



B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

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

ANNUAL EXAM - 2025-26
ENGLISH SET1 (301)

Class: XI
Date: 16.02.26
Admission no:

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

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The question paper is divided into three sections:
Section A – Reading Comprehension
Section B – Writing Skills
Section C – Literature
2. Read the questions carefully and follow the given instructions.

SECTION A

READING SKILLS

Q1. Read the passage given below carefully and answer the questions that follow: (12 marks)

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam was not only a distinguished scientist but also an inspiring teacher, a visionary leader, and a true embodiment of humility and dedication. Born on 15 October 1931 into a modest family in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, he faced financial hardships from an early age. His father, Jainulabdeen, was a boat owner, and young Kalam supported his family by selling newspapers. Despite limited resources, his parents instilled in him strong values of honesty, discipline, and faith, which shaped his character throughout life.

Kalam was a brilliant student with a deep interest in science and mathematics. His passion for learning led him to study aerospace engineering, and he went on to make remarkable contributions to India's defence and space research programmes. He played a pivotal role in the development of India's missile technology, earning him the affectionate title of the "Missile Man of India." His work strengthened India's self-reliance in defence technology and brought global recognition to the nation's scientific capabilities.

Despite his extraordinary achievements, Dr. Kalam remained deeply connected to students and young minds. He firmly believed that "dreams transform into thoughts, and thoughts result in action." Throughout his life, he emphasized the importance of dreaming big, working hard, and maintaining perseverance in the face of challenges. He often interacted with students, encouraging them to innovate, think creatively, and contribute positively to society and nation-building.

In 2002, Dr. Kalam became the 11th President of India. Even while holding the highest constitutional office, he continued to live a simple life and stayed accessible to the common

people. Unlike many leaders, he saw himself first as a teacher and a learner. He frequently visited educational institutions, delivered lectures, and motivated young people to use knowledge as a tool for national progress.

Dr. Kalam's simplicity, humility, and dedication made him a role model for millions. He never sought personal wealth or fame and remained committed to education till his last breath. On 27 July 2015, he passed away while delivering a lecture to students, a moment that symbolized his lifelong commitment to learning and teaching. His life story continues to inspire generations, reminding us that with strong willpower, discipline, and integrity, even the humblest beginnings can lead to extraordinary achievements.

On the basis of your reading of the passage, answer the following questions:

I. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam is popularly known as the "Missile Man of India" because he

- (i) led India's space missions
- (ii) developed missile technology for India
- (iii) served as the President of India
- (iv) taught science to students

II. Which of the following traits best describes Dr. Kalam's personality as reflected in the passage?

- (i) Ambitious and authoritative
- (ii) Wealth-oriented and powerful
- (iii) Humble and dedicated
- (iv) Strict and controlling

III. Assertion (A): Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam remained connected to students even after becoming President of India.

Reason (R): He believed education and innovation were essential for nation-building.

- (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

IV. Complete the Sentence

Dr. Kalam believed that dreams transform into _____ and thoughts result in _____.

V. Complete the Analogy

Selling newspapers: Financial support::Teaching students: _____

VI. How did Dr. Kalam's early life influence his values and character? (2)

VII. Why did Dr. Kalam consider himself a teacher and learner even while serving as President? (2)

VIII. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's life continues to inspire millions. Explain how his journey motivates students to overcome challenges and contribute positively to society. (2)

IX. State true or false: Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam lived a simple life and remained committed to education even after becoming the President of India

Q2. Read the passage given below carefully and answer the questions that follow: (10)

Over the last decade, the learning patterns of Indian students have undergone significant changes due to rapid technological advancement and evolving educational policies. According to a National Education Survey (2024), nearly 68% of students in senior secondary classes rely on digital resources such as online lectures, e-books, and educational apps for academic support. Of these, 42% prefer video-based learning, while 26% use interactive quizzes and simulations to understand complex concepts.

The same survey highlights that despite increased access to technology, reading textbooks remains important, with 54% of students stating that printed books help them retain information better. However, only 31% of students reported spending more than one hour daily on reading non-academic books, indicating a decline in traditional reading habits.

The study further reveals a growing awareness of skill-based learning. About 61% of Grade 11 students expressed interest in acquiring skills related to artificial intelligence, coding, digital marketing, and data analytics. At the same time, 39% continued to favour conventional career paths such as medicine, engineering, and government services.

Teachers interviewed during the survey noted that while technology has enhanced accessibility and engagement, excessive screen time has reduced attention spans and deep focus. As a result, schools are now promoting a balanced learning approach, integrating digital tools with classroom discussions, reading sessions, and project-based learning.

Educational experts suggest that students who combine digital learning with regular reading and hands-on practice demonstrate better critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and long-term academic performance. The data clearly indicates that the future of education lies not in replacing traditional methods but in effectively blending them with modern technology.

On the basis of your reading of the passage, answer the following questions:

I. According to the National Education Survey (2024), what percentage of senior secondary students rely on digital resources for academic support?

- (i) 54%
- (ii) 61%
- (iii) 68%
- (iv) 42%

II. Which learning method is preferred by the highest percentage of students using digital resources?

- (i) E-books
- (ii) Interactive quizzes
- (iii) Video-based learning
- (iv) Project-based learning

III. Why do a majority of students still prefer printed textbooks despite increased digital access?

IV. Mention two reasons why schools are promoting a balanced learning approach. (2)

V. Assertion (A): Schools are encouraging a balanced learning approach combining digital tools and traditional methods.

Reason (R): Excessive screen time has negatively affected students' attention span and deep focus.

- (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

VI. Compare students' preference for skill-based learning and conventional career paths. What does this data suggest about changing career aspirations? **(2)**

VII. How does the data support the view that blending technology with traditional learning methods leads to better academic outcomes?

VIII. The National Education Survey (2024) reveals that 68% of senior secondary students rely on _____ for academic support, such as online lectures, e-books, and educational apps.

SECTION B – WRITING SKILLS

Q3. Attempt ANY ONE of the following: (4 marks)

A. Your college is organising an Education Fair in the college premises. As the head boy or the head girl of Sunshine Public School Agra. Draft a notice informing students of class 9 and 11th about the fair. Include other necessary details. You are Muskaan/Manoj. Put the notice in a box.

OR

B. Your school is organising an Inter School Science Quiz Competition. As president of the quiz club draft a notice informing students of class 9 to 12 about the competition. Include necessary details. You are Akila or Akhil. Put the notice in a box.

Q4. Attempt ANY ONE of the following in not more than 50 words: (4 marks)

A. You are Mr. Abhishek Sharma. You are planning to celebrate your parents 50th wedding anniversary in a grand manner. Draft formal invitation card for your friends and relatives mention all the necessary details.

OR

B. You are Mrs. Sonali Gupta a nutritionist. You are invited by principal of Radiant Public School Jammu to address the students on forming 'healthy food habits.' Write a formal letter of reply accepting the invitation.

Q5. Attempt ANY ONE of the following in 120–150 words: (5 marks)

A. You are Shantanu, residing at Ghar B-94, Balimela Road, Malkangiri. You came across the following classified advertisement in a local daily. Write a letter, in about 120-150 words, applying for the position of a volunteer for the Each One Teach One campaign.

SITUATION VACANT

WANTED committed volunteers, aged 18 years and above, to teach underprivileged children, for one hour a week, in the district of Malkangiri. Ability to speak, read and write Odiya fluently, important. Experience not necessary. All volunteers to receive training. Contact Nethra N, Coordinator (*Each One Teach One*), 4Literacy, Ambaguda, Malkangiri, Odisha -764045

OR

B. Despite being an essential component of road safety infrastructure, many people do not respect zebra crossings and fail to follow traffic rules, which results in hazardous situations on the roads. Write a letter to the editor of a national daily, sharing your concern, and examining the reasons for such behaviour. Provide suggestions for spreading awareness of rules and etiquettes involved, and ways to ensure adherence. Use the given cues along with your own ideas to compose this letter. You are Soma/Sunil Baruah, a concerned city resident.

Q6. Attempt ANY ONE of the following in 120–150 words: (5 marks)

A. You are Sohail/Soumya Hassan of class XII-B. Write an article for your school magazine, sharing the importance of young adults, as volunteers in one's local community, the need to do so and the benefits involved. Use the given cues along with your own ideas to compose this article.

-Role of Young Adults in Community Development

-Need for Volunteering in Local Communities

-Benefits of Volunteering for Young Adults

-Long-term Impact on Society and the Individual

OR

B. The efforts of 400 volunteers working with the NGO, for Literacy, in the district of Malkangiri, Odisha, was lauded by the District Collector, Shri V. Singh (IAS). As a staff reporter of 'The Odisha Bhaskar', write a report about this in 120-150 words covering all the details of the event.

SECTION C – LITERATURE

Q7. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given. (6 marks)

A. "The cardboard shows me how it was
When the two girl cousins went paddling,
Each one holding one of my mother's hands,"

(Photograph)

i. Which two details together show the safety and care provided to the children?

A) Cardboard and paddling

B) Two girl cousins and paddling

C) Holding hands

D) Cardboard and mother

ii. What does the word “*cardboard*” refer to in the given lines?

A) A box

B) A photograph

C) A painting

D) A letter

iii. Complete the Sentence

The two girl cousins went paddling while holding _____.

iv. What is the underlying theme of the poem?

v. Who is the central adult figure mentioned in the stanza?

A) The poet

B) The cousins

C) The poet’s mother

D) A teacher

vi. The stanza reflects a memory preserved through a _____.

OR

B. “My grandmother was a religious woman. She was short and fat and slightly bent. Her face was a criss-cross of wrinkles running from everywhere to everywhere. No, we were certain she had always been old, and that she could never have been young.” (*The Portrait of a Lady*)

i. Which physical feature of the grandmother is highlighted in the extract?

A) Tall and thin

B) Short and fat

C) Slim and graceful

D) Weak and fragile

ii. The grandmother’s face was described as a _____ of wrinkles.

iii. Find a word from the extract that means “*covered with lines or folds.*”

iv. Which two details together suggest the grandmother’s old age?

v. What kind of woman was the grandmother by nature?

vi. Why does the narrator feel that the grandmother had always been old?

Q8. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given.

A.Mrs. Pearson: I might. Who d’you think?

Doris [Staring at her]: Mum—what’s the matter with you?

Mrs. Pearson: Don’t be silly.

Doris: [Indignantly] It’s not me that’s being silly— and I must say it’s a bit much when I’ve been working hard all day and you can’t even bother to get my tea ready. Did you hear what I said about my yellow silk?

Mrs. Pearson: No. Don’t you like it now? I never did.

Doris [Indignantly]: Of course I like it. And I'm going to wear it tonight. So I want it ironed.
Mrs. Pearson: Want it ironed? What d'you think it's going to do—iron itself?

(Mother's Day)

i. Why is Doris consistently reacting 'indignantly' towards her mother Mrs. Pearson?

- A) The mother is not listening to her B) The mother is angry at her as well
C) The mother is acting unusual D) All of the above

ii. Choose the words that describe Doris's personality, on the basis of the passage.

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| I. Spoilt | II. Independent |
| III. Bad tempered | IV. Kind |
| (A) I and II | (B) I and III |
| (C) II and IV | (D) II and III |

iii. What does Doris's reaction reveal about her attitude towards her mother?

iv. How does Mrs. Pearson's reply in the last line indicate a change in her behaviour?

OR

B. As I walked slowly back to the station I thought about my mother, who had given me the address years ago. It had been in the first half of the War. I was home for a few days and it struck me immediately that something or other about the rooms had changed. I missed various things. My mother was surprised I should have noticed so quickly. Then she told me about Mrs Dorling. I had never heard of her but apparently she was an old acquaintance of my mother, whom she hadn't seen for years. She had suddenly turned up and renewed their contact.
(Address)

i. Why was the narrator surprised by the change in the rooms?

ii. The narrator realised that something had changed in the rooms mainly because:

- A). the furniture had been rearranged
B). his mother behaved differently
C). he noticed the absence of familiar objects
D). the house looked newly painted

iii. Mrs Dorling is introduced in the passage as someone who:

- A). was a close family member
B). had been regularly visiting the narrator's mother
C). reappeared unexpectedly after years
D). lived in the same neighbourhood

iv. What does the mother's reaction to the narrator's observation suggest about her?

Q9. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given.

A. All afternoon the usual line of tourists from around the world had descended into the cramped, rock-cut tomb some 26 feet underground to pay their respects. They gazed at the murals on the walls of the burial chamber and peered at Tut's gilded face, the most striking feature of his mummy-shaped outer coffin lid."
(Discovering of the Tut: the saga continues...)

- i.** What does the phrase “the usual line of tourists from around the world” most strongly suggest about the tomb?
- A). It is recently opened to the public
 B). It has become a routine stop on international travel itineraries
 C). It is accessible only during specific hours of the day
 D). It attracts visitors mainly from nearby regions
- ii.** The author’s description of the tomb as “cramped” and “26 feet underground” primarily serves to highlight:
- A). The architectural brilliance of ancient Egypt
 B). The physical discomfort experienced by the tourists
 C). The contrast between the tomb’s confined space and its global importance
 D). The poor preservation conditions of the burial chamber
- iii.** Why is Tut’s “gilded face” described as “the most striking feature” of the coffin lid?
- A). It is the largest decorative element in the tomb
 B). It reflects the advanced metallurgical skills of the Egyptians
 C). It captures the visitors’ attention more powerfully than the surrounding murals
 D). It provides clues about the cause of Tutankhamun’s death
- iv.** What is the tone of the given passage(descriptive/imaginary)?
- v.** How does the description of the tourists’ actions reflect their attitude towards Tutankhamun’s tomb?
- vi.** Why does the author mention that the tomb is “cramped” and located 26 feet underground?

OR

B. Tired and hungry, I started breathing through my mouth. After a while, I switched to single-nostril power which seemed to be admitting enough oxygen but, just as I was drifting off, I woke up abruptly. Something was wrong. My chest felt strangely heavy and I sat up, a movement that cleared my nasal passages almost instantly and relieved the feeling in my chest. Curious, I thought. *(Silk Road)*

- i.** Who is “I” in the above lines?
- ii.** What made the narrator catch a cold?
- iii.** Give the antonym of the word “alleviate”.
- iv.** Whom did the narrator consult for medication?
- v.** The narrator’s shift in breathing and sudden awakening suggest that the primary cause of his discomfort was:
- A). extreme physical exhaustion due to lack of sleep
 B). psychological anxiety triggered by unfamiliar surroundings
 C). insufficient oxygen intake caused by breathing difficulty at high altitude
 D). indigestion resulting from hunger and irregular meals
- vi.** The phrase “*single-nostril power*” suggests that the narrator was:

- A). experimenting playfully with breathing
- B). struggling to breathe normally
- C). practicing a formal yoga technique
- D). fully comfortable despite tiredness

Q10. Answer ANY FIVE of the following six questions, in about 40-50 words. 5×2 = 10

- i. Bring out the hypocrisy that the adults exhibit with regard to love. *(Childhood)*
- ii. What preparations did the narrator make for the world voyage? *(We're not afraid to die...when we are together)*
- iii. To what is the bird's movement compared? What is the basis for the comparison? *(Laburnum Top)*
- iv. The anguish of the father comes through very strongly in the poem. Show his feelings about his son as expressed in the poem. *(Father to Son)*
- v. Tibetan mastiffs were popular in China's imperial courts. Why? *(Silk Road)*
- vi. Why did Professor Gaitonde convey his regrets to the organisers of the Panipat Seminar? *(Adventure)*

Q11. Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions, in about 40-50 words. 2x2=4

- i. Why was Aram delighted and frightened at the same time when he saw his cousin Mourad on a beautiful white horse? *(Summer of a beautiful white horse)*
- ii. Why were Susan and her old mother so tense that night? *(Birth)*
- iii. How did the architect turn the tables on the king himself? *(Tale of the Melon City)*

Q12. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. (5)

A. There is a parallel drawn between rain and music. Which words indicate this? Explain the similarity between the two. *(Voice of the rain)*

OR

B. Khushwant Singh's grandmother wrote a letter to her sister describing her life with her grandson in the village. Write a letter on her behalf describing your experience. *(The Portrait of a Lady)*

Q13. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. (5)

A. It is not easy to let off past memories and possessions; Do you agree on the basis of "The Address"? You may write what you have learnt in the process of reading about the search of narrator's material possessions? How it has helped you grow? *(The Address)*

OR

B. The boys Mourad and Aram do not think they have stolen the white horse even though they kept the horse with them for a long time. Why did they take the horse? Why did they return it? *(Summer of a beautiful white horse)*

— ALL THE BEST —