



# B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

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

POST MID TERM - 2025-26  
ENGLISH (301)

Class: XI  
Date: 06.01.26  
Admission no:

Time: 1 hr.  
Max Marks: 25  
Roll no:

## SECTION A – READING (7 Marks)

**Q1. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.**

A recent nationwide survey on literacy conducted by the National Statistical Office reveals that India has been making steady—though uneven—progress in improving its literacy rate over the past two decades. The overall literacy rate has now risen to **77.7%**, indicating a gradual shift in educational participation across the country. Kerala continues to lead with an impressive **96.2%**, a figure attributed to its long-standing emphasis on social reforms, community-driven learning, and strong public schooling systems. At the other end of the spectrum, Bihar records the lowest literacy rate at **61.8%**, highlighting deep-rooted socio-economic and infrastructural challenges. The survey also notes that although female literacy has improved significantly, it still trails behind male literacy by nearly **12 percentage points**, underscoring persistent gender-based disparities in access to education.

The report brings attention to the stark gap between urban and rural literacy. Urban areas, with better infrastructure, trained teachers, and greater digital exposure, exhibit a literacy rate of **87.7%**, while rural regions stand at **73.5%**. The survey attributes this divide to a combination of factors such as inadequate school facilities, irregular teacher attendance, socio-economic barriers, and the prevalence of child labour in disadvantaged communities. Despite these challenges, a promising trend emerges from the youth literacy rate (ages 15–24), which has crossed **91%**, suggesting that government initiatives like *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao*, *Right to Education* provisions, mid-day meal schemes, and expanding digital access through rural internet programmes have begun to reshape India's educational landscape.

The survey reveals that states investing in teacher training, community participation, and school monitoring show better literacy retention, while regions affected by poverty, migration, and social inequalities continue to struggle. It stresses that enrolment alone is insufficient; quality education through improved curricula, regular assessments, and adequate learning resources is vital. Although India is moving toward universal literacy, significant gaps remain. The survey calls for targeted support in low-performing states, stronger public–private partnerships, and investment in digital infrastructure. Addressing gender gaps, ensuring teacher accountability, and promoting community awareness are essential for long-term, sustainable literacy growth.

**I. Consider the following statements based on the passage:**

1. Kerala's high literacy rate is a result of reforms and a strong public schooling system.
2. Rural literacy in India is higher than urban literacy due to improved digital access.
3. Youth literacy (ages 15–24) shows an upward trend due to government initiatives.
4. Bihar records one of the highest literacy rates because of strong infrastructure.

**Which of the following combinations is correct?**

- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 2 and 4 only
- C. 1, 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 3 and 4 only

**II. What can be inferred from the survey results?**

1. Socio-economic inequalities directly influence literacy outcomes.
2. Quality of schooling is as important as enrolment for sustained literacy.
3. Digital infrastructure has no impact on literacy growth.
4. Teacher training and monitoring improve literacy retention.

**Choose the correct option:**

- A. Statements 1, 2, and 4 are correct
- B. Statements 1 and 3 are correct
- C. Statements 2 and 3 are correct
- D. All statements are correct

**III. Despite several government schemes, literacy rates in some states remain low.**

**What deeper socio-economic factors, beyond educational policies, might continue to hinder literacy growth in such regions?**

(Answer in 40–50 words)

**IV. India cannot rely on enrolment figures alone to achieve universal literacy because \_\_\_\_\_.**

(Give a reason based on the passage)

**V. Complete the Analogy**

**Urban literacy : 87.7% :: Rural literacy : \_\_\_\_\_**

(Fill the value based on the passage)

**VI. According to the passage, all of the following contribute to the urban–rural literacy gap EXCEPT:**

- A. Better infrastructure in urban areas
- B. Trained teachers and higher digital exposure
- C. Adequate school facilities in rural areas
- D. Socio-economic barriers and child labour in rural regions

**VII. Explain the meaning of the phrase “steady—though uneven—progress” as used in the passage.**

## SECTION B – WRITING (4 Marks)

**Q2.** You are Maya Syiem from Shillong. You read the given advertisement and wish to apply for the post advertised. Write this job application along with your bio-data.

Join our Creative Team!  
A renowned publishing house in Shillong  
–A NEW WORLD–  
is seeking a talented illustrator for children's books.  
Creative individuals with a passion for storytelling through art, welcome.  
Experience, not mandatory.  
Team players with degree/ diploma in Fine Arts/ Graphic Design may apply with 5 samples  
from portfolio illustrating a variety of work.  
Write to the Project Lead, 23-C Rosewood Lane, Shillong-793005

## SECTION C – LITERATURE (14 Marks)

**Q3. Read the extracts and answer the multiple choice questions.** (4 × 1 = 4)

“As he walked along Hornby Road, past the shops and offices, Gaitonde noticed a remarkable change. He had never seen such a clean and orderly Bombay. There were no crowds, no noise, and no vendors shouting for customers. The imposing buildings looked even more majestic. He wondered if he had landed in some sort of dreamland. Everything appeared modern and yet strangely different — almost as if history had taken a completely different turn.”

I. In the extract, what surprised Professor Gaitonde the most when he walked along Hornby Road?

- A) The large number of foreigners
- B) The absence of noise and crowds
- C) The presence of modern vehicles
- D) The street vendors selling new items

II. What does Gaitonde’s observation that “history had taken a completely different turn” foreshadow?

- A) His desire to rewrite history
- B) A dream he had earlier
- C) His entry into a parallel world
- D) His loss of memory after the accident

III. **Assertion (A):** Gaitonde was puzzled by the appearance of Bombay because it looked far more orderly than he remembered.

**Reason (R):** He had unknowingly slipped into a parallel world where historical events had unfolded differently.

- 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. Gaitonde felt that the world around him appeared different, almost as if \_\_\_\_\_ had altered the course of history.

Which of the following details from the extract and the chapter help Gaitonde understand that he was not in his original world?

1. The unusually clean and orderly Hornby Road
2. The absence of crowds and noise
3. The majestic buildings appearing more imposing
4. His knowledge of the Marathas winning the Battle of Panipat

Choose the correct option:

- A) 1, 2, and 3 only
- B) 2 and 4 only
- C) 1, 2, 3, and 4
- D) 3 and 4 only

**Q4. Answer ANY THREE of the following in 30–40 words each: (2x3=6)**

- a) How does Prof. Gaitonde react when he realises that he is in a parallel world in the lesson *Adventure*?
- b) What emotional conflict does the father face in *Father to Son*?
- c) Describe the satirical element in *Tale of the Melon City*.
- d) What message does the poem *Father to Son* convey about generational gaps?

**Q5. Answer ANY ONE of the following questions in 120–150 words. (1x4=4)**

A) *Adventure* deals with the concept of parallel realities. How does the author use scientific explanation to make the narrative believable?

**OR**

B) *Tale of the Melon City* uses humour to criticise blind traditions. Discuss with examples.

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