragraph 3)

- a) Secure fortifications against cyber threats.
- b) Escapes from controlled AI constraints.
- c) Legal breaches in data privacy.
- d) Innovations in system upgrades.

VI. What would be the most suitable title for paragraph 4? (1 mark)

- a) AI's Disruptive Impact on Employment
- b) Global Job Losses from Automation
- c) Corporate Strategies for Workforce Adaptation
- d) Ethical Dilemmas in Hiring Practices

VII. Which phrase from paragraph 3 bears evidence to the regulatory response to AI risks? (1 mark)

VIII. Fill in the blank by choosing the appropriate option from those given in the brackets.

Paragraph 4 includes a _____ (statistic / anecdote / critique) from Andrew Yang. (2 marks)

IX. Why does AT&T's "Future Ready" initiative exemplify ethical AI integration? Answer in 30-40 words. (Paragraph 4)(2 marks)

2. Read the following.

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PUSHKAR CAMEL FAIR	HORNBILL FESTIVAL
November 1–9	December 1–10
Pushkar, Rajasthan	Kisama Heritage Village, Nagaland
The Pushkar Camel Fair is one of India's most iconic cultural events, blending tradition, trade, and festivity in Rajasthan's desert landscape. Held annually in the sacred town of Pushkar, it attracts traders and tourists worldwide, showcasing Rajasthani heritage through camel races, beauty contests for decorated camels, folk dances, and artisanal stalls. Coinciding with the full moon, it gains spiritual significance near Pushkar Lake, with activities like hot air balloon rides and camel safaris offering immersive desert experiences.	The Hornbill Festival, the "Festival of Festivals," celebrates Nagaland's 17 major tribes over 10 days at Kisama Heritage Village near Kohima. It features traditional morungs (tribal huts) as interactive museums, with cultural performances including war dances, folk music, and Naga wrestling. Handicrafts like handwoven shawls and bamboo products are displayed alongside tribal cuisine such as smoked pork and rice beers. The Kohima Night Carnival adds modern flair with rock contests and food stalls, bridging tradition and contemporary life.

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

I. Why is the tag 'A Trading Spectacle' suitable for the Pushkar Camel Fair instead of 'Spiritual Retreat'? (2 marks)

II. Complete the following with the correct option.

The Hornbill Festival is held _____.

- a) quarterly b) biennially c) annually d) monthly
- (1 mark)

III. State which of the following is True. (1 mark)

- a) Pushkar Lake is central to the Hornbill Festival's rituals.
- b) Morungs at Hornbill serve as living museums of tribal culture.

c) Camel safaris are a highlight of the Hornbill Festival.

IV. What does the writer wish to convey by stating that the Hornbill Festival bridges "tradition and contemporary life"? (1 mark)

V. What might be the most likely reason for the decorated camels at the Pushkar Fair? (1 mark)

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| a) To perform religious ceremonies. | b) To compete in beauty contests and attract traders. |
| c) To symbolize desert ecology. | d) To educate on animal rights. |

VI. Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option from those given in the brackets. (1 mark)

The Kohima Night Carnival is most likely an attraction at the Hornbill Festival because it provides a platform for ____ (tribal elders and performers / youth and modern artists) to blend cultures.

VII. If the Pushkar Fair highlights trade as its primary focus, what does the Hornbill Festival most likely focus on? (1 mark)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Economic livestock exchange | b) Preservation of tribal diversity |
| c) Desert adventure tourism | d) Religious pilgrimages |

VIII. What might be the most likely reason why the Hornbill Festival spans ten days while the Pushkar Fair lasts nine? (2 marks)

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 host a panel discussion on renewable energy innovations in the school multipurpose hall. You are Rohan Verma, Class X-E, Science Society Captain. 3M

4. Write a factual description of a community-led mangrove restoration project near your coastal area, in not more than 100 words, outlining its objectives, methods, and ecological outcomes. 4M

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

A. Coastal erosion, accelerated by climate change and unchecked development, endangers livelihoods and biodiversity in vulnerable regions.

As Ananya Joshi, 14, Sea Breeze Colony, Kochi, write a letter to the editor of a national daily, delineating the threats and recommending coastal zoning reforms and afforestation drives.

OR

B. The overuse of chemical fertilizers in agriculture is contaminating groundwater and diminishing soil fertility.

As Devansh Reddy of 72, Farm Lane, Punjab, write a letter to the editor of a leading newspaper, underscoring health hazards and advocating organic farming subsidies and farmer training programs.

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

A. Imagine you are Sara Khan, Class X. Write an article for your school e-magazine titled "Microplastics in Everyday Life: Hidden Pollutants, Visible Threats," investigating sources, health impacts, and practical reduction strategies for students.

OR

B. You are Arjun Malhotra, Class X. Write an article on “Carbon Capture Technologies: Bridging the Gap to Net-Zero Emissions,” elucidating mechanisms, real-world applications, and challenges in scaling for global adoption. Conclude with policy recommendations.

SECTION C GRAMMAR (10 marks)

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

Therapeutic gardens play a vital role in urban planning and are essential for Tokyo’s goal of (i) _____ (achieve/ achieving/ will achieving) a greener, healthier metropolis by 2030. In an ecological context, greenery often (ii) _____ (had improved/ improves/ improving) air quality and mental well-being, and Tokyo’s approach is notably progressive. The city now (iii) _____ (have considered/ has considered/ considers) these gardens a cornerstone of sustainable urban development.

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

S No.	Text	Word Before Omission	Word After
e.g.	The technology is cutting-edge solution.	is	a solution
i	We adopt renewable energy to combat climate change.		
ii	Solar panels provide clean power this region.		
iii	Each innovation, big or small, makes significant impact.		
iv	We invest now to ensure sustainable future.		

9. Do as directed. (1 + 2 = 3 marks)

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

RAVI: Neha! Tell me about Kerala. I've always been fascinated by your state’s backwaters and traditions.

NEHA: (i) rich culture / is renowned / Kerala / for its / lush landscapes / and / in the south / serene backwaters / a state / of India / and vibrant art forms

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

Kunal: Hey, Priya! Did you read about the new renewable energy breakthrough today?

Priya: Yes, I read about a solar panel that generates power even at night!

Kunal asked Priya (i) _____. Priya replied (ii) _____ at night. Then, Kunal added that the innovation could revolutionize energy storage in urban areas.

SECTION D: LITERATURE TEXTBOOK (26 MARKS)

10. Read the given extract and answer the questions briefly, for any two extracts, of the three, given.
2 x 4 = 8

A. "Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung."

- i. What specific act leads to the mariner bearing the "albatross" around his neck?
- ii. How does the albatross become a symbol of the mariner's wrongdoing?
- iii. Explain the significance of replacing the "cross" with the "albatross" in this context.
- iv. In what way does this incident mark the beginning of the mariner's journey towards redemption?

B. "The incidental expenses came to eight thousand rupees over and above the tiger skin and its attendant glory."

- i. What detail in the extract highlights the extravagant nature of Mrs. Packletide's actions?
- ii. How does this line use humour to criticize the practice of trophy hunting?
- iii. Why is the term "attendant glory" ironic in this situation?
- iv. What does this reveal about the theme of vanity and its consequences?

C. "So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes."

- i. According to the poet, what will last after monuments have decayed?
- ii. Why does the poet refer to "lovers' eyes" as making someone immortal?
- iii. How does this couplet reinforce the enduring strength of poetry?
- iv. What does this imply about the poet's view on the legacy left by art?

Q.11. Answer any five of the following in about 30-40 words. (2 × 5 = 10 marks)

- i. How does the revelation about the boys' past in Two Gentlemen of Verona transform the narrator's perception of them?
- ii. Explain the irony in Mrs. Packletide's hunting expedition in Mrs. Packletide's Tiger.
- iii. In The Letter, how does the postmaster's empathy for Ali develop over the course of the story?
- iv. Describe the frog's manipulative tactics toward the nightingale in The Frog and the Nightingale.
- v. In Snake, why does the poet later regret his action against the snake?
- vi. What does the mariner's shooting of the albatross symbolize in The Rime of the Ancient Mariner?

Q.12. Answer any one of the following two questions in about 150 words. 1x8=8

How does Virtually True blend technology with human emotion to explore the idea of friendship, empathy, and human connection in a digital world? Discuss with reference to the protagonist's experiences and actions.

OR

Both A Shady Plot and Julius Caesar employ the supernatural to reveal the inner conflict of characters and propel the plot forward. Compare how fear, conscience, or guilt are heightened through these supernatural interventions.

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