



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: XII
Date: 15.11.25
Admission no:

Time: 3hrs.
Max Marks: 80
Roll no:

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Read the following instructions very carefully and follow them:

- This question paper has 13 questions. All questions are compulsory.
- This question paper contains three sections:
Section A: Reading Skills
Section B: Creative Writing Skills
Section C: Literature
- Attempt all questions based on the specific instructions given for each part. Write the correct question number and part thereof in your answer sheet.
- Separate instructions are provided with each question/part, wherever necessary.
- Adhere strictly to the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

SECTION A – READING SKILLS

(22 Marks)

1. Read the passage carefully and answer the questions that follow. (12 Marks)

1 The art of slow living has gained importance in recent years, especially as people struggle to cope with the constant rush of modern life. The movement encourages individuals to appreciate simple pleasures — such as morning walks, cooking at home, and mindful communication — as a way to restore balance in an increasingly fast-paced world.

2 Advocates of this lifestyle believe that slowing down allows people to reconnect with themselves and others. Studies suggest that individuals who take regular breaks and engage in activities that bring them joy experience reduced stress levels and improved productivity. Interestingly, the concept of slow living is not about doing less, but about doing things with more focus and purpose.

3 The roots of slow living can be traced back to the Slow Food Movement in Italy during the 1980s. What started as a protest against fast food evolved into a philosophy promoting sustainable choices, local produce, and quality over quantity. The movement has now expanded into various aspects of life — travel, fashion, and work.

4 However, critics argue that slow living is a privilege available mainly to those with flexible jobs and financial security. For individuals working multiple shifts or managing household responsibilities, the luxury of slowing

down may seem unrealistic. Supporters counter this view by asserting that slow living is a mindset rather than a schedule, and can be practiced even in small ways — like enjoying a cup of tea without distractions.

5 Ultimately, the idea of slow living calls for mindfulness and intention in everyday choices. Whether it's through reading, gardening, or simply breathing consciously, the essence lies in appreciating the present moment instead of racing towards an uncertain future.

6 Another important aspect of slow living is its positive impact on mental and emotional health. By prioritizing meaningful activities and reducing unnecessary busyness, individuals often report greater satisfaction, improved focus, and a deeper sense of purpose. In addition, communities that embrace slower lifestyles tend to foster stronger social bonds and a sense of belonging, as people dedicate time to genuine human connections rather than digital distractions.

7 Environmental sustainability is also closely linked with slow living. Choosing locally sourced products, reducing consumption, and embracing mindful travel habits all contribute to lowering one's ecological footprint. In a world facing climate challenges and resource depletion, slow living encourages a thoughtful approach that benefits both individuals and the planet, demonstrating that personal well-being and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand.

Answer the following questions:

I. Which of the following statements best captures the main idea of the passage?

- A. Slow living is about avoiding work.
- B. Slow living promotes mindfulness and balance in daily life.
- C. Slow living is an outdated lifestyle trend.
- D. Slow living discourages ambition. (1)

II. Complete the sentence:

The phrase “simple pleasures” in paragraph 1 refers to _____. (1)

III. According to the passage, slow living improves productivity because _____. (1)

IV. Which of the following best explains why the movement began in Italy?

- A. People disliked fast-paced jobs.
- B. The Slow Food Movement inspired the philosophy.
- C. The government promoted the idea.
- D. Tourism was declining. (1)

V. Mention one criticism of slow living mentioned in the passage. (1)

VI. “Slow living is a mindset rather than a schedule.” Explain briefly. (2)

VII. What does the phrase “appreciating the present moment” mean in context? (1)

VIII. Complete the sentence using information from the passage

One simple way to practise slow living in daily life is _____. (1)

IX. The tone of the passage can best be described as —

- A. critical B. persuasive C. humorous D. indifferent (1)

X. What message does the author want to convey through this passage? (40 words) (2)

2. Read the passage carefully and answer the questions that follow. (10 Marks)

Survey Report: Online Learning Preferences among Students (2024–25)

A comprehensive survey of 1,500 students from a wide range of schools and colleges across the country was conducted to understand their preferences, experiences, and attitudes towards various online learning platforms. The aim was to analyze which digital learning modes are most effective, engaging, and suitable for students in the current educational environment.

The survey focused on four major types of online learning modes: live interactive classes, recorded lectures, self-paced courses, and AI-based learning apps. Students were asked to rate each mode according to their level of preference.

Learning Mode	Highly Preferred (%)	Preferred (%)	Neutral (%)	Least Preferred (%)
Live interactive classes	42	38	12	8
Recorded lectures	35	45	15	5
Self-paced courses	30	40	20	10
AI-based learning apps	25	35	25	15

(Based on a study by the National Education Research Council, 2024)

The survey of 1,500 students revealed that live interactive classes are the most preferred mode of online learning, with 42% marking them as highly preferred. These classes allow real-time interaction with teachers and peers, helping students stay motivated, focused, and engaged, creating a virtual classroom environment.

Recorded lectures follow closely, with 45% showing moderate preference. They provide flexibility, enabling learners to study at their own pace, revisit difficult topics, and balance academics with other commitments. Self-paced courses appeal to independent learners, with 30% highly preferring this mode. They offer autonomy in setting timelines and managing progress, though some students miss the interactive element of live sessions.

AI-based learning apps are gaining traction but remain the least preferred, with only 25% marking them as highly preferred. While they provide personalized learning paths and instant feedback, students still value teacher-led guidance and interaction, highlighting the continuing importance of structured, human-centered learning approaches.

The results suggest that while technology-driven learning tools are increasingly adopted, students still value interactive and structured learning environments. Educational institutions can use these insights to design blended learning strategies that balance flexibility, personalization, and live engagement to enhance learning outcomes.

I. The main purpose of the survey was to —

- A. find out students' exam results
- B. understand trends in online learning preferences
- C. identify top-performing institutions
- D. evaluate teachers' performance

(1)

II. Fill in the blank:

Live interactive classes are chosen mainly because they offer _____.

(1)

III. Which learning mode has the highest overall preference among students?

(1)

IV. What does the survey reveal about students' attitudes toward AI-based learning apps?

(1)

V.What challenge might institutions face based on the results? (40 words) (2)

VI.Based on the chart, which of the following is true?

A. Recorded lectures are the least preferred mode.

B. Live interactive classes and recorded lectures are both highly rated.

C. AI-based learning is the most popular.

D. Students prefer neutral modes. (1)

VII.What does the term “self-paced courses” imply? (1)

VIII.How can this data help policymakers improve education? (40 words) (2)

SECTION B

CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (18 Marks)

3. Attempt any one of the following in about 50 words. (4 Marks)

(A) You are Mehak Sharma, Secretary of the Cultural Society of Crescent School, Delhi. Write a notice informing students about a Talent Hunt Competition to be held in the school auditorium. Include necessary details and encourage participation.

OR

(B) You are Arun Nair, a member of the City Sports Club. Draft a notice announcing a Yoga Awareness Camp for residents, mentioning date, venue, and registration details.

4. Attempt any one of the following in about 50 words. (4 Marks)

(A) As Ritika Sen, Head Girl of Horizon Public School, invite noted environmentalist Dr. Ramesh Kumar to inaugurate your school’s Eco-Day Celebrations. Write a formal invitation giving details.

OR

(B) You are Aditya Singh of 27, Park View Apartments, Pune. You received an invitation to judge an interschool debate competition. Write a formal reply denying the invitation and expressing gratitude.

5. Attempt any one of the following in 120–150 words. (5 Marks)

(A) You are Priya Menon of 19, Maple Road, Bangalore. Write a letter to the editor of The National Daily, expressing concern over the increasing cyberbullying among teenagers and suggesting preventive measures.

OR

(B) You are Rohit Kumar of 16, Station Road, Jaipur. Write an application for the post of Junior Content Writer in response to an advertisement. Include your bio-data.

6. Attempt any one of the following in 120–150 words. (5 Marks)

(A) Write an article for your school magazine on “Artificial Intelligence: Boon or Bane for Students?” expressing balanced opinions with examples.

OR

(B) You are Reema Joshi, School Reporter. Write a report on your school’s Annual Sports Meet held recently, highlighting the events, winners, and enthusiasm among students.

SECTION C – LITERATURE (40 Marks)

7. Read the following extract and answer ANY ONE of the two (A or B).

(1 × 6 = 6)

(A)

“... I saw my mother,
beside me,
doze, open-mouthed, her face
ashen like that
of a corpse and realised with
pain
that she was as old as she looked...”

(My Mother at Sixty-six)

- I. What does the imagery of the “ashen face” suggest about the mother’s condition? (1)
- II. The word realised shows the poet’s awareness was
A. sudden B. delayed C. expected D. carefree (1)
- III. Which phrase in the extract conveys the idea of mortality? (1)
- IV. The phrase “but soon put that thought away” reveals the speaker’s attempt to —
A. face reality calmly B. avoid painful thoughts C. comfort her mother D. accept ageing (1)
- V. State one emotion that dominates the poet at this moment. (1)
- VI. Identify one universal theme in this extract. (1)

(B)

“When Aunt is dead, her terrified hands will lie
Still ringed with ordeals she was mastered by.
The tigers in the panel that she made
Will go on prancing, proud and unafraid.”
(Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers)

- I. What does the phrase “terrified hands” suggest about Aunt Jennifer’s life? (1)
- II. Complete the sentence: The tigers’ proud and fearless movements represent _____. (1)
- III. Which option best expresses the meaning of “still ringed”?
A. Hands decorated with jewellery
B. Bound by marital and societal constraints
C. Shaking due to age
D. Exhausted from labour (1)
- IV. How do the tiger contrast with Aunt Jennifer? (Answer in about 40 words) (2)
- V. What idea does the poet convey through the image of the tigers continuing to prance? (1)

8. Read the following extract and answer ANY ONE (A or B).

(4 Marks)

(A)

“My three hundred dollars bought less than two hundred in old-style bills, but I didn’t care; eggs were thirteen cents a dozen in 1894.”

(The Third Level)

- I. What does Charley's indifference to the loss of money reveal about his feelings toward 1894?
 A. He is disappointed by the past.
 B. He romanticises the simplicity of the past.
 C. He finds 1894 boring.
 D. He is angry about inflation. (1)
- II. Why does Louisa discourage him from searching further? (1)
- III. Which phrase shows Charley's obsession with escapism? (1)
- IV. Explain briefly how this extract highlights the theme of illusion vs reality. (1)

(B)

"Derry: ... You think, 'That's bad. That's the ugliest thing I ever saw.' ... When I look in the mirror and see it, I'm afraid of me."

(On the Face of It)

- I. Which emotion dominates Derry's words in this extract? (1)
- II. Choose the correct interpretation of Mr Lamb's response "No. Not the whole of you."
 A. He denies Derry's ugliness. B. He sees beyond Derry's face. C. He criticises Derry's attitude. D. He changes the topic. (1)
- III. What does Derry mean by "I'm afraid of me"? (1)
- IV. How does Mr Lamb try to bridge Derry's emotional distance? (Answer in 40 words) (1)

9. Read the following extract and answer ANY ONE (A or B).

(1 × 6 = 6)

(A)

"She said this in such a friendly manner that the rattrap peddler must have felt confidence in her.... But while he was riding up to the manor house he had evil forebodings."

(The Rattrap)

- I. Which of the following best describes Edla's behaviour towards the peddler?
 A. Authoritative B. Kind and respectful C. Suspicious D. Indifferent (1)
- II. Why was the peddler having "evil forebodings"? (1)
- III. The phrase "I will never get out of it" symbolically refers to _____. (1)
- IV. What do the blacksmiths' astonished looks indicate about society's perception of the peddler? (40 words) (2)
- V. How does this moment foreshadow the story's theme of redemption? (1)

(B)

"The evening had already blacked in the windows and the small room was steamy from the stove and cluttered with the heavy-breathing man in his vest at the table."

(Going Places)

- I. The phrase "blacked in the windows" literally suggests _____.
 A. arrival of night B. poverty C. loss of hope D. family bonding (1)
- II. What emotion does Sophie feel as she observes this scene? (1)
- III. How does the setting contrast with Sophie's aspirations? (1)
- IV. Explain briefly the symbolism in the image of the "crooked back and delicate bow." (40 words) (2)

V. State the theme highlighted in this extract.

(1)

10. Answer ANY FIVE of the following six questions in 40–50 words each.

(5 × 2 = 10)

I. What role does the French language play in The Last Lesson?

II. How does Douglas overcome his fear in Deep Water?

III. What message does Keats convey in A Thing of Beauty?

IV. Explain the significance of the poet's appeal in Keeping Quiet.

V. How does Mukherjee expose the intrusiveness of interviews in The Interview?

VI. Why does Anees Jung use a first-person narrator in Lost Spring?

11. Answer any two of the following three questions in 40 -50 words each:

(2 × 2 = 4)

1. Why did Dr. Sadao hesitate before treating the wounded American soldier, and what made him finally decide to operate on him?
2. What does Zitkala-Sa's forced haircut symbolise?
3. How did Kalki portray the Tiger King's character through his hunting habits?

12. Answer ANY ONE in 120–150 words.

(1 × 5 = 5)

(A) Analyse how Eco's views on writing and his "philosophy of the detective story" reveal his attitude toward literature and knowledge. How does this discussion help the reader understand the connection between intellect and imagination in his works?

OR

(B) How do Sophie and the office boy in Poets and Pancakes reflect dream vs reality?

13. Answer ANY ONE in 120–150 words.

(1 × 5 = 5)

(A) Both On the Face of It and Deep Water highlight the triumph of the human spirit over fear and isolation.

OR

(B) Both Zitkala-Sa and Bama, in their respective accounts "The Cutting of My Long Hair" and "We Too Are Human Beings", describe their childhood experiences of humiliation and resistance.

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