



English Core

Class XI
2026-27

Student Support Material



केन्द्रीय विद्यालय संगठन~Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan

संदेश

शिक्षा केवल पुस्तकों तक सीमित ज्ञान नहीं है; यह स्वयं को पहचानने, अपने विचारों को विस्तार देने और जीवन की चुनौतियों का आत्मविश्वास से सामना करने की सतत यात्रा है। केन्द्रीय विद्यालय संगठन का सदैव यह प्रयास रहा है कि प्रत्येक विद्यार्थी के लिए ऐसा शिक्षण वातावरण हो, जहाँ जिज्ञासा को प्रोत्साहन मिले, सीखना आनंददायी बने और प्रत्येक बालक अपनी अंतर्निहित क्षमताओं को पहचानकर उन्हें विकसित कर सके।

राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 2020 ने शिक्षा को सिर्फ रटने से समझने, सूचना से ज्ञान और ज्ञान से जीवनोपयोगी दक्षताओं की ओर अग्रसर किया है। आज का समय कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (Artificial Intelligence – AI), डिजिटल नवाचार और निरंतर बदलती तकनीकों का है। ऐसे युग में केवल तथ्यों का ज्ञान पर्याप्त नहीं है; आवश्यक है कि विद्यार्थी मनन- चिंतन करना सीखें, प्रश्न पूछें, समस्याओं का समाधान खोजें और नए विचारों के साथ आगे बढ़ें। यही क्षमताएँ उन्हें भविष्य के लिए तैयार करेंगी।

इन्हीं उद्देश्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए केन्द्रीय विद्यालय संगठन के पाँचों आंचलिक शिक्षा एवं प्रशिक्षण संस्थानों (ZIETs) के माध्यम से, समर्पित एवं अनुभवी शिक्षकों द्वारा कक्षा 9 से 12 के विद्यार्थियों के लिए यह विद्यार्थी सहायक सामग्री तैयार की गई है। यह केवल परीक्षा की तैयारी की संकलन सामग्री नहीं है, बल्कि विषयों को सरलता से समझने, अवधारणाओं को स्पष्ट करने, नियमित अभ्यास करने और आत्मविश्वास के साथ आगे बढ़ने का एक विश्वसनीय साथी है।

इस सामग्री में विषय-वस्तु को विद्यार्थियों की आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप सरल, व्यवस्थित एवं दक्षता-आधारित दृष्टिकोण से प्रस्तुत किया गया है। मुझे प्रसन्नता है कि इसे हमारे शिक्षकों के अनुभव, नवाचार और विद्यार्थियों के प्रति उनकी प्रतिबद्धता ने समृद्ध बनाया है। मुझे विश्वास है कि यह सामग्री विद्यार्थियों की सीखने की यात्रा को अधिक सहज, रोचक और प्रभावी बनाएगी तथा उन्हें बोर्ड परीक्षाओं के साथ-साथ जीवन की व्यापक चुनौतियों के लिए भी तैयार करेगी।

मेरा विश्वास है कि जब एक जिज्ञासु विद्यार्थी, प्रेरित शिक्षक और सार्थक शिक्षण संसाधन एक साथ आते हैं, तब शिक्षा केवल उपलब्धि का माध्यम नहीं रहती, बल्कि व्यक्तित्व निर्माण की एक सशक्त प्रक्रिया बन जाती है। यही भावना इस विद्यार्थी सहायक सामग्री के केंद्र में है।

मेरी हार्दिक शुभकामनाएँ हैं कि आप सभी सीखने की इस यात्रा में निरंतर आगे बढ़ें, अपने सपनों को नए आयाम दें और ज्ञान, संवेदनशीलता तथा नवाचार के साथ राष्ट्र निर्माण में अपना महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दें।

शुभकामनाओं सहित।


(विकास गुप्ता)

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ENGLISH CORE CLASS: XI (2026-27)

Section A Reading Skills- 26 Marks

I. Reading Comprehension through Unseen Passages 10+8=18 Marks

1. One unseen passage to assess comprehension, interpretation, analysis, inference and vocabulary. The passage may be factual, descriptive or literary.
2. One unseen case-based factual passage with verbal/visual inputs like statistical data, charts etc. to assess comprehension, interpretation, analysis, inference and evaluation.

Note: The combined word limit for both the passages will be 600-750. Multiple Choice Questions / Objective Type Questions will be asked.

3. Note Making and Summarization based on a passage of approximately 200-250 words. 5 + 3
(= 8 Marks)

Section B: Grammar and Creative Writing Skills– 23 Marks

II. Grammar 7 Marks

4. Questions on Gap filling (Tenses, Clauses)
5. Questions on re-ordering/transformation of sentences
(Total seven questions to be done out of the eight given)

III. Creative Writing Skills 16 Marks

6. Short writing task – Classified Advertisements, up to 50 words. One out of the two given questions to be answered (3 Marks: Format: 1 / Content: 1 / Expression: 1)
7. Short writing task – Poster up to 50 words. One out of the two given questions to be answered. (3 marks: Format: 1 / Content: 1 / Expression: 1)
8. Long Writing task: Speech in 120-150 words based on verbal / visual cues related to contemporary / age-appropriate topic. One out of the two given questions to be answered. (5 Marks: Format: 1 / Content: 2 / Expression: 2)

Section C: Literature - 31 Marks

This section will have variety of assessment items including Multiple Choice Questions, Objective Type Questions, Short Answer Type Questions and Long Answer Type Questions to assess comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation and extrapolation beyond the text.

10. One Poetry extract out of two, from the book Hornbill, to assess comprehension, interpretation, analysis, inference and appreciation. (3x1=3 Marks)
11. One Prose extract out of two, from the book Hornbill, to assess comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation and appreciation. (3x1=3 Marks)
12. One prose extract out of two, from the book Snapshots, to assess comprehension, interpretation, analysis, inference and appreciation. (4x1=4 Marks)
13. Two short-answer type questions (one from Prose and one from Poetry, from the book Hornbill), out of four, to be answered in 40-50 words. Questions should elicit inferential responses through critical thinking. (3x2=6 Marks)

14. One short-answer type question, from the book *Snapshots*, to be answered in 40- 50 words. Questions should elicit inferential responses through critical thinking. One out of two questions to be done. (3x1=3 Marks)

15. One Long answer type question, from *Prose/Poetry of Hornbill*, to be answered in 120-150 words. Questions can be based on incident / theme / passage / extract / event, as reference points to assess extrapolation beyond and across the text. The question will elicit analytical and evaluative response from the student. Any one out of two questions to be done. (1x6=6 Marks)

16. One Long answer type question, based on the chapters from the book *Snapshots*, to be answered in 120-150 words, to assess global comprehension and extrapolation beyond the text. Questions to provide analytical and evaluative responses, using incidents, events, themes, as reference points. Any one out of two questions to be done. (1x6=6 Marks)

PREScribed BOOKS

Hornbill: English Reader published by National Council of Education Research and Training, New Delhi	Snapshots: Supplementary Reader published by National Council of Education Research and Training, New Delhi
• The Portrait of a Lady (Prose) • A Photograph (Poem) • “We’re Not Afraid to Die... if We Can Be Together (Prose) • Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues • The Laburnum Top (Poem) • The Voice of the Rain (Poem) • Childhood (Poem) • The Adventure (Prose) • Silk Road (Prose) • Father to Son (Poem)	• The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse (Prose) • The Address (Prose) • Mother’s Day (Play) • Birth (Prose) • The Tale of Melon City (Prose)

MARKS DISTRIBUTION

Section	Competencies	Total Marks
Reading Skills	Conceptual understanding, decoding, analyzing, inferring, interpreting, appreciating, literary conventions and vocabulary, summarizing and using appropriate format/s.	26
Grammar and Creative Writing Skills	Conceptual understanding, application of rules, analysis, reasoning, appropriate style and tone, using appropriate format and fluency, inference, analysis, evaluation and creativity.	23
Literature Text Book and Supplementary Reading Text	Recalling, reasoning, appreciating literary conventions, inference, analysis, creativity with fluency, critical thinking.	31
	TOTAL	80

Internal Assessment	Assessment of Listening and Speaking Skills	10
	• Listening • Speaking	5+5
	• Project Work	10
	GRAND TOTAL	100

SECTION A (READING SKILLS)

READING COMPREHENSION- DESCRIPTIVE PASSAGES

Tips for Attempting Reading Comprehension Questions:

- **Skim:** Quickly read the introductory/concluding paragraphs to grasp the overall topic and structure.
- **Scan:** Look for keywords, dates, names, and other significant details that might be relevant to the questions.
- **Look up the questions:** After first reading, go through the questions once to understand the context better and know where to focus.
- **Engage actively:** Don't just passively read; interact with the text by underlining key words, making notes, and asking yourself questions.
- **Identify keywords:** Pinpoint important words and phrases in the passage that relate to the questions.
- **Use context clues:** If you encounter unfamiliar words, try to understand their meaning from the surrounding text.
- **Monitor your understanding:** Pause occasionally to check if you're following the text and re-read if necessary.

GENERAL TIPS:

Practice Regularly: The more you read and practice comprehension strategies, the better you'll become.

Improve Reading Speed: Read regularly to increase your speed.

Work on your vocabulary: Expanding your vocabulary will make it easier to understand complex texts.

UNSEEN PASSAGES (FACTUAL, DESCRIPTIVE, LITERARY) – SOLVED

1. Ethics are not merely a set of rules or a "code of conduct" to be followed in public; they are the fundamental scaffolding that supports the social fabric. While laws are written to regulate behaviour from the outside, morality is an internal compass that guides an individual through the fog of choice. In modern society, the line between personal ambition and collective well-being often becomes blurred. We live in an era where material success is frequently used as a yardstick for a "good life," sometimes at the expense of honesty and empathy.
2. A common misconception is that ethics and morality are synonymous. While they overlap, they serve different functions. Morality refers to individual beliefs about right and wrong, often inherited through culture or religion. Ethics, on the other hand, are the systematic reflections on these moral views, grounded in logic and reasoning. For instance, a person might have a moral belief that lying is wrong, but an ethical framework helps them decide what to do if telling the truth would cause unnecessary harm to an innocent person.
3. The erosion of values in contemporary times is a growing concern. The digital revolution has introduced new ethical dilemmas that our ancestors never faced. Concepts like "online privacy" and "cyber-bullying" are modern tests of character. In a world where screens distance us from the direct impact of our words, the exercise of compassion becomes even more vital.

4. True integrity is an "integral whole"—it cannot be practiced selectively. A person who is moral in public but lax in private creates a duality that eventually erodes their authenticity. As many great reformers have shown, it is the authenticity of one's life that lends weight to their message. For the youth, moving into a world of intense competition, the challenge is to achieve success without losing their humanity along the way.

Answer the following questions based on the above passage:

(10 Marks)

1. What is the primary difference between ethics and morality? 1
 - a) Morality is logical, while ethics is cultural.
 - b) Ethics are systematic reflections grounded in logic, whereas morality is often inherited.
 - c) They are identical and can be used interchangeably.
 - d) Ethics are private rules, and morality is public law.
2. What does the author mean by describing ethics as "fundamental scaffolding"? 1
 - a) They are temporary structures.
 - b) They are difficult to build
 - c) They are the essential support system for society.
 - d) They are only for high-rise buildings.
3. Complete the sentence appropriately. 1

The author's comparison of ethics to "fundamental scaffolding" suggests that without them, the social fabric would _____.
4. Based on your reading of paragraph 3, list two contemporary ethical challenges that differ from those of previous generations. 1
5. State whether the following statement is TRUE or FALSE: 1

The author believes that material success and a moral life are mutually exclusive concepts.
6. Select the word from paragraph 1 that conveys a meaning similar to 'criterion' or 'benchmark'. 1
7. "True integrity is an 'integral whole'—it cannot be practised selectively." Based on the text, explain why the author considers "selective" morality to be a threat to one's authenticity. 1
8. Select the option that correctly identifies the relationship between the two statements given below: 1
 - (i) Morality is often inherited through culture or religion.
 - (ii) Ethics are systematic reflections grounded in logic and reasoning.
 - a) (i) is the cause and (ii) is the effect.
 - b) (i) and (ii) represent contrasting approaches to right and wrong.
 - c) (ii) is a summary of (i).
 - d) (i) and (ii) are synonymous concepts.
9. Which of the following best describes the writer's tone in paragraph 4? 1
 - a) Didactic/Instructive
 - b) Sarcastic
 - c) Indifferent
 - d) Aggressive
10. The exercise of compassion becomes even more vital in a digital world because: 1
 - a) Screens help us connect faster.
 - b) Privacy is no longer a concern.
 - c) Digital tools are inherently unethical.
 - d) We cannot see the immediate pain our words might cause others.

Answer Key:

- 1 **b)** Ethics are systematic reflections grounded in logic, whereas morality is often inherited.
- 2 **c)** They are the essential support system for society.
- 3 collapse / lose its stability / disintegrate.
- 4 (i) Online privacy (ii) Cyber-bullying.
- 5 **FALSE** (*The text states success is "frequently" used as a yardstick at the expense of honesty, not that the two can never coexist.*)
- 6 **Yardstick**

5. State whether the following statement is TRUE or FALSE:

Dedicated freight corridors are being built to mix passenger and cargo traffic for better efficiency.

6. Select the word from paragraph 2 that means 'to make an action or process easier'.

- a) Transition b) Facilitates
- c) Diverse d) Spanning

7. How does the Indian Railways contribute to the Indian workforce? (Answer in about 40 words) 2

8. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a challenge for the Indian Railways? 1

- a) Safety protocols b) Financial burden of subsidies
- c) Lack of passengers d) Infrastructure bottlenecks

PASSAGE - 2

Teenage years are a time of rapid growth and development—physically, emotionally, and mentally. The body undergoes several changes that demand increased nutritional support. During this phase, adopting healthy food habits becomes essential, as they directly influence energy levels, academic performance, emotional stability, and long-term well-being. However, in today's fast-paced world, teenagers often fall into unhealthy eating habits. The easy availability of processed snacks, sugary beverages, and fast food, combined with academic stress and digital distractions, has significantly impacted their food choices.

Healthy eating is not merely about consuming fewer calories; it's about providing the body with the right nutrients to support development. A balanced diet comprising fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy helps in building strong bones, maintaining a healthy weight, and improving concentration. Iron, calcium, and protein are especially vital for teenagers. Unfortunately, many teens skip meals, particularly breakfast, which can lead to fatigue, irritability, and reduced academic performance.

Teenagers are highly influenced by their peers and digital trends, which can either encourage mindful eating or promote unhealthy choices. Social media, in particular, can play a dual role—it can raise awareness about nutrition but can also glamorize unrealistic body images and fad diets. Therefore, creating awareness about balanced eating and encouraging critical thinking about food choices is crucial.

Developing healthy food habits involves more than just knowing what to eat. It includes mindful eating—being aware of hunger cues, avoiding emotional eating, and eating without distractions. Parental guidance and school interventions also play a significant role in shaping teenagers' food habits. When schools incorporate nutrition education into their curriculum, it fosters a culture of conscious eating. Similarly, family meals and parental modelling of good eating habits create positive associations with healthy food. Encouraging teenagers to participate in meal planning and preparation can also build interest in nutrition. By making small, consistent changes—like replacing sugary drinks with water, opting for home-cooked meals over fast food, and including seasonal fruits in their snacks—teens can build a lifelong foundation of healthy eating. With the right guidance and motivation, teenagers can be empowered to make informed food choices that benefit both their current and future health.

Ultimately, cultivating good food habits during teenage years lays the foundation for a healthier adulthood. It is not about restricting food, but about choosing wisely, listening to the body's needs, and understanding the long-term impact of food on health. With the right knowledge, motivation and environment, teenagers can learn to nourish their bodies and minds in sustainable ways.

Answer the following questions based on the above passage:

(10 Marks)

- (i) Which of the following best describes the central idea of the passage? 1
 - a. Teenagers should avoid processed food
 - b. Schools and parents should monitor teenagers' eating habits strictly

- c. Social media influences food habits
- d. Developing healthy food habits during adolescence is vital for lifelong well-being
- (ii) According to the passage, why do teenagers choose unhealthy food? 1
 - a. Because teenage years are a time of rapid growth and development
 - b. Because of stress, peer influence and easy access to fast food
 - c. Because their parents force them to
 - d. Because they listen to their body's needs
- (iii) Which of the following best describes the narrative style of the passage? 1
 - a. Expository with a persuasive undertone, using facts and reasoning to promote awareness
 - b. Anecdotal and conversational, relying on personal stories
 - c. Dramatic and emotional, aiming to evoke strong feelings through storytelling
 - d. Poetic and symbolic, using figurative language to express abstract ideas
- (iv) What does the phrase 'mindful eating' in the passage imply? 1
 - a. Eating quickly without distractions
 - b. Eating the food, counting the calories
 - c. Avoiding junk food
 - d. Eating with awareness and avoiding emotional and distracted eating
- (v) Mention two risks of skipping breakfast. 1
- (vi) Explain the dual role of social media in influencing eating habits. 2
- (vii) Give one point each on how school and family can influence the eating habits of teenagers. 2
- (viii) Which of the following is *not* a suggestion made in the passage for improving the food habits of teenagers? 1
 - a. Replacing sugary drinks with water
 - b. Skipping meals to balance the intake of calories
 - c. Participating in meal planning
 - d. Eating without distractions

CASE-BASED READING PASSAGE -SOLVED

Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow:

(8 Marks)

1. The 21st century is marked by rapid technological advancements, globalization, and evolving job roles. Traditional skills are no longer enough to stay competitive. To succeed in today's workforce, individuals must continuously upgrade their skills. Here's how you can develop a future-ready skill set. Continuous learning is essential in a fast-changing world. Online platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and LinkedIn Learning offer courses on various topics. Attending workshops, webinars, and reading industry-related books can also help you stay updated with the latest trends. In a technology-driven world, digital literacy is crucial. Proficiency in productivity software (e.g., Microsoft Office, Google Workspace), collaboration tools (e.g., Slack, Zoom), and emerging technologies (e.g., artificial intelligence, cybersecurity) can improve job prospects. Learning coding, data analysis, or digital marketing can provide an additional career advantage.

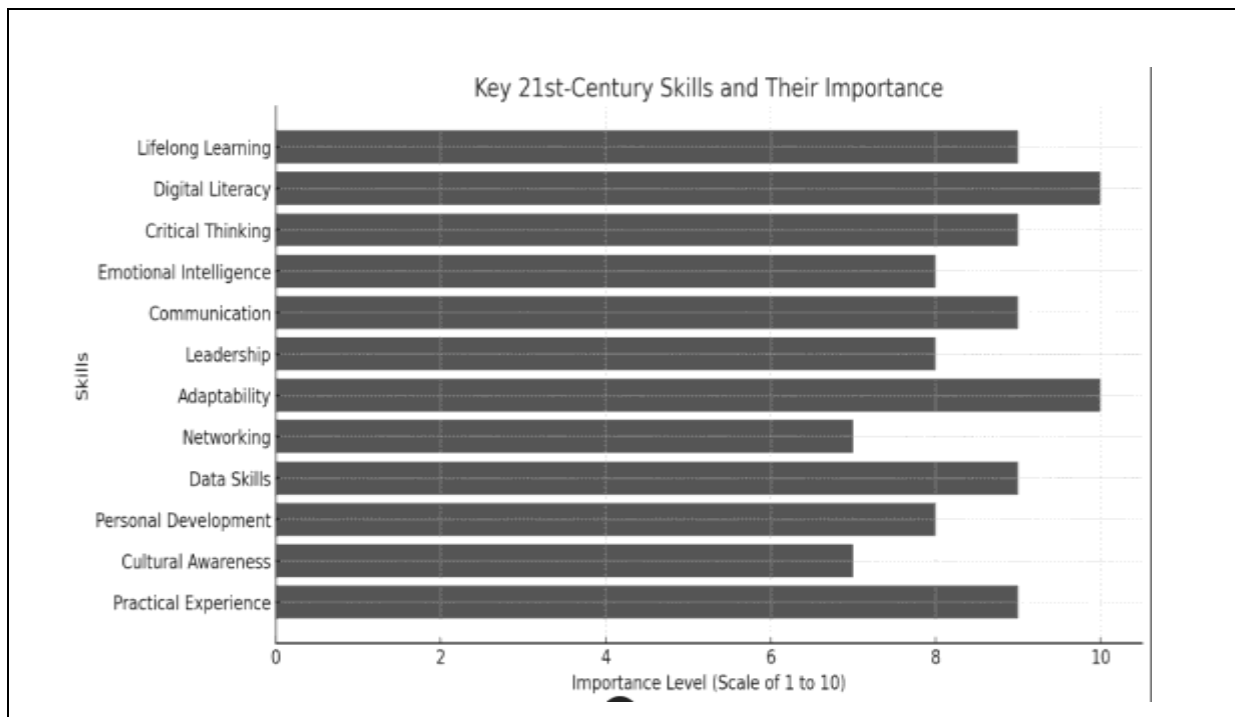
2. Automation is replacing repetitive tasks, making critical thinking a valuable skill. Employers seek professionals who can analyze situations, evaluate options, and make informed decisions. Participating in case studies, logic-based puzzles, and real-world problem-solving activities can sharpen these abilities. Workplace success depends on more than just technical skills. Emotional intelligence—understanding and managing emotions—helps improve teamwork and leadership. Skills like empathy, self-awareness, conflict resolution, and active listening foster strong professional relationships and effective collaboration. Effective communication—both verbal and written—is key in any career. Writing clear emails, delivering persuasive presentations, and articulating ideas effectively can enhance workplace interactions. Additionally,

collaboration skills are essential in diverse, global teams. Engaging in group projects, public speaking and networking events can improve these abilities.

3. Leadership is not just for managers; it's a valuable skill for all professionals. Decision-making, strategic thinking, and team management can boost career growth. Volunteering for leadership roles, seeking mentorship, and taking management training programs can help develop these skills. Industries evolve rapidly, making adaptability essential. Those who embrace change, learn new skills quickly and stay flexible have a higher chance of career success. Cultivating a growth mind-set and viewing challenges as opportunities can improve resilience. Networking can unlock job opportunities and career growth. Engaging with industry professionals on LinkedIn, attending conferences, and joining professional organizations can expand your knowledge and provide mentorship opportunities.

4. Data drives decision-making in modern businesses. Basic knowledge of data analysis tools (e.g., Excel, Power BI, Tableau) and understanding data-driven strategies can enhance employability. Learning statistical analysis and business intelligence concepts can be beneficial. Time management, financial literacy, stress management, and self-discipline are crucial for long-term success. Reading self-improvement books, practicing mindfulness, and attending personal development workshops can enhance productivity and well-being.

5. As workplaces become more diverse, cultural intelligence is vital. Understanding different perspectives, learning new languages, and developing cross-cultural communication skills can improve collaboration in international environments. Acquiring knowledge is not enough—you must apply it. Engaging in internships, freelance projects, volunteering, or personal projects can reinforce learning and provide practical experience. Building a portfolio of work can demonstrate skills to potential employers. The 21st-century job market is dynamic and competitive. Upgrading your skills through continuous learning, digital literacy, soft skills, adaptability, and practical application will ensure career success. By embracing these strategies, you can remain relevant, resilient, and prepared for the future.



Based on your understanding of the passage, answer the following:

(1x8= 8 M)

1. Which arrangement of the skills in the ascending order of their importance is right according to the graphic?

- a. Digital Literacy-Critical Thinking-Emotional Intelligence- Networking
 - b. Leadership-Adaptability-Networking-Data Skills
 - c. Practical Experience- Personal Development-Cultural Awareness- Data Skills
 - d. Networking-Leadership-Communication-Adaptability
2. According to the passage, why is adaptability considered a key 21st-century skill?
- a. It improves coding skills
 - b. It helps resist change
 - c. It allows professionals to adjust to rapid changes
 - d. It enhances handwriting
3. Which skill is the most essential to navigate multicultural environments?
- a. Digital marketing
 - b. Emotional intelligence
 - c. Cultural awareness
 - d. Data entry
4. Find the word from **Para 2** which can substitute the underlined word in the sentence given below:
Every citizen of India has the right of vocalizing one's views freely.
5. Complete the analogy-
Lifelong learning: Continuous improvement: Networking: _____
- a. Digital skills
 - b) Social growth
 - c) Online marketing
 - d) Critical thinking
6. Why is digital literacy considered a key skill in the 21st century?
7. Complete the analogy-
Adaptability: Change: Leadership: _____
- a. Emotions
 - b. Team guidance
 - c. Calculations
 - d. Travel
8. Mention two ways to develop communication skills based on the passage.

Answer Key:

1. d. Networking-Leadership-Communication-Adaptability
2. c. It allows professionals to adjust to rapid changes
3. c. Cultural awareness
4. Articulating
5. b. Social growth
6. Because many jobs now require the use of digital tools and technology, making it essential for communication, productivity, and efficiency.
7. b. Team guidance
8. Joining public speaking groups and participating in group projects.

CASE-BASED READING PASSAGES -UNSOLVED

PASSAGE - 1

Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow:

(8 Marks)

1. NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore recently made a dramatic return to Earth after an unexpected nine-month stay aboard the International Space Station (ISS). Originally scheduled for just an eight-day mission starting June 5, 2024, their journey took an unforeseen turn due to technical issues with the Boeing Starliner spacecraft, which was supposed to bring them back home. Instead, they had to rely on a SpaceX Dragon capsule, which successfully splashed down in the Gulf of Mexico, marking the end of a prolonged and challenging mission.
2. The Mission and Unforeseen Challenges: Williams and Wilmore were part of the highly anticipated Boeing Starliner's first crewed test flight, a crucial milestone in NASA's Commercial Crew Program. The mission was meant to demonstrate the Starliner's ability to ferry astronauts to and from the ISS safely. However, shortly after reaching orbit, the spacecraft experienced technical difficulties, including helium leaks and thruster malfunctions. Due to safety concerns, NASA and Boeing decided to keep the astronauts on the ISS until a reliable return plan could be arranged. While on board the ISS, Williams and Wilmore continued to contribute to important scientific research, maintenance work, and

spacewalks. They adapted to the situation with resilience, making the most of their extended stay. The delay also allowed them to participate in additional microgravity experiments that would have otherwise been assigned to future crews.

3. The Dramatic Return to Earth: After several months of troubleshooting and discussions between NASA, Boeing, and SpaceX, the decision was made to bring the astronauts home aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule. The successful return of Williams and Wilmore highlights the importance of partnerships between NASA and private space companies, ensuring safe space missions even in the face of unexpected challenges. On re-entry, the Crew Dragon capsule plunged through Earth's atmosphere and splashed down safely in the Gulf of Mexico, where recovery teams were ready to assist the astronauts. The return was met with celebration and relief, as their extended stay had sparked concerns about the physical toll of prolonged weightlessness.

Fact	Details
Mission start	Launched on June 5, 2024 aboard Boeing's Starliner as part of Crew Flight Test –originally planned for ~8 days
Cause of delay	Starliner suffered propulsion thruster malfunctions and helium leaks; NASA deemed return unsafe
Extended Stay	Instead of returning in June, Williams stayed aboard ISS for ~286 days, ultimately returning in March 2025
Return Vehicle	Escaped via SpaceX Crew-9 Dragon capsule, splashing down in Gulf-of-Mexico on March 18, 2025
Total Orbits / Distance	Completed 4,576 orbits, travelling ~195 million km (~121 million miles)
Spacewalks	Performed 9 EVAs, totaling 62 h 6 min—breaking female spacewalk record
Physical Effects	Bone/muscle loss (~1% bone loss per month), fluid shifts, cardiovascular deconditioning, "chicken legs," balance issues
Health Measures	Daily exercise (bike, treadmill, weights) to fight microgravity effects; reassured fans that weight remained stable
Rehabilitation	Underwent ~45-day rehab on Earth to recover strength, balance, and coordination

4. Post-Mission Recovery and Impact: After spending nearly a year in space, both astronauts were immediately taken for medical evaluations and began a 45-day rehabilitation program to help their bodies adjust back to Earth's gravity. Long-duration space missions can cause muscle atrophy, bone density loss,

and balance issues, requiring a carefully planned recovery process. Williams and Wilmore's journey underscore the challenges and unpredictability of space travel. It also emphasizes the need for more reliable spacecraft for future missions. Boeing's Starliner, despite its setbacks, remains an important part of NASA's plans for commercial spaceflight, but the company will need to resolve its technical issues before its next crewed mission.

5. This mission also highlighted NASA's flexibility and problem-solving abilities in the face of adversity. Despite the challenges, the astronauts continued valuable research and proved that astronauts must always be prepared for unexpected situations. Their grit and determination served as a testament to the human spirit of exploration and adaptability in space.

(Source: **Publicly available reports** on Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore's mission, including NASA press releases and news articles.)

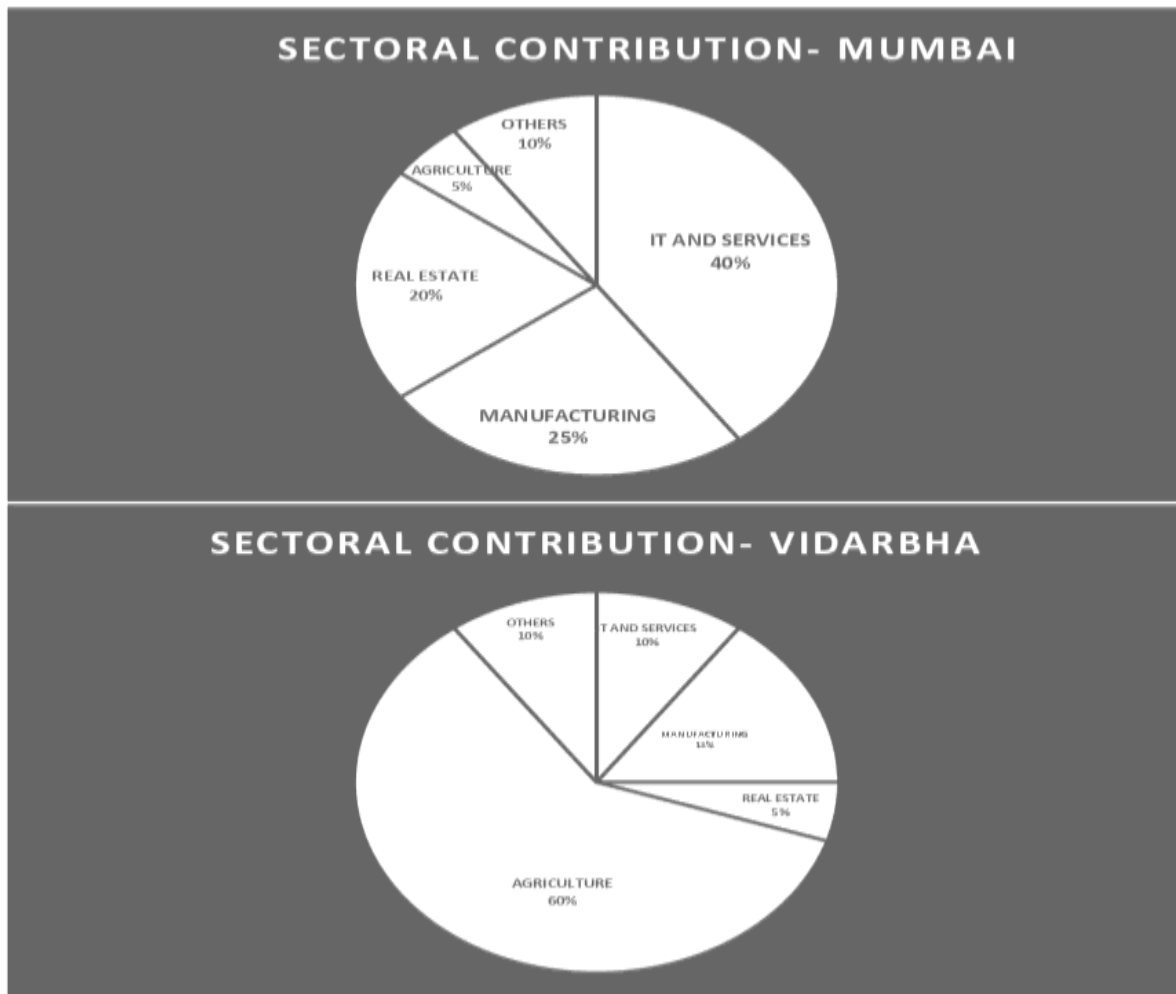
Based on your understanding of the passage, answer the following questions by choosing the most appropriate option:

1. Which spacecraft was originally supposed to bring Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore back to Earth?
 - a) SpaceX Dragon
 - b) Soyuz
 - c) Boeing Starliner
 - d) Orion

2. Which of the following does ‘a prolonged and challenging mission’ most likely refer to?
 - a) The mission to bring Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore back from space
 - b) The mission of Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore to adapt to the situation with resilience, making the most of their extended stay
 - c) The mission to demonstrate the Starliner’s ability to ferry astronauts to and from the ISS safely
 - d) The mission to underline the importance of partnerships between NASA and private space companies
3. What major issue delayed the return of Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore?
 - a) Communication failure
 - b) Solar panel malfunction
 - c) Thruster and helium leak issues in Starliner
 - d) Meteor strike
4. On the basis of the table, which of the following is NOT true about Sunita Williams’s mission?
 - a) She travelled 195 million KMs
 - b) She stayed in ISS for 286 days
 - c) She completed 4567 orbits
 - d) She performed nine EVAs
5. Which term best describes the planned return of astronauts to Earth after completing a mission?
 - a) Deployment
 - b) Splashdown
 - c) Docking
 - d) Calibration
6. Why is rehabilitation important after long-duration space missions?
7. Which combination of tone & mood is the most appropriate in the context of Para. 5?
 - a. Mood: Hopeful, Tone: Sombre
 - b. Mood: Hopeful, Tone: Celebratory
 - c. Mood: Sorrowful, Tone: Appreciative
 - d. Mood: Serious, Tone: Mocking
8. Which character traits of the astronauts aboard ISS are reflected here?
 1. Resilience 2. Grit 3. Cowardice 4. Determination 5. Foolishness 6. Tenacity
 - a. Only 1, 3, 5 b. Only 1,2,4,6 c. Only 2, 4, 6 d. Only 3 & 5

PASSAGE 2

1. India, with its vast and diverse landscape, has long grappled with the challenge of economic disparity. While metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Delhi boast thriving financial sectors, rural areas often remain deprived of basic amenities. This economic imbalance can be traced to a complex interplay of historical, social, and policy-driven factors.
2. Post-independence, India adopted a mixed economy with significant government intervention. While policies like the Five-Year Plans focused on industrialization, the benefits were often limited to urban regions. Despite the Green Revolution of the 1960s improving agricultural productivity, the income gap between rural and urban areas widened. This imbalance resulted in large-scale migration, leading to the overburdening of urban infrastructure.
3. Case Study: Maharashtra's Dual Economy: Maharashtra presents a stark example of this divide. Mumbai, the state's capital, is a global financial hub. It hosts the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and headquarters of numerous multinational corporations. Conversely, the Vidarbha region in the same state is predominantly agrarian, characterized by low productivity and farmer distress. Farmers in Vidarbha often face challenges like droughts, lack of modern agricultural equipment, and insufficient access to credit. The absence of alternative income sources further exacerbates the economic strain. In contrast, urban professionals in Mumbai benefit from access to education, healthcare, and lucrative employment opportunities.



4. Recognizing the disparity, both central and state governments have implemented several schemes to promote inclusive growth: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA): Launched in 2005, this program guarantees 100 days of wage employment per year to rural households. It has provided a safety net for millions, reducing distress migration. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY): This initiative aims to improve rural connectivity by constructing roads, facilitating better access to markets and healthcare. Skill India and Start-up India: By encouraging skill development and entrepreneurship, these programs aim to generate employment opportunities in rural areas. However, implementation challenges remain. Corruption, delays in fund disbursement, and inadequate monitoring often dilute the impact of these schemes. In recent years, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played a vital role in addressing regional disparities. Companies like Tata and Reliance have invested in rural education, healthcare, and skill training. NGOs like SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) have empowered women by promoting microfinance and self-help groups.

5. To bridge the economic divide, a multi-pronged approach is necessary: Investment in Infrastructure: Expanding Road networks, irrigation facilities, and digital connectivity in rural areas can stimulate economic growth. Agricultural Reforms: Providing better access to credit, modern technology, and market linkages can enhance farm productivity and income. Decentralized Development: Promoting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and encouraging local entrepreneurship can create jobs and reduce dependence on agriculture. Quality Education and Healthcare: Strengthening these sectors in rural areas will ensure equitable access to opportunities. India's vision of becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2030 hinges on addressing economic disparity. Sustainable and inclusive growth requires collaborative efforts from the government, private sector, and civil society. By empowering rural communities and ensuring equitable resource distribution, India can bridge the urban-rural divide and achieve holistic development.

Sources:

(Government Reports & Policies- Reports by NITI Aayog, Economic Surveys of India, and RBI reports. World Bank & IMF Reports- Studies on India's economic disparity and development. Academic Research & News Articles- Papers published by institutions like IIMs, IITs, and reports from The Hindu, Economic Times, and Business Standard.)

Based on your understanding of the passage, answer the following questions: (1x8=8 M)

1. What is the ratio of the sectoral contribution of IT & Services between Mumbai & Vidarbha?
a. 1:4 b. 4:1 c. 40:15 d. 8:1
2. What is one of the primary challenges faced by the farmers in Vidarbha?
a. Lack of access to modern technology b. Excessive industrialization
c. High employment opportunities d. surplus government support
3. Choose the most appropriate option based on the statements given below:
A. Assertion: There is economic disparity in India.
B. Reason: Expanding road networks, irrigation facilities, and digital connectivity in rural areas can stimulate economic growth.
a. Both A and B are correct, and B is the correct explanation of A
b. Both A and B are correct, but B is not the correct explanation of A
c. A is correct, but B is incorrect
d. Both A & B are incorrect.
4. How do NGOs like SEWA contribute to reducing economic disparity?
a. By establishing stock exchanges
b. By empowering women through microfinance and self-help groups
c. By privatizing agricultural lands
d. By promoting urban migration
5. Which of the following best explains the economic relationship between Mumbai and Vidarbha?
a. Mutual dependence with equitable growth b. Urban prosperity and rural stagnation
c. Rural development driving urban growth d. Equal distribution of resources
6. What challenges do farmers in Vidarbha face?
7. What role do private sector companies and NGOs play in bridging the economic divide?
8. Which of the following is the best synonym for "**exacerbates**" as used in the passage?
a. Improves b. Worsens c. Resolves d. Predicts

NOTE MAKING

NOTE-MAKING is an important study skill. In this type of question, a passage is given from which we need to draw the main points using a prescribed format of: Title, Sub-headings, Abbreviation table and a summary based on the notes prepared.

How to prepare good notes?

1. (i) Notes should be short. They should identify the main points.
(ii) They list information in what is called 'note form'.
(iii) They are written only in phrases, not sentences.
2. (i) Information is logically divided and subdivided using figures/letters.
(ii) The divisions are made like this: Main sections: Sub-sections: Sub-sub-sections: 1, 2, 3, etc. (i), (ii), (iii), etc. (a), (b), (c), etc.
3. Another common method is the 'decimal' system. Main sections: Sub-sections Sub-sub-sections: 1, 2, 3, etc. 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc. 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, etc.
4. Abbreviations and symbols are freely used.
5. Articles, prepositions and conjunctions are omitted.
6. Notes must make sense when they are read again; otherwise, they will be of no use.

How to summarize?

1. The points should be expanded into full sentences and linked using suitable connectors.
2. We need to be precise in our expression.
3. The summary will contain all the main ideas of the original text.
4. Avoid examples, explanations and repetition.

Note-Making and Summarization based on a passage of approximately 200-250 words.

This question is divided into two parts:

- a. **Note Making with Keywords (abbreviation) table (5 marks)**
- b. **Summary based on the notes (3 marks)**

Marking Scheme:

- a) Note Making: 5 Marks (Title: 1, Notes: 2, Numbering and indenting: 1, Key/Glossary: 1)
- b) Summary (up to 50 words): 3 Marks (Content: 2, Expression: 1)

Q1. Read the following passage:

Sleep is one of the most essential biological functions required for the proper functioning of the human body. Despite its importance, it is often neglected in today's fast-paced world. Many individuals sacrifice sleep to meet work deadlines, study longer hours, or engage in social and digital activities. However, this habit can have serious consequences on both physical and mental health.

Scientific research shows that sleep plays a crucial role in memory consolidation, emotional regulation, and overall cognitive performance. During sleep, the brain processes and organises information gathered throughout the day, strengthening neural connections that support learning. A lack of adequate sleep can impair attention, reduce problem-solving abilities, and negatively affect decision-making skills.

In addition to cognitive functions, sleep also impacts physical health. It helps regulate hormones responsible for appetite, growth, and stress. Chronic sleep deprivation has been linked to several health issues, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and weakened immunity. Moreover, insufficient sleep can lead to increased irritability, anxiety, and even depression.

Teenagers and young adults are particularly vulnerable to sleep deprivation due to academic pressure and excessive screen time. The blue light emitted by electronic devices interferes with the production of melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep cycles. As a result, many students struggle to maintain a healthy sleep routine.

Experts recommend that adolescents get between 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night. Establishing a consistent sleep schedule, reducing screen exposure before bedtime, and creating a comfortable sleep environment can significantly improve sleep quality. Prioritizing sleep is not a luxury but a necessity for maintaining overall well-being and achieving optimal performance in daily life.

Ans. A) **THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP**

1. Significance of Sleep

- 1.1 Essential biological func.
- 1.2 Often neglected in fast-paced lives
- 1.3 Sacrificed for work, study and digital use

2. Role in Cognitive Functions

- 2.1 Aids memory consolidation
- 2.2 Enhances learning and neural connections

2.3 Improves:

2.3.1. attention

2.3.2. problem-solving

2.3.3. decision-making

2.4 Lack of sleep → reduced mental efficiency

3. Impact on Physical Health

3.1 Regulates hormones (appetite, growth, stress)

3.2 Prevents:

3.2.1. obesity

3.2.2. diabetes

3.2.3. heart disease

3.3 Boosts immunity

3.4 Sleep loss → irritability, anxiety, depression

4. Teenagers & Sleep Issues

4.1 Academic pressure

4.2 Excessive screen time

4.3 Blue light dcrs. melatonin production

4.4 Disrupts sleep cycle

5. Measures to Improve Sleep

5.1 7–9 hrs recommended daily

5.2 Maintain fixed schedule

5.3 Reduce screen exposure

5.4 Create comfortable sleep envt.

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

Func.	Function
Dcrs.	Decrease
Envt.	Environment
Hrs	Hours

Ans b) SUMMARY - Sleep is vital for physical and mental well-being, yet often neglected in modern lifestyles. It supports memory, learning, emotional balance, and cognitive functions, while also regulating hormones affecting growth, appetite, and stress. Lack of sleep impairs concentration and increases health risks like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Teenagers are especially affected due to academic stress and screen use. Experts recommend 7–9 hours of sleep daily, along with consistent routines and reduced screen time, to maintain overall health and performance.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

PASSAGE-1

1. This isn't a mountain region of mere subjective beauty. Nor one, which claims its greatness, based on just an overwhelming opinion of a large majority. Sikkim is a treasure that few know about. However, the facts of its remarkable geography bear enough testimony to pitch Sikkim in a slot that no other mountain region, anywhere in the world, could duplicate or rival.

2. What Everest is to peaks, Sikkim is to the mountains. Tragically, a region so wild and exotic and with such geographic and climatic extremes, that its amazing wilds and not its unremarkable hill stations, ensure its accessibility to the adventurous only. Just delve into these facts a bit. From the plains, in a mere 80 kms as the crow flies, the altitude reaches 28,168 feet at the very top of Kangchenjunga, the third-highest peak in the world. Such a sharp elevation is unrivalled anywhere else and is the first geographical claim of Sikkim. The second is an offshoot of the first. Nowhere else do so many 7,000 meter-plus peaks crowd up such a confined space. And the third is really a consequence of the first and the second, with the sharp gradation creating the most variegated flora and fauna possible anywhere in the mountains. The fourth uniqueness is also a consequence of the first and the second and lies in the extremes of the climate, which ranges from the tropical to the typical arctic type. And the fifth claim is its thin permanent population and relatively fewer travelers by virtue of its remote, far-eastern Himalayan location.

3. The startling facts about Sikkim never seem to end. For starters, all of Sikkim lies in a mere 110 kms by 65 kms of mountains, peaks, glaciers, rivers and forests. A little dot on the map at a latitude of 27 degrees North and a longitude of 88 degrees East. Its 7,000-sq kms make it about as large as the National Capital Region of India! To the North and extending to the East of Sikkim is Tibet / China, and to the West is Nepal. To the South are the Himalayan and sub-Himalayan regions of West Bengal. It is, in fact, these geographical extremes and the resulting ambience that make the mountaineers trek here, when they are not climbing, besides fueling mountaineering dreams in the minds of trekkers, what with the closest possible proximity to magnificent peaks while trekking.

4. On the subject of trekking here, it is strange but true that acclimatization is much tougher in Sikkim than elsewhere. It may have something to do with being closer in latitude to the Tropic of Cancer, besides the rather sharp stages involved in each day of trekking. The closeness to the Tropic of Cancer has meant that the snowline will always be much higher, and therefore human settlements are seen even at altitudes of 16,000 feet! (Adapted from a travelogue by Ashish Kaul, Travel Writer)

PASSAGE 2

1. A concert, a social institution for the public performance of music outside of a religious or dramatic context. Concerts developed in their present form from the informal music-making of the 17th century. The social influences affecting the development of the concert also affected the music conceived for it, and the evolution in music from Mozart to Beethoven has a counterpart in the patronage of the concert. Similarly, cosmopolitan aspects of music in the early 21st century are associated with the increasingly international outlook of concert audiences.

2. Early forms of the concert were associated with university activities. In the 17th and 18th centuries, many German universities maintained a Collegium Musicum for the performance of chamber music, and "music meetings" were regularly held at Oxford and Cambridge.

3. Gatherings of amateurs to hear music had been a feature of the Italian academies of the Renaissance, notably those at Bologna and Milan, founded in the 15th century. Like the French academies that succeeded them, they fostered music as one of the humanities and anticipated in this respect the function of 18th-century concert patrons. The more important Italian and French academies were, however, principally

concerned with exploring the borderlands of music and poetry, and these opened a way to the opera rather than to the concert.

4. The first known public concerts for which admission was charged were given in London by the violinist John Banister at his home in Whitefriars in 1672. In 1678, Thomas Britton, a charcoal seller, established weekly concerts in a loft in Clerkenwell at the subscription rate of 10 shillings a year. Handel and Pepusch were among the performers at these humble but historic concerts, which were the forerunners of several other London series, particularly in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. *(Adapted from web source: Britannica)*

GRAMMAR (07 MARKS)

TENSES

USAGE RULES

Tense	Structure and Usage Rule	Example
Present Simple	Subject + V1 (+ s/es) Used for general truths, habits, and repeated actions	She writes daily. She goes to school every day.
Present Continuous	Subject + is/am/are + V1 + ing Used for actions happening now or temporary situations	She is writing now. He is reading a book.
Present Perfect	Subject + has/have + V3 Used for actions completed recently or with relevance to the present	She has written the letter. They have finished their homework.
Present Perfect Continuous	Subject + has/have been + V1 + ing Used for actions that started in the past and are still continuing	She has been writing since morning. She has been studying for two hours.
Past Simple	Subject + V2 Used for actions completed in the past at a specific time	She wrote a letter. I visited Delhi last year.
Past Continuous	Subject + was/were + V1 + ing Used for actions happening at a specific time in the past	She was writing at 5 PM. He was watching TV at 8 PM.
Past Perfect	Subject + had + V3 Used to show an action completed before another past action	She had written before dinner. She had left before I arrived.
Past Perfect Continuous	Subject + had been + V1 + ing Used for the duration of an action continuing before another past action	She had been writing for hours. They had been playing for two hours.
Future Simple	Subject + will/shall + V1 Used for actions that will happen in the future	She will write tomorrow. I will call you tomorrow.
Future Continuous	Subject + will/shall be + V1 + ing Used for actions that will be in progress at a certain future time	She will be writing at 5 PM. She will be working at 6 PM.
Future Perfect	Subject + will/shall have + V3	She will have written by noon.

	Used for actions that will be completed before a specific time in the future	I shall have finished the work by Friday.
Future Perfect Continuous	Subject +will/shall have been+V1+ ing Used to show the duration of an action up to a point in the future	By next July, I will have been working at the company for five years. They will have been studying for hours before the exam begins.

DETERMINERS

Determiners are words like a, an, the, my, this, your, either, neither, all, some, any, enough, most, much, many, little and few. They go before nouns. Articles, possessives and demonstratives are also determiners. (Use *much* with uncountable nouns; use *many* with countable nouns. *Much* can also mean to a great degree.)

Type of Determiner	Examples	Usage Rules
Articles	a, an, the	'a' and 'an' are indefinite articles, used for non-specific things. 'The' is a definite article, used for specific or known things.
Demonstratives	this, that, these, those	Point to specific things or people. 'This' and 'these' refer to things near the speaker; 'that' and 'those' refer to things farther away.
Possessives	my, your, his, her, its, our, their	Show ownership or relationship. Used before nouns to indicate possession.
Quantifiers	some, any, much, many, few, little, a lot of, several	Indicate quantity or amount.
Distributives	each, every, either, neither	Refer to members of a group individually or collectively.
Interrogative Determiners	what, which, whose	Used to ask questions related to a noun. 'What' for general things, 'Which' for specific choices, 'Whose' for possession.
Numbers	one, two, three, etc.	Specify quantity or order. Can be cardinal (one, two, three) or ordinal (first, second, third).

CLAUSES

Type of Clause	Examples	Usage Rule
Independent Clause	She is reading.	Expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence.
Dependent (Subordinate) Clause	Because it was raining	Cannot stand alone; depends on an independent clause to form a complete sentence.
Noun Clause	What she said was surprising.	Functions as a noun in the sentence; it can act as a subject, object, or complement.
Adjective (Relative)	The book that I borrowed	Functions as an adjective; modifies a noun or

Clause	is interesting.	pronoun.
Adverbial Clause	I will call you when I arrive.	Functions as an adverb; modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb, indicating time, reason, condition, etc.
Conditional Clause	If you study, you will pass.	Expresses a condition; often introduced by 'if' or 'unless'.
Comparative Clause	She runs faster than I do.	Used to compare one thing to another; often introduced by 'than' or 'as...as'.

MODALS

Modal Verb	Example	Usage Rule
Can	She can swim.	Expresses ability, possibility, or permission.
Could	Could you help me?	Expresses past ability, polite requests, possibility, or suggestion.
May	You may leave now.	Expresses permission, formal requests, or possibility.
Might	It might rain today.	Expresses a slight possibility.
Must	You must wear a seatbelt.	Expresses obligation or strong necessity.
Shall	Shall we start?	Expresses suggestions, offers, or future reference (mainly in British English).
Should	You should exercise daily.	Expresses advice, recommendation, or expectation.
Will	I will call you.	Expresses future intention, promise, or certainty.
Would	Would you like some tea?	Expresses polite offers, past habitual actions, or hypothetical situations.
Ought to	You ought to be careful.	Expresses moral obligation or advice.
Need to	You need to study.	Expresses necessity or requirement. (<i>Semi-modal expression</i>)
Dare	I dare not speak.	Expresses courage or challenge; mostly used in negative or interrogative forms.

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

Tense	Active Voice Structure	Passive Voice Structure	Example
Simple Present	Subject + Verb (V1) + Object	Object + is/am/are + Past Participle + by + Subject	She writes a letter. → A letter is written by her.
Present	Subject + is/am/are +	Object + is/am/are +	She is writing a letter. → A

Continuous	Verb(+ing) + Object	being + Past Participle + by + Subject	letter is being written by her.
Present Perfect	Subject + has/have + Past Participle + Object	Object + has/have been + Past Participle + by + Subject	She has written a letter. → A letter has been written by her.
Simple Past	Subject + Verb (V2) + Object	Object + was/were + Past Participle + by + Subject	She wrote a letter. → A letter was written by her.
Past Continuous	Subject + was/were + Verb(+ing) + Object	Object + was/were + being + Past Participle + by + Subject	She was writing a letter. → A letter was being written by her.
Past Perfect	Subject + had + Past Participle + Object	Object + had been + Past Participle + by + Subject	She had written a letter. → A letter had been written by her.
Simple Future	Subject + will/shall + Verb (V1) + Object	Object + will/shall + be + Past Participle + by + Subject	She will write a letter. → A letter will be written by her.
Future Perfect	Subject + will/shall + have + Past Participle + Object	Object + will/shall + have been + Past Participle + by + Subject	She will have written a letter. → A letter will have been written by her.

GAP FILLING QUESTIONS

- These questions typically test your knowledge of tenses and clauses.
- It is in the form of fill in the blanks type.
- For tenses, the verb to be changed is given in brackets and is to be changed according to the given context.
- For clauses, the questions have to be answered with appropriate clauses as per the given context.

Q1. Fill in the blanks with the correct tense of the verb in brackets

- She usually _____ (go) to the gym in the evening.
- We _____ (watch) a movie when the power went out.
- He _____ (not/finish) his homework yet.
- By the time you arrive, we _____ (leave).

Ans1:

- She usually goes to the gym in the evening. → **(Simple Present – habitual action)**
- We were watching a movie when the power went out. → **(Past Continuous – ongoing action interrupted)**
- He has not finished his homework yet. → **(Present Perfect – action not completed till now)**
- By the time you arrive, we will have left. → **(Future Perfect – action completed before a future point)**

Q2. Fill in the blanks with the correct tense of the verb in brackets.

- a) They _____ (play) cricket for two hours before it started raining.
- b) I _____ (meet) him at the mall yesterday.
- c) If it rains tomorrow, we _____ (cancel) the trip.
- d) While I _____ (read), she was cooking.

Ans 2: a) They had been playing cricket for two hours before it started raining.→ (*Past Perfect Continuous – ongoing action before another past action*)

- b) I met him at the mall yesterday.→ (*Simple Past – completed action in the past*)
- c) If it rains tomorrow, we will cancel the trip.→ (*First Conditional – future condition + result*)
- d) While I was reading, she was cooking.→ (*Past Continuous – simultaneous past actions*)

Q3. Fill in the blanks with appropriate clauses:

- a) I don't understand _____ she is always late.
- b) This is the man _____ helped me during the accident.
- c) He spoke so softly _____ we could hardly hear him.
- d) Can you explain to me _____ the project was delayed?

Ans 3.a) I don't understand **why she is always late.**→ (*Noun clause – object of "understand"*).

- b) This is the man **who helped me during the accident.**→ (*Adjective/Relative clause – modifies "man"*)
- c) He spoke so softly **that we could hardly hear him.**→ (*Adverb clause – result*)
- d) Can you explain to me **why the project was delayed?**→ (*Noun clause – object of "explain"*)

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

I. Fill in the blanks with the correct tense form of the verb given in brackets:

- 1. I _____ (not/see) him since Monday.
- 2. She _____ (read) a book when I entered the room.
- 3. The train _____ (arrive) before we reached the station.
- 4. He usually _____ (drink) coffee in the morning.
- 5. By next year, they _____ (complete) the project.

II. Fill in the blanks with an appropriate clause:

- 1. I don't know _____.
- 2. This is the same phone _____.
- 3. He explained everything _____.
- 4. She sings so well _____.
- 5. The girl _____ lost her bag was crying.

III. Fill in the blanks with a modal from the box.

- 1. You've got plenty of time. You _____ hurry.
- 2. There's a knock at the door. I'm expecting Paul. It _____ be him.

3. I can't get my phone to work. It _____ be out of order
4. _____ I ask you a question?
5. That was excellent work. But I _____ do it without you.
6. She _____ be 35. She looks older than that.
7. I _____ go to work on Saturdays. It's my day off.
8. Tom has given me a letter to post. I _____ forget to post it.
9. Ann stayed in bed this morning because she _____ go to work.
10. He _____ play chess when he was young.
11. You _____ drive a car when you're 18.
12. Jack spends the whole day just walking around. He _____ have a job.
13. When I was in school I _____ do a hand stand, but now I'm too old. I _____ do one any more.
14. My mother keeps telling me that we _____ wash our hands before we sit down at the dinner table.
15. You _____ forget to turn off the lights when you go to bed.
16. When I was a child I _____ understand adults, now that I'm an adult I _____ understand children.
17. Sally looks sad and worried. She _____ have a problem with something.
18. _____ I see your passport please.
19. He sees very badly, so he _____ wear glasses all the time.
20. I _____ take a taxi because the bus was on time.
21. He owns a very expensive house. He _____ be a rich person.

IV. Fill in the blanks with appropriate determiners:

1. Have you got _____ butter? (**any / any of**)
2. _____ people have political affiliations. (**Many / Many of**)
3. _____ of my children loves music. (**each / every**)
4. _____ shops are closed on Sundays. (**Most / Most of**)

V. Fill in the blanks with *much* or *many*:

1. We have _____ work ahead of us.
2. In spite of all the publicity, the film hasn't made _____ money.
3. I haven't been to _____ places.
4. I have told you _____ times that I don't like smoking.
5. There aren't _____ students in the class.

TRANSFORMATION OF SENTENCES

- In this type of question, the sentences given are to be transformed as directed.
- The sentences are transformed by applying common grammatical rules.
- Some common types of sentence transformation are given below:

Common Types of Sentence Transformation

Type		Example	Transformed
Affirmative ↔ Negative		She is very kind.	She is not unkind.
Active ↔ Passive		He wrote a letter.	A letter was written by him.

Type		Example	Transformed
Direct ↔ Indirect Speech		She said, "I'm tired."	She said that she was tired.
Exclamatory ↔ Assertive		What a beautiful painting!	It is a very beautiful painting.
Interrogative ↔ Assertive		Isn't he smart?	He is smart.
Simple ↔ Compound/Complex		Being tired, he slept early.	He was tired, so he slept early.

Rewrite each sentence as directed.

Affirmative to Negative

She always helps her friends. (*Change into negative*)

She is a very talented singer. (*Change into negative without changing the meaning*)

Active to Passive Voice

The children have completed the assignment. (*Change into passive*)

They built a new bridge last year. (*Change into passive*)

Direct to Indirect Speech

He said, "I am not going to the party." (*Change into indirect speech*)

"What a beautiful dress!" she exclaimed. (*Change into indirect speech*)

Exclamatory to Assertive

How nice it is to see you! (*Change into assertive*)

What a lovely morning it is! (*Change into assertive*)

Interrogative to Assertive

Is she not a wonderful singer? (*Change into assertive*)

Did he complete his homework? (*Change into assertive*)

Complex to Simple Sentence

Although it was raining, he went for a walk. (*Change into a simple sentence*)

He was very tired, but he still managed to finish the work. (*Change into a simple sentence*)

Negative to Affirmative

I can't say that he is not honest. (*Change into affirmative*)

She doesn't feel that she is incapable of doing it. (*Change into affirmative*)

Answer key:

Affirmative to Negative

She does not fail to help her friends.

She is not an untalented singer.

Active to Passive Voice

The assignment has been completed by the children.

A new bridge was built last year.

Direct to Indirect Speech

He said that he was not going to the party.

She exclaimed that it was a beautiful dress.

Exclamatory to Assertive

It is very nice to see you.

It is a very lovely morning.

Interrogative to Assertive

She is a wonderful singer.

He completed his homework.

Complex to Simple Sentence

Despite the rain, he went for a walk.

Being very tired, he still managed to finish the work.

Negative to Affirmative

I can say that he is honest.

She feels that she is capable of doing it.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. He is always cheerful. (*Change to negative*)
2. She is not unaware of the truth. (*Change to affirmative*)
3. The police caught the thief. (*Change to passive*)
4. The cake was baked by my sister. (*Change to active*)
5. She said, "I will help you tomorrow." (*Change to indirect*)
6. He asked, "Have you finished your homework?" (*Change to indirect*)
7. What a surprise it was! (*Change to assertive*)
8. How intelligent she is! (*Change to assertive*)
9. Does this solution make any sense? (*Change to assertive*)
10. Who does not love freedom? (*Change to assertive*)

REARRANGING THE WORDS / PHRASES INTO MEANINGFUL SENTENCES

(In this type of question, the jumbled words/ phrases have to be changed into meaningful sentences using the basic rule of forming sentences, with the first letter capitalized, appropriate punctuation marks like ending a sentence with a full stop.)

1. Rearrange the following words into meaningful sentences:

- a) if / rains / it / we / go / won't / out
- b) although / he / tired / very / continued / he / was / working
- c) by / book / has / her / read / already / the / been
- d) unless / grammar / write / improve / you / you / won't / well / your

Answers:

- a) If it rains, we won't go out.
- b) Although he was very tired, he continued working.
- c) The book has already been read by her.
- d) Unless you improve your grammar, you won't write well.

2. Rearrange the following words into meaningful sentences:

- a) awarded / speaker / to / best / was / the / prize / the
- b) write / carelessly / marks / your / will / if / you / suffer
- c) failed / though / he / sincerely / he / tried
- d) after / completing / his / went / to / he / work / home

Answers:

- a) The prize was awarded to the best speaker.
- b) If you write carelessly, your marks will suffer.

- c) Though he failed, he tried sincerely.
d) After completing his work, he went home.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q. Rearrange the following words/phrases into meaningful sentences.

1. had / left / we / before / the place / it / started / raining
2. hardly / she / when / the phone / started / speaking / rang
3. known / the truth / had / we / earlier / acted / differently / we / would have
4. lost / the key / he / not / been / had / locked out / he / would have
5. unless / you / submit / on time / assignment / your / marks / be / deducted / will
6. dream / to / a / reality / turned / his / hard work / has
7. the offer / regret / later / might / refusing / you
8. watched / the movie / a / we / twice / already / have
9. so / she / shocked / was / speak / she / could / not
10. to / she / her goal / finally / managed / reach

ADVANCED WRITING SKILLS (16 MARKS)

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

INTRODUCTORY GUIDELINES

These are called classified advertisements as they are divided into categories or classes according to their subject matter and the function they perform. These advertisements are placed under different headings such as **Situation vacant, Situation Wanted, Sale and purchase of property or goods, property, To-let, educational institutions, Missing persons/pets, lost and found, and travels and tours.**

Poster	Break-up of Marks
Word limit: 50 words Total Marks: 3	Format: 1 Content: 1 Expression: 1

The main characteristics of a classified advertisement are:

- They are categorized into columns according to different classes.
- To be written inside a box.
- They are brief and occupy less space as the advertiser is charged per word, per column line or even, per column centimeter.
- Only relevant information should be included using short phrases and words
- The language should be simple, concise, factual, and formal.
- Clearly state the category by writing the heading at the top in centre alignment.
- WRITE key words as REQUIRED, WANTED, etc. (as per advertisement) in the beginning line and end with the contact's name, address and phone number.
- It should be written within 50 words.
- Do NOT miss out on important details.
- Do NOT make designs or suggestive pictures.

SITUATION VACANT	SITUATION WANTED
● Begin with 'Vacant' or 'Required' ● Specify the post and the number of vacancies ● Qualities of the person required	● Begin with 'Wanted' ● personal details: qualification and experience ● age and gender of the candidate ● other details (optional)

- Name of the Company (optional) - Age and sex of the candidate - Pay-scale and perks - Mode of applying - Contact address and phone number.	- preferences: type of job, area, locality - expected pay scale and perks - contact address and phone number
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TO-LET	HOUSE/ FLAT FOR SALE
- Type of accommodation, Number of rooms/ floors - Whether it is independent or an apartment. - Rent expected - Type of tenant required: Bank employee / small family. - Whom and when to contact. - Contact address/phone number	- Type of accommodation. No. of rooms/floor - Whether it is independent or an apartment - Price expected/negotiable - Location—where it is - Area: In sq. meters/ yards - facilities – power connection, telephone connection, parking, washrooms/toilets/proximity to business/ shopping area - Whom and when to contact
AUTOMOTIVE / VEHICLE FOR SALE	EDUCATIONAL/ TUTIONS
- Make Maruti/Hyundai/Honda, etc. - Model/colour/accessories/year of manufacture/mileage - Condition - Ownership details - Price expected - Contact address/phone number	- Classes and subjects - Special qualities of the tutor - Qualifications and experience of the tutor - Previous results of his/her students - Contact address/ phone number
MISSING PERSON	MISSING PETS
- begin with the heading “Missing” - brief physical description - name, age, height, complexion, build, - health/mental condition - identification marks - clothes	- begin with the heading “Missing” - name, breed, colour, fur, etc. - identifying features - missing from where/when - reward - contact address and phone number
LOST & FOUND	APPEALS
- begin with “Lost” or “Found” - specify if a person or item is lost - brief physical description. - when and where lost/found - reward (optional) - contact address and phone number	- begin with “Appeal” or “Help Required” - specify nature of an appeal - brief description of the problem - specify the help required. - contact address and phone number
MATRIMONIAL	TOURS & TRAVELS
- Mention Wanted Bride / Wanted Bridegroom/Groom - Family background	- begin with “Package Available” - name of the travel agency - destination and duration

• Age/height • Education - mention the highest qualification • Profession/ occupation • Location • Preferences - qualities expected in the partner (age, education, profession etc.) • Contact information - phone no, e-mail ID for communication.	• details of the package – boarding, lodging, sightseeing • cost and special discount • contact address and phone number
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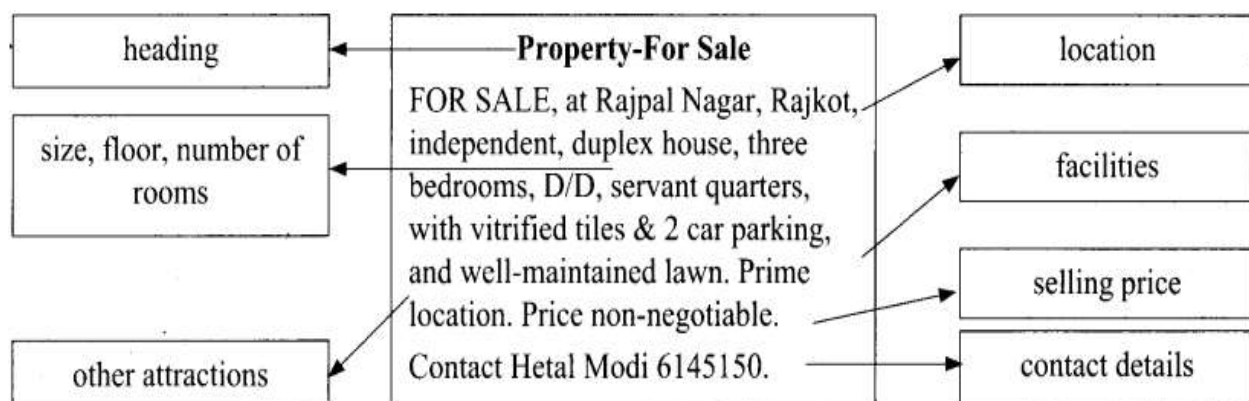
SAMPLE ADVERTISEMENTS

Sample Questions / Solved Questions:

1. You are the general manager of a leading industrial concern. You need a chartered accountant for your office. Draft an advertisement in not more than 50 words to be published in The Times of India, New Delhi, under the classified columns.

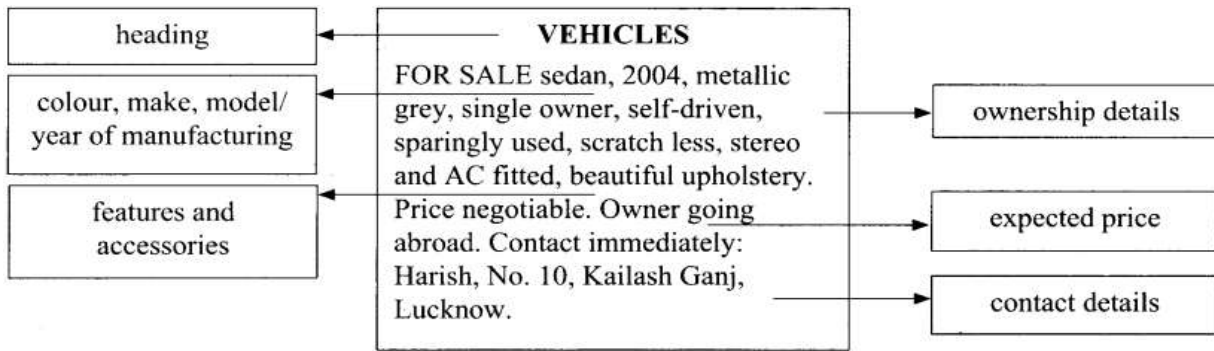


2. Hetal Modi, 23, of Rajpal Nagar, Rajkot wishes to sell her house as she is moving to England. Draft an advertisement for publication in the "For Sale" section of the newspaper

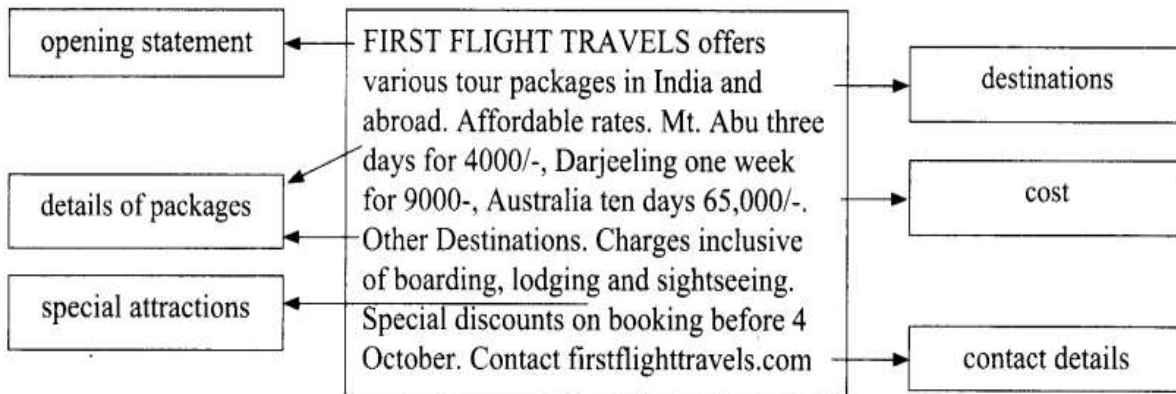


3. You want to dispose of your car, as you are going abroad. You are Harish of No. 10, Kailash Ganj, Lucknow. Draft an advertisement to be published in the daily, The Daily Times, under the classified

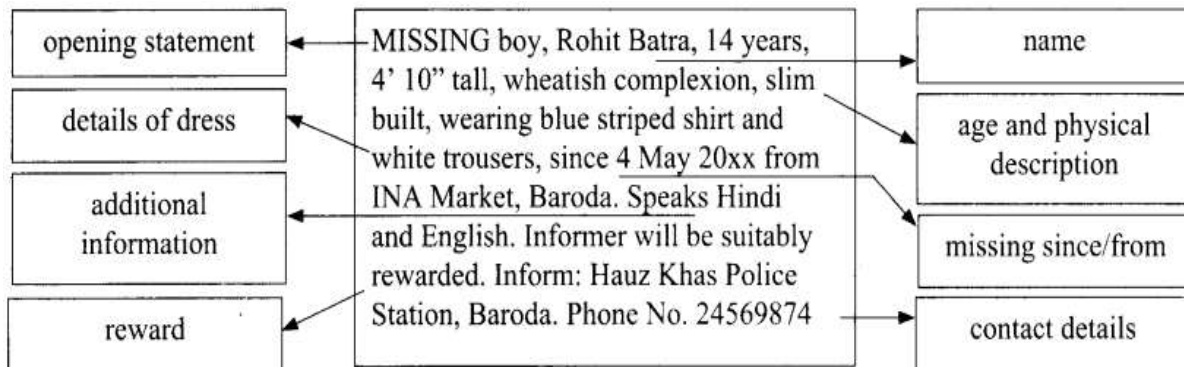
columns.



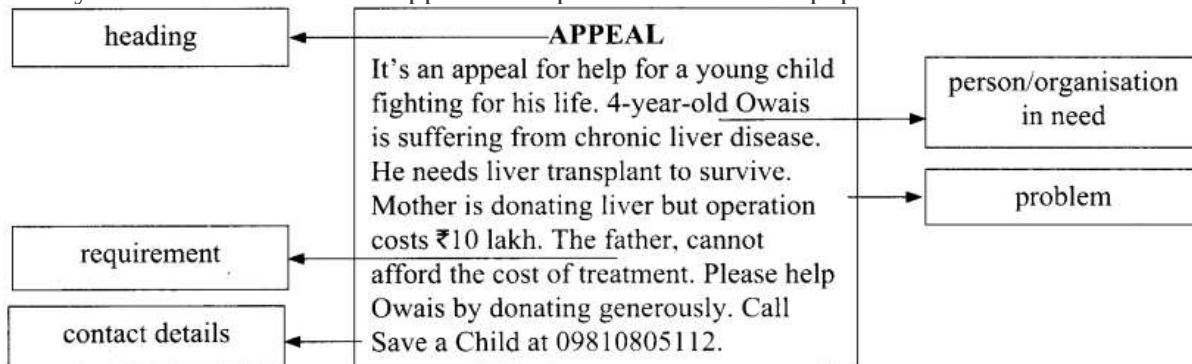
2. You are running a Travel and Tourism Agency. Draft an advertisement to be published about it in a local daily giving all relevant details.



3. You are the brother of a boy who has been missing from his home for the last two days. Draft an advertisement under the caption "Missing" for a local newspaper. Provide suitable details and also offer a reward.



4. The father of a four – year – old child suffering from chronic liver disease does not have the money for treatment. Draft an appeal to be published in a newspaper on his behalf.



UNSOLVED QUESTIONS

1. You are Vikram /Sonia, a renowned dance coach based in Delhi. Your finesse in various dance forms is well-acclaimed. You are looking for part time/ full-time job. Write an advertisement in about 50 words for the 'Situations Wanted' column of a local newspaper. Your contact no. 9997512XX.
2. You own an independent house in Jacobpura West in North Delhi, and you want to sell it. Draft an advertisement for a local daily, giving all necessary details in 50 words.
3. You have shifted to Delhi. You want to buy a 3 BHK flat near your office in Shalimar Bagh. Draft an advertisement in 50 words.
4. You are Kiran/Karan Kumar and want to sell your motorbike which you have been using for five years. Write an advertisement, in not more than 50 words, to be published under the classified columns of a national daily. Furnish all the necessary details.
5. You are looking for a second-hand motorcycle. Draft an advertisement in 50 words to be published in a national daily specifying your requirements.

POSTER MAKING

Poster	Break-up of Marks
Word limit: 50 words Total Marks: 3	Format: 1 Content: 1 Expression: 1

1. Layout and Format of a poster:

Do's:	Don'ts:
• Use a variety of bold, legible fonts. • Stick to one central message. Use persuasive language (e.g., "Join the Movement for a Cleaner Planet!"). • Can include rhetorical questions (e.g., "Do you want a better future?"). • Make it visually appealing with images and symbols. Bright and attractive but not overly crowded. • Ensure correct spelling and grammar. • A short and impactful heading. (e.g., "Every Drop Counts!") • TENSE – Simple present tense is usually used. • Third-person narration is to be used.	• Avoid too much text—keep it brief. • Do not use fancy, unreadable fonts. • Avoid excessive colours or cluttered designs. • Do not include irrelevant information. • Avoid complex sentences; keep it simple and easy to read.

2. STRUCTURE- (OPENING STATEMENT, VALUE POINTS & CONCLUDING STATEMENT)

- CATCHY HEADING/SLOGAN –related to the topic

- DETAILS – Answer to all relevant ‘wh’ questions related to the topic (E.g., What, When, Where, Why, How, etc.)
- Name of the issuing authority.

Solved Questions

1. You are Karuna Kapoor, Secretary, Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Draft a poster to build awareness among the public to stop being cruel to animals.



STOP animal abuse

BE KIND TO ANIMALS!
 They cannot narrate their sufferings

- They cannot express their pain, but they too feel.
- They are an integral part of our ecology
- The earth belongs to them as much as it does to us.
- They too are God’s creation.
- Animals serve us, guard us, feed us

Save Animals, Save Earth
 Come join our crusade against cruelty to animals.

Issued by - Secretary, SPCA

2. You are Azad Tandon/ Smriti Gulam of Lotus International School, Jodhpur. Your school is organizing a workshop on “Prevention of Drug Abuse” in the coming week. Prepare a **poster** with complete information for the students of class X-XII.

Date: 15th July, 2025
Time: 11.00 am
Venue: School Auditorium

- Understand the dangers of drug abuse
- Learn strategies for prevention
- Expert talk & interactive session

For Students of Classes X - XII
BE AWARE. BE STRONG. STAY DRUG-FREE!
 Issued by – Lotus International School, Jodhpur



UNSOLVED QUESTIONS

1. In a recent survey, it was found that your city has the highest rate of pollution in the country. Innumerable vehicles on the road and a lack of green cover have made the air unfit to breathe. Draft a **poster** in about 50 words, creating awareness about the need to keep your city clean and green. You are Rakshita/Rohit, Eco Club Captain of MVN Public School.
2. On the occasion of World Mental Health Day, your school, Shiksha Mandir, Agra, is hosting a wellness seminar. Design a poster that spreads awareness about mental health, the importance of seeking help, and ways to maintain emotional well-being.
3. Your school, D P Public School, Panjim, is organizing a Road Safety Week to educate students and the community about traffic rules and safe driving practices. Design a creative and informative poster emphasizing the importance of wearing helmets, using seat belts, and following traffic signals.
4. With the rise in cyber threats, your school, Ryan International School, Saket, is conducting an awareness drive on Responsible Internet Usage. Design a poster highlighting key tips for staying safe online, such as protecting personal information, avoiding cyberbullying, and recognizing online scams.
5. As part of the Fit India Movement, your school, Sunshine Public School, Gurgaon, is organizing a fitness campaign. Create a vibrant poster promoting the importance of regular exercise, healthy eating, and an active lifestyle.

SPEECH WRITING

Introductory Guidelines

Speech is the ability of expressing or describing thoughts, feelings or perceptions by vocal communication or conversation. It is addressed to many people. Writing a speech is like writing an essay, but the difference is that your words are being heard, instead of being read.

Marks Distribution

Format: 01 Mark **Content:** 02 marks **Expression:** 02 marks **Total:** 05 marks

Word limit: 120-150

Lay out, Format, Style & Presentation:

Title: written at the top

Opening: Start with a greeting or a relevant quote

- o "Good morning, I am here to express my views on..."
- o "It's a privilege to speak on..."
- **Conclusion:** end with suggestions for improvement and am hopeful for the future
- **Content Structure:**
 - o Define the topic.
 - o Discuss its causes, effects, current situation and possible solutions
- **Clarity & Organization:** Ensure logical flow and systematic presentation of ideas
- **Paragraph:** Structure the speech into **3-4 paragraphs** for coherence.
- **Preparation:** Always make a rough draft before finalizing.

Pattern of Tense used:

- Tense: Usually Present tense
- First Person narration is used
- Usually, Direct speech is used
- Use of voice (active/passive) will depend on the idea conveyed.

Opening Statement:

- "Respected teachers and dear friends, today I am here to speak on..."
- "It is a privilege to address such an esteemed audience on a topic so close to my heart..."

Value Points:

- **Introduction:** Context, importance of topic
- **Main Body:** Facts, examples, persuasive arguments, personal anecdotes
- **Conclusion:** Summarize, provide solutions, end on a strong note

Concluding Statements:

- "Let us work together to bring a positive change. Thank you."
- "I hope my words inspire action. Thank you for your time."

SOLVED EXAMPLE

Speech on Importance of Mental Health

Good morning, Everyone,

I am Rishi/Rishika, a student of Class XI Science. Today, I stand before you to speak on a topic that affects all of us—**Mental Health**.

Did you know that according to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in every four people worldwide experiences some form of mental health issue during their lifetime?

Mental health is just as important as physical health. It influences how we think, feel, behave, and cope with life's challenges. In today's fast-paced world, stress, anxiety, and depression are becoming increasingly common among students due to academic pressure, competition, and high expectations.

Taking care of our mental well-being helps us concentrate better, make informed decisions, build healthy relationships, and face challenges with confidence and a positive attitude. Simple habits such as getting adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, exercising regularly, taking short breaks, talking to someone we trust, and practicing yoga or meditation can significantly improve our mental health.

Unfortunately, lack of awareness and the stigma associated with mental health often prevent people from seeking help. We must normalize conversations about mental well-being, encourage those who are struggling, and seek professional support whenever necessary.

Let us work together to create an environment where everyone feels safe, respected, and comfortable expressing their emotions. By spreading awareness and showing empathy, we can break the stigma surrounding mental health and build a healthier and happier society.

Remember, asking for help is not a sign of weakness—it is a sign of courage and strength.

Thank you.

UNSOLVED PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR SPEECH WRITING

1. Is Success Measured Only by Wealth and Status?

You are **Meera/Manav**, a student of Class XI. Your school is conducting a Youth Festival where students will express their views on values and aspirations. You have been selected to deliver a speech on the topic **“Is Success Measured Only by Wealth and Status?”** Write the speech in **120–150 words**.

Hints:

- Success is about achieving personal fulfilment and happiness.
- Wealth alone does not guarantee satisfaction or respect.
- Hard work, perseverance, and values define true success.

2. Should Students Be Allowed to Grade Their Teachers?

You are **Arjun/Ananya**, a student of Class XI. You have been selected to deliver a speech on the topic **“Should Students Be Allowed to Grade Their Teachers?”** Write the speech in **120–150 words**.

Hints:

- It promotes accountability and improves teaching quality.
- Students' feedback can sometimes be biased and subjective.
- Professional development should be based on expertise, not popularity.

3. Should Students Rely Only on Textbooks for Learning?

You are **Neha/Nakul**, a student of Class XI. Your school is organizing a seminar on **Effective Learning Methods**. You have been asked to deliver a speech on the topic “**Should Students Rely Only on Textbooks for Learning?**” Prepare your speech in **120–150 words**.

Hints:

- Textbooks provide structured knowledge and syllabus coverage.
- Real learning involves curiosity, creativity, and practical experiences.
- The use of digital tools, discussions, and experiments broadens understanding.

4. Is Failure the End or a Step Towards Success?

You are **Kavya/Karan**, a student of Class XI. Your school is observing **Motivation Week** to inspire students to overcome challenges. You are to deliver a speech in the morning assembly on the topic “**Is Failure the End or a Step Towards Success?**” Write your speech in **120–150 words**.

Hints:

- Failure teaches important life lessons.
- Every successful person has failed at some point.
- Resilience and learning from mistakes are key to progress.

DEBATE WRITING

KEY GUIDELINES & TIPS

Definition:

A debate is a structured discussion where participants present arguments either in favour of or against the motion. It requires logical reasoning, strong rebuttals, and persuasive communication.

Marking Scheme: Format- 1 Mark Content-2 Marks Expression-2 Marks

Essential Tips for Writing a Debate:

Choose Your Stance:

- Decide whether you support or oppose the motion.
- Mention "FOR THE MOTION" or "AGAINST THE MOTION" in the title.

Introduction:

- Start with a compelling hook (quote, question, fact).
- Introduce yourself (name and details as per the question).
- **Clearly state your stand on the topic.**

Develop Strong Arguments:

- Present logical, well-structured points.
- Support arguments with relevant facts, statistics, and examples.

Express Agreement/Disagreement Clearly:

- Maintain clarity in your stance.
- Use polite sarcasm and counterarguments effectively.

Structure Your Debate Well:

- Organize points into paragraphs for coherence.
- Address opposing arguments and refute them logically.

Use Persuasive Language & Expressions:

Adopt an Argumentative Style:

- Be assertive but respectful.
- Use rhetorical questions to challenge the opposition.

Conclusion:

- End with a strong closing statement.
- Provide suggestions or steps for improvement.
- Leave the audience with a thought-provoking remark.

FOR THE MOTION	AGAINST THE MOTION
Opening Statements ✓ I strongly support the motion that... ✓ I firmly believe that... ✓ It is clear that... ✓ There is no doubt that... Stating Reasons ✓ Firstly, it is important to consider... ✓ One of the main advantages is... ✓ A key reason to support this is... ✓ Evidence shows that... Giving Examples ✓ For instance, / For example, ... ✓ A good illustration of this is... ✓ A real-life case is... Emphasizing Points ✓ This clearly proves that... ✓ Without a doubt, ... ✓ This strongly supports the motion... Conclusion ✓ In conclusion, the arguments clearly show that... ✓ Therefore, I firmly stand in favour of the motion. ✓ It is evident that supporting this motion is the right choice.	Opening Statements ✓ I stand firmly against the motion that... ✓ I strongly disagree with the claim that... ✓ The idea that... is highly debatable. Stating Reasons ✓ One major drawback is... ✓ This argument overlooks the fact that... ✓ It is important to note that... Giving Examples ✓ Take for example, ... ✓ A well-known example is... ✓ A recent study reveals... Emphasizing Points ✓ This clearly shows the weaknesses in the motion... ✓ On the contrary, ... ✓ This disproves the argument that... Conclusion ✓ To conclude, the evidence suggests we should reject this motion. ✓ Thus, I oppose the motion and urge others to do the same. ✓ Based on the arguments, it is clear that the motion is flawed.

SUPPORTING THE MOTION OR OPPOSING: CONFUSED?

Motion Type A: Positive Statement

The motion = the statement being debated.

Example: "**Homework should be banned.**"

For the motion = You agree (you believe homework should be banned).

Against the motion = You disagree (you believe homework should not be banned).

Motion Type B: Negative Statement

The motion = the statement being debated.

Example: "**Homework should *not* be banned.**"

For the motion = You agree (you believe homework should not be banned).

Against the motion = You disagree (you believe homework should be banned).

*** Two negatives (one 'no/not' in the motion and the other is the disagreement) make one positive.

Motion Type C: Question

The motion = the QUESTION being debated.

Example: **“Should homework be banned?”**

If your answer is yes → you're for the motion.

If your answer is no → you're against the motion.

SAMPLE ANSWERS

Motion 1: Should Social Media Be Banned for Teenagers? (Motion type: Question)

For the Motion:

Honourable Chairperson, esteemed judges, worthy opponents and knowledgeable audience, I, Ashwin Mukherjee, of Class XI Science, stand before you to strongly advocate for the ban on social media for teenagers. It is no secret that social media is a digital trap, consuming young minds and leaving them addicted. Research shows that excessive screen time leads to anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. Should we let our future leaders waste their time scrolling instead of growing?

Moreover, cyberbullying is a growing menace. Teenagers are highly vulnerable to online harassment, leading to severe emotional trauma. No child should suffer in silence while social media companies profit from their pain. The illusion of validation through likes and shares pushes teens toward dangerous self-esteem issues.

I firmly rebut the argument that banning social media restricts freedom. Regulating something that harms our youth is not oppression but protection. In conclusion, I strongly believe that banning social media for teenagers is the only way to safeguard their mental health and academic performance. If a tool does more harm than good, should we not rethink its necessity?

Thank you for your patient listening.

Against the Motion:

Honourable Chairperson, esteemed judges, worthy opponents and knowledgeable audience, I, Adwait Mohanty, strongly oppose the motion that social media should be banned for teenagers. Instead of banning, why not educate? Social media is not the enemy—misuse is.

Social media platforms provide a wealth of knowledge, from educational resources to global news. With proper monitoring, teenagers can use these platforms for learning and skill-building. Taking away social media is like taking away a book because some misuse it. Instead of banning, we should promote digital literacy and responsible usage.

I strongly rebut the claim that banning is the only solution. If addiction is an issue, do we ban books, television, or video games? No, we teach balance. To sum up, rather than shutting down an entire platform, let's encourage parental guidance and school awareness programs. If we teach teenagers to navigate the digital world wisely, won't we create responsible digital citizens instead of helpless ones?

Thank you for your patient listening.

UNSOLVED PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE WRITING

1. You are Aarav/Aditi, a student of Class XI. Your school is hosting a debate competition on the role of social media in modern society. You have been selected to deliver a debate on the topic ‘Should Social Media Platforms Be Held Accountable for Spreading Misinformation?’ Write in favour or against the motion in 120–150 words.

Hints for the Motion:

- Social media has a significant influence on public opinion.
- Misinformation can lead to serious consequences, including violence and panic.
- Platforms should ensure fact-checking and regulate harmful content.

Hints Against the Motion:

- Freedom of speech should not be compromised.
- Users are responsible for verifying the authenticity of information.
- Regulating content could lead to censorship and biased narratives.

2. You are Vikram/Vidhi, a student of Class XI. Your school is organizing a debate on the effectiveness of traditional school practices. You have been asked to speak on the topic ‘Homework is Beneficial for Students’. Write the debate in 120–150 words.

Hints for the Motion:

- Reinforces classroom learning and builds discipline.
- Encourages independent research and time management skills.
- Helps teachers assess students' understanding of concepts.

Hints Against the Motion:

- Leads to unnecessary stress and reduces family time.
- Not all students have equal access to resources for completing homework.
- Learning should be interactive and engaging rather than repetitive.

SECTION – C: LITERATURE (31 MARKS)

THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

- KHUSHWANT SINGH

TITLE -The title encapsulates the central theme of the story as the author beautifully and reverently draws a pen portrait of his grandmother from his memories and observation.

AUTHOR

KHUSHWANT SINGH- Indian author (1915-2014)

The author was a lawyer, diplomat, journalist, editor, columnist, politician and much more. He was a prolific writer and a versatile genius. Khushwant Singh was courageous in whatever he said, an outspoken man who never minced his words. He received Padma Bhushan (1974) and Padma Vibhushan (2007).

His major works include:

1. Train to Pakistan
2. Delhi
3. The Portrait of a Lady: Collected Stories
4. Truth, Love and Little Malice
5. The Good, the Bad and the Ridiculous

SETTING

He had his ancestral roots in Hadali, (in pre-independent India) – now in Pakistan. During the partition, the family moved to India. His first love was always Hadali, where he had spent his early childhood with his grandmother. His love for Hadali is evident in these words - ‘This is where my roots are, I have nourished them with tears of nostalgia’. On a marble plank in the school of Hadali it is written - *In Memory of Sardar Khushwant Singh - a Sikh, a Scholar and a Son of Hadali*.

GENRE: This belongs to the Genre of short stories (autobiography). The lady in the title is Khushwant Singh’s grandmother, and this short story is written in the first person, in an autobiographical vein. The story gives a detailed account of his grandmother and showcases the complexities of human relationships, societal norms in India and the challenges faced by individuals.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION: The story not only portrays how the bond between a grandmother and grandson changes over the years but also intends to unleash/bring out the concealed power of women in complex situations. It also unfolds the life of an elderly woman of pre-Independent India, who lived according to convention till her last breath.

MOOD: The story bears a warm and melancholic mood. It evokes a sense of admiration and respect for the grandmother and, at the same time, places the reader in a thought-provoking situation.

TONE: The story contains a nostalgic (a mixed feeling of sadness and fondness) and reflective (looking back) tone. Khushwant Singh fondly reminisces/remembers his life with grandmother and how the relationship changes with situations and time.

THEME: The story contains the theme of the strength of relationships, innocence in a child’s thought, friendship despite an age gap, love and kindness for all creatures, respect for elders, and acceptance of life as it happens.

CHARACTERS

- * GRANDMOTHER
- * GRANDFATHER

- *GRANDSON / NARRATOR
- *PARENTS

SUMMARY

Village Life: The grandson lived with his grandmother in a village while his parents were in the city. They went to the temple school together. She read scriptures while he learned the alphabet and prayers. On the way back, they fed village dogs.

Turning Point: They moved to the city. The boy attended an English school, and the grandmother could no longer help with his studies. She disapproved of the absence of religious teaching and the inclusion of music, which she associated with lowly traditions. Their bond weakened, and she became silent and withdrawn.

Growing Distance: The grandson got a separate room at university. She spent her time spinning, praying, and feeding sparrows, which became her favourite routine. He left abroad, unsure if he would see her again.

Return & Death: On his return after five years, she welcomed him joyfully and sang with neighbours, skipping her prayers. The next day, she had a mild fever and sensed her end. She spent her final moments praying and peacefully passed away.

Sparrows' Tribute:

Thousands of sparrows gathered silently around her body. They ignored food offerings and flew away quietly after the cremation, mourning her in their own silent way.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS:

The story depicts the generation gap that exists in the world, through the grandmother's religious and traditional lifestyle placed in contrast with the grandson's modern life. The story also portrays the value of a disciplined life through the grandmother's daily routine.

The first-person narrative makes the story deeply personal and intimate, allowing the readers to experience the emotional weight of the narrator's memory. The whole story is a visual treat with vivid imagery running from beginning to end. The narrative explores how relationships evolve. The story shows us how one can grow old gracefully in a dignified manner and accept death peacefully without any fear or regret.

LITERARY DEVICES:

- **SIMILE-** *'She was like the winter landscape in the mountains....'*-the grandmother has been compared to a white, serene winter landscape due to her grey hair, white attire and a calm, composed nature.
- **METAPHOR** - *'...an expanse of pure white serenity ...'* The writer employs an indirect comparison with snow-clad mountains to convey the beauty of his grandmother. The view of a white mountain provides comfort to the beholder since it is calm, peaceful and contented (satisfied) within. Similarly, the grandmother's inner beauty.
- **ALLITERATION-** *The sagging skins of the dilapidated drum.* The drum used by the grandmother to express her happiness on the return of her grandson was an old one. Its skin was loose, and the drum itself was in a neglected and ruined state.
- **HYPERBOLE** - *As for my grandmother being young and pretty, the thought was almost revolting.* - The child is unable to imagine and believe that his grandmother was a pretty young lady long ago. For him, his grandmother is always an old woman. He is unwilling to accept the truth told by people. He disagreed with the idea of his grandmother being an ordinary woman like others. Therefore, he had a revolutionary and protesting thought in this regard.
- **ONOMATOPOEIA-** *A veritable bedlam of chirrupings*-All sparrows together made chirping sounds to have their share of food from the grandmother. They made it noisy around the grandmother, and she enjoyed it to the maximum, as she was silent and lonely at all other times.
- **IMAGERY-** *An imagery gives a word picture which helps the reader create a mental image using his/her senses.*

E.g.-A veritable bedlam of chirruping/ She was like the winter landscape in the mountains Expanse of pure white serenity / The sagging skins of the dilapidated drum.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS

SOLVED EXAMPLES:

1. When I went to university, I was given a room of my own. The common link of friendship was snapped. My grandmother accepted her seclusion with resignation. She rarely left her spinning wheel to talk to anyone. From sunlight to sunset, she sat by her wheel spinning and reciting prayers. Only in the afternoon did she relax for a while to feed the sparrows. While she sat in the verandah breaking the bread into little bits, hundreds of little birds collected around her, creating a veritable bedlam of chirruping. Some came and perched on her legs, others on her shoulders.

a. By the expression ‘the common link of friendship was snapped’, the narrator means -

- (i) Moving into a hostel room
- (ii) Moving into a separate room
- (iii) Moving onto a new city
- (iv) Moving abroad

b. How did grandmother’s life change when they shifted to the city?

c. Find the word which does not mean ‘Bedlam’

- i) Pandemonium
- (ii) Ruckus
- (iii) Serenity
- (iv) Commotion

Answers: a. Moving into a separate room

b. She remained inside the house, spinning was the only activity, and sparrows replaced the stray dogs.

c. Serenity

2 ‘She was short, fat and slightly bent. Her face was a crisscross of wrinkles running from everywhere to everywhere’

a. What does the description of the grandmother highlight?

- (i) Her unimpressive and ugly face
- (ii) Her advanced age and physical appearance.
- (iii) Her disability and sorrow
- (iv) The way she makes faces

b What does the tone of the speaker suggest about his feelings towards his grandmother?

- i) Indifference
- ii) Acceptance
- iii) Observation and affection
- iv) Appreciation for appearance

c. What can be understood about the grandmother’s physical condition from the description given above?

Ans: a. Her advanced age and physical appearance.

b. Observation and affection

c. The narrator’s grandmother was an old and frail woman.

UNSOLVED QUESTIONS:

1. For several hours, she thumped the sagging skins of the dilapidated drum and sang of the homecoming of warriors. We had to persuade her to stop to avoid overstraining.

a. The grandmother, who was against all types of songs other than prayer, enjoyed singing together that day to -----

- i) Express her regret for having trusted only prayer songs throughout life.
- ii) Express her pleasure for the boy’s arrival after 5 years
- iii) To please her grandson, with whom she rarely talked, after he had embraced music lessons.
- iv) tell others that she has changed her attitude towards music.

b. What was so unusual about the grandmother that evening?

- i) She never rejoiced so much
- ii) She did not care to pray that evening.
- iii) She loved thumping the drum
- iv) She was calm

c. What happened to her the next morning on account of overstraining?

When we had both finished, we would walk back together. This time the village dogs would meet us at the temple door. They followed us to our home, growling and fighting with each other for the chapattis we threw to them.

a. **What is evident about the grandmother who feeds street dogs?**

- (i) Kind-hearted and loves all creatures (ii) animals are fed to avoid wastage of food
(iii) pretends to be kind before others (iv) Street dogs are fed to amuse the grandson

b. **Why did the dogs wait for them at the temple door?**

- (i) They would come after prayer (ii) They would come along the temple road from school
(iii) The school was attached to a temple (iv) None of the above

c. **What was it that both finished?**

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS OF 3 MARKS (40-50 WORDS)

SOLVED QUESTIONS:

1. How has Khushwant Singh employed several poetic words to describe the physical and spiritual beauty of his grandmother in the chapter?

Answer- The author has skillfully employed several images to describe his grandmother. He leaves an imprint of physical presence and spiritual essence found in his grandmother. The short, fat and slightly bent grandmother with crisscross wrinkles running from everywhere to everywhere provides a visual image of the grandmother. Her comparison to the winter landscape in the mountains, an expanse of pure white serenity breathing peace and contentment, reflects the spiritual calmness she possessed. Her white clothes, rosary beads and constant prayer convey her spiritual beauty shaped by faith and serenity.

2. Why was it hard for the author to believe that his grandmother was once young and pretty?

Answer- The author had always seen his grandmother as an old lady since his birth. Therefore, the way he had seen her for the past twenty years had become the only reality for him. So, it was even unimaginable for the child to think of his grandmother as a pretty young girl, though he had heard people saying that. As per the author, his grandmother had reached the zenith of growing old, and she remained the same.

3. Why was the grandmother disturbed when he started going to the city school?

Answer- The grandmother, being a religious and conservative woman, wanted her grandson to learn religious prayers and scriptures as was taught in the village school. When she came to know that the city schools taught modern science, English and music, she was disturbed. Her inability to assist him in learning Western Science and English made her unhappy. She was further disturbed as he didn't have any religious or scripture learning. Music was not meant for gentle folk but for beggars and prostitutes. She did not protest but remained silent. Her silence was her expression of strong disagreement.

UNSOLVED QUESTIONS:

1. How did the grandmother spend her day before her death?
2. What was the turning point in the friendship between grandmother and grandson?
3. Describe 'the happiest half-hour of the day' for the grandmother?
4. What are the differences between the village school education and the urban school education as mentioned in the chapter?
5. Do you think that the writer's attitude towards his grandmother changes as he grows up?
6. What does the behaviour of the sparrows reveal about the 'man and animal' love relationship?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS- 6 MARKS in 120-150 WORDS

1. A child should grow up with the knowledge to accommodate all living creatures and nature. He should learn to live harmoniously at a very young age so that he grows up into an adult with a heart to serve humanity and the world around him. How do you think Khushwant Singh's grandmother helped him to love all creatures?

Answer: Khushwant Singh's grandmother demonstrated immense love for nature and living creatures. All her actions, like feeding the stray dogs and later on befriending the sparrows shows a kind-hearted, generous soul. She carried stale chapatis every day to feed the stray dogs while returning with her grandson from the village school. The lesson states that her happiest time of the day was when she would feed the sparrows

during the afternoon. Her frivolous rebukes while feeding the sparrows display her deep and loving bond with them. The sparrows bid her a silent farewell on her demise and reciprocated her love. The narrator, having spent his formative years (childhood days) with her, must have been affected by the nature of his grandmother. His portrait of his grandmother is a tribute to her loving and affectionate nature.

2. Do you believe that Khushwant Singh's grandmother represents the inner strength of a woman? Find instances from the chapter to support this viewpoint and elaborate upon it.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS

1. Khushwant Singh feels highly apologetic for not rendering appropriate care and consideration towards his grandmother. He tries to express this on a page in his diary on the night after her funeral.

Thursday, 14th April 2026

8 pm

Dear Diary

Today has been the most sorrowful day of my life. Grandmother is no more, and my heart is heavy with regret. I cannot shake off the guilt of not having given her the care and attention she deserved in her final years. She was always there for me - guiding, loving and showering me with warmth -but I drifted away, lost in my world.

As I sit here, I remember how she silently accepted every change, never once complaining. When I left for higher studies, she became lonelier, yet she never voiced her pain. I should have spent more time with her, listened to her stories and acknowledged her sacrifices. Instead, I let her fade into the background, unaware that time was slipping away.

Yesterday, as her body lay still, the reality of my neglect hit me hard like a storm. When I saw the sparrows mourning in silence around her, I felt it like a reflection of my own remorse. Now I realise with deep regret that she deserved much more... my indifference towards her, perhaps, would have brought tears to her. I wish I could turn back time, hold her hands and tell her how much I love her. I know it's too late now. All I can do is live with this aching regret.

Good night.

UNSOLVED COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS

1. The grandmother writes a letter to her sister, describing her life in the city and conveying how much she desires to be back in her village. She also expresses her helplessness in this regard. Draft the letter for the grandmother in about 120-150 words.
2. Imagine that the father in the poem 'Father to Son' meets the grandmother when she reaches the railway station to see off her grandson. They strike up a conversation, and the grandmother provides a few tips for a healthy relationship. Construct the dialogue that might have taken place between them in about 120-150 words.
3. Social isolation and self-estrangement are the major problems of the growing elderly population in India. Write an article on this with reference to the chapter, including transformations in family, economy, culture, etc., in the Indian society today. (120-150 words)
4. Aged parents are left behind when children move abroad and settle down there. They are not to be left behind due to aging but they are the ones to be held close within our spaces. This is a period where they feel helpless and lonely and crave the security and warmth from their children and grandchildren. This togetherness inculcates true understanding between generations. Express your views in 120-150 words.
5. *The Portrait of a Lady* presents a changing relationship between the grandmother and the author. How does this change reflect the shifting values and lifestyles in modern society?

6. The grandmother accepts death calmly and without fear. What does this reveal about her personality, beliefs, and outlook towards life?

A PHOTOGRAPH

- **SHIRLEY TOULSON**

ABOUT THE POET

Shirley Toulson is an English poet known for her sensitive and nostalgic poetry. Her work often explores themes of loss, memory, and human relationships.

SETTING –WHEN AND WHERE

The poem is set in two different time frames of the past - one refers to the time when the photograph was taken, and the other pertains to the nostalgic response of the mother 20 or 30 years later, and one time frame of the present, wherein the poet reflects on the significance of the photograph as a memoir of her mother.

FORM OF POETRY / TYPE OF VERSIFICATION

This poem is written in free verse stanzas. There is no fixed rhyme or meter.

CHARACTERS

- ✓ The poet's mother
- ✓ The poet
- ✓ The two girl cousins
- ✓ The uncle who took the photograph

PLOT CONSTRUCTION / DEVELOPMENT OF IDEA

1. Introduction:

The poem begins with the speaker recalling a cherished photograph of her mother from her childhood. In the photograph, her mother stands with her two cousins, their faces glowing with innocence and joy as the sea waves playfully touch their feet. This captured moment reflects the carefree happiness of youth. As the poet gazes at the photograph, she is filled with a sense of nostalgia and loss, realizing how time passes swiftly, leaving only memories behind. Through this reflection, the poet beautifully conveys the transience of human life.

2. The Photograph as a reminder:

The photograph becomes a powerful symbol for the poet, evoking memories of her mother when she was alive. The mother is no longer there to give expression to the joy of the moment captured in the photograph. The image reminds the poet of her mother's past, but it also highlights the tragic reality that her mother is no more.

3. The Passage of time:

The speaker observes how time has changed everything, including the mother's life. As the poem progresses, there is a poignant realization that both the mother and the speaker have experienced the inevitable passage of time—growth, ageing, and loss. The photograph is not just an image; it's a link between the past and present.

4. Final reflection:

In the concluding lines, the speaker is filled with sorrow and a sense of longing as she looks at the photograph, realizing that death is inevitable, leaving behind a void that silences all other emotions. Through *A Photograph*, Toulson reflects on the universal experience of growing up, losing loved ones, and the enduring power of memories captured in photographs. The poem blends nostalgia with the melancholic realization that time waits for no one.

MOOD AND TONE

Mood: Nostalgic, Melancholic

Tone: Nostalgic, Reflective, Tender, Sombre

THEMES

- ✓ Passage of time
- ✓ Death and loss
- ✓ Nostalgia and memories
- ✓ Permanence of art vs transience of life

SUMMARY

- The poem centres around an old photograph of the poet's mother as a young girl.
- The photograph captures a happy moment: the mother, around the age of twelve, enjoying a beach holiday with her two cousins, Betty and Dolly.
- The three girls are holding hands and smiling at the camera held by their uncle.
- The sea is depicted as washing their "terribly transient feet," highlighting the temporary nature of human life compared to the enduring sea.
- The poet reflects on her mother's reaction to the photograph years later. Her mother would look at it and laugh, recalling the beach day and their dresses.
- The sea holiday was a past joy for the mother, while the photograph now evokes nostalgia and perhaps a sense of loss for the poet, as her mother has been deceased for twelve years.
- The poet notes the significant passage of time since the photograph was taken, both for her mother and now for herself.
- The poem concludes with the poet grappling with the profound silence and grief left by her mother's absence, a pain for which there are no words.

CRITICAL ESTIMATE / ANALYSIS

'A Photograph' captures the transient nature of human life and the permanence of memories. Through the simple object of a photograph, Shirley Toulson paints a poignant picture of time, memory, and irreparable loss. The shift from the mother's childhood to her death emphasises the inevitability of change. The free verse form adds a natural, reflective tone to the poem. The final line, 'It's silence silences,' is particularly powerful in conveying inexpressible grief. It may be interpreted as the absence of the mother who used to give tongue to the moment captured in the photograph, leading to a gossip between mother and daughter, which has been rendered silent ever since the mother passed away.

LITERARY DEVICES / TOOLS USED

- **Imagery:** Toulson uses vivid descriptions to create mental pictures for the reader.
 - **Example:** "cardboard shows me how it was / When the two girl cousins went paddling, / Each one holding one of my mother's hands, / And she the big girl—some twelve years or so." This paints a clear image of the old photograph and the scene it captures.
 - **Effect:** It allows the reader to visualise the past and connect with the scene and the people in the photograph.
- **Alliteration:** The repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words/syllables.
 - **Example:** "terribly transient feet."
 - **Effect:** This creates a soft, flowing sound and emphasises the fleeting nature of their feet in contrast to the enduring sea.
- **Personification:** Giving human qualities to inanimate objects.

- **Example:** "the sea... / washed their terribly transient feet." The sea is given the human attribute of *washing the feet*.
- **Effect:** It subtly highlights the power and timelessness of nature compared to the temporary existence of humans.
- **Metaphor:** Any implicit comparison of one common quality of two dissimilar things without using "like" or "as."
 - **Example:** While not a traditional metaphor, the "cardboard" itself can be seen as a metaphor for the preserved past, a tangible link to a moment in time.
 - **Effect:** It adds depth to the poem by suggesting that the photograph is more than just a picture; it's a representation of a bygone era.
- **Transferred Epithet:** A figure of speech in which an adjective or epithet is transferred from the person or thing it logically belongs to, to another noun.
- **Example:** "terribly transient feet." The adjective "terribly transient" emphasises the temporary nature of their feet.
 - **Effect:** It reinforces the theme of the fleeting nature of human life.
- **Irony (Situational):** A contrast between what is expected and what actually happens.
 - **Example:** The mother laughs at the photograph, recalling a happy past, but for the poet, the same photograph evokes a sense of loss and pain due to her mother's death.
 - **Effect:** This highlights the different perspectives shaped by time and experience, adding a layer of poignancy to the poem.
- **Symbolism:** The use of objects, people, or ideas to represent something else.
 - **Example:** The sea can be seen as a symbol of eternity and the relentless passage of time, contrasting with the temporary nature of human life. The photograph itself symbolises memory and the past.
 - **Effect:** It adds layers of meaning to the poem, prompting deeper reflection on time, memory, and loss.
- **Enjambment:** The continuation of a sentence or phrase from one line of poetry to the next without punctuation.
 - **Example:** "A cardboard shows me how it was / When the two girl cousins went paddling..." The sentence flows from one line to the next.
 - **Effect:** It creates a sense of continuity and natural flow, mirroring the unbroken passage of time.
- **Caesura:** A pause or break in the middle of a line of poetry, often indicated by punctuation.
 - **Example:** "And she, the big girl—some twelve years or so." The dash creates a pause.
 - **Effect:** It can emphasize a particular phrase or create a shift in thought or tone.
- **Repetition:** The recurrence of words or phrases.
 - **Example:** The repeated mention of "silence" in the final stanza emphasizes the profound absence and the poet's inability to articulate her grief.
 - **Effect:** It creates emphasis and reinforces the central themes of the poem.

These literary devices work together to create a poignant and reflective poem about memory, time, and loss. They allow Toulson to convey her emotions and insights in a powerful and evocative way.

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS

Extract 1:

*"The cardboard shows me how it was
When the two girl cousins went paddling,
Each one holding one of my mother's hands,
And she, the big girl—some twelve years or so."*

Questions:

1. What does the "cardboard" in the first line most likely refer to?
 a) A drawing made by the poet b) A piece of artwork the mother owned
 c) An old photograph d) A letter written on thick paper
2. Who is referred to as "the big girl" in these lines?
 a) Betty b) Dolly c) The poet d) The poet's mother
3. What activity were the two girl cousins engaged in, as suggested by the word "paddling"?
 a) Playing in the sand b) Swimming in the sea
 c) Walking in shallow water d) Building sandcastles

Extract 2: *"All three stood still to smile through their hair
 At the uncle with the camera. A sweet face,
 My mother's, that was before I was born.
 And the sea, which appears to have changed less,
 Washed their terribly transient feet."*

1. What detail in these lines indicates that the photograph was taken before the poet's birth?
 a) The mention of the uncle with the camera b) The description of the mother's "sweet face"
 c) The phrase "before I was born" d) The fact that they were at the sea.
2. Identify the literary device used in the phrase "terribly transient feet"
 a) Metaphor b) Simile c) Alliteration d) Personification
3. The phrase "the sea, which appears to have changed less, / Washed their terribly transient feet" highlights a contrast between:
 a) The happiness of the girls and the harshness of the sea
 b) The photographer and the subjects being photographed
 c) The enduring nature of the sea and the fleeting existence of humans
 d) The past and the present moment of the poets

Extract 3: *"The sea holiday
 Was her past, mine is her laughter. Both wry
 With the laboured ease of loss."*

Questions:

1. What does the poet refer to as "her past"?
 a) Her childhood memories b) Her marriage and family life
 c) The sea holiday depicted in the photograph d) Her life after the poet was born
2. The phrase "Both wry / With the laboured ease of loss" suggests that both the mother's past joy and the poet's present grief are tinged with:
 a) Bitterness and difficulty in expressing their emotions
 b) Pure happiness and contentment
 c) Anger and resentment towards the past
 d) Excitement and anticipation for the future
3. What does the poet mean by "mine is her laughter"?
 a) The poet often imitates her mother's laugh
 b) The memory of her mother's laughter is now a significant part of the poet's past
 c) The poet finds humour in the same things her mother did
 d) The poet has inherited her mother's cheerful disposition

Extract 4: *Now she's been dead nearly as many years
 As that girl lived. And of this circumstance
 There is nothing to say at all. Its silence silences.*

Questions:

1. According to these lines, the number of years the mother has been dead is _____.
2. The phrase "There is nothing to say at all" suggests the poet's:
 a) Indifference towards her mother's death b) Inability to fully express the depth of her grief

- c) Acceptance of her mother's passing d) Lack of memories of her mother
- 3. The repetition of the word "silence" in "Its silence silences" emphasizes:
 - a) The peacefulness of death b) The absence of noise in the photograph
 - c) The profound and overwhelming nature of the poet's grief
 - d) The quiet atmosphere of the beach in the photograph

ANSWERS

Extract 1:

- 1. (c) An old photograph.
- 2. (d) The poet's mother
- 3. (c) Walking in shallow water.

Extract 2:

- 1. (c) The phrase "before I was born."
- 2. (c) Alliteration
- 3. (c) The enduring nature of the sea and the fleeting existence of humans.

Extracts 3 and 4: Try yourself.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. What does 'the cardboard' refer to?

The cardboard refers to the **old photograph** itself. In older times, photographs were often mounted on stiff cardboard to provide support and prevent them from bending or creasing easily.

2. How did the poet's mother look as a child?

The poem describes the poet's mother as having a "**sweet face**" at around twelve years old. The photograph captures her smiling with her cousins at the beach, suggesting a happy and innocent childhood.

3. What does the poet feel when she sees her mother's photograph?

When the poet sees her mother's photograph, she feels a sense of **nostalgia and a poignant awareness of loss**. The photograph reminds her of a past time when her mother was young and alive, contrasting sharply with her present absence due to death. The "silence" she experiences highlights her grief.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (40-50 words)

- 1. How does the poet present the contrast between past and present?
- 2. Describe the emotional impact of the poem on the reader.
- 3. In what way is the photograph both a source of joy and grief?
- 4. What does the poem suggest about memory and permanence?
- 5. What does the poet mean by 'circumstance'?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Discuss the theme of loss and remembrance in the poem.

The poem "A Photograph" intricately weaves together the themes of loss and remembrance, using the old photograph as a poignant catalyst. The image captures a fleeting moment of joy from the poet's mother's childhood, a stark contrast creating with her eventual absence due to death. This juxtaposition underscores the transient nature of life and the inevitable sorrow that accompanies loss. The poet's act of looking at the photograph is an act of remembrance, a way to connect with a past that is irretrievably gone. Her mother's own nostalgic laughter at the snapshot years later highlights a different stage of remembrance, one tinged with the "laboured ease of loss," suggesting an acceptance of the passage of time. Ultimately, the poem culminates in the poet's present grief, a profound silence that emphasizes the depth of her loss. The photograph becomes a tangible link to a cherished memory, a reminder of what has been lost and the enduring power of remembrance in navigating that void. The poem suggests that while loss is an inherent part of life, remembrance allows us to keep the essence of the departed alive within our hearts and minds, even in the face of an overwhelming silence.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED): (120-150 words)

1. 'A Photograph is a tribute to the poet's mother.' Elaborate.
2. Discuss the poem as a representation of the passage of time.
3. How does the poet deal with grief and loss in the poem?
4. Compare the tone in the beginning and the end of the poem.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED):

1. Draw a comparison between this poem and The Address by Marga Minco.

Shirley Toulson's poem "*A Photograph*" and Marga Minco's short story "*The Address*" both delve into the deep emotional landscape of loss and memory, but in distinct ways. In *A Photograph*, the poet reflects on the death of her mother, triggered by an old photograph of her as a carefree girl on a beach. The tone is melancholic and nostalgic, and the silence left by her mother's absence becomes overwhelming—captured in the haunting line, "The silence silences me." In contrast, *The Address* follows a young woman who, after surviving the Holocaust, visits a house to retrieve her family's belongings, only to find that reconnecting with the past is more painful than comforting. The tone is restrained and introspective, and the story ends with her quiet decision to let go and not reclaim the past. While Toulson's poem ends in sorrowful acceptance of irreversible loss, Minco's story ends with the rejection of memory as a form of healing. Both works powerfully capture how objects from the past—a photograph or familiar household items—can stir profound emotions, reminding us that memory is both a comfort and a burden.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED): (120-150 words)

1. Write a diary entry as the poet reflecting on the memory captured in the photograph.
2. Create a mind map of the poem's progression in three parts.
3. Compose a short reflective paragraph on: 'Photographs are time machines of emotion.'
4. "Silence is a recurring element in *The Photograph* by Shirley Toulson." Analyze the significance of silence in the poem. How does it reflect the poet's emotions, the passage of time, and the theme of loss?

WE'RE NOT AFRAID TO DIE... IF WE CAN ALL BE TOGETHER

- GORDON COOK AND ALAN EAST

TITLE

"We're Not Afraid to Die... if We Can All Be Together" is a powerful and emotional title that reflects courage, unity, and determination in the face of life-threatening adversity.

AUTHORS

Gordon Cook and Alan East: The story is a true account based on the real-life sea voyage of Gordon Cook and his family, co-authored with writer Alan East.

SETTING

The journey begins from Plymouth, England, in July 1976, and the events unfold across the Southern Indian Ocean during their world voyage.

GENRE

Travelogue / Adventure Narrative- A non-fictional, first-person account of a sea adventure filled with survival, challenges, and family bonding.

CHARACTERS

Gordon Cook: The narrator, a 37-year-old businessman, is portrayed as an experienced sailor and a determined individual. He is driven by his dream of circumnavigating the globe and proves to be a capable captain during the perilous voyage. Despite facing severe injuries, he maintains his composure and focuses on saving his family. His leadership skills and refusal to give up are crucial to their survival.

Mary: The narrator's wife, Mary, is depicted as a courageous and supportive partner. She stands by her husband throughout the ordeal, offering encouragement and comfort to the children. Even when injured, she remains calm and helps with the pumping and signaling.

Jonathan (Jon): The narrator's six-year-old son, Jonathan, shows incredible bravery and maturity beyond his years. When the boat is in a dire state, he tells his father that he is not afraid to die as long as they are all together.

Suzanne (Sue): The narrator's seven-year-old daughter, Suzanne, also exhibits courage despite her injuries. She tries to reassure her father that she is fine, even when she is clearly not, highlighting her desire to maintain a positive attitude for the sake of her family.

The Helping Hands

Larry Vigil and Herb Seigler: The two professional sailors hired by the narrator, Larry Vigil and Herb Seigler, prove to be invaluable assets during the crisis. They work tirelessly to pump out the water, demonstrating their professionalism and dedication to the task at hand.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

- The family sets sail from Plymouth, England, in the Wavewalker, to replicate Captain James Cook's voyage.
- Initially, smooth sailing across the west coast of Africa and Cape Town.
- Encounter a severe storm in the southern Indian Ocean.
- Face giant waves, damage to the ship, and serious injuries.
- Despite broken ribs and injuries, the family and crew persist with courage.
- Jonathan's words, "We're not afraid to die if we can all be together," become the emotional backbone.
- After days of relentless effort, they reach a safe harbour in Ile Amsterdam.

MOOD AND TONE

Mood: Tense, suspenseful, inspiring

Tone: Honest, emotional, courageous, determined

THEMES

The primary theme of "We're Not Afraid to Die... if We Can All Be Together" is the strength of familial bonds and the power of courage and resilience in the face of adversity. The story emphasizes how the narrator and his family, united by love and determination, confront and overcome a life-threatening situation at sea. Another important message is the importance of preparation, teamwork, and optimism when facing challenges.

SUMMARY

- Gordon Cook sets sail with family and two crewmen to circumnavigate the world.
- The first leg of the journey is calm until they cross Cape Town.
- Face a violent storm in the Indian Ocean; Wavewalker is damaged.
- Suzanne is injured; Jonathan reassures her with brave words.
- Non-stop efforts by the crew and family keep the boat afloat.
- With hope and grit, they finally reach the safe haven of Ile Amsterdam.
- The family's unity and never-give-up attitude become the heart of the story.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The story serves as a tribute to the resilience of the human spirit and the love that binds families. Gordon Cook's account of his actual battle against nature's wrath combines emotion and suspense. Beyond merely being a travelogue, the story gains emotional depth from Suzanne's composure and Jonathan's courageous declaration. The author conveys complicated feelings like relief, pain, and fear in straightforward language. The power of sticking together in times of crisis, teamwork, and quick thinking are all highlighted in the narration. It encourages readers to remain strong and value the relationships that keep us together during difficult times.

LITERARY DEVICES AND STYLE OF WRITING

Narrative Style: First-person, chronological, realistic

Language: Simple, vivid, emotionally charged

Literary Devices:

Simile: *Gigantic waves rose like mountains.*
 Water came gushing in like a waterfall.

Symbolism: *The Wave-walker represents both vulnerability and hope*

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS: SOLVED

1. *There, before heading east, we took on two crewmen-American Larry Vigil and Swiss Herb Seigler- to help us tackle one of the world's roughest seas, the southern Indian Ocean. On our second day out of Cape Town, we began to encounter strong gales. For the next few weeks, they blew continuously. Gales did not worry me; but the size of the waves was alarming –up to 15 metres, as high as our main mast.*

(a) Just before the incident described, which port did the ship depart from?

- (i) Cape Town (ii) Indian Ocean (iii) Plymouth (iv) None of the above

Answer: (i) Cape Town

(b) The two extra crewmen were hired _____

- (i) to tackle the ship (ii) as the author wanted extra helpers
(iii) for maintenance of the ship (iv) to help the narrator tackle the toughest sea

Ans: (iv) to help the narrator tackle the toughest sea

(c) The author was worried about _____

Answer: size of the waves

(d) What does the author's statement, "Gales did not worry me; but the size of the waves was alarming," reveal about his experience and mindset?

Answer: The narrator was an experienced sailor who was accustomed to dealing with strong winds, or gales, but the tremendous waves presented a more significant threat and were beyond the normal sailing challenges, indicating rising danger and tension in the journey.

2. *Unexpectedly, my head popped out of the water. A few metres away, Wavewalker was near capsizing, her masts almost horizontal. Then a wave hurled her upright, my lifeline jerked taut, I grabbed the guard rails and sailed through the air into Wavewalker's main boom. Subsequent waves tossed me around the deck like a rag doll. My left ribs cracked; my mouth filled with blood and broken teeth. Somehow, I found the wheel, lined up the stern for the next wave and hung on.*

(a) Who is 'I' in the above lines?

Answer: 'I' in the above lines is the narrator, Gordon Cook.

(b) What does the physical state of the narrator reveal about his character in this passage?

- (i) He panicked and gave up (ii) He remained brave and determined despite severe injuries
(iii) He was too injured to continue (iv) He asked the crew for help immediately

Answer: (ii) He remained brave and determined despite severe injuries

(c) What saved the narrator from drowning when he was thrown overboard?

- (i) A safety raft (ii) A floating log (iii) His lifeline (iv) The crew's quick action

Answer: (iii) His lifeline

(d) The narrator was tossed around the deck "like a _____," indicating the immense power of the waves and his helplessness.

Answer: rag doll

(e) What do the narrator's actions right after his injury reveal about his leadership and mentality during the crisis?

Answer: The narrator demonstrated incredible fortitude, presence of mind, and a strong sense of duty by taking control of the ship's wheel right away despite his injuries. His deeds demonstrate his leadership and commitment to keeping his crew and family safe.

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS: UNSOLVED

1. "That evening, Mary and I sat together holding hands, as the motion of the ship brought more and more water in through the broken planks. We both felt the end was very near. But Wavewalker rode out the storm, and by the morning of January 6, with the wind easing, I tried to get a reading on the sextant. Back in the chartroom, I worked on wind speeds, changes of course, drift and current in an effort to calculate our position. The best I could determine was that we were somewhere in 150,000 kilometres of ocean looking for a 65-kilometre-wide island."

(a) What happened as a result of the ship's movement?

- (i) It slowed down considerably
- (ii) More water started to enter through the broken planks
- (iii) The crew went overboard
- (iv) The sails were torn completely

(b) How did the narrator and his wife feel during the storm?

- (i) Calm and hopeful
- (ii) Confused and angry
- (iii) Frightened and helpless
- (iv) Hopeless and approaching death

(c) 'On the morning of January 6, the narrator tried to take a reading with the sextant'.

What does the narrator's attempt to use the sextant during a storm reveal about his character?

- (i) He was reckless and overconfident
- (ii) He remained analytical and determined despite the odds
- (iii) He was uncertain of what to do next
- (iv) He preferred to act on guesses rather than facts.

2. On January 4, after 36 hours of continuous pumping, they reached the last few centimeters of water. Now, we had only to keep pace with the water still coming in. We could not set any sail on the main mast. Pressure on the rigging would simply pull the damaged section of the hull apart, so we hoisted the storm jib and headed for where I thought the two islands were. Mary found some corned beef and cracker biscuits, and we ate our first meal in almost two days. But our respite was short-lived. At 4 p.m., black clouds began building up behind us; within the hour, the wind was back to 40 knots, and the seas were getting higher.

(a) After 36 hours of continuous pumping, what situation did they eventually arrive?

- (i) The boat was fully repaired
- (ii) The sea had calmed completely
- (iii) Only a few centimeters of water remained in the boat
- (iv) They had reached the island safely

(b) What measures did they have to take to manage the water still entering the boat?

- (i) Covered the hull with plastic sheets
- (ii) Set full sails to move faster
- (iii) Stopped pumping and took a rest
- (iv) Continued pumping and kept pace with the incoming water

(c) Why couldn't the sailors put any sail on the main mast?

(d) Why was their respite short-lived?

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS- SOLVED

1. How did the narrator and his wife prepare for their circumnavigation?

Ans: The narrator and his wife aimed to 'duplicate' the round-the-world voyage undertaken 200 years ago by Captain James Cook. Throughout the previous 16 years, they had been making formidable preparations. For this purpose, they first acquired a boat called "Wavewalker," which was professionally designed and constructed. They put it to the test for months in the most severe weather. They trained to become better seafarers in British waters during all of their free time. Both physically and psychologically, they were ready to embark on their incredibly difficult and protracted sea voyage.

2. How did the weather look on the morning of January 2nd?

Ans: The weather remained poor and unfavourable on New Year's Day. On January 2nd, things became even worse. There were enormous waves. They were moving fairly quickly, even though they had only a slight storm jib. The ship was able to see the vast, limitless sea rolling in their direction as it rose to the top of each wave. The wind sounded like it was howling.

3. The waves were enormous on January 2nd. What efforts did the narrator make to shield himself and his family from the enormous waves?

Ans: They decided to slow down the boat to protect themselves. After dropping the storm jib, they looped a heavy mooring rope across the stem. Following that, they double-lashed everything, practised their life-raft drill, connected lifelines, put on life jackets and oilskins, and prepared themselves for the worst.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Describe the boat Wavewalker.
2. How did the voyagers celebrate their Christmas and where?
3. What happened on the morning of 3rd January?
4. What were the damages caused by the gigantic waves to the ship?
5. Describe the card made by Sue.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. "Unity is strength". How does the chapter illustrate this adage?

Ans: The chapter demonstrates the adage "Unity is strength" to a great degree. Despite exhaustion, injuries, or fear, every crew member helped with survival efforts when the Wavewalker was struck by disaster in the middle of the ocean. In his capacity as captain, Gordon Cook guided the ship and set the course with unwavering resolve. His wife, Mary, took care of the wheel and soothed their kids while providing him with unwavering support. For more than 36 hours, Larry and Herb, two crew members, pumped out water without giving up. Jonathan and Suzanne, the kids, did not even freak out. While Jonathan displayed courage and composure that inspired the others, Suzanne concealed her wounds to spare her parents the trouble. They were able to withstand harsh circumstances and ultimately locate land thanks to their combined efforts, mutual trust, and shared accountability. They were able to persevere and survive because of their united front. The chapter demonstrates unequivocally how solidarity in the face of hardship can grow stronger than danger or fear.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Describe the terrifying experience the narrator and his crew had in the Southern Indian Ocean when the Wavewalker was hit by enormous waves.
2. Highlight the remarkable courage and resilience shown by the two children during the crisis. What important life lessons do their actions teach us?
3. When we dare to fully utilise our inner strength, we can overcome life's obstacles. Elaborate with reference to the chapter.
4. "We're Not Afraid to Die, If We Can All Be Together" is a stirring tale of bravery, perseverance, and patience. Comment.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. What life lessons can we learn from the narrator's leadership and the family's teamwork during the storm?

Answer: Students can learn several valuable life lessons from the narrator's leadership and the teamwork displayed by the family. The power of togetherness and teamwork in the face of adversity can help us tide over any situation. Gordon Cook, in spite of being injured and exhausted, remained focused and led by example. He did not give up hope and made practical decisions even under pressure. Mary supported him by steering the boat and managing domestic duties calmly. The crew members, Larry and Herb, showed dedication by working nonstop to pump out water. Even the children contributed emotionally—Jonathan's brave words showed emotional intelligence and gave strength to the adults. His leadership inspired the others to stay strong. This coordinated effort highlights the power of unity, trust, and clear communication during a crisis. We learn that no matter how tough the situation is, staying positive, working together, and supporting one another can help overcome the most challenging circumstances.

2. Imagine you are Jonathan, the son of the narrator. Write a diary entry the night after the family survives the storm, reflecting on your thoughts, fears, and feelings about the experience.

Answer: January 6

Today, I witnessed the presence of death—and also the strength of love. When the waves crashed against our boat, I experienced fear unlike anything I had felt before. The sounds were horrifying, and the boat trembled as if it might break apart. I realised we could perish. However, what sustained me was the knowledge that we were together.

When Dad was injured, I felt afraid, but I concealed it. I wanted to show bravery—for him, for Mum, and for Sue. I told Dad, “We’re not scared of dying if we can all be together.” I wasn’t certain if he heard me, but I hope it offered some comfort.

Now that the storm has passed and we’re safe, I feel a sense of pride. Not for surviving—but for how we confronted it: as a united front, as a family, with bravery. I’ll always remember this day. It showed me that even the tiniest person can demonstrate strength when it is most crucial.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. The reaction of the crew and children gives us an insight into the human mind and how it can help us survive any disaster. Write a blog post titled, ‘*The Power of the Human Spirit in Times of Crisis – A Lesson from the Sea*’ with reference to the chapter, “*We’re Not Afraid to Die... If We Can All Be Together*”

2. Both the mother bird in the poem “*The Laburnum Top*” and Gordon Cook in the adventure saga, “*We’re Not Afraid to Die... If We Can All Be Together*”, exhibit strong leadership and protective instincts. Compare how both of them respond to their responsibilities in moments of crisis. What does this say about their roles and the values they represent?

3. Illustrate how the family’s journey reflects the concept that togetherness and emotional resilience can help in overcoming even the most dangerous obstacles in life.

4. Do you believe that it was wise to take children like Jonathan and Suzanne on a voyage involving multiple risks? Give reasons to support your answer.

5. In what way does the title emphasize the importance of unity in facing and overcoming challenging circumstances?

DISCOVERING TUT: THE SAGA CONTINUES...

-A.R. WILLIAMS

TITLE

‘Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues...’ focuses on the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb and the use of modern technology to analyze his mummy, thereby throwing light on his life and death and challenging some long-held beliefs about the ‘curse of the pharaohs.’

AUTHOR

A. R. Williams specializes in writing about the ancient world and cultural heritage preservation. As a writer for three decades at National Geographic magazine and digital news, she reported on new discoveries and the latest research in archaeology around the world.

SETTING

The narrative is set in the Ancient Egyptian civilization around 3,300 years ago. It provides a detailed account of the scientific and archaeological exploration by Howard Carter in the early 20th century and the discovery of Tut’s tomb in 1922. and the great pyramids in which the mummified bodies of the Pharaohs are buried. The chapter sheds light on the discovery of the last pharaoh of the ancient Egyptian dynasty, Tut

(Tutankhamun). *Discovering Tut, the Saga continues* is a historical narrative set in the ancient Egyptian civilization and the mysterious life and death of the last king in his dynasty.

GENRE

It is a Historical Narrative set in ancient Egyptian civilization 3300 B.C. The narrative provides a glimpse into the cultural and religious life during the reign of the pharaohs of ancient Egypt. The focus is on the mysterious life and death of the young pharaoh Tutankhamun.

CHARACTERS

1. King Tut – The young Egyptian Pharaoh whose tomb was discovered.
2. Amenhotep III – an Egyptian pharaoh who reigned during the 18th dynasty from 1336 to 1353 BC. His reign was marked by stability, prosperity and artistic achievements.
3. Amenhotep IV – the son of Amenhotep III. He was known for his radical religious and political reforms. Introduced worship of Aten, the Sun disk, demolishing the existing major deity, Amun.
4. Howard Carter - A British archaeologist who discovered Tut's tomb in 1922.
5. Zahi Hawass – the Secretary General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

1. Introduction to the discovery of King Tut's tomb.
 - Here, the readers come across the history of initial excavations, building a sense of suspense in the minds of the readers.
2. Detailed description of funerary treasures.
 - Exploring the significance and treasures found in the tomb. A detailed description of funerary treasures and artefacts is given. The readers get more insight into the historical context and cultural significance of treasures.
3. Discussion of ongoing research and analysis.
 - The narrative is more objective with scientific analysis, forensic studies and the latest available scientific advancements in the field of archaeology, with the changing times,
4. Attempt to unveil the possible mysteries surrounding Tut's life and death.
 - Theories about King Tut's reign, death and legacy find expression in the text.

MOOD AND TONE

Mood is of awe and wonder blended with curiosity and reverence

Tone is informative, investigative and reflective.

THEMES

The primary theme of "Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues" revolves around the use of modern technology, specifically CT scans, to uncover new information about King Tut's life and death, challenging previous theories and shedding light on historical mysteries.

SUMMARY

- The lesson throws light on the mysterious life and death of the last king of the ancient Egyptian dynasty, Tutankhamun.
- A British archaeologist, Howard Carter, discovered his tomb in 1922.
- Tut's tomb was a storehouse of stunning funerary treasures and artefacts.
- The mummy was placed in three nested coffins.
- The body was severed into several parts by Carter's men, who had to chisel out the body, which had become cemented to the gold coffin due to ritual resins.
- Tut's mummy underwent an X-ray in the year 1968 by an anatomy professor.
- Amenhotep III, the grandfather of Tut, was a powerful ruler who ruled the country for forty years.
- It was the golden period in the history of ancient Egypt.
- Amenhotep IV, who followed him, evoked drastic changes by overthrowing the religious practices of the people.

- He replaced the worship of Amun with that of Aten.
- He changed the capital from Thebes to Amarna.
- He was followed by a less significant ruler, Smenkhkare.
- King Tutankhaten took the throne at a very tender age, and he once again restored the ancient culture of Egypt.
- He also brought back the traditional worship of Amun, the Sun God and changed the capital from Amarna to Thebes. He changes his name from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun - the living image of God.
- Archaeological study was revolutionised in the last few decades with the developments in science and technology.
- In the year 2005, the mummy was taken out for a CT scan.
- The CT machine created 1700 digital X-ray images of Tut's head, neck and skull.
- After the scan, the mummy was carried back to his tomb.
- Despite technological advance the mystery behind Tut's death remained unsolved and alive.
- The narrative reflects on the legacy of ancient Egyptian kings.

CRITICAL ESTIMATE / ANALYSIS

The narrative highlights the significance of archaeological findings and the importance of preserving ancient artefacts. The lesson showcases the use of advanced technology and scientific methods to analyse ancient remains. The story points out the significance of exploring ancient Egyptian history and civilization. The narrative is engaging and draws the attention of the readers to the pyramids of Egypt. The descriptive language brings the ancient world so lively and vivid. The ethical implications of excavating and analyzing ancient remains could be debated after the reading of the text. The narrative provides a Western – centric perspective on ancient Egyptian culture.

LITERARY DEVICES AND TOOLS

1. **Imagery:** imagery is used to paint vivid pictures of Tutankhamun's tomb and its treasures.
Dark bellied clouds scudded across the desert sky...
Glittering goods, inlaid necklaces, bracelets, rings and amulets, sheaths of gold for fingers and toes.
2. **Symbolism:** deeper meanings are unearthed using various symbols. Tutankhamun's tomb and treasures.
The golden mask represents wealth, power and divine status.
The tomb represents the pharaoh's journey to the afterlife and the ancient Egyptian beliefs about death and resurrection.
The Amulets and jewels represent protection and good fortune.
3. **Allusion:** References to historical events, myths and beliefs.
4. **Alliteration:** 'glittering goods'
5. **Simile:** The winter air lay cold like death itself in this valley of the departed.

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS – SOLVED

1. The boy king soon changed his name to Tutankhamun, 'living image of Amun,' and oversaw a restoration of the old ways. He reigned for about nine years — and then died unexpectedly. Regardless of his fame and the speculations about his fate, Tut is one mummy among many in Egypt. How many? No one knows. The Egyptian Mummy Project, which began an inventory in late 2003, has recorded almost 600 so far and is still counting.

1. Why has the phrase 'boy king' been used for Tut?
 - a. He awarded every boy in his kingdom
 - b. He was very young when he became king

c. Boys of his kingdom liked him

Answer- **b. He was very young when he became king**

2. How many mummies are there in Egypt?

a. About 600

b. More than 1000

c. No one knows the exact number

Answer- **C. No one knows the exact number**

3. Which of the following was not done by Tut

a. He changed his name to Tutankhamun

b. He restored old ways

c. He ruled for far more than nine years

Answer- **C. He ruled for far more than nine years**

2. *He was just a teenager when he died. The last heir of a powerful family that had ruled Egypt and its empire for centuries, he was laid to rest laden with gold and eventually forgotten. Since the discovery of his tomb in 1922, the modern world has speculated about what happened to him, with murder being the most extreme possibility. Now, leaving his tomb for the first time in almost 80 years, Tut has undergone a CT scan that offers new clues about his life and death — and provides precise data for an accurate forensic reconstruction of the boyish pharaoh.*

1. What do you understand about the word “pharaoh”?

Answer. **It is a title given to the monarchs of ancient Egypt.**

2. Find a word from the given extract which means the same as “form a theory or conjecture about a subject without firm evidence:”

Answer. **Speculate.**

3. Find out the correct relation between the given sentences below.

Assertion: More clues about the life and death of King Tut are recently available.

Reason: Archaeology is revolutionized with the advancements in science and technology.

a. The Assertion is true, and the reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion.

b. The Assertion is false, and the Reason is true.

c. Both the Assertion and Reason are false.

d. The Assertion is true, but the Reason is not the correct explanation of the assertion

Answer: **a. The Assertion is true, and the reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion.**

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS - UNSOLVED

1. *The world’s most famous mummy glided head first into a CT scanner brought here to probe the lingering medical mysteries of this little understood young ruler who died more than 3,300 years ago. 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.*

1. Choose the meaning of the word ‘cramped’ from the options given below.

A. uncomfortably small

B. spacious

C. sufficiently ample

2. Find the synonym of ‘investigate’ from the above extract?

A. Lingering

B. Descended

C. Probe

3. Find out the correct relation between the given sentences below.

Assertion: King Tut’s mummy was CT-scanned.

Reason: Researchers wanted to unveil the lingering medical mysteries of King Tut’s life and death.

A. The Assertion is true, and the reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion.

B. The Assertion is false, and the Reason is true.

C. Both the Assertion and Reason are false.

D. The Assertion is true, but the Reason is not the correct explanation of the Assertion.

2. *Carter really had little choice. If he hadn’t cut the mummy free, thieves most certainly would have*

circumvented the guards and ripped it apart to remove the gold. In Tut's time the royals were fabulously wealthy, and they thought — or hoped — they could take their riches with them. For his journey to the great beyond, King Tut was lavished with glittering goods: precious collars, inlaid necklaces and bracelets, rings, amulets, a ceremonial apron, sandals, sheaths for his fingers and toes, and the now iconic inner coffin and mask — all of pure gold.

Q1. Identify the literary device used in “glittering goods”

- A. Alliteration B. Metaphor C. Simile D. Hyperbole

Q2. State whether the following statement is true or false.

Carter was afraid that the ornaments on the mummy would be stolen by thieves unless he forcefully removed them.

Q3. Which word in the passage means the same as “to overcome an obstacle cleverly or illegitimately”?

- A. Reassemble B. Circumvent
C. conceal D. Severed

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. “Archaeology has changed substantially”. Justify the statement by citing examples from the text.

Answer. In the course of time, archaeological tools and techniques have been revolutionised over the decades. More sophisticated tools like X-rays and CT scans have been used to find details of King Tut's mysterious life and untimely death in his teenage years. The shocking detail regarding the missing of two rib bones sheds further information on the life and death of King Tut.

2. Why was King Tut's demise a big event, even by royal standards?

Answer. King Tut's demise was a significant occasion even by royal standards. He was the last monarch in his familial line. He was nine years old when he became king, and he died mysteriously at the age of 18. His funeral was the death rattle of a dynasty that had controlled Egypt for many years. He passed away quite suddenly at a young age, which is why his death was a mystery. The cause of his demise and its consequences remain a mystery.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (40-50 words)

1. How does the discovery of Tut's tomb contribute to our understanding of ancient Egyptian culture?

2. What insight do the artefacts found in King Tut's tomb provide into ancient Egyptian funerary practices and beliefs?

3. “King Tut is one of the first mummies to be scanned — in death, as in life...”. Comment.

4. Give instances to prove that Akhenaten went “a little wacky”.

5. How far would you justify Carter's defense of his act of severing parts and joints of King Tut's mummy?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Analyze the cultural and historical significance of the artefacts found in King Tut's tomb. What do they reveal about ancient Egyptian society and beliefs?

Ans: The artefacts found in King Tut's tomb are of immense cultural and historical significance offering insights into ancient Egyptian society and beliefs. The golden mask is an iconic symbol of ancient Egyptian wealth and craftsmanship. It represents the importance of preserving the pharaoh's identity in the afterlife. The numerous funerary objects reveal their belief in an afterlife and the need to provide the deceased with necessities and luxuries. The exquisite jewellery and adornments found in the tomb demonstrate the advanced craftsmanship and wealth of ancient Egyptian society. The presence of foreign artefacts and influences in the tomb highlights the cultural exchanges and trade networks between ancient Egypt and other civilizations.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (120-150 words)

1. How does the study of King Tut's tomb and mummy reflect the intersection of science, history and culture?

2. Imagine you are an Egyptologist tasked with planning a new expedition to re-examine King Tut's tomb. What new technologies and approaches would you employ?
3. Describe challenges faced during the CT scanning of King Tut's mummy. Comment on the results of the CT scan.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. What conclusions can be drawn about King Tut's life and death based on the examination of his mummy and tomb artefacts?

Ans: The examination of King Tut's mummy and tomb artefacts provides valuable insights into his life and death. He was around 19 years old when he died, and he was a pharaoh of the 18th dynasty. His mummy was over 3,300 years old. The exact cause of his death is still debated. Two front ribs were missing from his mummy, which points to some foul play. His body was laid in a series of nested containers, including three golden coffins and four gilded shrines. His tomb contained personal jewellery, ceremonial items and weapons. The artefacts, such as the gold mask, coffins and funerary treasures, demonstrate the advanced craftsmanship and wealth of ancient Egyptian society. The tomb further provides valuable insights into ancient Egyptian culture, burial practices and the life of a young pharaoh.

2. If you were part of exploring King Tut's tomb, how would you prioritise the examination and preservation of the artefacts?

Ans: Being a part of the exploration team, priority shall be given to ensure that the artefacts are protected from further damage or deterioration. This involves thorough recording and documentation of each artefact, including photographs, videos and detailed notes. Collaboration with experts is essential, and suggestions shall be taken from experts from various fields, including archaeology, anthropology, history and conservation. Scanning and imaging shall be initiated without causing damage. The artefacts shall be stored in a controlled environment with stable temperature, humidity and lighting conditions. Finally, the information shall be shared with the public, academic community and relevant stakeholders.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (120-150 words)

1. Discuss the contributions of various disciplines (e.g. Archaeology, Egyptology, forensic science, and history) to our understanding of King Tut's life and death.
2. Imagine that you are Howard Carter. After studying the tomb of King Tut, you want to publish an article for National Geographic magazine. Write the article.
3. Using evidence from the discovery of King Tut's tomb, write a debate for or against the hypothesis that King Tut's death was due to natural causes or foul play.
4. "In *Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues*, modern scientific techniques play a key role in uncovering historical truths." How does the use of modern science enhance our understanding of history, particularly in the case of Tutankhamun?

THE LABURNUM TOP

-TED HUGHES

TITLE

The poem's title refers to the top of a Laburnum tree, which plays a pivotal role in the poem. It highlights the transformation the tree undergoes when a goldfinch arrives.

POET

Ted Hughes (1930–1998) was a celebrated English poet, best known for his deep connection with nature and wildlife. His poetry often explores the raw power of the natural world, blending vivid imagery with profound themes. As the Poet Laureate of Britain (1984–1998), he wrote extensively on nature, mythology, and human emotions. His notable works include *The Hawk in the Rain*, *Crow*, and *Birthday Letters*.

SETTING

The poem is set on an autumn afternoon, where a quiet and lifeless Laburnum tree becomes active and dynamic when a goldfinch arrives to feed its young ones.

FORM OF POETRY

The poem is a free verse lyric that captures the contrast between silence and energy in nature.

RHYME SCHEME

The poem does not follow a specific rhyme scheme.

CHARACTERS

- **Laburnum Tree** – Represents stillness, lifelessness, and later vibrancy.
- **Goldfinch** – Symbolises energy, care, and movement.
- **Goldfinch's chicks** – Represent dependence and innocence.

ORGANISATION OF IDEAS

1. **Stanza 1**
 - The poem starts with the beautiful description of the Laburnum tree in autumn—silent, still, and lifeless.
 - Its leaves are yellowing, and it stands motionless.
2. **Stanza 2**
 - The goldfinch arrives.
 - She enters the tree, making it come alive with her chirruping and presence.
 - Her babies in the nest become active, bringing an energetic transformation.
3. **Stanza 3**
 - The mother bird feeds her nestlings.
 - After feeding, she flies away, leaving the tree to its earlier silent state.
4. **Stanza 4**
 - The poem ends with the tree returning to emptiness, emphasising the contrast between activity and stillness.

MOOD AND TONE

- **Mood:** The poem starts with a melancholic, dull mood, but turns joyous and energetic with the goldfinch's arrival, and ends on a quiet, contemplative note.
- **Tone:**
 - ❖ Beginning: Somber and melancholic
 - ❖ Middle: Energetic, vibrant and lively
 - ❖ Ending: Quiet, reflective and peaceful

THEMES

- **Contrast between Life and Stillness** – The Laburnum tree is lifeless until the goldfinch arrives, showing the interplay of movement and quietness in nature.
- **Nature's Interdependence/Symbiotic Relationship in Nature** – The goldfinch and the tree depend on each other for shelter and sustenance.
- **Parental Care** – The goldfinch is a symbol of a caring mother, feeding and nurturing her chicks.

SUMMARY

- The Laburnum tree appears silent and lifeless in the autumn.
- A goldfinch arrives and brings vitality to the tree as it feeds its young.
- The chicks become noisy and active in the mother's presence.
- The mother bird is alert and cautious while feeding them.
- After feeding, she flies away, and the tree becomes silent once again.
- The poem symbolises the cyclical nature of life and the temporary yet impactful presence of life forces in nature.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Ted Hughes' "The Laburnum Top" is a masterful depiction of the interplay between stillness and movement in nature. The poem highlights how life can bring temporary vibrancy to seemingly lifeless objects. The Laburnum tree, initially silent and still, bursts into energy with the goldfinch's arrival. The poem uses vivid imagery and sound to contrast the dormancy of the tree with the vitality of the bird. The cyclical pattern—silence, activity, and silence again—mirrors the transience of life. Hughes also discusses how symbiotic relationships occur in the natural world.

LITERARY DEVICES AND TOOLS USED

- **Simile:** Sleek as a lizard
- **Metaphor** – 'The engine of her family'
- **Personification** –The whole tree trembles and thrills
- **Contrast** – Between stillness and motion, silence and sound.
- **Alliteration** – 'September sunlight', 'tree trembles', 'whistle-chirrup whisperings'
- **Symbolism** – The tree as lifelessness, the goldfinch as vitality and care, 'Yellow' is the symbol of decay and loneliness.
- **Imagery** – Vivid description of the tree and bird (e.g., "silent, motionless tree," "engine of her family").

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow.

EXTRACT 1

*"Then sleek as a lizard, and alert and abrupt,
She enters the thickness, and a machine starts up
Of chittering's, and a tremor of wings, and trilling's-
The whole tree trembles and thrills."*

1) How is the goldfinch described by the poet when it arrives?

- a. Slow and steady
- b. Bright and colourful
- c. Sleek as a lizard, and alert and abrupt
- d. Quiet and calm

Ans: c. Sleek as a lizard, and alert and abrupt

2) What does the reference to the 'machine' indicate in line 2?

Ans: The 'machine' refers to the young ones of the goldfinch. They suddenly start twittering and chirruping as their mother comes to the nest to feed them.

3) Find out the literary device used in the last line.

- a) Simile
- b) Metaphor
- c) Personification
- d) Transferred Epithet

Answer: c) Personification

4) Why do you think the poet refers to the nest as a 'machine'? What effect does this metaphor create?

Answer: The metaphor of a machine suggests sudden, synchronized, and energetic activity. When the mother bird enters the nest, her young ones respond instantly with chirrups and fluttering wings, as if the tree has been switched on like a machine. This creates a vivid picture of liveliness and energy

EXTRACT 2

*"Then with eerie delicate whistle-chirrup whisperings
She launches away, towards the infinite
And the laburnum subsides to empty"*

1) What effect does the last line create?

- (a) It creates the contrast between the liveliness of the tree and its silence
- (b) It creates the contrast between the change of seasons
- (c) It creates an opportunity to plant more Laburnum trees
- (d) It creates the scene for the arrival of new bird species in the tree

Answer: (a) It creates the contrast between the liveliness of the tree and its silence

2) The word _____ from the extract means the same as 'strange' and 'mysterious'.

- (a) delicate (b) odd (c) infinite (d) eerie

Answer: (d) eerie

3) How does the poet create a mood of mystery in these lines?

Answer: The use of words like "eerie," "delicate," and "whisperings" adds an air of mystery to the bird's departure. It reflects the soft, almost magical nature of her flight and creates a quiet, reflective mood as she vanishes into the sky.

4) What does the poet mean by 'the laburnum subsides to empty'? What does it suggest about the connection between the bird and the tree?

Answer: This phrase suggests that once the goldfinch leaves, the tree returns to its earlier stillness and silence. It implies that the bird brings life and energy to the tree, and her absence makes it feel empty and lifeless again, showing their deep connection.

UNSOLVED EXTRACT: 1

*"The Laburnum top is silent, quite still
In the afternoon yellow September sunlight,
A few leaves yellowing, all its seeds fallen."*

1. How is the laburnum tree described at the beginning of the poem?

- a) Vibrant and bustling with activity b) Quiet and motionless
c) Wrapped in snow d) Bursting with blossoms

2. During which season is the setting of the poem established?

- a) Spring b) Summer c) Autumn d) Winter

3. How does the poet use visual imagery in the extract to reflect the mood and setting?

4. The dominant colour in the opening lines is _____.

5. Which poetic device is used in the first line?

UNSOLVED EXTRACT: 2

*"Till the goldfinch comes, with a twitching chirrup
A suddenness, a startlement, at a branch end.
Then sleek as a lizard, and alert, and abrupt,
She enters the thickness"*

1. What transformation does the goldfinch bring to the laburnum tree upon its arrival?

- a) It causes the tree to wilt b) It fills the tree with energy, sound, and motion
c) It makes the tree shed its leaves d) It helps the tree grow taller

2. How is the goldfinch depicted when it makes its appearance in the poem?

- a) Moving slowly and lazily b) Radiant and vividly colored
c) Swift like a lizard, with sharp and sudden movements d) Serene and peaceful

3. The literary device used in the third line is _____.

4. Why is the comparison of the goldfinch to a lizard effective? What qualities does it highlight?

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS- SOLVED

1. Why is the laburnum tree described as "silent" at the beginning of the poem?

The laburnum tree is described as "silent" to show a sense of stillness, lifelessness, and inactivity. It sets a quiet, almost somber tone before the arrival of the goldfinch energizes the scene. It acts as an effective contrast before and after the arrival of the goldfinch.

2. How does the arrival of the goldfinch change the atmosphere of the poem?

The arrival of the goldfinch transmutes the still, silent tree into a lively, noisy, and animated space. Her presence brings energy, movement, and a burst of life to the tree. It gives vitality and life to the tree as well as the nestlings.

3. What is the significance of the line “Then sleek as a lizard, and alert, and abrupt”?

This simile emphasizes the quick, graceful, and sudden movements of the goldfinch. It highlights her alertness and agility, making her entrance vivid and dramatic. The lizard moves quickly. It is also very alert. When the mother bird enters the branch like a lizard, it aims to avoid the attention of predators.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS- UNSOLVED (40-50 words)

1. How does the goldfinch's presence highlight the poem's main idea?
2. Why do you think the poet uses the tree as a metaphor in the poem?
3. What lesson about motherhood or how to care for one's parents can be deduced from the poem?
4. How does Ted Hughes use imagery to improve the reader's experience?
5. What does the tree's symbolic return to silence after the bird's departure suggest?
6. How does the poem contrast stillness with abrupt movement?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS- SOLVED

1. The arrival of the goldfinch on the Laburnum top causes a significant shift in the poem. How do you understand this change? Is change beneficial or detrimental in life?

Answer: In the beginning of the poem, the Laburnum tree appears quiet and motionless. It enjoys a stillness bathed in sunlight on a September afternoon. However, the moment the goldfinch arrives, the scene transforms into one of lively activity. The tree's silence is disrupted by the cheerful chirping and fluttering of the chicks and the goldfinch.

I believe that the change brought by the goldfinch's presence is a positive one, as it alleviates the monotony. The tree becomes vibrant and full of life with the goldfinch's movements and the sounds of the chicks.

A change in life can be either positive or negative, depending on the context. Nevertheless, change is the only constant we can rely on in life. Even if a change turns out to be unfavourable, it is essential to accept it and adapt as we move forward.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS- UNSOLVED (120-150 words)

1. Ted Hughes' poem "The Laburnum Top" describes the transformation of the laburnum tree. What changes does the goldfinch's arrival bring about?
2. Examine how the use of imagery and symbolism in the poem "The Laburnum Top" by Ted Hughes enhances the overall theme of the poem.
3. Comment on the theme of nature and its cycles in "The Laburnum Top." How does Ted Hughes depict the goldfinch and the laburnum tree's relationship?
4. What are some ways that Ted Hughes uses sound to enhance the imagery in "The Laburnum Top"? Provide suitable examples from the poem to support your analysis.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. The poem illustrates how a single interaction within nature infuses energy into a setting that would otherwise be devoid of life. How might this be connected to human experiences, particularly regarding loneliness, companionship, or caregiving?

The poem uses the metaphor of a calm, quiet laburnum tree that suddenly comes to life with the arrival of a bird—the goldfinch. This change elegantly reflects the human experience, especially how care and companionship can transform our emotional state. In life, many individuals face instances of emotional stillness—feelings of isolation, loneliness, or lack of purpose. Similar to the serene top of the laburnum, a

person may seem lifeless or unresponsive, but with the arrival of a friend, loved one, or caregiver, everything can shift.

For example, an elderly person living by himself may feel withdrawn and uninspired. Yet, when his grandchildren come to visit and fill the space with laughter and conversation, the person's mood is immediately elevated—echoing how the goldfinch breathes life into the tree. Likewise, those who are struggling with mental or physical health challenges frequently rely on the compassion and assistance from caregivers to rediscover motivation and meaning in their lives.

The poem also illustrates how even a minor act or presence—like the fleeting visit of the goldfinch—can impart joy and purpose. In our everyday lives, we often fail to recognize how our presence can influence others. A call to a lonely friend, a few moments spent with a child, or a kind word to a stranger can lift their spirits, just as the goldfinch invigorates the tree. Therefore, the poem conveys the significance of relationships and the restorative power of love and affection, making it highly applicable to real-life situations.

2. Imagine that you are the goldfinch. Write a diary entry that conveys your thoughts and emotions about your visit to the laburnum tree. Illustrate the happiness of reuniting with your young ones and the brief yet enchanting connection you have with the tree.

Thursday, 8th September 20XX

8 pm

Dear Diary,

Today, as always, I glided through the golden rays of September sunlight and made my way to the laburnum top. From a distance, the tree seemed motionless and peaceful, as if it had fallen asleep under the weight of its yellowing leaves. Yet, I was aware of the truth. I understood that concealed within its dense foliage was my own small universe—my nest, my young ones and my motivation to return.

As I went closer, I stayed vigilant, for I recognized how crucial it is to maintain the secrecy of our presence. I went down quietly and swayed through the branches like a lizard. The instant I chirruped gently, a quiver surged through the tree. That tranquil, drowsy tree awakened to the joyful calls of my chicks. I cannot express the happiness that follows—their gentle songs, eager beaks, and the twinkling of tiny wings. For those brief moments, the tree and I are filled with vigour and feeling. It transformed from mere wood and leaves into a home, a cradle, a refuge. The atmosphere was alive with warmth, intention, and affection. The tree, previously so silent, shifted into a lively hub of existence.

However, my visits are always brief. I feed them swiftly, cuddle them for a brief moment, and then I have to depart. I ascend into the open sky, once again leaving behind silence. I am aware the tree will revert to its stillness, but within that silence now resides a memory—a heartbeat of our short yet lovely encounter. This connection I share with the tree may not endure forever, but for the time being, it imparts meaning to both our existences. And tomorrow, I will return yet again to enliven the laburnum's top once more.

-Goldfinch

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (120-150 words)

1. Goldfinch's arrival causes a significant transformation in the laburnum tree. Think back to a time in your life when an apparently unimportant incident brought about unforeseen energy and change. What is the connection between this and the poem's portrayal of the laburnum tree and the goldfinch? Write it in the form of blog content.

2. Consider yourself one of the nest's young goldfinches. Following the events of the day, you write a journal entry detailing how your mother, the goldfinch, gives your quiet world on the laburnum tree vitality, warmth, and attention. Consider her love, vigour, and contribution to your upbringing. Write your thoughts and feelings down in the form of a diary entry.

3. Examine critically how sound and imagery are used effectively in "The Laburnum Top". In what ways do the visual and auditory components contribute to the contrast between the tree before and after the goldfinch's arrival?

THE VOICE OF THE RAIN

-WALT WHITMAN

TITLE

The title "The Voice of the Rain" is significant because it embodies the central theme of Walt Whitman's poem. The personification of rain as a communicative entity that shares its life cycle and purpose with the reader. The title suggests a direct interaction with nature, where the rain itself speaks, offering insights into its origins, its role in the world, and its eternal cycle. It highlights the idea that nature possesses a voice and can convey profound messages to those who listen.

POET

Walt Whitman (May 31, 1819 – March 26, 1892) was an American poet, essayist and journalist. He is best known for his collection of poems, "Leaves of Grass", which celebrates the beauty and diversity of American life and the human experience. Whitman's poetry is known for its free verse style, exploration of themes such as nature, democracy, individuality and its celebration of the human body and spirit. He is considered one of the most influential poets in American literature.

SETTING

The setting is the natural world, specifically the Earth's atmosphere and landscape.

FORM OF POETRY

The poem is written in free verse, with no specific rhyme or meter.

RHYME SCHEME

There is no specific rhyme scheme in the poem.

CHARACTERS

The characters in the poem are:

The poet (narrator)

The rain (personified)

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

The poem's plot is constructed around the personification of the rain, which describes its role in the Earth's ecosystem. The poem explores the rain's origin, purpose and cyclical nature.

MOOD AND TONE

"The Voice of the Rain" by Walt Whitman has a conversational, meditative and appreciative tone.

The poem uses personification to give the rain a voice, creating an intimate and reflective mood as the rain describes its cyclical journey and life-giving purpose. The poem creates a feeling of awe and appreciation for the natural world and its rhythms.

THEME

The theme of the poem is the beauty and importance of nature's cycles, specifically the role of rain in sustaining life on Earth.

The main theme of Walt Whitman's "The Voice of the Rain" is the cyclical nature of life and the interconnectedness of all things, highlighted beautifully through the rain's journey. The poem personifies the rain, allowing it to describe its own journey from the earth, through the sky, and back again, highlighting its role in nourishing and renewing the world. The formation and the entire journey of the rain is compared to the creation of a song. The poem also highlights the selfless nature of rain as it nurtures life without even expecting appreciation in return.

SUMMARY IN BULLET POINTS

- The poem personifies the rain, giving it a voice to describe its role in the Earth's ecosystem.
- The rain rises from the land and sea, forming in the heavens.
- It descends to nourish the Earth, bringing life to seeds and purifying its origin.
- The rain's cyclical nature is emphasized, as it gives back life to its origin.
- The poem highlights the beauty and importance of nature's cycles.

CRITICAL ESTIMATE

The poem is a beautiful and thought-provoking exploration of the natural world. Whitman's use of personification and imagery creates a vivid picture of the rain's role in sustaining life on Earth. The poem's themes of renewal and purification are timeless and universal.

LITERARY DEVICES

Personification (giving the rain human-like qualities)- *'AND who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,'*

Imagery (creating vivid pictures of the natural world)- *'Eternal I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea, upward to heaven, whence, vaguely formed, altogether changed, and yet the same,*

Metaphor (comparing the rain to a poem)- *'I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain.*

Paradox (A statement that seemingly contradicts itself but reveals a deeper truth on close examination.)

Alliteration (Repetition of the same sound in a sequence of nearby words.) *-I give back life to my own origin,*

Symbolism (the rain representing renewal and purification)

Style of writing: In this poem, Walt Whitman's style of writing is conversational and free-flowing.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. *And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,
Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:
I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain,
Eternal, I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea,
Upward to heaven, whence, vaguely form'd, altogether changed,*

a. What did the poet ask the soft-falling shower?

Answer: "And who art thou?" which means 'who are you?'

b. How does the rain describe itself in the poem?

Answer: The rain describes itself as the "Poem of Earth".

c. What is the nature of the rain's rise, according to the poem?

i) Visible and tangible ii) Invisible and intangible iii) Loud and thunderous iv) Slow and sluggish

Answer: ii) Invisible and intangible

2. *Yet the same,
I descend to lave the droughts, atomies, dust-layers of the globe,
And all that in them without me were seeds only, latent, unborn;
And forever, by day and night, I give back life to my own origin,
and make pure and beautify it;*

a. What does the rain do to the droughts and dust layers of the globe?

Answer: The rain washes over them, bringing life and nourishment.

b. What would seeds be without the rain?

Answer: Seeds would not be able to bloom and grow without the rain.

c. The rain says, 'I give back life to my own origin, and make pure and beautify it;' What does it mean by this?

i) It drains life from it

ii) It replenishes the water bodies when it comes down.

iii) It has no effect on it

iv) It pollutes it

Answer: ii) It replenishes the water bodies when it comes down.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. *Eternal, I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea,
Upward to heaven, whence, vaguely formed, altogether changed,
and yet the same,*

I descend to lave the droughts, atomies, dust layers of the globe, (2020)

- (i) Who is the speaker here?
- (ii) From where does the speaker rise?
- (iii) What is meant by altogether changed, and yet the same?
- (iv) What are 'atomies'?

2. *"I descend to lave the droughts, atomies, dust- layers of the globe,
And all that in them without me were seeds only, latent, unborn;"*

- i. With what purpose does the rain descend from the sky?
- ii. How does the rain help the seeds?
- iii. What is latent and unborn, and why?
- iv. What does the phrase 'lave the droughts' mean?

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. What is the poem's central theme?

Answer: The poem's central theme is the beauty and importance of nature's cycles. It highlights the role of rain in sustaining life on Earth. The poem showcases the interconnectedness of nature.

2. How does the rain describe itself in the poem?

Answer: The rain describes itself as the "Poem of Earth". This description highlights the rain's role in creating beauty and harmony on the planet. It's a poetic and symbolic representation.

3. There are two voices in the poem. Who do they belong to? Which lines indicate this?

Answer: One voice is of the poet himself. The other voice is of the rain. This is indicated by the following lines:

" And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,
Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:
I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain."

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. What is the tone of the poem?

2. How does the poem describe the rain's movement?

3. What effect does the rain have on the Earth's surface?

4. What literary device is used in the phrase "I am the Poem of Earth"?

5. What answer did the rain give to the poet about its origin?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Analyze the theme of nature's cycles in the poem.

Answer: The poem beautifully explores the theme of nature's cycles, highlighting the interconnectedness of the Earth's elements. The rain's journey from the land and sea to the sky and back again illustrates the cyclical nature of life. The poem showcases how the rain nourishes the Earth, bringing life to seeds and rejuvenating the land. This cycle of renewal emphasizes the importance of nature's rhythms and the rain's role in sustaining life. In the poem, the water rises from the 'land and the bottomless sea' to reach the sky. There, it transforms itself into a vague formation of clouds, different in their structure than the water from which they originate. After wandering, these clouds descend to the earth in the form of rain to provide relief to the drought-ridden areas and infuse life into the unborn and latent seeds. The rain renders the earth

beautiful and pure. In science, we learn the cyclical process of rain in terms like evaporation, condensation, precipitation, flowing rivers, groundwater and ocean water, etc., while in the poem, the same process becomes interesting and unusual. The rain speaks for itself to describe its course.

2. Discuss the poet's portrayal of the rain as a creative and life-giving force.

Answer: The poet portrays the rain as a creative and life-giving force, emphasising its role in sustaining life on Earth. The rain is described as the "Poem of Earth", highlighting its beauty and harmony. The poem showcases the ability to bring life to seeds, quench the thirst of the dry land, and rejuvenate the Earth's surface. The rain's cyclical nature, giving back life to its origin and making it pure and beautiful, further emphasizes its creative and life-giving force. The poet's portrayal of the rain underscores the importance of appreciating and respecting nature's power.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. How does the poem use imagery and symbolism to convey the significance of rain in the natural world?
2. Discuss the poet's use of personification in the poem, particularly in relation to the rain.
3. What message do you think the poet is trying to convey through the poem's exploration of the rain's cyclical nature?
4. Analyze the poem's structure and language, and explain how they contribute to its overall meaning and effect.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. The rain describes itself as the 'poem of the earth'. Analyze the claim of the rain and justify it.

Ans- Just as a poem is a beautiful, rhythmic expression of thoughts and feelings, rain is a natural expression of the earth's cycle. It originates from the earth, rises to the sky (evaporation), forms clouds, and then returns to nourish the land, completing a graceful and meaningful cycle—much like a poem that begins in the heart of a poet and returns to touch the soul of the reader. Rain revitalizes the earth, bringing life to dry lands, helping plants grow, and supporting ecosystems. Similarly, poetry revives the human spirit, stirs emotions, and brings depth and meaning to life. In this way, the rain nourishes the physical world, and poetry nourishes the inner world.

2. The poem is a powerful commentary on the rejuvenating power of nature. How far do you agree with the statement? Give reasons to support your answer.

Ans- Whitman illustrates how natural elements like rain are essential to sustaining life on Earth. The rain describes itself as rising invisibly from the land and sea, only to return in a nourishing form, revitalizing "droughts, atomies, dust-layers"—symbols of lifelessness and decay. In doing so, it breathes new life into the environment, encouraging growth and beauty.

This cycle of evaporation and rainfall is presented not merely as a scientific process, but as something sacred and poetic. Just as poetry can uplift the human spirit, rain renews the natural world, restoring balance and promoting vitality. The poem draws a parallel between the creative power of the poet and the life-giving role of rain, showing that both return to their source—whether earth or heart—enriched and more meaningful.

Ultimately, the poem is a celebration of nature's regenerative force, reminding us of the deep connection between all living things and the natural cycles that sustain them. It encourages readers to view nature not just as a backdrop to human life, but as a dynamic, healing presence—an eternal poem written by the Earth itself.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Write an imaginary conversation between the poet and the rain.
2. In *The Voice of the Rain*, the rain describes its journey from the earth to the sky and back again. Analyze how this cycle reflects deeper themes about life, creativity and renewal. How does the poet

use this natural process to comment on human expression and artistic creation? Support your answer with evidence from the poem.

CHILDHOOD

- MARKUS NATTEN

TITLE

The poem 'Childhood' explores the themes of innocence, nostalgia, longing, a sense of loss and the passing of time. The introspective and reflective setting of the poem enables the speaker to look back on his childhood experiences and memories.

POET

Markus Natten – he is known for his thought – provoking and introspective works. Very often he discusses the themes of childhood and innocence, nature and environment, human emotions and experiences and nostalgia and passing of time. His poems invite the readers to reflect on their own experiences and emotions, creating a sense of connection and understanding.

SETTING

The **setting** of the poem "Childhood" by Markus Natten is primarily **psychological and reflective**, rather than physical or geographical. It explores the **inner landscape of the speaker's mind** as he questions when and where his childhood ended.

FORM OF POETRY/ TYPE OF VERSIFICATION

1. Free Verse or blank verse – natural flow of thoughts and emotions in free verse.
2. The language used is simple and accessible conveying the speaker's emotions and memories.

RHYME SCHEME

1. Free Verse – No specific rhyme scheme as the focus is on exploring emotions rather than adhering to specific rhyming patterns.
2. Internal rhymes or slant rhymes (using words that almost rhyme or have a similar sound) can be found, adding depth and musicality to the poem.

CHARACTERS

1. The Speaker – The narrator of the poem, who reflects on his childhood experiences and memories.
2. The Child – The narrator's childhood self, who is portrayed as innocent, imaginative and carefree.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

The plot of the poem is constructed around the theme of the loss of childhood. In the subsequent three stanzas, the poet wonders when he lost his childhood. These stanzas deal with the themes of innocence, rational aptitude, intruding hypocritical approaches, and the identification of individuality subsequently. The last stanza of the poem searches for where he lost his childhood. The poem jumps between memories and reflections; childhood reminiscence and experiences are the axis on which the themes revolve.

MOOD AND TONE

1. The mood of the poem enables us to explore the complexities of childhood memories and the passage of time. The readers are invited to reflect on their own experiences.

- * Nostalgic -evokes a sense of longing
 - * Reflective – enables the contemplation of themes and emotions
 - * Wistful – evokes a sense of loss and wistfulness.
 - * Intimate – The poet uses a personal and intimate tone.
2. The tone is reflective, inviting the reader to ponder the themes and emotions discussed.

THEMES

Loss of Innocence, Nostalgia, Transition to Adulthood, Self-discovery and the fleeting nature of childhood are the important themes running through the poem.

SUMMARY

- The poem explores the themes of growing up, loss of innocence and nostalgia.
- The poet wonders about the time when he lost his childhood.
- The poem touches on the idea that childhood is a state of innocence and purity which fades as one matures.
- It is a personal and introspective account of the poet's own experiences.
- The poem invites the readers to reflect on their own childhood memories and the passage of time.
- The first stanza deals with Rationalism – the poet guesses the time of rational thinking as the point of his loss of childhood.
- It is the time he starts to distinguish between reality and fiction.
- The second stanza deals with Hypocrisy – here the poet realizes the grown-ups are not as good as they appear. They do not practice what they preach.
- The third stanza deals with individuality – here the poet develops independent thinking.
- He identifies himself as the master of his own mind.
- It is the time of self-realization and affirmation of his own individuality.
- The fourth stanza seeks to explain where he has lost his childhood and is hopeful to find it among the company of sweet children.
- He imagines that his lost childhood lies in some hidden place that has been forgotten.
- The glimpse of that lost childhood can be found on the innocent face of an infant.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

It is a powerful and thought-provoking poem that explores the complexities of human memory, identity and the passage of time. Natten creates vivid pictures of the fleeting nature of childhood through powerful images. The poem is an invitation to the readers to reflect on their own childhood. They become aware of their lost simplicity and innocence. The language creates a poignant picture of the human experience, highlighting the importance of cherishing childhood memories.

LITERARY DEVICES

1. **Imagery** – Vivid imageries have been used in the poem to paint a picture of childhood memories, evoking a sense of nostalgia and wonder.

Eg. The infant's face – a vivid picture of innocence.

2. **Metaphor** – Metaphor is used to convey the fleeting nature of the passage of time.

Eg. "*Childhood is hidden in an infant's face*". In this line, "childhood" is not literally hiding in an infant's face. Instead, the poet is comparing the essence or innocence of childhood to what is seen in an infant's face — pure, untouched, and innocent — without directly stating it as a comparison.

3. **Symbolism** - Symbolism is used to convey the meaning through symbols.

Eg. The face of an infant – representing innocence and purity.

4. **Refrain** – to emphasize the importance of childhood experiences.

Eg. "*When did my childhood go*" emphasizes the poet's confusion and longing.

3. **Repetition** – Repetition is used to convey emphasis and emotional impact by repeating words.

"*They talk of love; they preach of love*"

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Read the following extract from the poem and answer the questions that follow.

*When did my childhood go?
Was it the day I ceased to be eleven,
Was it the time I realized that Hell and Heaven,
Could not be found in Geography,
And therefore could not be,
Was that the day!*

Q1. What is the quality acquired by the poet at this stage of his life?

- A. The poet is starting to make sense. B. He is fearless
C. He is determined D. None of the above

Ans: A. The poet is starting to make sense.

Q2. When did the poet know that 'hell' and 'heaven' are imaginary concepts?

Ans. When he was unable to find these locations in his Geography books.

Q3. Find out the correct relation between the given sentences below.

Assertion: The poet is worried.

Reason: He has lost his innocence.

- A. The Assertion is true and the Reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion.
B. The Assertion is false and the Reason is true.
C. Both the Assertion and Reason are false.
D. The Assertion is true but the Reason is not the correct explanation of Assertion.

Ans. A. The Assertion is true and the Reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion

2. *When did my childhood go?*

*Was it the time I realized that adults were not
All they seemed to be,
They talked of love and preached of love,
But did not act so lovingly,
Was that the day!*

Q1. Why does the poet not talk greatly of grown-up people?

- A. The poet is afraid of adults B. He believes the adults blindly.
C. He believes that adults are role models D. He finds that adults do not practice what they preach.

Ans: D. He finds that adults do not practice what they preach.

Q2. Why is the poet confused?

Ans. The Poet is unable to distinguish between being a child and an adult.

Q3. Choose a word from the passage which means 'sermonized'.

Ans. Preached

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. *Where did my childhood go?*

*It went to some forgotten place,
That is hidden in an infant's face,
That's all I know.*

Q1. Why is the poet eager to know the lost place of his childhood?

- A. The poet values childhood beyond everything else.
B. The poet wants to live a childlike, innocent life once more.
C. The poet is curious to discover the location of his early years.
D. All of the above.

Q2. Where is the poet able to find his lost childhood?

Q3. Choose a word from the passage which is synonymous with 'concealed'.

2. *“Was it the time I realized that Hell and Heaven,
Could not be found in Geography,
And therefore could not be,
Was that the day!”*

Q1. Name the poem and the poet.

Q2. Which word in the stanza suggests that the poet’s changing notion of hell and heaven evolved quite naturally in the course of time?

Q3. Find out the correct relation between the given sentences below.

Assertion: The poet realized that hell and heaven do not exist physically.

Reason: He could not find them in Geography.

- A. The Assertion is true, and the Reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion.
- B. The Assertion is false, and the Reason is true.
- C. Both the Assertion and Reason are false.
- D. The Assertion is true, but the Reason is not the correct explanation of Assertion.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. What did the poet notice about independent thinking? How important was this discovery?
He identifies his individuality and finds himself different from others. He has his own opinions. He becomes quite aware of his abilities for independent thinking and decision-making.
2. What is the poet trying to convey when he says that childhood is hidden in an infant’s face?
An infant is innocent and trusts everyone. He does not deceive anyone; on the other hand, adults are hypocrites. Acquisition of rational thoughts leads to the loss of childlike innocence.
3. How does rationalism steal away childhood innocence from the mind of the poet?
Loss of childhood innocence is a part of developing critical and rational thinking. The poet considers the existence of heaven and hell and accepts the rational notions of those entities as he grows up. A person cannot remain innocent like a child in his thoughts as he advances in age.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. What is the central theme of the poem "Childhood"?
2. How does the poet describe the loss of childhood innocence?
3. What emotions does the poet express towards childhood?
4. What does the poem suggest about the passage of time?
5. How does the poet's nostalgia for childhood manifest in the poem?
6. How does the poet's tone convey his emotions about his childhood?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Discuss the theme of nostalgia in the poem "Childhood" by Markus Natten. How does the poet convey this theme through imagery and language?

Ans: In the poem *Childhood* by Markus Natten, the theme of nostalgia is expressed through the poet's longing for the innocence and simplicity of childhood. The poet reflects on the moment he lost his childhood, wondering when exactly it slipped away. Through rhetorical questions and a reflective tone, the poet conveys his deep yearning for the past. He uses simple yet powerful imagery, such as "the time I realized that adults were not all they seemed to be," to depict the loss of innocence. The poet's language is straightforward, yet it evokes a sense of wonder and sadness. His repeated questioning — "Was it the time..." — emphasizes his confusion and longing to reclaim that lost phase. The poem captures the inevitable transition from childhood to adulthood, leaving behind cherished innocence.

2. Analyze the poet's portrayal of childhood in the poem. What qualities of childhood does the poet emphasize, and how does this portrayal relate to the human experience?

Ans: In the poem *Childhood*, Markus Natten portrays childhood as a phase of innocence, purity and simplicity. The poet emphasizes qualities such as honesty, wonder and the absence of hypocrisy. He reflects on how, during childhood, there is unquestioning belief and trust, unlike adulthood, where people often hide their true feelings. Through his reflective tone and rhetorical questions, the poet shows that childhood is free from the complexities and pretensions of the adult world. The loss of childhood, as described in the poem, is symbolic of the universal human experience — growing up brings awareness, doubt and disillusionment. This portrayal relates to the human condition, in which everyone eventually loses their innocent outlook as they mature, realizing that life is not as pure or straightforward as it once seemed.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. How does the poet's portrayal of childhood relate to your own experiences or observations?
2. Analyze the poet's use of imagery in the poem. How does it contribute to the overall meaning and mood?
3. Explore the idea of loss and longing in the poem "Childhood". How does the poet convey the sense of loss, and what does this reveal about the human condition?

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. How does the poet Markus Natten use imagery and symbolism to convey the themes of innocence and loss in the poem "Childhood"? What effect does this have on the reader?

Ans: The poet Markus Natten uses vivid imagery and symbolism to convey the themes of innocence and loss in the poem "Childhood". For example, the imagery of childhood memories evokes a sense of innocence and simplicity, while the symbolism of growing up represents the loss of this innocence. This has a profound effect on the reader, evoking a sense of nostalgia and wistfulness. The poet's use of imagery and symbolism invites the reader to reflect on their own experiences of childhood and the passing of time.

2. Discuss the role of memory in the poem "Childhood". How does the poet use memory to explore the themes of childhood and growing up? What insights does this provide into the human experience?

Ans: Memory plays a crucial role in the poem "Childhood", as the poet uses memories of childhood to explore the themes of innocence, loss, and growing up. The poet's use of memory highlights the significance of childhood experiences in shaping our identities and worldviews. Through the exploration of memory, the poet provides insights into the human experience, revealing that our memories of childhood continue to influence us throughout our lives. This exploration also underscores the bittersweet nature of memory, which can evoke both joy and sorrow.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Analyse the poet's use of language and tone in the poem "Childhood". How does the poet's language and tone contribute to the overall mood and meaning of the poem? What effect does this have on the reader?
2. How does the poem help you understand the perspective of others who may have had different childhood experiences?
3. How would you justify the generation gap discussed in the poem "*Father to Son*" in the light of the ideas discussed in the poem "*Childhood*"?

THE ADVENTURE

- JAYANT NARLIKAR

TITLE

The name of the chapter reflects the protagonist, Professor Gaitonde's journey into a fascinating alternate reality, where the course of history has taken a different, unexpected turn. This experience is filled with intellectual and personal growth, making the narrative both adventurous and thought-provoking.

AUTHOR

Jayant Narlikar is a renowned Indian astrophysicist and cosmologist. Born in 1938, Narlikar's work has had a significant impact on our understanding of the universe. He has inspired generations of scientists and science enthusiasts in India and beyond. Narlikar has been bestowed with several awards, including the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Vibhushan, India's third and second-highest civilian honours. Narlikar is also a prolific science writer, making complex concepts accessible to a broader audience. He has written several books on science, including "The Scientific Edge" and "An Introduction to Cosmology".

SETTING

The story is set in an alternate reality, with a different historical outcome. After being struck by a truck, Professor Gaitonde was transported to an alternate world where the outcome of the Third Battle of Panipat was different from that of the present world. The Marathas won the battle and had control over a majority of the Indian mainland, with the British restricted to small pockets like the Bombay Presidency.

GENRE

Science fiction: The story explores the concept of travel to an alternate world/reality and its potential impact on history, weaving in elements of philosophy and history as well. It probes the readers to explore the possibility of single impactful instances changing the course of history for a large population.

CHARACTERS

Professor Gangadharpanth Gaitonde: He is an eminent professor of history working in Pune. He has a catastrophic, life-altering accident, which causes him to transition to a parallel world for 60 hours.

Rajendra Deshpande: A friend and fellow academic, uses his knowledge of catastrophe theory and quantum physics to try to explain Gaitonde's experience.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

'The Adventure,' by Jayant Narlikar, follows Professor Gangadharpanth (Gaitonde), a historian, as he experiences a transition into a parallel universe. This alternate reality is one where the East India Company never gained dominance in India and the Marathas won the Third Battle of Panipat. The story explores themes of alternate history, the nature of reality and the power of perspective.

MOOD AND TONE

The story evokes a mood of intrigue, mystery and intellectual curiosity. The tone is thought-provoking, imaginative, and subtly suspenseful, blending scientific concepts with a narrative that explores the possibilities of alternate realities and historical "what-ifs".

THEMES

The chapter explores several key themes, including the concept of parallel universes, the impact of historical events, and the nature of reality and perception. The story uses a fictional scenario to delve into the possibilities of alternate histories and the potential for seemingly minor events to drastically alter the course of history.

1. Alternate History: The story explores a world with a different historical outcome.
2. Different Reality: The East India Company still holds power, unlike in our known history.
3. Catastrophe Theory: A small change can lead to significant differences in reality.
4. Multiple Realities: The story suggests that different versions of history can exist. It questions the determinism and fixed nature of reality.

SUMMARY

- “*The Adventure*” by Jayant Narlikar tells the story of **Professor Gangadharpant**, also known as **Professor Gaitonde**.
- Gaitonde is a **historian** who experiences a **strange shift in reality**.
- He finds himself in an **alternate world** where the **Marathas won the Battle of Panipat**.
- In this version of history, the **British never colonized India**.
- Gaitonde explores this alternate reality, observing how India developed independently.
- He later discusses his experience with his friend **Rajendra Deshpande**, a physicist.
- Rajendra introduces the idea of **parallel universes** to explain the phenomenon.
- The story delves into **scientific theories** like **quantum physics and catastrophe theory**.
- Themes explored include **time travel, destiny** and the **fluid nature of reality and history**.
- The narrative blends **history and science fiction**, challenging readers to think about **what might have been**.

CRITICAL ESTIMATE/ANALYSIS

The chapter is a thought-provoking story that explores complex themes through a unique blend of science fiction and history. The narrative raises questions about the nature of reality, determinism, and the impact of small events on larger outcomes. Through Professor Gaitonde's journey, the story encourages readers to think critically about the possibilities of multiple realities. The use of catastrophe theory adds depth to the narrative, making it a compelling read. Overall, "The Adventure" is a well-crafted story that challenges readers to consider alternative perspectives on history and reality.

LITERARY DEVICES

Alliteration: “the blue carriages carried”, “blow-by-blow account of the battle”

Irony: A key element of the story is the irony of Professor Gaitonde, a historian, experiencing a historical event that never actually happened.

Personification: “*It roared through Kalyan.*” – personification of the train, Jijamata Express
“The letters on it proclaimed its identity” – Personifies the Victoria Terminus.

Imagery: Narlikar uses rich descriptions to paint a picture of the alternate reality, including the changed landscape of Bombay.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

I. Meanwhile, the racing mind of Professor Gaitonde had arrived at a plan of action in Bombay. Indeed, as a historian he felt he should have thought of it sooner. He would go to a big library and browse through history books. That was the surest way of finding out how the present state of affairs was reached. He also planned eventually to return to Pune and have a long talk with Rajendra Deshpande, who would surely help him understand what had happened. That is, assuming that in this world there existed someone called Rajendra Deshpande! The train stopped beyond the long tunnel. It was a small station called Sarhad. An Anglo-Indian in uniform went through the train checking permits.

1. Where did Professor Gaitonde plan to go to find out more about the present state of affairs?

Ans: Professor Gaitonde planned to go to a big library to find out more about the present state of affairs.

2. What does the phrase “racing mind” tell you about Professor Gaitonde’s mental state?

Ans: The phrase “racing mind” suggests that Professor Gaitonde was in a state of intense mental activity and confusion. It reveals that his thoughts were moving rapidly, possibly in a disorganized or anxious way, as he tried to process the strange and extraordinary experience he had just gone through.

3. What was Gangadharpanth Gaitonde's profession?

A) Scientist

B) Historian

C) Engineer

D) Doctor

Ans: B) Historian

4. Why did Professor Gaitonde wonder if someone like Rajendra Deshpande existed in this world?

Ans: Professor Gaitonde questions whether he is back in the original world he came from or if he is still in some altered version of reality. This confusion leads to his doubt about the existence of familiar people like Rajendra in this version of the world.

II. He thanked the girl politely and came out. It was characteristic of him not to worry about where he would stay. His main concern was to make his way to the library of the Asiatic Society to solve the riddle of history. Grabbing a quick lunch at a restaurant, he made his way to the Town Hall. Yes, to his relief, the Town Hall was there, and it did house the library. He entered the reading room and asked for a list of history books, including his own.

His five volumes duly arrived on his table. He started from the beginning. Volume one took the history up to the period of Ashoka, volume two up to Samudragupta, volume three up to Mohammad Ghori and volume four up to the death of Aurangzeb. Up to this period, history was as he knew it. The change evidently had occurred in the last volume. Reading volume five from both ends inwards, Gangadharpanth finally converged on the precise moment where history had taken a different turn.

1. What was Professor Gaitonde's main concern after reaching the town?

Ans: Professor Gaitonde's main concern was to make his way to the library of the Asiatic Society to solve the riddle of history.

2. How did Gangadharpanth approach reading volume five of his history book?

Ans: Gangadharpanth approached reading volume five of his history book by reading from both ends inwards, eventually converging on the precise moment where history had taken a different turn. By doing so, he hoped to quickly narrow down the section where the change had occurred.

3. What was the "riddle of history" that he wanted to solve?

Ans: The "riddle of history" that Professor Gaitonde wanted to solve was the sudden and unexplained change in historical events that he had experienced in an alternate reality.

4. What did Professor Gaitonde feel upon seeing the Town Hall?

A) Disappointed that it had changed

B) Confused about its location

C) Relieved that it was still there and housed the library

D) Uninterested, as he had another place to visit

Ans: C) Relieved that it was still there and housed the library

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. “Don’t smile smugly. In case you think that it was just my mind playing tricks and my imagination running amok, look at this.” And, triumphantly, Professor Gaitonde produced his vital piece of evidence: a page torn out of a book. Rajendra read the text on the printed page and his face

underwent a change. Gone was the smile and in its place came a grave expression. He was visibly moved. Gangadharant pressed home his advantage. “I had inadvertently slipped the Bakhar in my pocket as I left the library. I discovered my error when I was paying for my meal. I had intended to return it the next morning. But it seems that in the melee of Azad Maidan, the book was lost; only this torn-off page remained. And, luckily for me, the page contains vital evidence.” Rajendra again read the page. It described how Vishwasrao narrowly missed the bullet; and how that event, taken as an omen by the Maratha army, turned the tide in their favour.

1. What was the vital piece of evidence that Professor Gaitonde produced to support his claim?
 2. How did Rajendra's expression change after reading the text on the printed page?
 3. Where did Gangadharant inadvertently slip the Bakhar?
 A) Pocket of his coat B) Library C) Pocket as he left the library D) Restaurant
 4. What event did the page from the book describe that turned the tide in favor of the Maratha army?
 A) Vishwasrao being hit by a bullet B) Vishwasrao narrowly missing the bullet
 C) The death of a key enemy leader D) The arrival of reinforcements
2. “A good guess. I was indeed wondering what course history would have taken if the result of the battle had gone the other way,” Professor Gaitonde said. “That was going to be the topic of my thousandth presidential address.” Now you are in the happy position of recounting your real-life experience rather than just speculating,” Rajenhdra laughed. But Gangadharant was grave. “No, Rajendra, my thousandth address was made on the Azad Maidan when I was so rudely interrupted. No, the Professor Gaitonde who disappeared while defending his chair on the platform will now never be seen presiding at another meeting— ‘I have conveyed my regrets to the organizers of the Panipat seminar.
1. What topic was Professor Gaitonde planning to discuss in his thousandth presidential address?
 2. What action did Professor Gaitonde take regarding the Panipat seminar after his experience?
 3. Where was Professor Gaitonde's thousandth address supposed to be made?
 A) Library
 B) Azad Maidan
 C) Seminar Hall
 D) University
 4. Why was Professor Gaitonde’s presidential address interrupted at Azad Maidan?
 A) Because he fell ill suddenly
 B) Because the audience disagreed with his views
 C) Because of an accident on stage
 D) Because he was in a dream and suddenly woke up

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Where did Professor Gaitonde plan to go to solve the riddle of history?

Ans: Professor Gaitonde planned to visit the library of the Asiatic Society. He wanted to research and understand the historical events that had led to the present state of affairs. The library was his best bet to find answers.

2. What was the vital piece of evidence that Professor Gaitonde produced?

Ans: The vital piece of evidence was a page torn out of Bhausahabanchi Bakhar. This page describes an event where Vishwasrao narrowly missed a bullet, which was taken as an omen by the Maratha army. This event changed the course of history.

3. Who did Professor Gaitonde meet in Pune to understand what had happened?

Ans: Professor Gaitonde planned to meet Rajendra Deshpande in Pune. He hoped that Rajendra would help him understand the strange events that had occurred. Rajendra was a knowledgeable person who could provide insights.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. What was Professor Gaitonde's initial reaction to finding himself in a different reality?
2. How did the Maratha army's morale change after the event described in the torn-out page from Bhausahebanchi Bakhar?
3. What was the significance of the Battle of Panipat in the story?
4. What role did Vishwas Rao play in the alternate version of Indian history?
5. What was the topic of Professor Gaitonde's thousandth presidential address supposed to be?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Describe Professor Gaitonde's experience at the Azad Maidan and its aftermath.

Ans: At the Azad Maidan, Professor Gaitonde found himself at a public meeting in an alternate reality where the Marathas had won the Battle of Panipat. Being curious, he observed the proceedings and eventually took the stage to give a speech, treating it as his thousandth presidential address. However, his views, based on the historical facts of the real world, did not align with the beliefs of the people in this alternate world. The audience became hostile and started heckling and throwing objects at him. The situation turned chaotic, and he was forcibly pulled off the stage, ending his address abruptly. The aftermath of this experience was deeply unsettling for him. When he returned to the real world, he felt that the version of himself who gave lectures and led discussions had vanished. He believed that he would never be able to preside over a session again. This experience left him emotionally shaken but intellectually curious, prompting him to seek answers from Rajendra Deshpande.

2. How did Professor Gaitonde's encounter with Rajendra Deshpande help him understand his experience?

Ans: Professor Gaitonde's encounter with Rajendra Deshpande was crucial in helping him make sense of his bizarre experience in an alternate reality. Troubled and confused by the version of history he had witnessed—where the Marathas had defeated Abdali and India had never been colonised—Gaitonde turned to Rajendra, a physicist and a rational thinker, for an explanation. Rajendra listened carefully and proposed that quantum theory and the concept of catastrophe might explain what had happened.

He introduced the idea of parallel universes, suggesting that at a crucial moment in history—the Battle of Panipat—two possible outcomes had emerged, and Gaitonde had somehow slipped into the alternate one where the Marathas won. Rajendra believed this could happen due to a shift in reality caused by intense mental or physical stress, possibly when Gaitonde was hit during the chaos at Azad Maidan.

This scientific explanation provided intellectual clarity and comfort to Gaitonde, transforming his confusion into curiosity and reinforcing his belief in the significance of alternate possibilities in history.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Describe the events that led Professor Gaitonde to realize that history had taken a different course. How did he react to this discovery, and what steps did he take to understand the situation?
2. Discuss the significance of the torn-out page from Bhausahebanchi Bakhar in Professor Gaitonde's experience. How did it serve as evidence of the alternate reality, and what insights did it provide into the events that had occurred?

3. Analyze the character of Professor Gaitonde. What traits does he exhibit throughout his experience, and how does he respond to the challenges he faces in the alternate reality?
4. Explore the theme of reality and its implications in the story. How does Professor Gaitonde's experience illustrate the concept of multiple realities and what commentary does the story offer on the nature of history and human experience?

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Imagine you are Professor Gaitonde, and you've just returned to your original reality. Write a reflective diary entry (100-120 words) exploring the implications of experiencing an alternate reality on your understanding of history and your own identity.

Ans: Reflective Diary Entry

Friday, 25 September 2026

9 pm

Dear Diary

What an extraordinary experience! To have lived, even briefly, in a reality where the Marathas triumphed at Panipat has shaken the very foundation of my understanding of history. I always believed history was fixed—recorded facts bound by time. But now, I've seen that reality itself may have multiple versions, shaped by a single turning point. My identity, once rooted in scholarship and logic, now feels fluid. Am I merely a historian of one reality, or a witness to many possibilities? Rajendra's explanation offers reason, but my soul remains stirred. The Professor Gaitonde who once stood firmly behind a podium may never be the same. I have glimpsed a world that *might have been*.

Good Night

2. Design an alternate reality where a significant historical event in your country turned out differently. Describe the consequences of this event on the present day. How does this alternate reality shape the world you're living in?

Ans: In this alternate reality, the First War of Independence in 1857 succeeds, and India breaks free from British control nearly a century earlier. Under the united leadership of Rani Lakshmi Bai, Bahadur Shah Zafar, and Tantia Tope, a federal republic is formed with a democratic constitution inspired by ancient Indian principles.

Without British economic exploitation, India industrializes on its own terms, preserving indigenous crafts and traditions while embracing technology. By the 21st century, India is a global leader in science, education, and environmental innovation, having avoided the cultural and linguistic suppression of colonial rule.

English remains a secondary language, while Sanskrit, Hindi, Tamil, and other regional languages flourish. The Railways and education systems evolve indigenously, promoting inclusivity and decentralization. India's early freedom also influences other colonies, accelerating global decolonization. In this reality, I live in a nation that is modern yet deeply rooted in its cultural identity, proud of its uninterrupted sovereignty.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Analyse how the story's exploration of alternate realities and the nature of reality relates to our understanding of the world and our place in it. What insights does the story offer, and how can they be applied to real-life situations?

2. Imagine you are Professor Gaitonde, and you have to present your experience of living in an alternate reality to a group of historians. How would you structure your presentation to convey the significance of your experience?
3. Compare and contrast the world Professor Gaitonde experienced in the alternate reality with our current world. What similarities and differences do you observe and what do these, reveal about the significance of historical events and their impact on society?

SILK ROAD

-NICK MIDDLETON

TITLE

This chapter is an excerpt from the book '*Extremes Along the Silk Road*', describing the author's journey along the ancient trade route called Silk Road. Nick Middleton is a geographer and travel writer who writes about his travel through the extremes of the fabled route that links the East and the West. The Silk Road cuts through one of the most extraordinary landscapes on the planet. A vast region separating China from the Mediterranean, it is one of the most inhospitable places on earth, a forbidding terrain of hostile deserts, treacherous mountain ranges, howling winds, searing heat, and blistering cold. This account of the Silk Road, with contrast and exotic detail, describes the challenges and hardships the author faced while journeying to Mount Kailash on his attempt to do 'the Kora' - a Buddhist religious practice.

It's a travelogue describing the author's journey from Ravu to Mount Kailash to do Kora (Buddhist spiritual practice/ ritual). He took silk road to experience the spiritual magic of the lake Manasarovar and Mount Kailash. It's a vivid and picturesque account of his journey.

AUTHOR

Nick Middleton is a geographer, travel writer, and Oxford teacher who writes about his travels through the extreme routes all over the world. This chapter is an excerpt from the book '*Extremes Along the Silk Road*', describing the author's journey along the ancient trade route called Silk Road. Here he writes about his travel through the extremes of the fabled route that links the East and the West.

SETTING

In this travelogue, 'Silk Road', the writer recounts his experience of travelling through the remote region of Tibet, focusing on the challenges and adventures he faced. Middleton, along with his guide Tsetan, traverses harsh landscapes, encounters nomadic people and faces the effects of high altitude on his way to complete Kora.

GENRE

It is a *travelogue* driven by a desire to explore uncharted territories and face the unknown with excitement. It demonstrates remarkable endurance and adaptability, navigating harsh climates and rugged terrains. This is a highly observant piece of writing, providing subtle details in his surroundings, capturing the essence of landscape and culture.

CHARACTERS

- Nick Middleton: The narrator and protagonist, a British geographer.
- Tsetan: The local Tibetan driver who helps Nick navigate the rugged terrain.
- Daniel: Nick's friend and translator, who accompanies him to Hor.
- Lhamo: A local girl who befriends Nick and gifts him a drokba (sheepskin coat).
- Norbu: A Tibetan who works in Beijing and also joins Nick for the kora.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

The story "Silk Road" by Nick Middleton follows his journey to Mount Kailash in Tibet to complete the Kora. The plot centres around his journey from Ravu, his initial starting point, to Darchen, the base for the Kora, and the challenges he faces along the way. He travels with companions Tsetan, his driver, and later meets Norbu, who joins him for the Kora. The narrative highlights the difficulties of high-altitude travel, cultural encounters, and the determination required to complete the pilgrimage.

First-person Narrative: The story is told from Middleton's perspective, allowing the reader to experience the journey through his thoughts, feelings, and observations, creating a personal and immersive experience.

MOOD

In "Silk Road," the mood is generally challenging but ultimately hopeful. The tone shifts throughout the narrative, reflecting the author's experiences and changing perspectives.

TONE

The tone also evolves from negative and critical towards positive and appreciative as the author comes to appreciate the beauty of the landscape and the significance of the kora.

THEMES

The main themes are resilience, faith, and the importance of positive thinking. The author highlights these themes through his journey and experiences. He describes the beauty of the rugged landscape, the struggles he undertook with determination and help from others, as well as the treasure of knowledge he gained throughout his journey.

LITERARY DEVICES

Imagery: Middleton uses rich sensory details to paint a picture of the landscapes, weather conditions, and people he encounters. For example, descriptions of the "barren slopes," "twisting tracks," the "biting wind," and the appearance of the Tibetan mastiffs create a strong visual and tactile experience for the reader. The narrative appeals to multiple senses – sight (snow-capped mountains, colourful prayer flags), sound (hissing fuel tank, barking mastiffs), touch (biting wind, sheepskin coat), and even a sense of discomfort (headache from altitude sickness).

Simile: Comparisons using "like" or "as" are used to create relatable images. For instance, the clouds are compared to 'large French loaves. Eg: extended banks of clouds like long French loaves.

Symbolism: Mount Kailash itself serves as a powerful symbol of the spiritual quest and the ultimate destination of his arduous journey. The kora represents a significant religious ritual and a personal goal for the narrator. The Silk Road itself symbolizes ancient connections and journeys.

Personification: Human qualities are attributed to inanimate objects or animals. The mountains are described as "gathering on the horizon," and the car is said to "labour" up the steep inclines.

SUMMARY

DEPARTURE FROM RAVU

- The author left Ravu along with Daniel, an interpreter, and Tsetan, a tourist guide.
- Before leaving, Lhamo, the lady who had provided them with accommodation at Ravu, gave the author a gift of a long-sleeved sheepskin coat.

DROKBAS AND ENCOUNTER WITH TIBETAN MASTIFFS

- As they crossed the hills of Ravu, they saw open plains and arid pastures, individual Drokbas looking after their flocks. They also passed isolated tents of the nomads.
- These tents were guarded by black dogs called Tibetan Mastiffs. These dogs wore red collars and barked furiously with their big jaws.
- Whenever they see vehicles pass by, they would chase the intruders for some distance while barking furiously.
- These dogs became popular in China as hunting dogs and were brought as tribute from Tibet.

ICE BLOCKS THE ROAD

- Their car entered a valley wherein the river was wide and clogged with ice. The turns were now sharper, and the ride became bumpier.
- As they were climbing up, the author started feeling pressure in his ears. Suddenly, Tsetan stopped the car and got out of it.
- They could not move around the snow patch or climb the steep mountain. So, they threw some dirt on the path. To avoid any mishap, the author and Daniel stayed out of the car while Tsetan slowly drove over the ice patch.
- They came across a similar blockage in a short while. But this time Tsetan drove around the snow. They were at a height of 5400 meters. Rapid ascent had caused a headache for the author.

BACK ON THE HIGHWAY

- They went down the other side of the pass. At 2 o'clock, they had lunch beside a dry Salt Lake.
- The author reached Hor, a place that falls on the old trade route from Lhasa to Kashmir.
- Daniel left. Tsetan and the author got the punctured tyres repaired and moved forward on their journey.
- The author finds Hor, a town that was located on the shore of holy Lake Mansarovar, to be grim and miserable.
- It had no vegetation and was covered in just dust and rocks. The author could now see Mount Kailash and was eager to move ahead.

SICK AT DARCHEN

- The author reached a guest house at Darchen after 10:30 pm. At night, as the author went to sleep, his nostrils got clogged. He had trouble breathing. The author started breathing from his mouth.
- Tsetan took the author to the Darchen Medical College. There, a Tibetan doctor gave certain medicines and told him that the author had the effect of cold and altitude. The author used the medicine, and he enjoyed a sound sleep. Tsetan left the author to go to Lhasa.

DARCHEN

- Darchen, although dusty, was surrounded by a picturesque scene of the Himalayas. It also had some general stores and cafes, and was full of people.
- For the author, it was a relaxed place, but there were no pilgrims there.
- One day, while drinking tea, the author thought about his pilgrimage. He did not want to do the kora alone.

MEETING NORBU

The author finally found someone to accompany him on his kora. The author was reading a book in a café when Norbu sat with him.

- Norbu spoke English, and so they started a conversation.
- Norbu was a Tibetan who worked in Beijing at the Chinese Academy of Social Science in the Institute of Ethnic Literature.
- He was writing academic papers on Kora and had come to do it himself for the first time. It was he who gave the idea of them being a team.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Read the extracts and answer the following questions:

1. These beasts would cock their great big heads when they became aware of our approach and fix us in their sights. As we continued to draw closer, they would explode into action, speeding directly towards us, like a bullet from a gun and nearly as fast.

i. Which beast does the author mention in the above lines?

- a. The Himalayan dogs b. the big foot c. the Tibetan mastiffs d. the huge yaks

Answer: c. the Tibetan mastiffs

ii. 'They would explode into action' - what does this mean?

- a. The dogs would chase the car with great speed b. There was a loud explosion
c. The loud sound of the tire burst d. The sound of the landslide on the journey

Answer: a. The dogs would chase the car with great speed

iii. What kind of dogs were the Tibetan mastiffs?

- a. huge and black b. very quick c. guard dogs d. all of the above

Answer: d. all of the above

2. Hor was a grim, miserable place. There was no vegetation whatsoever, just dust and rocks, liberally scattered with years of accumulated refuse, which was unfortunate given that the town sat on the shore of Lake Manasarovar, Tibet's most venerated stretch of water. Ancient Hindu and Buddhist cosmology pinpoints Manasarovar as the source of four great Indian rivers: the Indus, the Ganges, the Sutlej and the Brahmaputra. Actually, only the Sutlej flows from the lake, but the headwaters of the others all rise nearby on the flanks of Mount Kailash.

(a) Why do you think the author describes Hor as a 'grim, miserable place'?

Answer: Hor was dusty, and the place was strewn with garbage. Additionally, there was no vegetation growing there, giving it a barren and desolate look.

(b) What does the word "accumulated" mean?

Answer– Accumulated means to gather or pile up, especially little by little; amass.

(c) Why is Lake Manasarovar 'Tibet's most venerated stretch of water'?

Answer: According to ancient Hindu and Buddhist cosmology Lake Manasarovar is the source of four great Indian rivers: the Indus, the Ganges, the Sutlej and the Brahmaputra. This is why Lake Manasarovar is considered 'Tibet's most venerated stretch of water'.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. By now, we could see snow-capped mountains gathering on the horizon. We entered a valley where the river was wide and mostly clogged with ice, brilliant white and glinting in the sunshine. The trail hugged its bank, twisting with the meanders as we gradually gained height and the valley sides closed in.

- (i) What does the word "clogged" mean in the extract?
- (ii) How does the extract show that the narrator is in a cold and high-altitude place?
- (iii) How does the author create a sense of beauty and contrast in the extract?

2. My initial relief at meeting Norbu, who was staying in the guest house, was tempered by the realization that he was almost as ill-equipped as I was for the pilgrimage. He kept telling me how fat he was and how hard it was going to be. "Very high up," he kept reminding me, 'so tiresome to walk.' He wasn't really a practicing Buddhist, it transpired, but he had enthusiasm, and he was, of course, Tibetan.

Although I'd originally envisaged making the trek in the company of devout believers, on reflection I decided that perhaps Norbu would turn out to be the ideal companion. He suggested we hire some yaks to carry our luggage, which I interpreted as a good sign, and he had no intention of prostrating himself all around the mountain. 'Not possible,' he cried, collapsing across the table in hysterical laughter. It wasn't his style, and anyway, his tummy was too big.

- (i) Why did the author experience relief upon meeting Norbu?
- (ii) What led the author to conclude that Norbu wasn't a devout believer?
- (iii) Why did the author feel that Norbu was ill-equipped as he was for the pilgrimage?

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Answer the following questions in 40-50 words: -

1. Why do you think the article has been titled 'The Silk Road'?

Ans: This article has been given the title 'The Silk Road' as it describes the author's journey through the ancient trade route called 'the Silk Route'. The title refers to an ancient trade route that connected the East and the West, facilitating the exchange of goods, cultures and ideas over 1500 years. Many trades were established by it – the Chinese silk, spices, tea and porcelain; the Roman Empire's gold, silver, fine glassware, carpets, jewels and wine; Indian textiles, pepper and precious stones. The road largely traded silk with China and was therefore named 'Silk Road'. In the chapter, the author was exploring the Himalayan belt in Tibet and travelled to Mount Kailash. The chapter is named Silk Road as the author explored this region.

2. Why were the Tibetan mastiffs popular in China's imperial courts?

Ans: Tibetan mastiffs were popular as hunting dogs in the imperial courts of China. In ancient times, they were brought as tribute from Tibet along the Silk Road. They were used as watchdogs because they are huge and black. They are fast like bullets and explode very quickly. Their breed is fearless and ferocious.

3. Contrast the author's experience at Hor with that of the earlier accounts of the place.

Ans: Hor seemed to be a dull and grim place to the writer. There was very little vegetation, and years of accumulated refuse made the place miserable. Although the place was situated on the shore of Lake Mansarovar, it still seemed unfortunate. The author was really astonished to see the contrast between his experience and that of the previously read accounts. Ekai Kawaguchi, a Japanese monk, arrived there in 1900, and he was so moved by the holiness of the Lake that he burst into tears. A similar effect was felt by Sven Hedin, a swede when he visited the hallowed waters.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Where is the town of Hor situated? Describe the town.
2. Why does the narrator think that the snow was dangerous yet beautiful?
3. Describe the author's physical condition at Darchen?
4. Comment on Tsetan's support to the author during the journey.
5. "Two academics who have escaped from the library." Who made this comment, and what does it mean?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. What was the purpose of the author's journey to Mount Kailash?

Ans. Nick Middleton is a geographer and has travelled to over 50 countries. As a passionate explorer, he likes to take on the challenges in extreme conditions and survive them. He travels to Mount Kailash for the same reasons, surviving one of the most challenging and hostile geographical territories. The author was fascinated to explore the ancient Silk Road. He details his experience of the region along with his mental and physical striving. The narrator wanted to gain the experience of performing Kora in the company of devout pilgrims. He found an ideal companion in Norbu, a Tibetan who was working in Beijing at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. The narrator on his way to Mount Kailash came across a lot of topographic variation. Comment.
2. Why was the narrator disappointed to find no pilgrims at Darchen? Was his disappointment dispelled?
3. Describe the difficulties and disillusionment faced by Nick Middleton during his journey to Mount Kailash.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. How does Nick Middleton's description of the harsh physical environment along the Silk Road reflect the challenges faced by travellers?

Ans: Nick Middleton vividly describes the harsh physical environment of the Silk Road, highlighting the extreme cold, high altitude, and treacherous terrain. He mentions icy winds, rough mountain tracks, and the constant struggle to breathe due to the thin air at high altitudes. These descriptions reflect the physical and mental challenges faced by travellers. For instance, his difficulty in sleeping and persistent headache indicate how taxing the journey was. Even the vehicles struggled to move through the rugged, snow-covered paths. These hardships portray how demanding and unpredictable travelling along the Silk Road can be, reminding readers of the physical endurance and resilience required to survive in such a remote, unforgiving landscape.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. In your opinion, why do people accept challenges to experience the thrill of a new adventure? Do you think it is worth it? Comment with reference to the text.
2. Imagine you are Nick Middleton. Make a diary entry highlighting how mindless and uncontrolled tourism endangers the environment. Draw references from the lesson.

FATHER TO SON

- ELIZABETH JENNINGS

TITLE

As it is evident from the title, the poem describes a father-son relationship. It is about the lack of communication that leads to emptiness in their relationship.

POET

Elizabeth Jennings (1926-2001) was an English poet whose works relate intensely personal matters in a plainspoken, traditional and objective style. Her verse frequently reflects her devout Roman Catholicism and her love of Italy. Some of the best of her later poems concern her nervous breakdown and its aftermath, such as those collected in *Recoveries* (1964) and *The Mind Has Mountains* (1966). She also published poetry for children.

Elizabeth Jennings, the renowned poet who writes about a father-son relationship in the poem 'Father to Son', was never married. Her life and career were marked by both literary success and personal struggles, including poverty and mental health issues, which were often highlighted in her work and in public perception, leading to the nickname "the bag-lady of poetry".

SETTING

The setting of the poem is primarily domestic and internal, focusing on the emotional and psychological space between the father and son.

- **Domestic Sphere:** The poem unfolds within the context of a family home.
- **Internal and Psychological:** The true setting of the poem lies in the father's mind and heart. It's within his reflections, regrets, and yearning for connection that the poem takes place. We experience the setting through his memories of the son's childhood ("Yet have I killed / The seed I spent or sown it where / The land is his and none of mine?"), his current frustration ("What can he love of mine?"), and his longing for reconciliation ("Would have him prodigal, returning, to / His father's house, the home he knew, / Rather than see him make and move / His world elsewhere").
- In essence, the setting of "Father to Son" is less about a pinpointed location and more about the emotional landscape of a father grappling with his son's growing independence and the breakdown of their once-close bond within the familiar, yet emotionally charged, space of their shared home.

STRUCTURE AND FORM

Free Verse: "Father to Son" is written in free verse, which means it does not follow a specific rhyme scheme or meter. This allows Jennings to focus more on the emotional content rather than conforming to a rigid structure.

CHARACTERS

The poem "Father to Son" by Elizabeth Jennings primarily features two central characters:

The Father (The Speaker):

- He is the first-person narrator of the poem, and all the thoughts and feelings are conveyed through his perspective.
- He is characterized by a sense of loss, regret, and longing for a closer relationship with his son.
- He expresses frustration and bewilderment at the growing distance between them.
- He reveals a deep yearning for reconciliation and a return to a more familiar and loving dynamic ("Would have him prodigal, returning to / His father's house, the home he knew...").
- He embodies the universal struggle of a parent grappling with a child's growing independence and the potential for emotional disconnect.

The Son:

- The son is present in the father's thoughts and memories, but does not speak directly in the poem.
- He is depicted as having grown into an independent individual with his own life and interests, seemingly separate from his father's.
- He is portrayed as someone the father struggles to understand and connect with on an emotional level. The father questions his son's affections and feels a sense of alienation from him.
- The son's silence and absence from direct speech emphasize the emotional gap between him and his father. We only see him through the father's yearning and somewhat perplexed gaze.

Therefore, the core of the poem revolves around the internal struggle of the father and the absent but significant presence of the son, whose independence has created a painful distance between them.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

This poem is more of a psychological and emotional exploration of a father's internal state and his reflections on his relationship with his son. In essence, the plot of "Father to Son" is not a linear narrative of conflict and resolution, but rather a reflective exploration of a complex father-son relationship, marked by distance, longing, and a fragile hope for reconciliation.

- Introduction of the Central Conflict (Stanza 1)
- Exploration of the Roots of the Conflict (Stanza 2)
- Expression of Present Alienation and Longing (Stanza 3)

MOOD

The prevailing mood of the poem is one of melancholy, sorrow, and a profound sense of loss.

TONE

The tone of the poem is reflective and melancholic. The father's regret and longing are palpable throughout the poem, making the reader empathize with his plight.

THEME OF THE POEM

'Father to Son' presents a fairly universal theme of the generation gap existing in the relationship between a father and son. Every father experiences the same feeling of helplessness depicted in the poem. When the gap between a father and son increases, a father obviously wonders how the distance crept in and tries to mend it. He expects to regain the good old relationship. The father craves a chance to set things right.

SUMMARY OF THE POEM (in bullet points)

- The helpless father in the poem expresses his deep regret at not understanding his own son even though they lived together in the same house.
- From his personal experience, this father realizes that staying together under one roof for several years doesn't bring people together.
- Now the father craves a chance to draw a new understanding from the son's infancy to the present moment.
- The father then wonders if he had sown his seed, unfortunately, like an inefficient farmer in somebody else's land.
- Similarly, the father is experiencing loneliness, abandonment and aloofness when both interact like strangers.
- Father is puzzled and anxious to know why he is unable to love what his son loves, even though they both resemble each other.

- On account of several disparities other than in shape, the relationship has toppled down, and silence surrounds them.
- Father is ready for any kind of submission just to bring back a healthy relationship. Father is willing to accept his son back home like the prodigal son in the biblical story.
- He wants to be a part of his son's world rather than seeing his son make a separate world for him.
- He feels that from this sorrow, they will create a divine world of love, forgiving and forgetting the past.
- He feels grief about the growing distance between them, and he is angry due to the grief and sadness.
- They want to forgive each other, yet they couldn't find a solution to the problem they face.

LITERARY DEVICES

1. **Simile:** Used to compare the father's and son's relationship to strangers, highlighting the lack of emotional connection. E.g.- 'We speak like strangers,'

2. **Imagery:** Jennings uses vivid imagery to convey the emotional landscape of the poem. For instance, the father's feeling of alienation is depicted through the metaphor of a "seed" that has not grown into the plant he expected. Jennings uses vivid imagery to convey the emotional landscape of the poem. For instance, the father's feeling of alienation is depicted through the metaphor of a "seed" that has not grown into the plant he expected.

3. **Metaphor:** The poem uses the "land" as a metaphor for the son's heart, and the "seed" as a metaphor for the father's efforts to connect. The poem employs metaphors to deepen the reader's understanding of the emotional distance between the father and son. The "seed" metaphor is particularly powerful in illustrating the father's expectations and disappointments.

4. **Personification:** The poem personifies the silence existing between him and his son, suggesting their inability to express themselves. E.g.: 'Silence surrounds us'

5. **Allusion:** The poem alludes to the biblical story of the prodigal son, highlighting the father's desire for his son's return.

6. **Alliteration:** It is the occurrence of the same consonant sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. e.g. 'Silence surrounds us', 'the home he knew'.

7. **Enjambment:** The poem frequently uses enjambment. Enjambment is a poetic device where one line flows into the next without a pause. This technique helps to maintain the poem's conversational tone and reflects the ongoing nature of the father's thoughts and feelings. E.g.: "I do not understand this child, though we have lived together now in the same house for years. I know Nothing of him, so try to build up a relationship from how He was when small."

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Read the extracts and answer the following questions:

1. *I do not understand this child
Though we have lived together now
In the same house for years. I know
Nothing of him, so try to build
Up a relationship from how
He was when small.*

(a) What problem do the given lines highlight?

(I) communication gap (II) generation gap (III) conflict regarding opinions (IV) both I and II

Ans: (IV) both I and II

(b) What happened when he tried to build a relationship with him in his childhood?

(I) he was successful (II) his efforts were in vain (III) he was not interested (IV) none of the above

Ans: (II) his efforts were in vain

(c) Which literary device has been used in the last line of the above extract?

(I) metaphor (II) personification (III) simile (IV) alliteration

Ans: (IV) alliteration

2. *Yet have I killed*

The seed I spent or sown it where

The land is his and none of mine?

We speak like strangers, there's no sign

Of understanding in the air.

This child is built to my design

Yet what he loves I cannot share.

(a) Why does the father use 'I' in the line '*The seed I spent or sown it where*'?

(i) to acknowledge his sorrow

(ii) to let his son know his importance

(iii) to acknowledge his role in the strange relation

(iv) to make him understand about him

(b) What is the meaning of '*This child is built to my design / Yet what he loves I cannot share*'?

(i) his son looks like him, and they share everything with each other

(ii) his son looks like him, yet they don't have anything to share

(iii) his son should follow his footsteps, but that is not the case

(iv) neither does his son look like him nor does he understand him

Ans: (ii) His son looks like him, yet they don't have anything to share

(c) Which literary device has been used in the line '*We speak like strangers*'?

(i) metaphor (ii) personification (iii) simile (iv) alliteration

Ans: (iii) simile

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. *I would have*

Him prodigal, returning to

His father's house, the home he knew,

Rather than see him make and move

His world. I would forgive him too,

Shaping from sorrow a new love.

a. What does the word *Prodigal* mean?

b. Which literary device has been used in the phrase- '*Shaping from sorrow a new love*'?

c. Why do you think the father wants his son to return to his childhood home rather than make and move his own world?

2. *Father and son, we both must live*

On the same globe and the same land,

He speaks: I cannot understand

Myself, why anger grows from grief.

We each put out an empty hand,

Longing for something to forgive.

- a. Who are 'we' in the above extract?
- b. Why do you think 'anger grows from grief'?
- c. What does 'an empty hand' signify?

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions in 40-50 words:

1. Why is the father unhappy with his son?

Ans: In the poem 'Father to Son', the father is unhappy with the son because the son is unlike his father in most aspects and has his own thoughts and interests despite having been brought up in the environment and with the values that the father provided him with.

2. What is the irony in the poem 'Father to Son'?

Ans: The poet has highlighted the generation gap existing between a father and a son. The irony which the poet talks about in the poem is that, though they have lived together for many years, the father knows very little about his son.

3. Does the poem talk of a universal experience?

Ans: Yes, the poem talks of a fairly universal experience as it deals with the common situation of lack of communication, leading to a generation gap. Here, the father seems to be helpless as he tries to build up a new relationship with the son. This is not a single experience, but it is universal as both the father and the son are waiting for the other to come and ask for forgiveness. They either talk like strangers or silence surrounds them.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Is the father responsible for the present situation? What are your views?
2. What is meant by 'silence surrounds us'?
3. What is your opinion of the son in the poem?
4. Why do you think the father is unable to understand his son in 'Father to Son'?
5. What is the father's complaint against his son?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Answer the following questions in 120-150 words:

1. How far has the poet succeeded in transforming a purely personal matter into a universal experience prevalent in modern times?

Ans: The poem begins with the plea of a father. The speaker i.e., the father, recounts his own experience. He talks about the non-functional father-son relationship. He neither understands his son nor knows anything about him. In spite of living in the same house, the distance between the father and the son has increased. There is a lack of communication between them. They either talk like strangers or silence surrounds them. The father is unable to share what the son prefers to do. The distance has reached a sorrowful limit. Even then, the father is willing to shape a new love and build up a fresh relationship. His grief takes the form of anger, and they fail to reach any compromise. This maladjustment or growing break-up of relationships is typical of the modern materialistic age.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. What sort of father-son relationship has been depicted in the poem 'Father to Son'?
2. Write about the literary devices used in the poem.
3. Justify the title given to the poem 'Father to Son'.
4. What do you think is a possible solution to the situation depicted in the poem 'Father to Son'?

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Imagine you are the father from the poem. Write a letter to your son expressing your desire to mend the strained relationship.

Ans. 32, Rosewood Lane
Greenfield, London

27 June 2026

Dear Son,

I sit here tonight, staring at the quiet walls of this house, feeling the growing emptiness between us, and my heart feels heavy. I cannot carry this silence anymore. You are my son — my own flesh and blood — yet somewhere along life's path, we drifted apart, and I never found the words to pull you back.

I know I may have failed to understand you, to see the world through your eyes. But please know, my love for you has never changed, not for a moment. I miss the laughter, the conversations, even the little arguments.

I don't want to be a stranger in your life. Let's try — for us.

With all my love
Dad

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. How, in your opinion, can the father improve his relationship with his son? Support your answer with a relevant explanation.
2. How does the lack of communication between the father and son in the poem reflect real-life challenges in parent-child relationships? Suggest possible ways to overcome such misunderstandings.

THE SUMMER OF THE BEAUTIFUL WHITE HORSE

-WILLIAM SAROYAN

TITLE

The summer of the beautiful white horse is a beautiful narrative that revolves around the summer adventure of the young narrator, Aram, with his teenage cousin Mourad, who enjoyed riding a stolen horse on a beautiful summer morning. The story revolves around the boys' innocent desire to gain freedom and live a life beyond their poverty-stricken lives.

AUTHOR

William Saroyan was born on August 31, 1908, in Fresno, California. He left school when he was 15 years old and educated himself by reading and writing. William Saroyan, an American author, began his career during the *Great Depression* by writing brash, original, and irreverent stories that celebrated the joy of living in spite of poverty, hunger, and insecurity. In his work, he was concerned with the basic goodness of all people and the value of life.

SETTING (WHEN AND WHERE)

- **Time:** The story is set in a nostalgic past, described as the "good old days" when the narrator, Aram, was nine years old.
- **Place:** It takes place in the San Joaquin Valley of California, where an Armenian immigrant community resided, specifically a Garoghlanian family.

GENRE

"The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse" falls under **Realistic Fiction**, blending elements of **coming-of-age**, **humour**, and **cultural reflection**. The story portrays believable characters and everyday situations, focusing on moral dilemmas within a close-knit Armenian immigrant community. Aram's internal struggle between desire and family values reflects his journey toward maturity and moral understanding. Light-hearted moments, such as Aram's failed attempts to ride the horse and Uncle Khosrove's famous line, *"It is no harm; pay no attention to it,"* add charm to the narrative. The story highlights the importance of honour and reputation in Armenian culture, even amidst poverty.

CHARACTERS

- **Aram:** The 9-year-old narrator, curious, thoughtful, and honest.
- **Mourad:** Aram's 13-year-old cousin, eccentric, joyful, and deeply connected with animals.
- **Uncle Khosrove:** A hot-headed, eccentric man who believes in dismissing all troubles.
- **John Byro:** An Assyrian farmer, friend of Uncle Khosrove. (the owner of the white horse)

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

The story begins with Aram being awakened at dawn by his cousin Mourad, who mysteriously appears with a beautiful white horse. The sight bewilders Aram, as they both belong to the poverty-stricken but honour-bound Garoghlanian family. Mourad invites Aram to ride, and though Aram suspects the horse is stolen, he is overwhelmed by his lifelong desire to ride one. Mourad, considered eccentric, insists he has a special understanding with the animal. They hide the horse in an abandoned vineyard barn and ride it secretly every morning. Aram's inexperience causes comical falls, while Mourad rides with ease and confidence. Tension arises when John Byro, the horse's true owner, visits their home. Despite grieving the loss, he still trusts the boys due to the family's reputation for honesty and integrity when they are seen accompanying the white horse. Guilt takes root, and the boys silently return the horse. The story ends with Byro joyfully discovering the horse—healthier than ever, restored to him without confrontation or blame.

MOOD AND TONE

- **Mood:** The story creates a **nostalgic**, **adventurous**, and **humorous** atmosphere. The boys' secret morning rides bring excitement, while the humorous antics of Uncle Khosrove and Aram's clumsiness lighten the narrative.
- **Tone:** Saroyan's tone is **warm**, **reflective**, and **compassionate**. He fondly recalls childhood innocence and gently conveys moral lessons without harsh judgment, celebrating growth through experience.

THEMES

- **Honesty vs. Desire:** The internal struggle between moral upbringing and the temptation of personal desires.
- **Family Reputation:** The weight of a family's name and values influences individual choices.
- **Coming-of-Age:** Aram's journey through moral awakening and understanding.
- **Freedom and Joy:** Represented by the horse and the boys' carefree rides.
- **Cultural Identity:** The story highlights Armenian traditions, honour, and pride amidst immigrant life.

SUMMARY

- The narrator Aram, a nine-year-old boy, recalls a time from his childhood in the Armenian Garoghlanian family, known for their honesty.
- His cousin Mourad, a thirteen-year-old boy, wakes him up early in the morning, sitting on a beautiful white horse, despite being too poor to own one.
- Aram is conflicted, torn between excitement and the improbability of Mourad owning the horse honestly.
- Mourad insists he did not steal it for money, only for the joy of riding, which he believes is not real theft.
- They hide the horse and ride it secretly every day in the countryside.
- Aram keeps falling off while Mourad handles the horse like an expert.
- One day, John Byro, the horse's real owner, visits Aram's home. He expresses sadness but refuses to doubt the boys because of their family's reputation.
- Mourad and Aram are moved by the trust and decide to return the horse quietly.
- John Byro finds the horse in his barn and notices it is stronger and better tempered than before, a testament to the care with which it was handled when it went missing. He chose not to question anything and was grateful for the return of the horse.
- The story ends with a message of silent morality and respect for values.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

"The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse" is a heartwarming tale that explores the delicate balance between desire and morality through the innocent eyes of childhood. The story is told from Aram's point of view, which adds a layer of innocence and authenticity to the events, allowing readers to engage directly with his inner conflict. Saroyan crafts a (first-person) narrative that is both simple and profound, using the backdrop of the Armenian immigrant experience to discuss universal human values.

The story's brilliance lies in its subtle critique of moral absolutism. While the boys technically commit a wrong by taking the horse, their intentions are innocent and driven by pure, childlike wonder rather than malice. This raises an important ethical question: Is an action wrong if it causes no harm and brings joy?

The Garoghlanian family's deep-rooted sense of honour serves as a moral compass, reminding the readers of the importance of integrity, even amidst poverty and hardship. John Byro's silent understanding and refusal to shame the boys highlight the power of forgiveness and quiet wisdom.

Saroyan's nostalgic and humorous tone invites readers to reflect on their own childhood mischief and moral dilemmas, ultimately reinforcing the idea that real maturity comes from understanding and correcting one's mistakes without external pressure.

LITERARY DEVICES

i. Imagery: Vivid descriptions of the horse, the countryside, and the morning rides bring the story to life.

Example: "It was the loveliest horse I had ever seen... magnificent and white."

ii. Symbolism: The white horse symbolizes freedom, desire, and innocence. It represents the boys' longing to experience joy beyond the limitations of their circumstances.

iii. Irony: Despite being poor and unable to afford luxuries, the Garoghlanian family is known for their unwavering honesty, which ironically makes Mourad's act of taking the horse both shocking and humorous.

iv. Humour: The narrative contains light-hearted moments, especially when Aram keeps falling off the horse, and in the exaggerated behaviour of Uncle Khosrove, who dismisses every crisis by saying, *"It is no harm; pay no attention to it."*

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

EXTRACT 1:

"We were poor. We had no money. Our whole tribe was poverty-stricken. Every branch of the Garoghlanian family was living in the most amazing and comical poverty in the world. Nobody could understand where we ever got money enough to keep us with food in our bellies, not even the old men of the family. Most important of all, though, we were famous for our honesty. We had been famous for our honesty for something like eleven centuries, even when we had been the wealthiest family in what we liked to think was the world. We were proud first, honest next, and after that we believed in right and wrong. None of us would take advantage of anybody in the world, let alone steal."

1. What is the narrator emphasizing about the Garoghlanian tribe in this passage?

- A. Their passion for wealth
B. Their deep-rooted honesty
C. Their mysterious disappearance
D. Their rise to political power

2. What does the phrase "comical poverty" most likely suggest?

- A. The tribe was poor but not really suffering
B. Their poverty was exaggerated for sympathy
C. Their poverty was almost laughable in its extremes
D. They used poverty as a form of protest

3. The Garoghlanian family was so poor that they were forced to steal in order to survive.

- A. True
B. False

4. Match the items in Column A with the correct descriptions in Column B and choose the right set from the options given below:

Column A		Column B
a. "Food in our bellies"	→	i. Poor but deeply rooted in moral and cultural pride
b. Eleven centuries of honesty	→	ii. Even in past wealth, honesty remained their legacy
c. "Comical poverty"	→	iii. Despite mystery of income, basic needs were met
d. Pride → Honesty → Right & Wrong	→	iv. Exaggerated but amusing depiction of their poor lifestyle

e. Garoghlanian family

– v. Order of values held by the Garoghlanian family

A. a → iii, b → ii, c → iv, d → v, e → I

B. a → ii, b → iv, c → iii, d → v, e → i

C. a → iii, b → i, c → ii, d → iv, e → v

D. a → iv, b → iii, c → i, d → ii, e → v

EXTRACT 2:

“Every family has a crazy streak in it somewhere, and my cousin Mourad was considered the natural descendant of the crazy streak in our tribe. Before him was our uncle Khosrove, an enormous man with a powerful head of black hair and the largest moustache in the San Joaquin Valley, a man so furious in temper, so irritable, so impatient that he stopped anyone from talking by roaring, It is no harm; pay no attention to it.”

1. What is meant by “Mourad was considered the natural descendant of the crazy streak in our tribe”?

A. Mourad was literally the son of a madman

B. Mourad was mentally unstable

C. Mourad inherited the eccentric behaviour found in the family

D. Mourad had nothing in common with the family

2. What trait best describes Uncle Khosrove based on this passage?

A. Cowardly

B. Hot-headed and dismissive

C. Clever and calculating

D. Gentle and persuasive

3. What is ironic about Uncle Khosrove’s repeated line, “It is no harm; pay no attention to it”?

A. He says it with kindness and actually pays attention

B. It is used only when he is calm and happy

C. It always solves problems without him trying

D. He says it in serious situations where attention is needed

4. The line “the largest moustache in the San Joaquin Valley” is an example of:

A. Simile

B. Personification

C. Hyperbole

D. Symbolism

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

EXTRACT 3: *“Early every morning for two weeks, my cousin Mourad and I took the horse out of the barn of the deserted vineyard where we were hiding it and rode it, and every morning the horse, when it was my turn to ride alone, leapt over grape vines and small trees and threw me and ran away. Nevertheless, I hoped in time to learn to ride the way my cousin Mourad rode. One morning on the way to Fetvajian’s deserted vineyard, we ran into the farmer John Byro, who was on his way to town. Let me do the talking, my cousin Mourad said. I have a way with farmers.”*

1. What can be inferred about Aram’s horse-riding skills compared to Mourad’s?

A. Aram was a better rider than Mourad

B. Aram avoided riding the horse

C. Aram was inexperienced and kept falling off

D. Aram trained the horse every day

2. What does the word “deserted” mean in the context “deserted vineyard”?

A. Beautiful

B. Remote

C. Abandoned

D. Fruitful

3. Mourad’s willingness to speak to John Byro reveals that he is:

A. Nervous and shy

B. Confident and quick-thinking

C. Disrespectful and careless

D. Quiet and introverted

4. The mood during the boys' morning rides can best be described as:
- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. Gloomy and fearful | B. Boring and repetitive |
| C. Adventurous and playful | D. Sad and emotional |

EXTRACT 4: *"ONE day back there in the good old days when I was nine and the world was full of every imaginable kind of magnificence, and life was still a delightful and mysterious dream, my cousin Mourad, who was considered crazy by everybody who knew him except me, came to my house at four in the morning and woke me up tapping on the window of my room.*

Aram, he said. I jumped out of bed and looked out of the window. I couldn't believe what I saw. It wasn't morning yet, but it was summer and with daybreak not many minutes around the corner of the world it was light enough for me to know I wasn't dreaming. My cousin Mourad was sitting on a beautiful white horse."

1. What does Aram's reaction on seeing Mourad with a horse indicate?
A. He had seen Mourad on a horse before
B. He suspected Mourad was planning to sell the horse
C. He found it unbelievable and thought he was dreaming
D. He wanted to call other family members
2. In the phrase *"the world was full of every imaginable kind of magnificence"*, the word *"magnificence"* suggests:
A. Mystery and confusion
B. Danger and challenge
C. Beauty, wonder, and grandeur
D. Loneliness and sadness
3. What is the tone of the narrator in this passage?
A. Anxious and skeptical
B. Mocking and sarcastic
C. Nostalgic and reflective
D. Critical and disapproving
4. What does Aram's view of Mourad reveal about their relationship?
A. He is afraid Mourad will get into trouble
B. He admires Mourad despite what others say
C. He avoids Mourad because of his actions
D. He does not care about Mourad's behavior

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. **Why was Aram initially unwilling to believe Mourad had stolen the horse?**

Aram was initially skeptical that Mourad had stolen the horse because their family was known for its honesty and pride. He couldn't reconcile the possibility of Mourad stealing such a valuable animal with their family's reputation. Additionally, Aram knew Mourad's family was very poor, making it improbable they could afford such a beautiful horse.

2. **What traits make Mourad similar to Uncle Khosrove?**

Both Mourad and Uncle Khosrove are eccentric and emotionally intense. They act impulsively, often disregarding logic or consequences. Mourad's spirited nature and Uncle Khosrove's famous outbursts make them natural carriers of the tribe's 'crazy streak.'

3. **What role does John Byro play in the story?**

John Byro is the horse's rightful owner. Though he suspects the truth when he sees the boys with his horse, he refrains from accusing them, honouring the Garoghlanian family's reputation. His trust indirectly prompts the boys to return the horse.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. How does Aram justify the act of riding a stolen horse?
2. Describe the setting and how it contributes to the story's atmosphere.
3. How does the interaction with John Byro serve as a turning point?
4. Why does Mourad finally decide to return the horse?
5. Why did John Byro not accuse the boys of stealing the horse?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. **Did the boys return the horse because they were conscience-stricken or because they were afraid?**

Ans. The story clearly shows that the boys were neither afraid nor burdened by guilt. Their decision to return the horse was not driven by fear, nor did they feel remorse for taking it. The narrator even justifies the act, saying that stealing a horse just to ride it wasn't the same as stealing something like money. In his view, it only became true theft if they intended to sell the horse, which they never would. This reflects their unique moral reasoning. Mourad had kept the horse for over a month when John Byro visited. They kept it for two more weeks after that. The situation changed when the rightful owner, John Byro refused to believe it was his horse, considering the reputation of the boys' family. It was their pride in the family's reputation for honesty that compelled them to return it. John Byro's trust and respect confirmed this, motivating them to silently uphold the honour of the Garoghlanian tribe.

UNSOLVED LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What conflicting thoughts passed through the narrator's mind on seeing Mourad on a beautiful white horse early one morning and why?
2. "The distribution of the various kinds of spirit of our tribe had been from the beginning capricious and vagrant." Elucidate.
3. Describe Mourad's unique relationship with animals and how it shapes the narrative.
4. Draw a comparison between the two characters - Mourad and Aram.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Imagine you are Aram, writing a letter to your cousin Mourad a few years later. In your letter, reflect on the summer when you both took the white horse, the emotions you experienced, and what you learned about honesty, family, and growing up.

24, York Street
San Jose
California

23rd September 2026

Dear Mourad,

I hope you are doing well. Lately, I've often thought about that unforgettable summer when you woke me at dawn, sitting proudly on the beautiful white horse. Those early morning rides through

the open fields felt like pure freedom. I remember the excitement, the thrill, and also the quiet guilt that lingered in my heart.

At the time, I didn't fully understand what it meant to carry the weight of our family's honor. But when John Byro showed trust instead of anger, I realised how important honesty and reputation are. Returning the horse without a word was our silent way of making things right.

Now I know that growing up means learning from such moments. We tasted freedom, but also learned responsibility. I wonder if you still believe you had a special bond with that horse—I think, in some way, you truly did.

Your cousin
Aram

THE ADDRESS

-MARGA MINCO

TITLE

The title 'The Address' is symbolic and significant. It refers to the physical location of Mrs. Dorling's house, where the narrator goes in search of her mother's belongings after the war. However, it also represents a painful journey into the past, marked by loss, betrayal, and disillusionment. The "address" becomes a reminder of what once was, and what can never be reclaimed. It highlights how material objects cannot restore emotional connections lost to time and tragedy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marga Minco was a Dutch journalist and acclaimed writer, born on March 31, 1920, in Ginneken near Breda. As the only survivor of her immediate Jewish family during the Holocaust, she went into hiding and lost her parents and siblings. After the war, she resumed journalism and debuted in 1957 with *Het bitterekruid* ("Bitter Herbs"), earning the Vijverberg Prize. Her work, striking for its minimalist, sober prose, explores themes of loss, memory, and survivor's guilt. Over her long career she received major honors: Constantijn Huygens Prize (2005) and P.C. Hooft Prize (2019). She passed away on July 10, 2023, aged 103.

SETTING (WHEN AND WHERE)

- **Time Setting:** The story is set during the post-World War II period (1939-1945), after the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. The war has ended, and people are trying to rebuild their lives amid loss and trauma.
- **Place Setting:** The story primarily takes place in Holland, in two locations:
 - The **narrator's former home** is now lost due to war and displacement.
 - **46 Marconi Street**, the residence of Mrs. Dorling, where the narrator goes in search of her family's belongings.

GENRE

- **Literary Fiction:** Explores deep human emotions and moral questions.
- **War Fiction:** Centres around the aftermath of World War II.
- **Realistic Fiction:** Based on real-life events and experiences during the Holocaust, depicted in a believable and relatable manner.

CHARACTERS

- **Narrator:** A Jewish girl who returns to her native city after surviving the war. Her journey reflects emotional healing and the attempt to reconnect with her past. Her identity remains unknown to universalize the trauma.
- **Mrs. Dorling:** An old acquaintance of the narrator's mother. She takes their belongings under the pretense of safekeeping but later refuses to acknowledge the narrator. She represents selfishness, opportunism, and the moral ambiguities of wartime behaviour.
- **Mrs. S- Narrator's Mother:** A simple and gullible woman who allows Mrs. Dorling to take their household items. Her role is limited but significant as her decisions impact the story's events.
- **Mrs. Dorling's Daughter:** A polite and curious girl, unaware of the past. She gives the narrator a glimpse of her former life by allowing her to see the household items.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

“The Address” begins with the narrator returning to her hometown in Holland after the end of World War II. As a Jewish survivor, she is searching for remnants of her past life, especially her family's belongings, which were handed over for safekeeping to an old acquaintance, Mrs. Dorling. Her mother had trusted Mrs. Dorling during the Nazi occupation, giving her valuable household items like silverware, crockery, and tablecloths to prevent their confiscation. The narrator visits 46 Marconi Street, the address her mother had once given her. However, Mrs. Dorling, now cold and evasive, refuses to acknowledge her.

On her second visit, Mrs. Dorling is absent, and her young daughter lets the narrator in. Inside, the narrator sees her family's possessions being used without reverence. The furniture and cutlery, though physically intact, appear foreign and stripped of emotional significance. Memories flood her mind, but they now feel disconnected from the present. She realizes that reclaiming these objects cannot bring back her mother, her home, or her former identity. In a quiet yet powerful decision, she leaves without claiming anything, choosing emotional freedom over painful nostalgia. The story captures the deep emotional scars of war, emphasizing that healing often comes through acceptance and letting go of the past.

MOOD AND TONE

- **Mood:**
 - Somber and nostalgic, creating a sense of loss and grief.
 - Emotionally heavy, reflective of the narrator's inner turmoil.
- **Tone:**
 - Quiet and subdued.
 - Reflective and melancholic, echoing the post-war trauma and emotional conflict.

THEMES

- **Loss and Displacement:** The story centers on what people lose during war, not just possessions but homes, identity, and peace.
- **Trust and Betrayal:** Mrs. Dorling's actions betray the narrator's family's trust.
- **Memory and Emotional Trauma:** The emotional weight of memories is explored through objects.
- **Identity and Detachment:** The narrator's journey shows how war reshapes identity and forces emotional detachment.

- **Materialism vs Emotional Healing:** The story contrasts the physical reclaiming of possessions with the psychological need to heal and let go.

SUMMARY

- The story begins after World War II, with the unnamed narrator returning to her hometown in Holland.
- She is a Jewish survivor seeking to recover belongings her family had handed over for safekeeping during the Nazi occupation.
- These belongings were given to a woman named **Mrs. Dorling**, a former acquaintance of the narrator's mother.
- Mrs. Dorling frequently visited the narrator's house during the war, taking away valuable items such as silverware, crockery, and other antiques.
- The narrator's mother had given her the address—**46 Marconi Street**—where Mrs. Dorling lived.
- When the narrator visits the house, **Mrs. Dorling does not recognize her** or pretends not to, and denies her entry.
- The narrator leaves but remains curious and emotionally conflicted.
- On a second visit, **Mrs. Dorling's daughter** opens the door and unknowingly lets her inside.
- Inside, the narrator sees **familiar objects** from her childhood—furniture, utensils, and cutlery—scattered around the house.
- These items, though physically unchanged, feel alien in the new environment, stripped of the emotional warmth they once held.
- Overwhelmed by a sense of **displacement and detachment**, the narrator reflects on her lost past.
- She realizes that **reclaiming material possessions cannot restore the life, people, or memories** she lost during the war.
- In a quiet but firm decision, she chooses to **walk away without claiming anything**, symbolizing **healing through emotional detachment**.
- The story ends on a note of introspection, showing how survivors often **let go of the past to find peace in the present**.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Marga Minco's "The Address" is a moving depiction of the aftermath of war, particularly the emotional burden carried by survivors. The narrator's journey to reclaim lost possessions mirrors her deeper attempt to reconnect with her roots and family. However, as she stands amidst familiar objects in a foreign environment, the alienation she feels emphasizes how the past can never truly be reclaimed once broken by trauma. Minco's minimalist and subtle storytelling magnifies the grief without sentimentality. The story raises questions about memory, identity, and the ethics of survival, ultimately showing that healing sometimes lies in letting go.

LITERARY DEVICES, WRITING STYLE & RELEVANT INFORMATION

- **Symbolism:** Household items represent memory, identity, and emotional connection.
- **Foreshadowing:** The narrator's tone and unease suggest her eventual detachment.
- **Imagery:** Vivid descriptions of furniture and objects recreate her emotional world.
- **Style of Writing:** Simple, restrained, first-person narrative; focuses on internal emotion more than action.

- **Historical Relevance:** The story reflects the Jewish experience during and after WWII. Marga Minco herself was a Holocaust survivor.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Extract 1:

“The woman looked at me searchingly. She had opened the door a chink. I came closer and stood on the step. ‘No, I don’t know you.’ ‘I’m Mrs. S’s daughter.’ She held her hand on the door as though she wanted to prevent it opening any further. Her face gave absolutely no sign of recognition. She kept staring at me in silence. Perhaps I was mistaken, I thought, perhaps it isn’t her. I had seen her only once, fleetingly, and that was years ago. It was most probable that I had rung the wrong bell. The woman let go of the door and stepped to the side. She was wearing my mother’s green knitted cardigan.”

1. What does the woman’s silent behavior suggest?
 - a) She was very soft-spoken
 - b) She was trying to avoid confrontation or recognition**
 - c) She didn’t understand the narrator’s language
 - d) She was welcoming but too shocked to speak
2. What does “opened the door a chink” imply?
 - a) The woman was trying to check the weather
 - b) She opened the door fully and cheerfully
 - c) She opened it slightly, suggesting hesitation or suspicion**
 - d) She opened the door to make room for someone to exit
3. How does the extract reflect emotional discomfort?
 - a) Through awkward silence and minimal interaction**
 - b) Through loud arguments and verbal confrontation
 - c) Through a joyful reunion
 - d) Through vivid recollection of happy memories
4. Who is ‘she’ in the above lines?
 - a) Mrs. Dorling**
 - b) Mrs. S
 - c) Narrator’s mother
 - d) Mrs. Dorling’s daughter

Extract 2:

‘Won’t you sit down?’ asked the girl. She held open the door of the living-room and I went inside past her. I stopped, horrified. I was in a room I knew and did not know. I found myself in the midst of things I did want to see again but which oppressed me in the strange atmosphere. Or because of the tasteless way everything was arranged, because of the ugly furniture or the muggy smell that hung there, I don’t know; but I scarcely dared to look around

me. The girl moved a chair. I sat down and stared at the woollen table-cloth. I rubbed it. My fingers grew warm from rubbing. I followed the lines of the pattern. Somewhere on the edge there should be a burn mark that had never been repaired.

1. Why does the narrator feel horrified upon entering the room?

- a) The girl refuses to speak to the narrator
- b) Familiar items are placed in unfamiliar settings**
- c) The room is dark and completely unrecognizable
- d) The house is dirty and filled with old clothes

2. What does the narrator's reaction to the tablecloth reveal?

- a) She remembers the exact pattern on the tablecloth
- b) She emotionally reconnects with past memories**
- c) She wants to take the cloth home immediately
- d) She thinks the cloth is poorly maintained

3. What is the meaning of the word "oppressed" in this context?

- a) Encouraged by comforting memories
- b) Surprised by unexpected belongings
- c) Weighed down by strong emotions**
- d) Confused by the strange atmosphere

4. Which literary device is used in "a room I knew and did not know"?

- a) A metaphor describing memory
- b) A simile comparing feelings
- c) A paradox showing emotional conflict**
- d) A personification of the room

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. "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. Since then, she had come regularly."

1. What was the narrator doing at the beginning of the passage?

- a) Talking to their mother about the War
- b) Walking back to the station and reflecting on the past
- c) Searching for Mrs. Dorling's house
- d) Visiting old friends from the War

2. What is the most likely meaning of the word "acquaintance" as used in the line "she was an old acquaintance of my mother"?

- a) A relative or family member
- b) A person known slightly, but not a close friend
- c) A former colleague
- d) A neighbour who lived nearby

3. Which phrase best describes the narrator's reaction to noticing the changes in the home?

- a) **Cry over spilt milk** – to complain about something that cannot be changed
- b) **Something felt off** – a sense that things aren't quite right
- c) **Break the ice** – to start a conversation in a social setting
- d) **Jump the gun** – to act before the proper time

4. What can be inferred about the narrator's relationship with their home?

- a) They had not visited home in a long time
- b) They had no emotional attachment to the place
- c) They were unaware of any changes made in the house
- d) They often stayed at home during the war

2. *"Again I heard the unnatural sound of my voice and I went on: 'I remember my mother once asked me if I would help her polish the silver. It was a very long time ago and I was probably bored that day or perhaps I had to stay at home because I was ill, as she had never asked me before. I asked her which silver she meant and she replied, surprised, that it was the spoons, forks and knives, of course. And that was the strange thing, I didn't know the cutlery we ate off every day was silver.'"*

1. What is the significance of the narrator's voice sounding 'unnatural'?

- a) She was trying to imitate someone
- b) She was emotionally conflicted
- c) She had not spoken in a long time
- d) She wanted to sound angry

2. Why might the narrator have had no idea that the cutlery was made of real silver?

- a) Because silver was common in every household
- b) Because material things were never discussed
- c) Because her family had lost its possessions during the war
- d) Because the family used them daily without special emphasis

3. Which word below is a near ANTONYM of "probably" in this context?

- a) Possibly
- b) Uncertainly
- c) Definitely
- d) Apparently

4. Why does the narrator recall a seemingly ordinary memory about polishing silver while visiting the address her mother once gave her?

- a) To express anger at Mrs. Dorling for taking their belongings
- b) To reconnect with a time when life felt normal and safe
- c) To remember a moment when she discovered how expensive their home was
- d) To prove that she had helped with household chores

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Why did the narrator hesitate to visit the address initially?

Ans: The narrator hesitated to visit the address after the war because she feared confronting the painful memories associated with her past. She was emotionally unsettled and unsure of what she might find, dreading the possible loss of her connection to her mother and her former life.

2. Explain the significance of the title "The Address".

Ans: The title symbolizes the narrator's search for identity, memory, and emotional closure. It represents a physical location where her past is stored, but also becomes a metaphor for loss and displacement. The "address" holds her mother's belongings but not the emotional warmth once associated with them.

3. How does the author use the house to reflect the theme of dislocation?

Ans: The unfamiliar setting of the once-familiar objects in Mrs. Dorling's house makes the narrator feel emotionally disoriented. The changed atmosphere and arrangement disconnect the narrator from her memories, reflecting the dislocation and emotional trauma caused by war and the sense of being uprooted from one's past.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE (UNSOLVED)

1. In what way does the narrator's visit represent a journey of self-discovery?
2. What reason did Mrs. Dorling give for taking away the precious belongings of the narrator's mother?
3. Who had given the narrator the address, when and under what circumstances?
4. Do you think the narrator made the right decision by not reclaiming the belongings? Why?
5. What did the narrator learn about Mrs. Dorling from her mother?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. "The Address" is a story of dislocation, identity, and healing. Analyze.

Ans. "The Address" highlights the emotional displacement caused by war. The narrator visits a house holding her mother's belongings, hoping to reclaim her past. However, she finds herself emotionally disconnected from the items, which now reside in a strange, impersonal setting. The familiar objects have lost their warmth and meaning. She realizes that without the original context—her mother and their home—the belongings are just things. Her journey reflects a painful search for identity amidst trauma and loss. The final decision to leave the items behind signifies emotional maturity. It marks her acceptance that clinging to the past hinders healing. By choosing to move forward, she reclaims her agency and begins the process of emotional recovery. The story serves as a poignant reminder that healing often comes not from recovering the past but by learning to live without it.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Do you think Mrs. Dorling truly believed she was safeguarding the narrator's possessions, or was she taking advantage of a tragic situation? Justify your answer.
2. The story ends with the narrator choosing not to reclaim her belongings. Do you think this was the right decision? Analyze the ending and discuss its significance in the narrator's journey toward acceptance and peace.
3. How does Marga Minco use symbolism and imagery to enhance the impact of the story? Discuss with special reference to the household objects and the setting of the story.
4. Comment on the significance of the title of the story The Address.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Compare “The Address” and “The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse” in terms of their portrayal of moral dilemmas and emotional maturity. How do both narrators navigate right and wrong amid changing circumstances?

Ans. Both “*The Address*” and “*The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse*” portray moral dilemmas that test the emotional maturity of their young narrators. In “*The Address*”, the narrator struggles with the choice of reclaiming her mother’s belongings after the war. Though emotionally connected to them, she ultimately let’s go, realizing that the past cannot be revived through material things. Her decision reflects deep emotional growth and acceptance of loss. Similarly, in “*The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse*”, Aram and Mourad face a moral conflict when they “borrow” a horse without permission. Initially, the boys view it as harmless fun, but gradually understand the importance of honesty and family values. Returning the horse symbolizes their maturing sense of right and wrong. Both stories reflect on memory, identity, and values, showing how personal ethics guide decisions even in difficult times. Letting go becomes a sign of wisdom and integrity.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. The narrator of “The Address” chooses emotional closure over reclaiming physical belongings. Do you agree with her decision? Justify your viewpoint with reference to the story and real-life situations where letting go is necessary for healing.
2. War impacts people differently, shaping their character and choices. Using “The Address” as a lens, discuss how extreme situations reveal true human nature. What do the characters of the narrator and Mrs. Dorling tell us about dignity, memory, and moral boundaries in difficult times?
3. Imagine the narrator writes a diary entry the night she revisits the house. Write the entry reflecting her inner turmoil and decision to leave the past behind.

If you were in the narrator’s place, would you have made the same decision to walk away without reclaiming the belongings? Why or why not? Justify your viewpoint with emotional and practical reasons.

MOTHER’S DAY

~ J B PRIESTLEY

TITLE

The title *Mother’s Day* is significant as it highlights the theme of maternal sacrifice and the lack of appreciation that mothers are often subjected to. Mrs. Pearson, the protagonist is shown as a nervous and shy woman who faces disrespect at the hands of her husband and children who do not value her. Eventually, with the help of her fierce and strong-willed neighbour, Mrs. Fitzgerald, she finds her voice and asserts her position in the family by establishing healthy boundaries regarding their behaviour.

AUTHOR

J.B. Priestley (1894–1984) was a British playwright, novelist, and social commentator known for his thought-provoking body of work. Born in Bradford, England, he gained fame for his novels and plays, which critique social inequality. His works often explore themes of time, morality, and social responsibility. He was also a broadcaster and political thinker, advocating for social justice. Priestley’s writing blends realism with philosophical depth, making him one of the most influential literary figures of the 20th century.

SETTING

The setting of the play 'Mother's Day' is in the living room of the Pearson family in a small suburban semi-detached villa, while the mother-figure, Mrs. Pearson, is seen seated, and every other character – Mrs. Fitzgerald, Doris, Cyril and George Pearson, is seen interacting with her in the living room space which signifies the domestic realm where gender roles are defined. It is also the very living room space where Mrs. Pearson learns to re-establish her authority and subvert the existing role of a submissive woman that she previously held in her house.

GENRE

The play *Mother's Day* by J.B. Priestley falls under the genre of **social satire and comedy**. It uses humour, irony, and wit to critique societal norms, particularly the unfair treatment of housewives and mothers. The play also has elements of **domestic drama**, as it focuses on family relationships and everyday life. Through satire, Priestley exposes gender inequality and the lack of appreciation for women's contributions within the household, while the comedic elements make the message more engaging and impactful.

CHARACTERS

1. **Mrs. Annie Pearson** – The protagonist of the play, Mrs. Pearson is a pleasant but worried-looking woman who is also a kind, devoted, submissive and overworked housewife. She is taken for granted by her family. She lacks confidence and always prioritizes her husband and children's needs over her own. However, after switching personalities with Mrs. Fitzgerald, she becomes assertive and demands respect.
2. **Mrs. Fitzgerald** – A bold, independent, and strong-willed woman who is Mrs. Pearson's neighbour. She introduces the idea of switching personalities through a magic spell, helping Mrs. Pearson stand up for herself. She represents empowerment and self-respect.
3. **George Pearson** – Mrs. Pearson's husband, who is self-centred and dismissive of his wife's efforts. He enjoys spending time at the club rather than with his family and expects Mrs. Pearson to serve him without question.
4. **Doris Pearson** – The Pearsons' daughter, a young and selfish girl who treats her mother like a servant. She is shocked when Mrs. Pearson, with Mrs. Fitzgerald's personality, refuses to cater to her demands.
5. **Cyril Pearson** – The Pearsons' son, who, like his sister, takes his mother for granted. He expects her to cater to his needs without appreciation. He is also surprised by his mother's sudden change in behaviour.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

1. Exposition (Introduction)

Setting: A middle-class British home, 1950s.

Characters Introduced: Mrs. Annie Pearson (the selfless mother), Mrs. Fitzgerald (her bold neighbour), Doris (spoiled daughter), Cyril (lazy son), and George (patriarchal husband).

Conflict Introduced: Mrs. Pearson is overworked and underappreciated. Mrs. Fitzgerald proposes a personality switch to teach the family a lesson.

2. Rising Action

Mrs. Pearson now behaves with Mrs. Fitzgerald's bold attitude.

She refuses to make tea, mocks Doris's boyfriend, and scolds Cyril for being demanding.

Both children are shocked and confused.

Tension builds as the family feels a power shift.

3. Climax

Mr. George Pearson returns and is stunned by his wife's assertive behaviour.
Mrs. Pearson mocks his club and exposes how others laugh at him.
The family dynamics are completely shaken as the mother asserts control.

4. Falling Action

The family members feel guilt and embarrassment.
Mrs. Fitzgerald decides to switch personalities back with Mrs. Pearson.
Mrs. Pearson is advised to keep her confidence and demand respect.

5. Resolution (Conclusion)

- The family begins to appreciate Mrs. Pearson.
- They agree to help out with household duties.
- The play ends with a humorous yet powerful message about gender roles, equality, and family respect.

MOOD AND TONE

The **mood** of the play is primarily **light-hearted and humorous, satirical** (where they criticise the gender roles in society) and empowering as the protagonist gradually finds her voice.

The **tone** of *Mother's Day* is **ironic and sarcastic**. It is also didactic (instructive), and tells us how a mother is to be respected and treated.

THEME

The following themes have been handled by J.B. Priestley in his play, 'Mother's Day':

Status of women in the family and in a patriarchal society.
Self-respect and the importance of prioritizing oneself, not allowing oneself to be exploited.
Parenting techniques/ styles (their pros and cons)

SUMMARY

- The play emphasizes the importance of setting boundaries and teaching respect for parents, regardless of gender roles.
- The story centres on Mrs. Annie Pearson, a devoted and self-sacrificing housewife.
- She undergoes a transformation after receiving help from her assertive neighbour, Mrs. Fitzgerald
- Mrs. Pearson is portrayed as timid and hesitant to confront her children's and husband's disrespectful behaviour.
- Her daughter Doris and son Cyril behave rudely, which she tolerates silently.
- Her husband, George, also takes her for granted and shows a lack of appreciation.
- Mrs. Fitzgerald, who is strong-willed and outspoken, suggests a magical personality switch.
- After the switch, Mrs. Pearson, now bold and assertive, challenges her family's selfish behaviour.
- She refuses to serve them and speaks out confidently.
- The family is shocked by her sudden change and begins to recognize their own flaws.
- The experience leads to their realization of Mrs. Pearson's value and importance.
- Once the switch is reversed, Mrs. Pearson retains her renewed confidence and asserts her role with dignity.
- The play critiques unfair expectations imposed on mothers and housewives.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

J.B. Priestley's *Mother's Day* is a witty social satire that critiques the undervaluation of women, especially housewives, in domestic life. Through the character of Mrs. Pearson, Priestley exposes how mothers are often taken for granted by their families. The play cleverly uses humour, irony, and a supernatural twist to highlight the importance of mutual respect and the need for women to assert themselves. Mrs. Fitzgerald's intervention acts as a catalyst for change, leading to a reversal of roles and, ultimately, attitudes. The play advocates for dignity, equality, and emotional reciprocity in family relationships, making its message timeless and relevant.

LITERARY DEVICES

1. Irony - Type: Situational and dramatic irony

Example: The family underestimates Mrs. Pearson and treats her poorly, assuming she's weak and content with housework. However, the twist comes when Mrs. Fitzgerald switches personalities with her, and Mrs. Pearson asserts herself strongly. Both women know the reason behind Mrs. Pearson's newfound confidence, but others do not know.

2. Satire

Example: The play mocks the typical British family dynamic where the mother is overworked and underappreciated, while the rest of the family is selfish and entitled.

3. Humour

Example: The audience laughs at the shocked reactions of Doris, Cyril & George when Mrs. Pearson speaks assertively and even insults them. The switching of personalities of Mrs. Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald created many humorous situations, such as confusion in addressing each other.

4. Contrast (Foil Characters)

Example: Mrs. Pearson vs. Mrs. Fitzgerald

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. *Besides I'm so fond of them even if they are so thoughtless and selfish. They don't mean to be*

- a. Which characteristic trait is reflected in the speaker's description of 'they', and her eventual reaction to it?

The mother was aware that her family members were spoilt and selfish and yet, unfortunately, she defended them. She had initially refused to deal with her family strictly until convinced by Mrs. Fitzgerald.

- b. What was the listener's reaction to these words?

The listener, Mrs. Fitzgerald, believed that the Pearsons would rectify their behaviour only if dealt with an iron hand.

- c. Do you think the speaker's defense of 'they' is justified? Is her defense in some way responsible for perpetuating their behaviour?

No, it is not justified. Yes, as a mother, it was her duty to correct her children, which would prevent them from turning into entitled and ungrateful individuals.

2. *Mrs. Pearson: Here-steady, Mrs. Pearson-if you had to live my life it wouldn't be so bad. You'd have more fun as me than you've had as you.*

- a. Why is Mrs. Pearson, the speaker, addressing Mrs. Fitzgerald as Mrs. Pearson?

The speaker, Mrs. Pearson, was actually Mrs. Fitzgerald, who was disguised as Mrs. Pearson by interchanging their personalities. She was addressing Mrs. Pearson disguised as Mrs. Fitzgerald.

- b. What was different about the two lives of the speaker and the listener?

While Mrs. Fitzgerald had a strong and assertive personality that helped her establish strict boundaries, Mrs. Pearson was soft-spoken, naive and submissive.

- c. What, according to you, makes the speaker a lot more forthright and stronger than the listener?

Mrs. Fitzgerald is a strong and independent woman. Her husband's job abroad allowed her to hone the skills that made her more forthright.

- d. Why would it be 'more fun' to be the speaker? If given a choice, what changes would you make in your life as the listener to have 'more fun'?

It would be 'more fun' to be the speaker because then Mrs. Pearson would get to deal the cards in her life as per her wish. Given a choice, I would ensure that the bad behaviour of my family is met with punishment so that they do not repeat their intentional poor behaviour.

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. *"Mrs. Pearson (smiling): That's better. I'm glad you're learning. Now I'll go and get tea ready."*

- a. Who is Mrs. Pearson addressing, and what change does this line indicate?

- b. How does this statement reflect Mrs. Pearson's final stance in the play?
 - c. Does this ending suggest a complete transformation in the family's attitude or just a temporary shock?
 - d. How does Mrs. Pearson balance assertiveness with care in this moment? Why is this line significant in concluding the play's central conflict?
2. ***"George Pearson (indignantly): What's the matter with you? Have you gone mad?"***
- a. Why is George Pearson shocked by his wife's behaviour?
 - b. What does this reaction tell us about George's usual expectations of his wife?
 - c. How does this moment reflect the impact of Mrs. Pearson's transformation on her family? What does this reveal about how people react when their comfort is challenged?
 - d. How does George's response contribute to the play's theme of self-respect?

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. How was the experience for the two women after the change of bodies?

While Mrs. Fitzgerald was excited at the prospect of exchanging souls with each other, since she herself had proposed it, Mrs. Pearson found it daunting. She was skeptical (doubtful) about how her family would respond to a strict mother-figure. But Mrs. Fitzgerald believed it was essential to deal with the family to discipline them. Therefore, she agreed to play the role of Mrs. Pearson by exchanging her soul with Mrs. Pearson.

2. What was Mrs. Fitzgerald's advice to Mrs. Pearson after she had put back the family members in their proper place?

Mrs. Fitzgerald repeatedly instructed Mrs. Pearson to be firm with her family members and not make any allowance for their misbehaviour. While Mrs. Pearson was nervous about justifying her drastic behaviour change, her neighbour directed her not to explain to her family, but to demand respect.

3. What was the change that came over the Pearson family in the end?

The Pearson family was unaccustomed to facing the bitter truth and being disciplined. When Mrs. Fitzgerald handled them sternly and dished out bitter truths to every family member, they learned about being polite. In the end, when Mrs. Pearson exchanged souls and came back to her original form, she continued being firm with the family. They agreed to spend the night at home playing rummy and having supper together, and paid better heed to conducting themselves well.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (40-50 words)

- 1. Imagine you are Mrs. Pearson. How would you handle your family's behaviour differently, instead of switching personalities with Mrs. Fitzgerald?
- 2. If Mrs. Pearson had continued being submissive, how do you think her family's behaviour would have affected her in the long run?
- 3. Do you think Mrs. Fitzgerald's way of dealing with the situation was justified? Why or why not?
- 4. How does the play challenge traditional gender roles within the household?
- 5. Who is Mrs. Fitzgerald? What does she advise Mrs. Pearson?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTION (SOLVED)

1. Why do you think magic is used in the story? Does it take away the realistic element from the play?

The **magic element** is used in literature for several reasons, enriching storytelling and deepening thematic impact. Magic often represents deeper themes like power, transformation, fate, or the unknown. In *Mother's Day* by J.B. Priestley, the magical personality swap symbolizes empowerment and self-realization. It also allows writers to break the limits of reality, making stories more engaging and imaginative. It helps in resolving conflicts or introducing twists that wouldn't be possible in a realistic setting. While change in

human behaviour is a slow process, Priestley used magic to show the transformative behaviour of the Pearsons in a span of few hours by using the element of magic. In the play, the personality switch drives the entire plot, allowing Mrs. Pearson to assert herself. The author also uses magic to subtly critique society, making complex issues more accessible. Overall, magic in literature serves as a powerful tool to entertain, provoke thought, and deepen storytelling.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (120-150 words)

- a. The shock treatment makes the thoughtless and selfish persons realize the real position of the lady of the house.” How far do you agree with the statement? Give reasons for your answer.
- b. “Sometimes it does people good to have their feelings hurt.” Who says this, and what does she say to hurt Mr. Pearson?
- c. Every woman and mother demands respect from her children and her other family members. Discuss this statement within 120-150 words in the light of the play ‘Mother’s Day’.
- d. How do *Mother’s Day* and *The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse* address the theme of moral values and self-realization?

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Was it ethically justifiable for Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Pearson to switch bodies to teach the family a lesson? Why or why not?

A: While ethically questionable, the switch is a symbolic device used to empower Mrs. Pearson. Since her family ignored her pleas when she was herself, the drastic measure became a tool for self-assertion. From a consequentialist perspective, the outcome—family members realizing their faults and beginning to respect Mrs. Pearson—justifies the action. However, from a moral perspective, deceiving others could be seen as unethical. The play leaves this tension unresolved, encouraging viewers to consider the morality of using unconventional means for just causes. The switch provides a much-needed ‘shock treatment’ that breaks years long cycle of exploitation. Ultimately, the intervention is justifiable because it restores dignity and equity to the household, proving that sometimes unconventional methods are very much required to correct social injustices.

2. How does Mrs. Pearson’s transformation impact her relationships by the end of the play? Do you think the change is sustainable?

A: Mrs. Pearson’s transformation shocks her family into acknowledging their disrespect. It resets the power dynamic and forces them to see her as a person, not a servant. Whether the change is sustainable depends on her consistency. If she maintains her assertiveness without reverting to passivity, the shift may endure. The play ends on a hopeful note but subtly warns that real change requires ongoing effort from both sides. The concluding scene, where the family agrees to stay in for a quiet evening of rummy, suggests a hopeful shift towards mutual respect. However, Priestley subtly warns that real lasting change is a ‘two ways Street’ requiring ongoing effort from both sides. Mrs. Pearson must remain the ‘mistress of her own life’ to ensure that a family does not slide back into their old selfish habit

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED) (120-150 words)

1. What is the symbolic significance of Mrs. Pearson refusing to serve tea or cigarettes during the confrontation scenes?
2. What values does Priestley seem to promote through the play, and how does he use satire to do so?
3. If you were in Mrs. Pearson’s position, what non-supernatural strategy could you use to achieve the same outcome? Justify your approach.

BIRTH

-A.J. CRONIN

TITLE

The title "Birth" is justified as it directly relates to the central event of the story, the physical birth of a child, which also symbolizes the broader themes of new beginnings, hope and transformation. The story depicts the struggle of Dr. Andrew Manson to save both the mother and the lifeless newborn, highlighting the fragility of life and the profound impact of childbirth.

AUTHOR

Archibald Joseph Cronin (A. J. Cronin) – A Scottish novelist and physician. His medical background influenced much of his writing, often blending human drama with themes of ethics and duty. His most famous work remains the book 'The Citadel' (1937) from which this excerpt has been taken. The novel delves deeper into Dr. Andrew Manson's experiences and the broader issues within the medical profession.

SETTING

The story is set in a Welsh mining town of Blaenelly in the early 20th century. The town was mostly inhabited by miners who had limited access to proper medical attention. Dr. Andrew Morgan, a young medical graduate who had joined as an apprentice to Dr. Edward Page, goes to the house of Joe and Susan Morgan to deliver their baby and is faced with a critical situation which challenges his knowledge and determination to do justice to his patients.

GENRE

Short story / Realistic fiction with elements of drama and professional ethics.

CHARACTERS

Dr. Andrew Manson – He is a young medical graduate working in a small mining town. On the call of Joe Morgan, a miner, Dr. Andrew Manson manages to help in a difficult birth and saves the baby's life due to his knowledge and efforts. He was initially dazed and lost in his disturbing thoughts when he first came along with Joe Morgan to check on Susan Morgan. However, his personal problems took a backseat the moment he found the baby was on his way, who was critical and unresponsive after birth. He collected himself and put in everything he knew to save the mother and the child. This shows his dedication and sense of responsibility towards his patients.

Joe Morgan - He is the husband of Susan Morgan. He asks Dr Andrew Manson to help in his wife's delivery and reposes full faith in the doctor.

Mrs. Susan Morgan – Joe's wife, a caring lady, is giving birth for the first time, though she has been married for more than 20 years.

Mrs. Morgan's mother – A minor character of about 70, whose actions reflect her wisdom and concern for her daughter's well-being. She offers tea to the doctor after he says that there is still time for the baby to be born. She did this to prevent him from leaving the house, demonstrating her worldly-wise nature.

Midwife – She assists the doctor during the delivery. She finds Dr. Andrew Manson's approach and techniques of reviving the child very strange and unacceptable.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION

1. Exposition (Introduction)

The story is set in a **small Welsh town**, where **Dr. Andrew Manson**, a young medical graduate, visits a patient's house late at night after a long day and especially a heartbreaking evening with Christine, his lady-love.

The patient is **Susan Morgan**, a young woman in labour. Her husband **Joe Morgan** is anxious but hopeful.

Andrew is deeply tired, emotionally drained and lost in his own thoughts about love and life. He questions marriages and love affairs while waiting for Susan's labour.

2. Rising Action

Susan is in **prolonged labour**. Andrew waits through the night, assisting the midwife.

After hours of labour, the baby is delivered, but to everyone's horror, **the child is stillborn**.

To make things worse, **Susan's condition becomes critical** due to her age.

3. Climax

Faced with a life-or-death situation, Andrew **makes quick, courageous medical decisions**.

He first saves Susan from dying by giving her an injection and works "unsparingly to restore" her.

Then he turns his attention to the stillborn child, who is **blue and limp** — a case of **asphyxia pallida** (lack of oxygen at birth).

Against all odds, Andrew **refuses to give up**. He tries to revive the baby using cold and hot water baths and **artificial respiration techniques** (a method involving pressing the chest and back rhythmically).

4. Falling Action

After a long struggle, the baby finally **starts breathing and crying**, proving that Andrew's efforts weren't in vain.

The **emotional tension breaks**, and there is a mix of disbelief and joy among everyone present.

5. Resolution

Andrew steps out into the early morning light, **emotionally transformed and triumphant**.

He feels deeply fulfilled — not because he saved two lives, but because he **did not give in to despair or exhaustion**.

The story ends with a tone of **hope, renewal and professional pride**.

MOOD AND TONE

Mood: Tense, emotional, dramatic.

Tone: Serious, determined, ultimately hopeful.

THEME

Multiple themes have been dealt with in this lesson. The miracle of birth, dedication and ethics in the medical profession, hope, resilience, the value of life, emotional strength and human drama are some of the prominent ideas presented through the story. One simple child birth leads to a challenging situation, which brings out the different emotions that the characters go through. Hope shines bright throughout this tale of human resilience.

SUMMARY (IN BULLET POINTS)

- Joe Morgan calls Dr. Andrew for his wife's delivery.
- Dr. Andrew faces a professional and emotional test.
- The baby is born lifeless; the mother is also weak.
- Dr. Andrew manages to revive the mother first.
- Uses various methods to resuscitate the baby.
- After a long struggle, the baby breathes.

- Dr. Andrew feels a deep sense of accomplishment.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

“Birth” showcases a deeply emotional and professional journey of a young doctor, Andrew Manson, who saves a newborn from death. The story captures the inner conflict and determination of a medical professional in a crisis. Cronin blends his medical knowledge with literary finesse to create a gripping narrative. The moment of revival is not just a medical achievement but a personal triumph for Andrew. The story celebrates human perseverance, hope, and the sanctity of life. It serves as a powerful reminder of the value of professional ethics and emotional strength.

LITERARY DEVICES / STYLE

The story "Birth" by A.J. Cronin uses several narrative techniques that enhance its emotional and dramatic impact.

1. **Third-Person Limited Point of View:** This style of narration gives us access to Andrew’s inner world, but it stays in third person.
2. **Realism:** The story is written in a realistic style, portraying medical details and human emotions accurately. The setting, a mining town, and the characters like Joe and Susan Morgan are believable and grounded.
3. **Dramatic Tension:** The pace of the story quickens as the delivery becomes complicated, especially when the baby appears stillborn. The suspense of whether the baby will survive keeps the reader engaged.
4. **Symbolism:** The baby’s revival symbolizes hope, renewal, and the triumph of dedication and science over despair. Dr. Manson’s success also symbolizes a turning point in his professional and moral journey.
5. **Dialogue and Action:** The story uses sparse but effective dialogue, allowing actions and thoughts to carry the narrative forward. The detailed description of resuscitation adds intensity and authenticity.
6. **Tone and Style:** Realistic, descriptive, emotionally intense writing style.

EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Extract 1:

“The night air was cool and deep with quiet mystery. Usually so perceptive, Andrew now felt dull and listless. He had no premonition that this night call would prove unusual, still less that it would influence his whole future in Blaenelly.”

1. Where is Dr. Andrew headed in this scene?
Dr. Andrew is headed to attend to Susan Morgan, who is in labour.
2. What does Andrew's lack of premonition suggest about his expectations for the night?
He anticipates a routine medical visit, unaware of the significant events to unfold.
3. Identify the literary device used in “deep with quiet mystery.”
Imagery
4. What does the phrase “influence his whole future in Blaenelly” imply?
The upcoming events will have a profound impact on his career and life in the town.

Extract 2:

“The child was gasping now, deeper and deeper. A bubble of mucus came from one tiny nostril, a joyful iridescent bubble. The limbs were no longer boneless. The head no longer lay back spinelessly. The blanched skin was slowly turning pink.”

1. What medical condition was the newborn suffering from?
Asphyxia pallida

2. What does the phrase “joyful iridescent bubble” signify?
It symbolizes the return of life and hope as the baby begins to breathe.
3. How did Andrew attempt to revive the baby?
By alternating between hot and cold-water baths and performing artificial respiration.
4. What change in the baby's appearance indicated recovery?
The skin turning pink and the baby starting to gasp for air indicated the appearance of baby's recovery.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

Extract 1:

“Susan said not to give her the chloroform if it would harm the baby. She’s awfully set upon the child, Doctor, Bach.”

1. Who is the speaker of this line?
2. What does the line “she’s awfully set upon the child” mean?
3. Why does Andrew still administer chloroform to Susan despite this appeal?
4. How does this extract reflect the theme of the relationship between the mother (or caretaker) and the child in moments of crisis?

Extract 2:

"A desperate sense of defeat pressed on him, a raging hopelessness. He felt the midwife watching him in stark consternation, while there, pressed against the wall where she had all the time remained – her hand pressed to her throat, uttering no sound, her eyes burning upon him – was the old woman."

Questions

1. What emotion is the doctor experiencing in the extract?

- A) Confidence B) Defeat and hopelessness C) Excitement D) Relief

2. How does the old woman react in the extract?

- A) She is speaking loudly B) She is crying
C) She is silently watching the doctor with intense eyes D) She is comforting the doctor

3. What is the significance of the old woman’s silence in the extract?

4. What is the likely role of the midwife in this extract?

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. What is the central theme of Birth by A.J. Cronin?

Ans: The central theme of Birth revolves around the challenges and emotional intensity of childbirth. It explores the tension, fear, and responsibility that medical professionals face while trying to save lives, particularly the life of a newborn child, and the emotional strain it places on both the medical staff and the family involved.

2. How is the doctor's emotional state portrayed in the story?

Ans: The doctor’s emotional state is portrayed as conflicted and filled with despair. Throughout the story, he struggles with feelings of hopelessness and inadequacy as he faces a difficult and potentially life-threatening birth. His intense concentration reflects his desire to overcome the situation, but his fear of failure weighs heavily on him.

3. How does the old woman’s (Susan’s mother) reaction impact the atmosphere of the story?

Ans: The old woman’s reaction, characterized by her intense and silent gaze, adds to the sense of tension and foreboding. Her presence suggests a deep emotional connection to the birth, and her silence may indicate her judgment or anxiety about the doctor’s ability to handle the delivery. She amplifies the gravity of the situation.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Why did Joe Morgan come to Dr. Andrew so late at night?
2. What was Dr. Andrew's emotional state before the delivery?
3. What dilemma did Dr. Andrew face after the delivery?
4. What role does the midwife play in the story?
5. How did Dr. Andrew revive the stillborn baby?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. How does A. J. Cronin present the theme of hope and triumph in 'Birth'?

Ans. In Birth, A.J. Cronin presents the theme of hope and triumph through the emotional and physical journey of Dr. Andrew Manson. The story begins with a sense of despair as Dr. Manson feels the weight of an overwhelming, life-or-death situation. He is confronted by his own limitations and a deep sense of defeat, especially as the delivery seems to be taking a fatal turn. However, Cronin gradually shifts the tone by focusing on the doctor's inner resolve. Despite moments of doubt, Dr. Manson's determination ultimately drives him to take decisive action, symbolizing hope in the face of adversity. The successful birth of the child at the end of the story represents triumph over hopelessness. Cronin uses the doctor's journey from despair to action to highlight the idea that even in the most trying circumstances, hope, perseverance, and human determination can lead to a positive outcome.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. "Birth is not just a story of a baby being born, but a doctor's rebirth too." Discuss.
2. What does the story tell us about the challenges faced by young professionals?
3. Compare the situation in the story to modern medical practices.
4. How does Cronin use suspense and emotion to engage the reader?

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Create a diary entry from Dr. Andrew's perspective after the event.

Saturday, 22 September 20XX

5:00 a.m.

Dear Diary

Tonight, I encountered something that changed me forever. I stood at the edge of hopelessness as I held a stillborn child in my hands and saw the mother unconscious and pale. For a moment, I was gripped by fear and helplessness. But something within me refused to give up. I had to act — not just as a doctor, but as a human being responsible for two precious lives. My training, my instinct, and sheer willpower took over. Artificial respiration, cold and hot water stimulation — I kept going, and then, a miracle! The baby gasped. It cried. It lived! I cannot express the surge of relief, the tears that welled up unbidden. Tonight, I didn't just save a life; I was reborn myself — stronger, surer, and humbler than ever before. I now understand what it truly means to serve life.

Andrew

2. Compare Dr Andrew's situation to Marga Minco's predicament in 'The Address'.

Ans: Dr. Andrew Manson in 'Birth' and the young daughter in Marga Minco's 'The Address' both face deeply personal challenges, though in vastly different contexts. Dr. Andrew confronts a life-and-death medical emergency where his skills, presence of mind, and determination are tested as he struggles to revive a stillborn baby and save the unconscious mother. His crisis is external yet emotionally intense, and through perseverance, he emerges stronger and more confident in his role as a doctor. In contrast, the girl in 'The Address' undergoes an internal, emotional struggle as she returns to a war-torn world, seeking traces of her lost family through familiar objects kept by a woman who had once betrayed her mother's trust. Her predicament is marked by grief, displacement, and a quiet dignity as she ultimately chooses to walk away, letting go of the past to protect her emotional integrity. While Andrew's story highlights professional growth through action, the daughter's journey reflects emotional maturity through silent strength and acceptance. Both characters, however, show that resilience in the face of adversity defines true courage.

COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. What do Dr. Andrew's actions reveal about his values? (Inference-based)
2. Discuss a time you or someone you know did not give up in a crisis. (Real-life correlation)

THE TALE OF MELON CITY

VIKRAM SETH

TITLE

The title '**The Tale of Melon City**' is a satire that mocks the poor governance of a state. It reflects the absurdity of a system where decisions are made arbitrarily and without logic, as the leader's ego overshadows his sense of good judgment. The word '**Tale**' suggests that the story is a fable or allegory, encouraging critical thoughts on the true meaning of governance and justice. Also, it urges the people to seek accountability from their rulers, so that they can come down from their high horse and serve their subjects, rather than rule.

The term '**Melon City**' refers to the bizarre outcome of the city's leadership. Due to a foolish tradition, a melon is chosen as the ruler, which symbolizes how rulers can sometimes be chosen without merit or reason. The citizens, indifferent to who governs them as long as they are left in peace, accept a melon as their king without question, only to realize later that the peace was temporary, and political supervision of a leader is an absolute necessity to maintain peace and justice.

The title, therefore, highlights the theme of **absurdity in politics, blind acceptance of tradition, and the irony of governance** where the ruler is merely a symbolic figure, and the people care more about stability than rational leadership.

Reference to 'after Idries Shah'

Idries Shah wrote 'The Tale of Melon City' as a short story in his book, '*The Caravan of Dreams*'. That story was converted into a poem by Vikram Seth. By referencing "**After Idries Shah**," Vikram Seth acknowledges his inspiration from Shah's tradition of **allegorical storytelling**. Both authors use **wit, absurdity, and irony** to question authority, justice, and human behaviour, making their works timeless and thought-provoking. The poem is similar in style to folklore but written with a satirical quill and ironical twists using couplets which do not break with the end of a line.

POET

Vikram Seth is an acclaimed Indian author, poet, and novelist known for his versatility in writing. Born on June 20, 1952, in Kolkata, India, he studied at Oxford and Stanford. His most famous work, *A Suitable Boy* (1993), is one of the longest English novels ever written. He is also known for *The Golden Gate* (1986), a novel in verse, and *An Equal Music* (1999). Seth's poetry collections, such as *Mappings* and *Beastly Tales*,

showcase his lyrical brilliance. His works often explore themes of love, family and social issues with deep sensitivity and elegant storytelling.

SETTING OF THE POEM

The setting of '**The Tale of Melon City**' is an unnamed city that follows a unique tradition of governance. The city is depicted as a place where justice is carried out in a ridiculous and illogical manner, and the people are indifferent to who rules them as long as they have peace. The question remains as to whether they have peace. Is peace only for the upper class, and not for the poor? If the king does not interfere, then do his ministers get a free hand with exploiting the poverty-stricken?

Though the time period is not specified, the setting has a historical or fable-like feel, with a king, ministers, and traditional customs. The story satirically portrays a system where laws are followed literally, leading to irrational decisions. The city ultimately becomes known as '**Melon City**' when a melon is crowned as its ruler.

FORM OF POETRY

'**The Tale of Melon City**' by Vikram Seth is written in the form of a **narrative poem**. It tells a humorous and satirical story in verse, using a simple and direct style. The poem follows a structured rhyme scheme, making it engaging and easy to read. The use of irony, wit, and satire gives the poem a fable-like quality.

RHYME SCHEME

'**The Tale of Melon City**' by Vikram Seth follows a **rhymed couplet** pattern, meaning it has an **AA BB CC** rhyme scheme throughout the poem.

This means that:

Every two consecutive lines rhyme with each other.

The poem flows rhythmically and musically, making it engaging and easy to read.

The rhyme scheme adds to the satirical and humorous tone of the poem. This structure also aligns with traditional narrative poetry, reinforcing the fable-like quality of the tale.

CHARACTERS

The poem '**The Tale of Melon City**' features several characters, each playing a role in the bizarre sequence of events. The key characters include:

1. **The King** – A foolish, egoistic, and prejudiced ruler who is, ironically, described as 'just and placid'. He is so busy establishing his authority in an unfair manner that he inadvertently sentences himself to death, due to his own irrational judgment.
2. **The Architect** – The person responsible for designing the arch. The only person who belongs to the higher class, and is educated- a combination that alone can bring about the downfall of a tyrannical ruler, which is why tyrannical kings never want the populace to be educated. He initially gets blamed but cleverly shifts the responsibility back to the King.
3. **The Ministers** – Officials who ensure that the law is followed, even when it leads to illogical decisions, such as executing the King. The ministers are minions who are sycophantic in their behaviour towards the king, but in a twist of events, could be held responsible for the king's downfall (death) as well.
4. **The People (Citizens)** – Passive and indifferent, they accept any ruler as long as they live in peace, even when a **melon** is chosen as their King. They remind one of the spineless Roman crowds during the reign of Julius Caesar.
5. **The Wise Man** – An old advisor who suggests that the next ruler should be chosen based on tradition. He is a prime example of the fact that age does not automatically bring wisdom.

6. **The Simpleton** – A foolish passerby who, when asked to decide the next ruler, randomly suggests ‘a melon,’ leading to the city's absurd conclusion.
7. **The Melon** – The final ruler of the city, symbolizing how governance can sometimes be meaningless, yet people accept it without protest, for their temporary happiness.

PLOT CONSTRUCTION/DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS

The poem ‘**The Tale of Melon City**’ by Vikram Seth develops its ideas in a logical yet incongruous sequence, reinforcing its satirical message. The development of ideas follows these key stages:

Introduction of the ‘just and placid’ king

The poem begins by introducing a king who is known for his sense of justice and fairness, yet he never smiles or looks content, which hints at his incapacity as a ruler as well as his sense of insecurity. An insecure ruler needs constant validation of his powers and exercises them in callous ways to establish his authority. Following this line of reasoning, the king orders the construction of an arch to celebrate his rule and edify (educate) his subjects (though there is no reference to his being a connoisseur of art), but when he finds a flaw in it, he demands punishment for those responsible.

Blame Game – a mockery of justice

While the knocking off of the crown was accidental, the king wanted someone to be punished for the act. The blame for the faulty arch kept shifting, from the workmen to the masons to the architect, and the King was bloodthirsty since he was desperate to get someone hanged so that the audience could get entertained as they were waiting to witness a public hanging. One could easily discern the crooked humour that is tantamount to cruelty in the king’s judgement. The King, blindly following justice, agreed that someone must be punished, and in a twist of fate, got himself convicted and eventually hanged.

The King's Execution – Governance in Chaos

The ministers, following tradition, executed the King. This led to the question of who would be the next ruler. A wise man (who was assumed to be wise because of his age) suggested choosing the next King based on an old custom: the first person to pass by the city gates should get to decide the next ruler. The poet used irony to warn his readers against blindly trusting age without wisdom.

Choosing the New Ruler – The Fool’s Choice

A simpleton happened to pass by and, when asked to choose the new ruler, randomly declared that the next King should be ‘a melon.’ The ministers, following the tradition without questioning, crowned a melon their new ruler.

Conclusion – Passive Acceptance

The people of the city, indifferent to who governs them as long as they are left in peace, accept the melon as their King. The city is named ‘**Melon City**’, highlighting the absurdity of blind tradition and passive governance.

MOOD AND TONE

Mood

The mood of the poem is **light-hearted, humorous, and satirical**, despite addressing serious themes like governance and justice. The ludicrousness of events—where a King sentences himself to death and a melon becomes the ruler—creates a sense of amusement. However, there is also an **underlying irony and cynicism**, as the poem subtly critiques blind tradition and the passive acceptance of authority by the citizens.

Tone

The tone is **mocking, ironic, and satirical**. Vikram Seth ridicules the irrational decision-making of the King, the blind obedience of the ministers, and the indifferent attitude of the people. The sarcastic tone highlights the foolishness of governance based on rigid laws and customs rather than logic and reason. The poet maintains a **detached and objective tone**, narrating the events without explicitly passing judgment, allowing the absurdity of the situation to speak for itself.

THEMES

Vikram Seth's poem explores several key themes through satire and irony:

1. **Justice and Governance is a farce**

The King follows justice so literally that he ends up sentencing himself to death. This highlights the irrationality of a system where laws are applied without thought or reason.

2. **Blind Tradition and Bureaucracy**

The ministers and citizens follow customs mindlessly, such as executing the King and selecting a ruler based on an old tradition. This mocks how societies sometimes prioritize rituals over logic.

3. **Indifference of the People**

The citizens do not care who rules them, as long as they are left in peace. This reflects political apathy, where people accept authority without questioning its legitimacy.

4. **Satire on Leadership and Power**

The King is replaced by a melon, yet the city functions as usual. This suggests that a ruler's presence may sometimes be symbolic and leadership can be meaningless if the people do not engage in governance.

5. **Irony and Foolishness in Decision-Making**

The entire story is filled with irony, where decisions lead to illogical consequences. The King's quest for justice results in his execution, and a foolish passerby determines the fate of the city.

Through humour and satire, the poem critiques power, governance, and society's blind acceptance of authority.

SUMMARY

The poem is a **satirical take on governance, justice, and blind tradition**.

A **just but foolish King** orders the construction of an arch to educate his countrymen and establish his authority as a connoisseur of art with refined taste.

While passing under it, his crown gets knocked off his head since the arch was built low.

He finds a flaw in the arch and demands **punishment for the guilty**.

The **blame keeps shifting** – from workmen to masons to the architect, and finally back to the King.

The King, following his own sense of justice, **sentences himself to death**.

Ministers follow an old custom to choose the next ruler.

A **simpleton passerby suggests 'a melon'** as the new ruler.

The ministers obey, and a **melon is crowned as King**.

The citizens, indifferent to who rules them, accept it as long as they have peace.

The city is renamed '**Melon City**', highlighting the **absurdity of governance**.

The poem explores **irrational justice, blind tradition, political apathy, and irony in leadership**.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

- The poem is a satire on the poor governance of society by incompetent rulers who highly estimate themselves without being in touch with reality.
- Vikram Seth uses satire to mock the irrationality of leadership and justice.
- The King blindly follows laws to satisfy his own ego and to establish his authority, leading to **his own execution**, showing how rigid justice can be self-destructive.
- The ministers and citizens accept ridiculous decisions without question, highlighting **bureaucratic inefficiency and political apathy**.
- The story unfolds in a **logical yet absurd manner**, making it both humorous and thought-provoking.
- The King, who wants justice, becomes a victim of his own policies.
- The people end up with a **melon as their ruler**, but they remain indifferent as long as they have peace.
- The selection of a new ruler is based on an **old custom**, showing how **blindly following traditions can lead to irrational outcomes**.
- The ministers don't question the simpleton's choice of a melon, reinforcing the idea that **power can be symbolic and meaningless**.
- The citizens **do not care** about who rules them, as long as they are undisturbed.
- This reflects real-world societies where people often accept **weak or incompetent leadership** as long as their daily lives are unaffected.

Do the followers blindly listen to their king, or are they instrumental in planning his death?

- The king was angry at his crown falling off his head because of the low height of the arch, for which he wanted to punish his subjects without trying to be reasonable.
- He initially wanted to hang the Chief of builders to death, who shifted the blame on his workmen (since it has always been easy to victimize the poor who are not given a voice), who, unfortunately, could only blame the size of the bricks since they belonged to the lowest rung of society. But the bloodthirsty king was not happy about punishing inanimate objects, for which the blame was smartly put on the masons. They sought refuge by shifting the blame on to the architect. The architect represents the middle-class cadre with education who alone could bring down tyrannical rulers. Therefore, he cleverly blamed the king for making amendments to the plan.
- When the king saw red (angry at being in danger), he sought the advice of the wisest man (who was clearly not wise). He was advised to hang the arch.
- It was a minister of the king who suggested that a person and not a 'thing' should be hanged, and continued the blood sport until the king was framed and killed. The question arises as to whether it was an act of foolishness or conspiracy to get rid of the not-so 'just and placid' king.

LITERARY DEVICES

Vikram Seth uses various literary devices to enhance the poem's satirical and humorous effect.

1. Satire

- The poem mocks the **absurdity of justice, blind tradition, and political apathy**.
- Example: The King executes himself in the name of justice, and a **melon is crowned as ruler**, exposing the foolishness of governance.

2. Irony

- **Situational Irony**: The King, who wants justice, **ends up punishing himself**.
- **Dramatic Irony**: The people believe they are ruled by a wise King, but it's actually **a melon**.

3. Symbolism

- **The Melon** → Represents **irrational leadership and passive acceptance**.
- **The Arch** → Symbolizes the **cycle of blame** and flawed justice.
- **The Simpleton** → Stands for **random, thoughtless decision-making** in governance.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. *'The King proclaimed an arch should be
Constructed that triumphally
Would span the major thoroughfare
To edify spectators there.'*

- . Why did the King order the construction of the arch?
- . What was the purpose of making it a symbol of his triumph?
- . How does this decision foreshadow the events that follow?
- . How does the King's action reflect his leadership qualities?

Ans:

- . The king wanted to educate his countrymen on art and prove himself to be an expert on the subject with refined taste that would elevate his stature before his subjects.
- . The arch would immortalize the king's existence and would be a witness to his great leadership. Like Ozymandias, he expected his art to be a reminder of his greatness to posterity. Also, it would establish his authority as someone superior to his subject and because of his refined taste.
- . The arch that was 'built triumphantly' would eventually be the reason for his death. While he wanted people to respect him through his artwork, it would become the cause of a disaster that would change his life forever.
- . The king's actions depict him as a foolish, weak, and irrational ruler, whose blind justice and poor decision-making ultimately turn his city into a satirical reflection of absurd governance.

2. *'Hanged', said the architect, 'O King,
You have forgotten one small thing.*

- . What role does the architect play in the scheme of the poem?
- . What was the small thing that was forgotten by the king?
- . What difference in character is brought out between the king and the architect through this conversation?
- . Explain the irony of the situation.

Ans:

- . The king wanted to hang one of his subjects for his crown falling off his head while he was passing under the arch, owing to its low height. Since the crime for which the countrymen were accused of, was so absurd, the blame was shifted comically from one person to another, ultimately leading to the architect who was blamed for making the plan based on which the arch was built.
- . The king, in his mad rush to display his power, forgot that the plan was amended and finally sanctioned by him. Therefore, if anyone was to blame, it was the king himself.
- . The king was an ambitious ruler who was foolish and whimsical. This further made his obsession with displaying his power more dangerous and resulted in poor decisions that affected his countrymen. The architect, on the other hand, was a shrewd person who could keep his calm in difficult situations, which allowed him to turn the tables on the king and frame him guilty.

- There is situational irony at play here when the king desperately wanted to establish his power by hanging someone for the petty act of a crown accidentally falling off his head. But, because of the architect's presence of mind and wit, he outmaneuvered the king and framed him as guilty of the 'crime'. Therefore, the king was responsible for his own death.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

Extract 1:

*"The architect was summoned, and he said, 'Sir,
The workmen made a slight error
For which I am not responsible at all. '"*

- Who is being addressed as "Sir" in this extract?
- What had happened that led to the summoning of the architect?
- How does the architect defend himself?
- What does this extract reveal about the nature of justice in the poem?

Extract 2:

*"Then the King said, 'I need some counsel.
This is a matter of grave concern.
Let the wisest man in the land be brought
To judge the issue in his learned turn. '"*

- Why did the King feel the need for counsel?
- Who was eventually brought in as the wisest man?
- What unusual decision did the wise man make?
- What does this tell us about the satire used in the poem?

Extract 3:

*"They said, 'His Majesty must be hanged!'
The crown slipped from his royal head,
The ministers walked about in dread
And life in the capital droned on."*

- Why did the people say "His Majesty must be hanged"?
- How did the ministers react to this situation?
- What does the line "life in the capital droned on" suggest?
- How does this ending reflect the poem's central theme?

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

- Why was the arch constructed in the city? What led to the king ordering a hanging?

The arch was constructed in the city because the foolish king believed himself to be an expert on art and took it upon himself to educate the population on art. He further expected to be remembered by his people because of the arch. While crossing under the arch during its inspection, the king was standing on his chariot. The low height of the arch caused his crown to fall off his head. He wanted to punish the population for the insult.

- How does the poem reflect the king's sense of justice?

Though repeatedly called 'just and placid', it is ironic that the king had no sense of justice. Just to satisfy his false ego and pacify the crowd, he ordered a hanging. His purpose was to hang anybody whose height would fit the noose. His foolish yet callous plan backfired when he himself got fit the height and was hanged.

- Why did the people want a 'just and placid' ruler?

The people believed in the policy of laissez-faire or the policy of non-interference. They believed that having a spineless ruler would mean independence to do whatever they wanted. Hence, they elected a ruler who was actually not that 'just'.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. How does the structure of the poem reflect the theme of irony and absurdity?
2. Compare the behaviour of the king with the expectations of an ideal ruler. What does this reveal about the poem's commentary on leadership?
3. Identify and explain the use of satire in the poem. How does it contribute to the poet's message?
4. Do you agree with the people's logic in choosing a melon as their ruler? Justify your opinion using evidence from the poem.
5. Write an alternative ending to the poem where the king decides not to hang himself. How would this change the overall message or tone?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Evaluate the behaviour of the citizens in the poem. Do you think their passive acceptance of a melon as a ruler reflects realism or foolishness? Justify your viewpoint.

Ans: The citizens' behaviour can be interpreted in multiple ways, depending on one's perspective. On the surface, it appears foolish that they accept a melon as their ruler. They do not question the decision, nor do they protest the absurdity of crowning a fruit. From this angle, their behaviour reflects a passive and unthinking populace, more interested in the appearance of tradition and peace than actual governance or leadership.

However, one could also interpret their actions as a form of realistic wisdom. The citizens have likely seen the consequences of interfering with power or questioning authority. By allowing a melon – a silent, passive, and harmless figure – to rule, they ensure that no real political power is exercised, which might prevent further chaos or injustice. The phrase "they are free, and the city is at peace" implies that the absence of an interfering ruler might be better than having an overbearing one.

Therefore, their behaviour is both ironic and insightful. It highlights how people may prefer symbolic leadership and peace over authoritarian control. Vikram Seth leaves the interpretation open-ended, making readers question what true governance should look like.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Rewrite the ending of the poem with a twist: instead of a melon, the fool chooses a child as the ruler. How would this change affect the message of the poem? Write a new ending and explain its implications.
2. Imagine you are a citizen of 'Melon City'. Write a formal letter to a neighbouring kingdom explaining your new ruler and defending your city's traditions.
3. Apply the situation in "*The Tale of Melon City*" to a real-life scenario or modern government system. How can the poem be seen as a metaphor for political absurdities in today's world?

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTION (SOLVED)

1. How does Vikram Seth use satire to critique the concepts of democracy, justice, and popular will at the end of the poem?

Seth uses satire by portraying a system where decisions are made through hollow procedures—such as asking the crowd who should be punished, then letting the "wisest minister" and traditions dictate governance. The final choice of a melon (based on tradition and public symbolism) mocks democratic ideals that are devoid of critical thinking. The poem criticizes how public opinion, when uninformed or ritualistic, can uphold absurd outcomes under the illusion of justice and democracy.

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS (UNSOLVED)

1. Analyze how the poem explores the conflict between individual integrity and systemic absurdity. What does this suggest about citizens' roles in maintaining or challenging flawed systems?
2. Interpret the melon as a political symbol. How does its selection as the ruler reflect the poet's deeper commentary on power, authority, and the nature of rulership?
3. How do the ministers and citizens react when the blame is being assigned? What does this suggest about their sense of responsibility?

POETIC DEVICES/ LITERARY DEVICES / FIGURES OF SPEECH

Techniques or tools that a writer uses to create a specific effect or convey a certain meaning. These devices include elements of language, structure, style, narrative technique, etc.

Poetic Device	Definition	Example from textbook /others
Simile	Comparison of an object, person or anything to something essentially different, using the words ' <u>like</u> ' or ' <u>as</u> '.	1. Then <u>sleek as a lizard</u> (<i>The Laburnum Top</i> - the swift movement of the goldfinch is compared to the glide of a lizard) 2. She was <u>like a winter landscape</u>...(<i>The Portrait of a Lady</i>) 3. We <u>speak like strangers</u>. (<i>Father to Son</i>)
Metaphor	Comparison between two things/people/any object that aren't alike but do have something in common. The words used for comparison are not meant to be taken literally. 'Like /As' should not be used.	1. A <u>machine</u> starts up (<i>The Laburnum Top</i> - indirect comparison between the starting up of a machine and the sudden activity that erupted in the Laburnum tree at the arrival of the goldfinch) 2. It is the <u>engine of her family</u> (<i>The Laburnum Top</i>) 3. I am the <u>Poem of Earth</u> (<i>Voice of the Rain</i>) 4. The seed I spent or sown it where (<i>Father to Son</i> – gardening metaphor – father compared to a gardener and the son compared to the seed)
Refrain	A short part of a song or poem that is repeated, especially at the end of each longer part, or any phrase that is repeated.	1. <u>When did my childhood go?</u> (<i>Childhood</i> - repeated at the end of the first three stanzas) 2. <u>For men may come and men may go, but I go on forever</u> (<i>The Brook</i> by Alfred Lord Tennyson)
Repetition	Repeating a word or phrase multiple times within the lines or stanzas.	1. They talked of <u>love</u> and preached of <u>love</u> (<i>Childhood</i>)

Metonymy	The name of an object is substituted for something closely associated with it.	1. The <u>Chair</u> declared a holiday for students - (represents the principal)
Pun	It is a play on words. It uses a word to create a double meaning.	1. The cat is near the computer to keep an eye on the <u>mouse</u> . (represents both -mouse as the animal and mouse as a computer accessory)
Alliteration	Repetition of the sound in a sequence of nearby words/syllables	1. Tree trembles and thrills. (<i>The Laburnum Top</i>) 2. Its silence silences. (<i>A Photograph</i>) 3. Terribly transient feet (<i>A Photograph</i>) 4. Stood still to smile (<i>A Photograph</i>) 5. Silence surrounds us. (<i>Father to Son</i>)
Hyperbole	The use of exaggeration	1. The thought itself was revolting (<i>The Portrait of a Lady</i> - the idea that the grandmother could ever be a pretty young girl was unacceptable to the narrator, as he had always seen her as an old, wrinkled woman) 2. The bottomless sea. 3. That bag weighs a ton. (The bag is so heavy it feels like a ton)
Synecdoche	A part is used for the whole and the whole for the part.	1. Terribly <u>transient feet</u> (<i>A Photograph</i> – the feet represent the transience of human life) 2. The tickets are Rs 100 <u>per head</u> (head representing the whole person)
Anaphora	A word /phrase used repeatedly at the beginning of two consecutive lines, clauses, sentences or stanzas to add artistic effect.	And all that in them without me were seeds only, latent, unborn; And forever, by day and night, I give back life to my own origin, And make pure and beautify it; (<i>The Voice of the Rain</i>)
Personification	Human traits /qualities are given to non-human things/abstractions	1. The whole tree trembles and thrills (<i>The Laburnum Top</i>) 2. Said the voice of rain (<i>The Voice of the Rain</i>) 3. Anger grows from grief (<i>Father to Son</i>) 4. Silence surrounds us (<i>Father to Son</i>)
Onomatopoeia	The use of a sound word that imitates a sound.	1. Twitching <i>chirrup</i> 2. Of <i>chitterings</i> 3. and <i>trillings</i> 4. Delicate <i>whistle-chirrup</i> whisperings (All examples from <i>The Laburnum Top</i>)
Enjambment	It involves the flow of a thought or sentence from one line to the next without a break, creating a sense of momentum and urgency.	1. The cardboard shows me how it was When the two girl cousins went paddling, (<i>A Photograph</i>) 2. The Laburnum Top is silent, quite still In the afternoon, yellow September sunlight (<i>The Laburnum Top</i>)

Paradox	A statement that seemingly contradicts itself but reveals a deeper truth on close examination.	1. Its silence silences. (<i>A Photograph</i>) 2. I give back life to my own origin (<i>Voice of the Rain</i> - nourishing the one who created)
Oxymoron	Contradictory words are paired together for an impact	1. Laboured ease of loss (<i>A Photograph</i> - the task of coping with loss is a laborious task, which is essential to the process of easing ourselves of the pain) 2. He is <i>regularly irregular</i>.
Symbolism	Symbol is the use of an object, place colour, sound etc., which has a meaning in itself and also represents another thing which has a larger meaning and concept.	1. Sea is a symbol of eternity. 2. Rain is a symbol of the cycle of life and renewal. 3. Childhood is a symbol of innocence and purity.
Contrast	Closely arranged words with strikingly contradictory characteristics.	1. And the sea, which appears to have changed less (<i>A Photograph</i> -The eternity and changeless nature of sea in contrast to the transience of human life) 2. The initially <i>still</i> tree transforms to vibrant tree after the bird's arrival. 3. Innocence of childhood and realisation in adulthood.
Transferred Epithet	Transferring an adjective that is usually associated with a human being to another object or idea.	1. I have had several <u>sleepless nights</u>. (the nights are not sleepless, the speaker is) 2. We had a <u>joyful day</u>. (the people are joyful, not the day)
Allusion	A reference to a person, place, incident in history, literary work, etc., that an author or poet expects the reader to connect and understand.	1. Prodigal son (<i>Father to Son</i> – allusion to The Parable of the Prodigal Son from The Bible)
Sarcasm	It is a bitter form of irony, used to convey an unpleasant idea in a teasing tone.	1. He was a just and placid kind. (<i>The Tale of Melon City</i> – the king is neither just nor placid on close examination of his actions and behaviour)
Irony	A contradiction of expectation. What is said stands in contradiction to what is meant; What is expected stands in contradiction to what actually occurs.	1. They talked of love and preached of love, / But did not act so lovingly (Childhood) 2. Water, water, everywhere, / Nor any drop to drink. (<i>Rime of the Ancient Mariner</i> by S T Coleridge – the seamen are surrounded by sea but do not have drinking water)

Imagery/ Image	Language is used in such a way to create a mental picture or sensory impression in a reader's mind	1. Smiling through their hair (<i>A Photograph</i> -the words create an image of the girls laughing as the breeze carries their hair to their faces)
Antithesis	It uses parallel structures to juxtapose contrasting ideas for emphasis.	1. Altogether changed and yet the same (<i>Voice of the Rain</i>)

SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER 2026-27

CLASS: XI

MAX. MARKS: 80

SUBJECT: ENGLISH CORE (301)

TIME: 3 Hours

General Instructions:

- This Question Paper contains **03** sections - **READING, GRAMMAR & CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS & LITERATURE**
- Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part.

SECTION A – READING SKILLS (26 MARKS)

Q1. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow.

10 marks

1. In today's digital age, technology has become an inseparable part of human life. It is an undeniable fact that the impact of technology on human relationships is profound, but it is a topic that generates both optimism and concern. While many believe that technology connects people in ways that were once unimaginable, others argue that it has led to a gradual erosion of genuine human connections.

2. On the one hand, technology, particularly social media, has allowed people to communicate instantly across great distances. Social networks like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter allow people to share their lives and thoughts in real time, making the world feel smaller and more interconnected. For families spread across countries or friends who have moved far away, technology is a lifeline, allowing them to maintain relationships that would have otherwise faded due to time and distance.

3. However, there is also a darker side to technology's role in relationships. While it is easy to connect with others online, it is increasingly difficult to connect truly with them in meaningful ways. Digital communication often lacks the emotional depth that face-to-face interaction provides. Tone, body language, and subtle facial expressions — all of which are critical to understanding a person's emotions — are lost in a text message or an email. As a result, people may find themselves in relationships that are shallow and disconnected, even though they are constantly "connected" through their phones and computers.

4. Another area of concern is the addictive nature of technology. With the rise of smartphones and social media platforms, people often find themselves spending more time interacting with a device than with the people around them. This shift in attention can lead to isolation, as individuals may choose to engage with their screens rather than the members of their family or friends who are physically present. It is not uncommon to see groups of people sitting together, but each one focused on his/her phone rather than engaging with one another. This phenomenon has been described as "social isolation in a crowd."

5. In light of these concerns, it is important to remember that technology itself is not inherently bad. It is a tool, and like all tools, it can be used in positive or negative ways. The challenge lies in striking a balance between virtual and real-life interactions. Technology should serve as a bridge to strengthen relationships, not as a barrier that prevents us from forming authentic connections. The responsibility lies with us, the

users, to ensure that we use technology in a way that enhances, rather than diminishes, the quality of our relationships.

i. According to the passage, how has technology improved human relationships? (1)

- a) It has led to people spending more time with one another in person.
- b) It has made communication more personal and meaningful
- c) It has made it easier for people to stay connected across long distances
- d) It has reduced the need for human interaction altogether.

ii. What is the "darker side" of technology's impact on relationships mentioned in the passage? (1)

- a) Technology makes people more social and outgoing.
- b) Digital communication often lacks emotional depth, making relationships shallow.
- c) People no longer use social media for communication.
- d) Technology helps people develop deeper, more meaningful relationships.

iii. What does the phrase "social isolation in a crowd" refer to in the passage? (1)

- a) The idea that technology has increased the number of social gatherings people attend.
- b) The tendency to avoid crowds and stay home due to excessive technology use.
- c) The fear of social interaction in public spaces.
- d) The situation where people are physically together but are absorbed in their devices rather than interacting with one another.

iv. In the last paragraph, the author states that "the responsibility lies with us, the users." What does this imply about the role of individuals in using technology? (1)

- a) Individuals have no control over how technology impacts their relationships.
- b) People should be mindful of how they use technology to maintain meaningful relationships.
- c) Technology should be banned to avoid negative effects on relationships.
- d) People should only use technology for work-related purposes.

v. Identify one positive and one negative impact of technology on human relationships, as discussed in the passage. (2)

vi. In the phrase "a bridge to strengthen relationships," what does the word "bridge" metaphorically mean? (1)

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a) A physical structure | b) A connection or link |
| c) A separation or barrier | d) A form of transportation |

vii. Assertion (A): The passage argues that technology is the primary cause of social isolation in modern society.

Reason (R): The author claims that technology, particularly social media and smartphones, leads to people preferring virtual interactions over face-to-face communication, which diminishes the quality of human relationships.

(1)

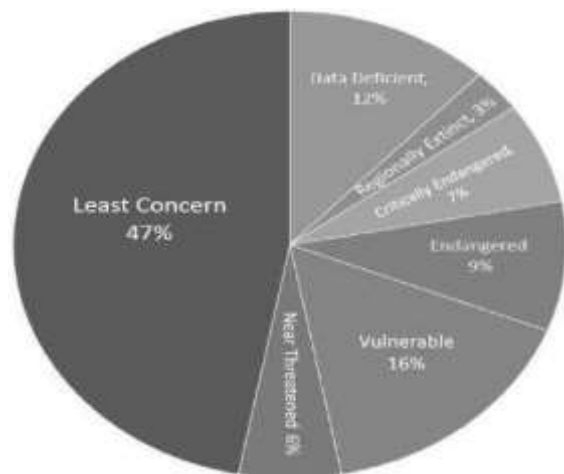
- a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
- c) A is true, but R is false.
- d) A is false, but R is true.

viii. How does the passage differentiate between virtual communication and face-to-face interactions in terms of emotional connection? (2)

Q2. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow.

(8 marks)

1. India ranks third in the list of countries with the largest number of threatened turtle and tortoise species in the world after China and Vietnam, an international report released on Thursday has revealed.
2. The country has two of the world's 25 most threatened freshwater turtle species - Northern River Terrapin (Batagurbaska) found in the Sundarbans, West Bengal and the Red-Crowned Roof Turtle (Batagurkachuga), found only within the riverine National Chambal Gharial Wildlife Sanctuary (NCGWS) in Madhya Pradesh.
3. Another three species - South Asian Narrow-headed Softshell Turtle (Chitra indica) from NCGWS, Black Softshell Turtle (Nilssonina nigricans) from Assam, and the Arakan Forest Turtle (Heosemys depressa) from Mizoram, were identified under the list of top 50 most threatened species globally. This takes the tally in India to 7.4% under the world's 25 most threatened turtle species and 10% of the top 50.



4. Additionally, the study identified the Keeled Box Turtle (Cuora mouhotii), Asian Giant Tortoise (Manouriaemys) in northeast India, and the Leith's Softshell Turtle (Nilssonialeithii) from western India, as three other threatened species outside the top 50, assessed as critically endangered. The details were revealed in the report - Turtles in Trouble: The World's 25+ Most Endangered Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles - in Ojai, California, USA compiled by the Turtle Conservation Coalition, an international body comprising eight conservation groups, including the International Union

for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Turtle Surveillance Alliance (TSA).

5. "Our study found that Asia was facing a crisis with 63% of the top threatened tortoise and turtle species identified from the continent, followed by Africa and Latin America at 14.8% each," Rick Hudson, President and Chief Executive Officer, TSA, that released the study, told HT in a telephonic interview.
6. The study identified 356 tortoise and freshwater turtle species globally, of which, 148 or 60.4% of those species have been included in the IUCN 2017 Red List, and 41.6% of all turtle and tortoise species are officially listed as 'Threatened' by IUCN criteria (categorised as vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered). Of this, all species identified in India are listed either under 'endangered' or 'critically endangered' categories. The Yangtze Giant softshell Turtle from China is the most threatened species worldwide.

(Source: The Hindustan Times)

On the basis of your understanding of the passage, answer the following questions by choosing the most appropriate option:

(8x1=8 marks)

- i. Scientific name for the Red-Crowned Roof Turtle is:**
a. Cuora mouhotii b. Batagurbaska c. Batagurkachuga d. Nilssonialeithii
- ii. Turtle Conservation Coalition, an international body comprises how many conservation groups?**
a. 7 conservation groups b. 8 conservation groups c. 9 conservation groups d. 10 conservation groups
- iii. What is India's count in the percentage of the world's top 50 most threatened turtle species?**
a. 7.4% b. 8% c. 8.4% d. 10%
- iv. What is the function of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)?**
a) protection of turtle species b) conservation of nature
c) conservation of turtle species d) surveillance of turtles

v. Rick Hudson, President and Chief Executive Officer, TSA, who released the study, has said that:

- . Asia was facing a crisis with 63% of the top threatened tortoise
 - . Turtle species identified from the continent are also included under this
 - . African and Latin American species comes at the second place
 - . All of these

vi. Where is the Yangtze Giant Softshell Turtle, the most threatened species worldwide, found?

vii. Which word in the passage means the same as 'involving'? (para 4)

viii. Arrange the given species of turtle which are under threat from least to most from the given pie chart.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Regionally extinct | 2. least concern | 3. endangered | 4. near threatened. |
| a. 1,4,3,2 | b. 3,2,1,4 | c. 2,4,3,1 | d. 4,3,2,1 |

Q3. Read the following passage:

(8 marks)

A wildfire is an uncontrolled fire that burns in the wildland vegetation, often in rural areas. Wildfires can burn in forests, grasslands, savannas, and other ecosystems. They are not limited to a particular continent or environment.

Wildfires can burn in vegetation located both in and above the soil. Ground fires typically ignite in soil thick with organic matter that can feed the flames, like plant roots. Ground fires can smoulder for a long time—even an entire season—until conditions are right for them to grow to a surface or crown fire. Surface fires, on the other hand, burn in dead or dry vegetation that is lying or growing just above the ground. Parched grass or fallen leaves often fuel surface fires. Crown fires burn in the leaves and canopies of trees and shrubs.

Some regions, like the mixed conifer forests of California's Sierra Nevada Mountain range, can be affected by different types of wildfires. Sierra Nevada forest fires often include both crown and surface spots.

Wildfires can start with a natural occurrence—such as a lightning strike—or a human-made spark. However, it is often the weather conditions that determine how much a wildfire grows. Wind, high temperatures, and little rainfall can all leave trees, shrubs, fallen leaves, and limbs dried out and primed to fuel a fire. Topography plays a big part too: flames burn uphill faster than they burn downhill.

Still, wildfires are essential to the continued survival of some plant species. For example, some tree cones need to be heated before they open and release their seeds; chaparral plants, which include manzanita, chamise (*Adenostomafasciculatum*), and scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*), require fire before seeds will germinate.

Wildfires also help keep ecosystems healthy. They can kill insects and diseases that harm trees. By clearing scrub and underbrush, fires can make way for new grasses, herbs, and shrubs that provide food and habitat for animals and birds. At a low intensity, flames can clean up debris and underbrush on the forest floor, add nutrients to the soil, and open up space to let sunlight through to the ground. That sunlight can nourish smaller plants and give larger trees room to grow and flourish.

While many plants and animals need and benefit from wildfires, climate change has left some ecosystems more susceptible to flames, especially in the southwest United States. Warmer temperatures have intensified drought and dried out forests. The historic practice of putting out all fires has also caused an unnatural buildup of shrubs and debris, which can fuel larger and more intense blazes.

- a) On the basis of your understanding of the above passage, make notes on it using headings and subheadings. Use recognizable abbreviations (wherever necessary, a minimum of four) and a format you consider suitable. Also, supply an appropriate title to it. (5)
- b) Based on your notes, write a summary of the above passage in about 50 words. (3)

SECTION: B GRAMMAR AND CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (23 MARKS)

GRAMMAR (7 MARKS)

Q4. Choose the most appropriate option from the ones given below to complete the following passage.
Answer **any 04** out of the following. (4x1=4 marks)

Always read the metre dials (i)..... the right to the left. This procedure is much easier, especially (ii) any of (iii) dial lands that are near the zero marks. If the meter (iv).....two dials, and one is smaller (v)..... the other, then it is not imperative to read the smaller dial because it only registers a small amount.

- | | | | |
|------------|----------|---------|--------------|
| • (a) from | (b) for | (c) on | (d) in |
| • (a) as | (b) if | (c) for | (d) because |
| • (a) a | (b) an | (c) the | (d) any |
| • (a) have | (b) has | (c) are | (d) has been |
| • (a) on | (b) than | (c) to | (d) off |

Q5. Rearrange the following words into meaningful sentences. Attempt any 03 out of the following. (3x1=3 marks)

- our school/as/selected /have been/i/the Head Boy/of/
- given/the responsibility/was/organizing/of/ the children's day/i/program
- we/committee/formed/a / plan/to/the program
- last two/to/decided/we/a special assembly/conduct/the/during/periods

CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (16 MARKS)

Q6. Attempt ANY ONE of two in 50 words. (1x3=3 Marks)

A. You are Sonam, a graduate in history with specialization in tourism of India. You are well acquainted with places of historical interest in Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. You are looking for the job of a tourist guide. Draft a **suitable advertisement** in the situation wanted column of a newspaper in not more than 50 words. Give relevant details.

OR

B. You are Head of a reputed coaching institute who is seeking a tutor for the institute to teach IIT-JEE/NEET aspirants. Draft an **advertisement** in not more than 50 words, inviting the applications from the interested candidates for the post vacant.

Q7. Attempt ANY ONE of two in 50 words. (1x3=3 Marks)

A. During autumn break, Bharati Management Institute, Surat is organizing a workshop on "Financial Literacy and Skills" to teach skills of money handling, banking, security etc., for college students. Prepare a **poster** to be put up on the notice board of the institute to invite students for the event in 50 words.

OR

B. You are Shreya/Shekhar working for an NGO dealing with homeless elders and old people. Prepare a **poster** to be displayed in the different parts of the city in not more than 50 words to spread the message to take care of these old age persons, as they are an integral part of our society.

Q8. Attempt **ANY ONE** of two in **120-150 words**.

(1x5=5 Marks)

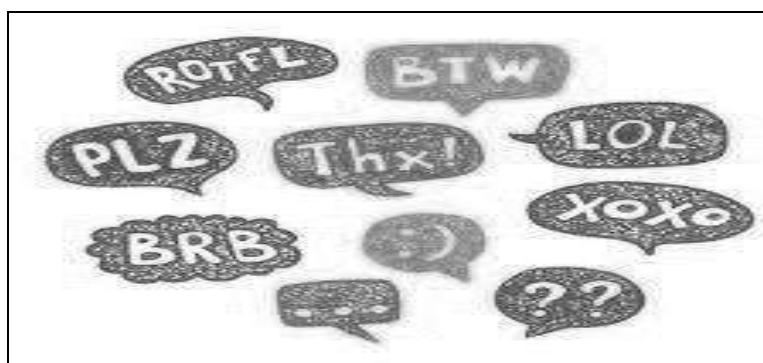
A. A study conducted by Edu Health Research reveals that many school going students are victims of bullying. Bullying leads to stress and low confidence in the children. Being a student counsellor, you decide to motivate school children to fight against bullying by giving a speech on the topic, “**Zero-tolerance for bullying in schools.**” Draft your **speech** in not more than 120-150 words.

You can include points like:

- Inform parents, teachers about such incidents
- Punishment for bullying: zero tolerance
- Teaching students to respect each other etc.,

OR

B. After realizing the dangerous intrusion of SMS/WhatsApp language into the English language you decide to deliver a speech on the topic, **The Intrusion of SMS/WhatsApp language in English.** As Deepak/Deepika, a language enthusiast, draft a **speech** in not more than 120-150 words to highlight the issue.



Q9. Attempt **ANY ONE** of two in **120-150 words**.

(1x5=5 Marks)

A. The term “Brain Rot” gained recent popularity, especially online, as a slang term to describe the mental state of being overly consumed by certain media, activities, and content. The Literary club of your school has taken up this topic to conduct a debate. You, as Ajay/Ankita, a student of class XI, would like to participate in the **debate** competition. Draft a debate either for or against the motion, ‘**Excessive Social Media Bingeing Leads to Brain Rot.**’

OR

B. You are Naman/Namita participating in the Interschool Debate Competition. The topic given to you is “**Artificial Intelligence: A Threat to Human Jobs.**” Prepare a **debate** including arguments either for or against the motion. *You may include arguments such as:*

For the Motion	Against the Motion
• Replacing human workers	• Job creation in many fields
• Low skilled labours in danger	• Improved efficiency
• killing creativity	• boom in e-commerce

SECTION-C LITERATURE & SUPPLEMENTARY READING TEXT (31 MARKS)

Q10. Read the following extracts and answer ANY ONE out of two:

(3x1=3 marks)

- . Rather than see him make and move**
*His world. I would forgive him too,
Shaping from sorrow a new love.
Father and son, we both must live
On the same globe and the same land*
- . Why was the father ready to forgive him?**
a) to let go of all the sorrows he had inside b) to become a better person
c) to teach his son a lesson d) to help his son
- ii. Which of the following has the same literary device as in, “beautiful world blooms.”**
a) father and son b) rather than see c) a new love d) make and move
- iii. On which condition and hope, the father is ready to forgive the son?**

OR

**B. “Then with eerie delicate whistle-chirrup whisperings
She launches away, towards the infinite and
the laburnum subsides to empty.”**

i) Which word is the antonym of ‘shout’?

- a) eerie b) whisperings c) subsides d) delicate

ii) ‘whistle-chirrup whispering’ has following literary devices:

1. Alliteration 2) Oxymoron 3) Synecdoche 4) Onomatopoeia
a) 1&4 b) 1&3 c) 2&4 d) 1&2

iii) Why does ‘she’ launch away?

Q11. Read the following extracts and answer ANY ONE out of two:

(3x1=3 marks)

A. “After finding a hammer, screws and canvas, I struggled back on the deck. With the starboard side bashed open, we were taking water with each wave that broke over us. If I couldn't make some repairs, we would surely sink. Somehow, I managed to stretch canvas and secure waterproof hatch covers across the gaping holes”.

- . The statement “we were taking water with each wave” refers to:**
a) they were choked by the water b) they were drawing water from the sea
c) the Wavewalker was flooded with water with each wave d) they were about to sink
- ii. What repair work was done by him?**
- ii. ‘Gaping holes on the deck’ refers to.**

OR

B. “Don’t smile smugly. In case you think that it was just my mind playing tricks and my imagination running amok, look at this.” And, triumphantly, Professor Gaitonde produced his vital piece of evidence: a page torn out of a book. Rajendra read the text on the printed page and his face underwent a change. Gone was the smile and in its place came a grave expression. He was visibly moved. Gangadhar pant pressed home his advantage.

i) Which of the following emoticons resemble the word ‘smugly’?

- a) b) c) d)



ii) The 'vital evidence' was from which book:

- a) Dadasahebanchi Bakhar
- b) Madhavraoanchi Bakhar
- c) Bausahebanchi Bakhar
- d) Vishwasraoanchi Bakhar

iii) Rajendra Deshpande's face underwent a change because _____.

Q12. Read the following extract and answer ANY ONE out of two: (4x1=4 marks)

*'O King, it was the workmen's fault'
'Oh!' said the King, and called a halt
To the proceedings. Being just
(And placid now) he said, 'I must
Have all the workmen hanged instead.'
The workmen looked surprised, and said,
'O King, you do not realize
The bricks were made of the wrong size.'
'Summon the masons!' said the King.
The masons stood there quivering.
'It was the architect...', they said,
The architect was summoned.*

i) What does the word 'quivering' mean?

- a) The act of vibrating due to fear
- b) The act of vibrating due to cold
- c) The act of vibrating due to lack of confidence
- d) The act of vibrating due to sudden love

ii) To whom did the masons pass the blame?

- a) Workmen
- b) Architect
- c) Chief of Builders
- d) Themselves

iii) What does the word 'proceedings' refer to in the above extract?

iv) What was the consequence of the wrong size of the brick?

- a) The thoroughfare was blocked.
- b) The arch was slanting
- c) The king's crown was broken
- d) The arch was too low

OR

B. "And what should I have done with them in a small rented room where the shreds of black-out paper still hung along the windows and no more than a handful of cutleries fitted in the narrow table drawer? I resolved to forget the address. Of all the things I had to forget, that would be the easiest."

i) The word 'them' stands for

- a. Friends
- b. shred of black-out paper
- c. feelings
- d. the belongings

ii) Assertion (A): The narrator decides to forget the address because she realizes the past is beyond retrieval.

Reason (R): Her encounter with the woman and the things at the address makes her understand that the things she once valued no longer have emotional significance for her.

- 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

iii) Find a word from the extract opposite to 'abundance'

iv) What is the significance of the "shreds of black-out paper" still hanging along the windows in the narrator's room?

- a) They symbolize the lasting effects of war and the narrator's inability to fully move on from the past.
- b) They represent the narrator's desire to remember the past and keep it alive.

c) They indicate that the narrator's new home is still in disrepair.

d) They are a symbol of the narrator's hope to restore the world to how it was before the war.

Q13. Answer any TWO of the following questions in about 40 -50 words. (3x2=6 marks)

- What thought was almost 'revolting' for the grandson about his grandmother?
- Why did the poet call the rain 'impalpable' in the poem '**The Voice of the Rain**'?
- Explain why Ray Johnson referred to Akhenaten's reign as "a horrific time."
- In the poem, **Childhood**, what, according to Markus Natten, could not be found in geography?

Q14. Answer any ONE of the following questions in 40-50 words. (3x1=3 marks)

- Describe the ride of Aram and Mourad when they went out together for the first time.
- Mrs. Fitzgerald put up a great show in the role of Mrs. Pearson. But what were the two slips that could have led her identity out?

Q15. Answer any ONE of the following questions in 120-150 words. (1x6=6 marks)

- Both chapters, '**The Portrait of a Lady**' and '**A Photograph**', explore the theme of recollections of memories of their loved ones. With reference to these chapters, describe the commonality between the main idea, characters and role of a woman in a family.
- Imagine yourself as Norbu from the chapter, **Silk Road**. You come to your room and decide to pen down your feelings in your diary about meeting a fellow pilgrim, Nick Middleton, at the Darchen café.

You may begin like this:

Dear Diary

Today at a café, I was fortunate to meet a companion to do Kora.....

Q16. Answer any ONE of the following questions in 120-150 words. (1x6=6 marks)

- Susan's mother witnessed how Andrew Manson, with his quick decision, revived both her daughter and the stillborn grandson. Imagine for the naming ceremony of the baby, she gives a brief 'Thank You' speech in honour of the young doctor. Draft a speech in not more than 120-150 words with reference to the chapter, Birth by A. J. Cronin. **You may begin like this:**

A warm welcome to all who have gathered here for my grandson's naming ceremony.

On this day, I would like to tell you all how Dr Andrew saved my precious grandson.....

- B.** "Honesty is the foundation for trust." In the light of this quote, elucidate how the Armenian cousins of '**The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse**' and Mrs. Dorling from the chapter, '**The Address**' breach the trust and turn out to be disloyal towards their friends and loved ones.

MARKING SCHEME

CLASS: XI

MAX. MARKS: 80

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

TIME: 3 hours

Section A – Reading Skills (26 Marks)

Ans 1. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow. (10 marks)

- c) It has made it easier for people to stay connected across long distances.
- b) Digital communication often lacks emotional depth, making relationships shallow.
- d) The situation where people are physically together but are absorbed in their devices rather than interacting with each other.
- b) People should be mindful of how they use technology to maintain meaningful relationships.

- **Any relevant point: positive Impact of Technology:** Technology allows people to stay connected across long distances, helping maintain relationships between family members and friends who are far away. Social networks like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter enable real-time sharing of lives and thoughts, making the world feel smaller and more interconnected.

Negative Impact of Technology: Technology, especially digital communication, can lead to shallow relationships. Since digital communication lacks emotional depth—such as tone, body language, and facial expressions—it may result in relationships that are disconnected and less meaningful, despite constant online interaction.

- vi. b) A connection or link
- vi. d) A is false, but R is true.

The **assertion (A)** is false because the passage doesn't claim that technology is the *primary* cause of social isolation, but rather discusses how it *contributes* to it. The **reason (R)** is true, as the passage does mention how the preference for virtual interactions over face-to-face communication can affect the depth and quality of relationships. Hence, the reason is true, but it doesn't directly support the false assertion.

viii. The passage differentiates between virtual communication and face-to-face interactions by highlighting that digital communication often lacks emotional depth. In face-to-face interactions, crucial elements like tone, body language, and subtle facial expressions help convey emotions and create a deeper understanding of the other person's feelings. In contrast, these emotional cues are often lost in virtual communication, such as text messages or emails, making the connections shallow and less meaningful.

Ans2. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow. (8 marks)

- c) BatagurKachua
- b) 8 conservation groups
- d) 10%
- b) conservation of nature
- d) all of these
- vi. China
- vi. comprising
- vi. a)1,4,3,2

Ans3. Note Making and Summarization based on the given passage.

a. Note Making: (5 Marks)

- Title: 1
- Numbering and indenting: 1
- Key/glossary: 1
- Notes: 2

b. Summary (up to 50 words): (3 Marks)

- Content: 2
- Expression: 1

SECTION: B GRAMMAR AND CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (23 marks)

GRAMMAR (7 marks)

Ans 4. ANSWER ANY 04

- (i) (a) from
- (ii) (b) if
- (iii) (c) the
- (iv) (b) has
- (v) (b) than

Ans 5: ANSWER ANY 03

- a) I have been selected as the Head Boy of our school.
- b) I was given the responsibility of organizing the children's day program.
- c) We formed a committee to plan the program.
- d) We decided to conduct a special assembly during the last two periods.

CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (16 marks)

Ans 6.A or B Classified Advertisements, up to 50 words. One out of the two given questions to be answered (3 Marks). Students give relevant details using the cues in the question. A box to be drawn and a suitable title must be given.

(3 marks: Format: 1; Content: 1 /; Expression: 1)

Ans 7.A or B: Poster up to 50 words. One out of the two given questions is to be answered. Students give the relevant details using the cues in the question. A box to be drawn, a suitable title with an illustration is given.

(3 marks: Format: 1; Content: 1; Expression: 1)

Ans 8.A or B: Speech in 120-150 words based on verbal/visual cues related to the topic. One out of the two given questions is to be answered.

(5 Marks: Format: 1 / Content: 2 / Expression: 2)

Topic, 3 -4 paragraphs, Greetings and thank you must be included.

Ans 9.A or B: Debate based on visual/verbal inputs in 120-150 words, thematically related to the issue. One out of the two given questions is to be answered.

(5 Marks: Format: 1 / Content: 2 / Expression: 2)

Topic, for /against the motion, Greetings, and argumentative points/ phrases to be included.

SECTION-C LITERATURE & SUPPLEMENTARY READING TEXT (31 MARKS)

Ans 10: Read the following extracts and answer ANY ONE out of two: (3x1=3 marks)

A.

- i) a) to let go of all the sorrows he had inside
- ii) d) make and move
- iii) that he stays with his father, they stay together or any similar point.

B.

- i) b) whisperings
- ii) a) 1&4
- iii) She flies away to search for food for her young ones, or to carry on with her duty to look after her family. (similar relevant points)

11A.

- i) c) the Wavewalker was flooded with water with each wave
- ii) He stretched canvas and secured waterproof hatch covers across the holes.
- iii) large and big holes / the damage on the boat.

B.

- i) **-b-** smugly: means in a way to show too much satisfaction/confidence.
- ii) c) Bausahebanchi Bakhar
- iii) Deshpande's face changed as he was puzzled after seeing the Bakhar page, an unexpected and unbelievable piece of evidence shown by Gaitonde.

Ans12. A

- i) a) The act of vibrating due to fear
- ii) b) Architect
- iii) The proceedings here refer to the hanging of workmen.
- iv) d) the arch was too low.

B. i) d) to belongings

- ii) a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- iii) handful
- iv) a) They symbolize the lasting effects of war and the narrator's inability to fully move on from the past.

Ans 13. Answer any TWO of the following questions in about 40 -50 words. (3x2=6 marks)

Students may give similar /suitable points for the following questions:

a) The narrator/grandson had known his grandmother for 20 long years, and for him, she had always been very old and wrinkled. When people say that she was a pretty lady and even had a husband, that thought was almost revolting

b) The rain describes itself as 'impalpable' that means 'something that is not able to be perceived by the senses (especially touch). This is because the entire process of water evaporating from the seas and oceans, rising of the water above the sky, taking the form of clouds, and then falling as rain remains unsensed, unfelt and untouched by humans.

They are not able to see or touch this transformation of rain in different states despite the original content remaining the same. Thus, it is impalpable.

c) The new pharaoh promoted the worship of the Aten, the sun disk, changed his name to Akhenaten, or 'servant of the Aten,' and moved the religious capital from the old city of Thebes to the new city of Akhetaten, known now as Amarna. He further shocked the country by attacking Amun, a major god, smashing his images and closing his temples

d) 'Hell and Heaven' stands for imaginary things, a matter of belief, and they do not exist. They *could not be found in geography or on the map*. After attaining maturity, he realised they are imaginary places that actually do not exist in this world and the terms used by adults.

Ans 14. a) Aram and Mourad's first ride on the stolen white horse was filled with excitement and guilt. Mourad, confident and daring, leads the ride through the countryside, while Aram, though nervous, follows, fascinated by the horse but aware that it's not theirs. The experience is a mix of adventure and moral conflict.

b) Mrs. Fitzgerald in her nervousness, addresses Mr. Pearson as George. Mr. Pearson is surprised to be called thus but Mrs. Pearson covers up. Later, when Mrs. Fitzgerald attempts to slap George, following an argument, the real Mrs. Pearson exclaims and calls out Mrs. Fitzgerald.

Ans 15. Answer any ONE of the following questions in 120-150 words.

(1x6=6 marks)

A. In "*The Portrait of a Lady*", the narrator reflects on his grandmother's life and the memories of their time together after her death.

In "*A Photograph*", the speaker looks at a photograph of her mother from her childhood, and this image sparks a deep sense of nostalgia and longing.

The relationship with the grandmother changes, and her passing marks a transition in the narrator's life. The photograph, which once captured a moment of happiness, becomes a poignant reminder of time's fleeting nature.

Both are deeply concerned with the **inevitable passage of time**, the **loss** of loved ones, and how **memories** shape our emotional landscapes.

B. The answer is written in a Diary Entry form. Following similar points could be included as per the incidents of the chapter:

- Found a traveller named Nick Middleton.
- He was waiting for a fellow pilgrim to do Kora.
- As I am doing research on Kora, he considered me the best person to go with him.
- We planned our Kora, didn't have enough equipment, my weight was a concern, thought of riding on a yak etc.

Ans 16. Answer any ONE of the following questions in 120-150 words. (1x6=6 marks)

A. A warm welcome to all, who have gathered here for my grandson's naming ceremony. On this day, I would like to tell you all, how Dr. Andrew saved my precious grandson who was delivered stillborn. Andrew, being a young doctor, showed great courage and did not give up. It was a difficult case, still born baby, understood baby was asphyxiated; rubbed him with towel, thumped his chest, but to no avail; I immersed the baby alternately in hot and warm water. Saved Susan by giving an injection, saved both mother and child.

B. Both cases highlight how dishonesty leads to a breakdown in trust. The Armenian cousins, by participating in the theft and deception, and Mrs. Dorling, by failing to honour her promise to protect the narrator's belongings, show how fragile trust is when not based on honesty. Their actions turn out to be acts of disloyalty, leaving the characters they've wronged hurt and disappointed.

In conclusion, honesty is indeed the foundation for trust, and when it is compromised, as seen in these two stories, it leads to betrayal and disloyalty. The characters in both narratives breach the trust of those closest to them, revealing how dishonesty can damage relationships and cause emotional harm.

SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER FOR PRACTICE

ENGLISH CORE (301)

CLASS XI

Time: 3 hours

Maximum Marks: 80

SECTION A- 26 MARKS: READING SKILLS

1. Read the following passage carefully: 1x10=10

The Impact of Social Media on Communication

I. In recent years, social media has become an essential part of daily life for millions of people around the world. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp allow users to communicate with friends, family, and colleagues in real-time, regardless of their geographical location. Social media has made

communication faster, more efficient, and more accessible. However, as social media use continues to grow, there are significant concerns about its impact on face-to-face communication and the quality of relationships.

II. One of the most notable effects of social media is the way it has changed how people interact with one another. While it has certainly made it easier to stay in touch, it has also led to a decrease in face-to-face communication. Many people now prefer sending a text message or a quick social media update instead of having a real conversation. This shift has led to a decline in the depth of interactions, with many people opting for short, surface-level exchanges rather than engaging in meaningful, in-person conversations.

III. Moreover, social media often presents a curated version of reality. People tend to share only the positive aspects of their lives, which can create unrealistic expectations and comparisons. This has contributed to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety, particularly among teenagers and young adults. The constant pressure to maintain a perfect online image can take a toll on mental health, leading to stress and self-esteem issues.

IV. Despite these drawbacks, social media also has its advantages. It allows people to connect with others who share similar interests or experiences, forming communities and networks that may not have been possible otherwise. It provides a platform for marginalized voices and has played a crucial role in raising awareness about social issues. Social media can be a powerful tool for education, activism, and global communication when used responsibly.

V. In conclusion, while social media has revolutionized communication in many ways, it is important to strike a balance between online and offline interactions. The key is to use social media in a way that enhances, rather than diminishes, personal connections and mental well-being.

Based on your understanding of the above passage, answer the questions given below by choosing the correct option from the ones given:

i. What is the meaning of the word ‘curated’ as used in the passage?

- a) Natural
- b) Carefully selected or organized
- c) Disorganized
- d) Randomly created

ii. According to the passage, what is one negative consequence of social media’s influence on communication?

- a) Increased face-to-face interactions
- b) Superficial and shallow conversations
- c) Better understanding of social issues
- d) Stronger personal connections

iii. What is the main reason social media contributes to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety, according to the passage?

- a) People post only positive aspects of their lives, creating unrealistic expectations
- b) Social media platforms encourage healthy living and fitness
- c) People spend too much time communicating in person
- d) Social media limits the ability to share content with others

iv. What can be inferred about the author’s view on social media?

- a) The author believes social media is entirely harmful.
- b) The author believes social media is only beneficial.
- c) The author believes social media has both positive and negative effects.
- d) The author believes social media should be banned entirely.

v. What is the purpose of the passage?

- a) To explain the negative effects of social media on communication
- b) To encourage people to stop using social media
- c) To explain the benefits and drawbacks of social media on communication
- d) To discuss the evolution of social media platforms

vi. Which of the following best summarizes the passage?

- a) Social media has revolutionized communication and should be used more.
- b) Social media has both positive and negative effects on communication and relationships.
- c) Social media only has negative effects on communication.
- d) Social media has no impact on communication.

vii. According to the passage, why is face-to-face communication becoming less common?

- a) People find face-to-face interactions more convenient.
- b) Social media allows for easier and quicker communication.
- c) People prefer in-person conversations over texting.
- d) Face-to-face communication is seen as outdated and unnecessary.

viii. Based on the passage, how can people use social media in a more responsible way?

- a) By focusing only on the positives in their lives and avoiding negativity.
- b) By maintaining a balance between online interactions and real-life conversations.
- c) By ignoring social media altogether.
- d) By sharing every detail of their personal lives to create transparency.

ix) Which statement summarizes the author's opinion on social media's role in relationships?

- a) Social media has completely replaced real-life relationships.
- b) Social media can be beneficial if used responsibly, but it must not replace in-person interactions.
- c) Social media is harmful and should be abandoned.
- d) Social media always enhances personal relationships.

x) What might happen if people continue to rely on social media for communication without balancing it with face-to-face interactions?

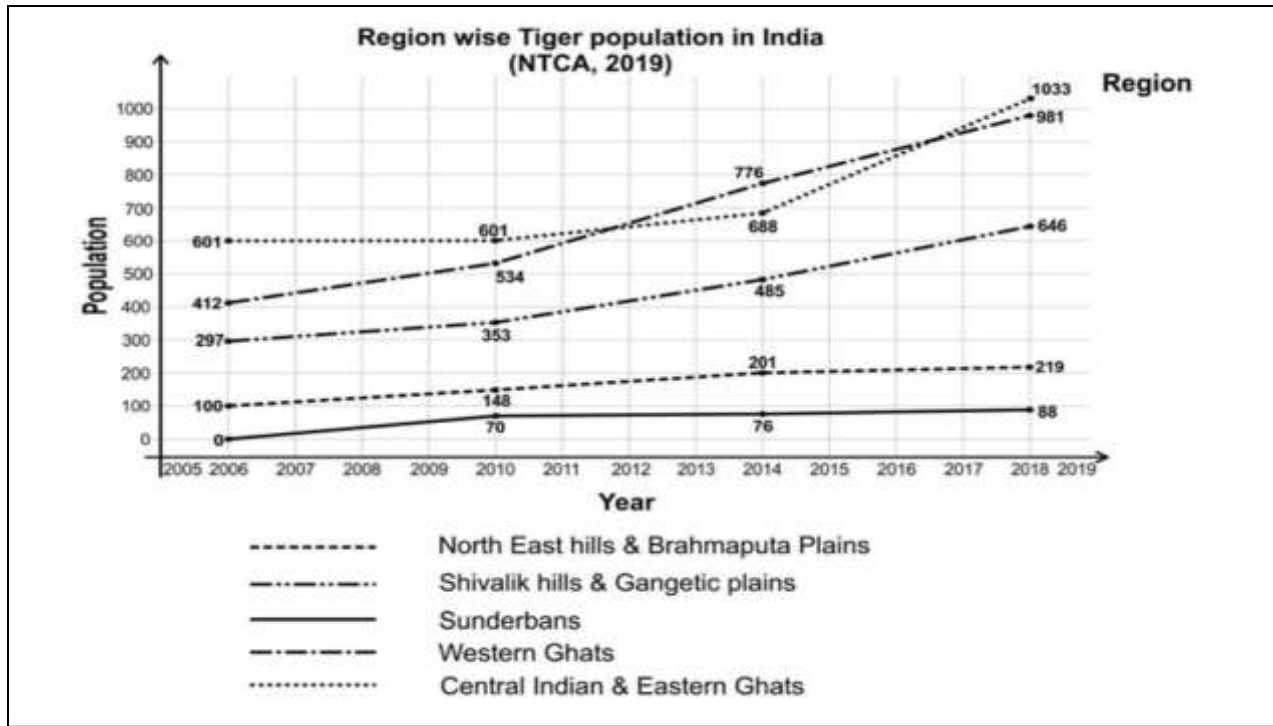
- a) Relationships will become more meaningful and personal.
- b) Social issues will be resolved more easily.
- c) Mental health issues such as anxiety and loneliness could increase.
- d) People will engage in deeper, more thoughtful conversations.

2. Read the following passage carefully: 1x8=8

An Increase in the Tiger population in India

- . The fourth quadrennial report on the status of tigers released by the Government of India revealed that the number of tigers in India increased by 74% between 2010 and 2018, and by more than 33% between 2014 and 2018.
- . Certain methodological changes, along with tiger conservation programmes, have contributed to the increase. The tiger population has been estimated in three phases, wherein phase three made extensive use of camera traps. The 2018 data has been lauded since 83% of the tiger population was individually camera-trapped. Additionally, in this data, all tigers above the age of one have been included, while in all the previous surveys (in 2010 and 2006), only tigers above 1.5 years of age were included.
- . The estimate of the tiger population may not be accurate owing to the limitations in counting the highly secretive carnivore. Hence, the survey provided not a specific number but the range of tiger numbers, i.e., between 2,603 and 3,346. This data has a possible error of 14%. Currently, India is home to 75% of the global tiger population.
- . To estimate the tiger population pragmatically (since tigers keep moving within forests and are not restricted to any one state), India's states have been classified into five different regions: Shivalik Hills and Gangetic plains, North East Hills and Brahmaputra Plains, Sundarbans, Central India and

Eastern Ghats, and Western Ghats. The graph shows the region-wise distribution of India's tiger population.



Based on your reading of the passage, answer ANY EIGHT of the following questions by choosing the best of the given options:

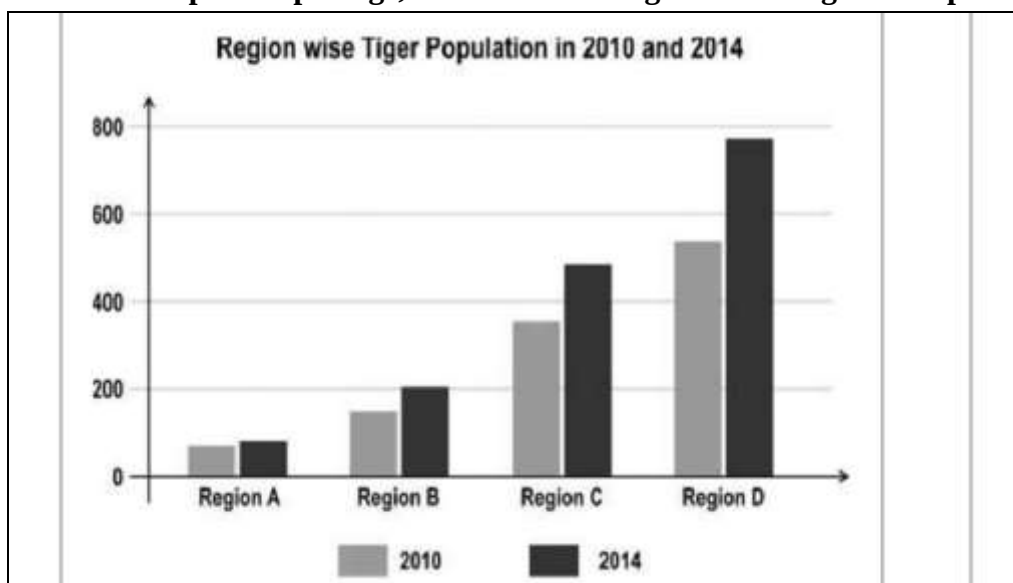
i) Which of these is the meaning of the word 'lauded' in paragraph 2?

- a) praised
- b) replaced
- c) controlled
- d) completed

ii) Why is it a challenge to accurately estimate the total number of tigers present?

- a) People who are skilled at estimating without errors are few.
- b) Tigers are difficult to spot since they are good at hiding.
- c) Tigers are dangerous since they are prone to attacking humans.
- d) People find it difficult to keep up with the fast-growing number of tigers.

iii) The graph given below represents the status of the tiger population of four different regions in India in 2010 and 2014. As per the passage, which of these regions does region A represent?



- a) Sundarbans
- b) Western Ghats
- c) Shivalik Hills and Gangetic Plains
- d) North East Hills and Brahmaputra Plains

iv) Which of these factors contributed to the increase in the number of tigers in the fourth quadrennial report?

- (i) programmes designed to protect tigers
 - (ii) a change in the category of tigers considered
 - (iii) an improved methodological design to spot tigers
 - (iv) a change in the total number of tigers above the age of one
- a) only (i) and (iii) b) only (iii) and (iv) c) only (i), (ii) and (iii) d) only (ii), (iii) and (iv)

v) Based on the graph given, which of these regions showed a trend different from the other regions between 2006 and 2010?

- a) Sundarbans
- b) Central India and Eastern Ghats
- c) Shivalik Hills and Gangetic Plains
- d) North East Hills and Brahmaputra Plains

vi) Which of these does the phrase ‘wildlife trafficking’ in paragraph 5 refer to?

- a) organized relocation of endangered wildlife to their natural habitats
- b) illegal gathering, transportation and distribution of protected wildlife
- c) continuous tracking of wildlife using modern monitoring technologies
- d) excessive crowding of wildlife in a particular area due to mismanagement

vii) Based on the graph given, which of these regions has shown a 50% increase in tiger population between 2014 and 2018?

- a) Western Ghats
- b) Central India and Eastern Ghats
- c) Shivalik Hills and Gangetic Plains
- d) North East Hills and Brahmaputra Plains

viii). Which of these is true about the trend of the tiger population in the Shivalik plains and the Gangetic plains?

- a) The tiger population has more than doubled between 2006 and 2018.
- b) The tiger population has shown a sharp increase between 2006 and 2010.
- c) The tiger population had dropped between 2010 and 2014 and showed a Sharp increase between 2010 and 2018.
- d) The tiger population had increased between 2006 and 2010 and remained steady between 2010 and 2014.

ix. Based on the graph given, which of these regions showed the lowest growth rate of the tiger population between 2014 and 2018?

- a) Western Ghats
- b) Shivalik hills and Gangetic Plains
- c) Central Indian and Eastern Ghats
- d) North East Hills and Brahmaputra Plains

2. Read the following passage carefully:

5+3=8 M

The concept of globalization has significantly impacted economies, societies, and cultures worldwide. It refers to the growing interconnectedness and interdependence of countries, driven primarily by advancements in technology, trade, and communication. One of the major aspects of globalization is the free movement of goods, services, and capital across borders, which has led to the expansion of international trade. This has benefited many economies, especially developing nations, by providing access to global markets and fostering economic growth.

Globalization has also had a profound impact on culture. Through the exchange of ideas, people can experience different cultures, lifestyles, and traditions. However, this cultural exchange has raised concerns about the erosion of traditional cultures and values. While some people embrace the opportunities for cultural enrichment, others worry about the dominance of Western culture and its impact on local customs. In the field of communication, globalization has facilitated the rapid spread of information. The rise of the internet, social media, and mobile communication has made it easier for people to connect and share knowledge across geographical boundaries. As a result, information flows quickly, leading to greater awareness of global issues.

Despite its many benefits, globalization has also resulted in challenges such as economic inequality, environmental degradation, and the loss of cultural identity. To ensure that globalization works for the greater good, it is essential to manage its impact carefully and ensure that the benefits are shared equitably.

- . Based on your reading of the passage, make notes on it using headings and subheadings. Supply an appropriate title to it. Use recognizable abbreviations (minimum 4), wherever necessary. 5
- . Write a summary of the notes prepared, in not more than 80 words. 3

SECTION B - 23 MARKS: GRAMMAR AND CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS

GRAMMAR

Answer ANY SEVEN questions out of the eight given below.

(1x7=7)

1. Fill in the blanks using the correct word from the options given.

- i) He left in a hurry he had got a phone call.
 a) while b) so c) after d) where
- ii) he says is quite true.
 . That b) What c) How d) Until
- iii) By the time you arrive, I my homework.
 . Will have finished b) had finished c) finish d) am finishing
- iv) If I about the meeting, I would have attended.
 . Know b) will know c) have been knowing d) had known

2. Answer the questions below as per the directions given.

- i) Choose the correct order of words that form a meaningful sentence.
 Permitted/ children/ to drive/ are not/ eighteen/ under the/ age of.
- . Children are not permitted to drive until the age of eighteen.
 - . Children under the age of eighteen are not permitted to drive.
 - . Under the age of eighteen, children are not permitted to drive.
 - . Eighteen children are not permitted to drive under the age of.
- ii) Choose the correct order of words that form a meaningful sentence.
 Last Sunday/ busy/ was particularly/ platform/ the railway
- . Last Sunday, the railway platform was particularly busy.
 - . The railway platform last Sunday was particularly busy.
 - . Particularly, busy was last Sunday the railway platform.
 - . Busy platform was the railway particularly, last Sunday.

iii) Change the following sentence into passive:

Some girls were watering the withered plant.

- . Some girls were being watered by the withered plant.
- . The withered plant has been watered by some girls.
- . The withered plant was being watered by some girls.
- . The withered plant watered the girls.

iv) Change the following sentence into passive:

The cattle have eaten all the fodder.

- . All the fodder was eaten by the cattle.
- . The fodder was being eaten by all the cattle.
- . The cattle had eaten all the fodder.
- . All the fodder has been eaten by the cattle

CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS

6. You are Heera/Harish, project coordinator at Shiksha Niketan NGO for children with special needs. You are looking for educators proficient in sign language to teach students with hearing impairment. Draft an advertisement in about 50 words to be published in the local newspaper, inviting applications for the same. Provide relevant details. 3 Marks

OR

ii. You are Sneha/Sourav. Write an appealing and informative advertisement in 50 words for a house for sale. The property is a bungalow with a lawn and was once the home of an acclaimed poet.

7. Some people in your area have been unkind to stray animals. You often see them hitting or mistreating the animals. Create a poster in not more than 50 words informing the people in your colony about a fundraising event to build an animal shelter. Mention relevant details. 3 Marks

OR

India celebrates June 19 as the National Reading Day in honour of P N Panickar, the Father of the Library Movement in Kerala. Your school is planning to celebrate this day by organizing a photo exhibition on P N Panickar and a quiz competition for reading enthusiasts. Create a poster in about 50 words informing your schoolmates about the event. You are Sanjana/Srijan, the secretary of the Reading Club of your school.

8. i) You are Keerthi/Karthik from Blooming Flowers International School. Your school is organizing an event to celebrate Mental Health Day in October 2025. You have been selected to deliver an opening speech on the topic 'Necessity to promote mental wellness before the commencement of other activities. Write a speech in 120 – 150 words sharing your views on the given topic. 5 Marks

OR

ii) Your school is organizing Tech Fest, an exhibition of technology in the field of education. As Aswathi/Aswanth, the student coordinator of the programme, prepare an introductory speech in 120-150 words on the topic 'The Role of Technology in Shaping Education'. Discuss how technology has transformed the traditional classroom experience and what are its advantages and disadvantages.

9. i) You are Aabha/Abhay, a student of DPS School. Your school has organized a debate on the topic 'A college degree is necessary to succeed in life' in which you will be participating. Write your views in 120-150 words either for or against the motion. 5 Marks

OR

ii) You are taking part in the debate competition to be held in your school as part of Manthan Mandal activities. The topic for debate is 'Artificial Intelligence will do more harm than good in the future'. Express your views in 120-150 words in favour of/ against the topic. You are Ayush/ Anchal.

SECTION C - LITERATURE (31 MARKS)

10. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow. Attempt ANY ONE. (3x1=3)

*When did my childhood go?
Was it the time I realized that adults were not
all they seemed to be,
They talked of love and preached of love,
But did not act so lovingly,
Was that the day!*

. What is the poet questioning in the extract?

a) The importance of love in adulthood

b) The beginning of adulthood

- c) The meaning of love d) The role of adults in society

ii. Which of the following can be inferred from the line 'Was that the day'?

- a) The poet is unsure about the exact moment when childhood ended.
b) The poet clearly remembers the moment childhood ended.
c) The poet feels that childhood ended suddenly.
d) The poet believes childhood never ends.

iii) What tone is reflected in the extract?

- a) Happy and carefree
b) Reflective and somewhat disillusioned
c) Excited and hopeful
d) Angry and rebellious

B. *"She enters the thickness, and a machine starts up
Of chitterings, and a tremor of wings, and trillings —
The whole tree trembles and thrills."*

"It is the engine of her family."

*"She stokes it full, then flirts out to a branch-end
Showing her barred face identity mask."*

i) What does the "machine" most likely symbolize?

- a) The noise of the wind blowing through the branches
b) The shaking of the tree due to an approaching storm
c) The bird's activity, its energy, and sounds
d) The humming of insects around the tree

ii) What effect does the bird's activity have on the tree, as described in the extract?

- a) The tree is silently observing the bird.
b) The bird's activity causes physical vibration in the tree.
c) The tree is still and unaffected by the bird.
d) The tree is being nourished by the bird.

iii) Which of the options has the same figure of speech as the fourth line (it is the engine of her family)?

- a) Her smile is as bright as the sun.
b) The wind howled through the night.
c) The road was a ribbon of moonlight.
d) I am so hungry, I could eat an elephant.

11. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow. Attempt ANY ONE. (3x1=3)

A) Prepared as he was for many shocks, Professor Gaitonde had not expected this. The East India Company had been wound up shortly after the events of 1857 — at least, that is what history books said. Yet, here it was, not only alive but flourishing. So, history had taken a different turn, perhaps before 1857. How and when had it happened? He had to find out.

i) What was Professor Gaitonde's reaction to the situation described in the extract?

- a) He was surprised and confused.
b) He was calm and collected.
c) He was indifferent and unaffected.
d) He was angry and upset.

ii) What does the phrase "that is what history books said" imply about Professor Gaitonde's understanding of history?

- a) He believes history books are inaccurate.
 - b) He trusts history books as an accurate account of events.
 - c) He feels history books are irrelevant.
 - d) He questions the authenticity of history books.
- iii) What do these lines reveal about Professor Gaitonde's approach to understanding history?
- a) He is indifferent to discovering the truth.
 - b) He is disinterested in history and prefers to focus on the present.
 - c) He is confused and plans to ignore the situation.
 - d) He is keen to investigate and uncover the truth

B. *As the years rolled by, we saw less of each other. For some time, she continued to wake me up and get me ready for school. When I came back, she would ask me what the teacher had taught me. I would tell her English words and little things of western science and learning, the law of gravity, Archimedes' Principle, the world being round, etc. This made her unhappy. She could not help me with my lessons. She did not believe in the things they taught at the English school and was distressed that there was no teaching about God and the scriptures." "One day, I announced that we were being given music lessons. She was very disturbed. To her, music had lewd associations. It was the monopoly of harlots and beggars and not meant for gentlefolk." "She said nothing, but her silence meant disapproval." She rarely talked to me after that.*

- i) What effect did the Western education have on the narrator's relationship with the old lady?
- a) It brought them closer together.
 - b) It caused a sense of separation and unhappiness for the old lady.
 - c) The old lady was supportive of the new education.
 - d) It made the narrator indifferent to the old lady.
- . Why was the old lady distressed about the lessons taught at the English school?
- iii) What does the phrase "rolled by" mean in this context?
- a) Passed quickly and continuously
 - b) Moved in a smooth and continuous motion
 - c) Moved roughly and erratically
 - d) Stopped and started intermittently

12. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow. Attempt ANY ONE. (4x1=4)

A) *No doubt about it at all. Who's the better for being spoilt—grown man, lad or girl? Nobody. You think it does 'them good when you run after them all the time, take their orders as if you were the servant in the house, stay at home every night while they go out enjoying themselves? Never in all your life. It's the ruin of them as well as you. Husbands, sons, and daughters should be taking notice of wives and mothers, not giving 'them orders and treating 'them like dirt. An' don't tell me you don't know what I mean, for I know more than you've told me.*

- . What does Mrs. Fitzgerald mean by "Who's the better for being spoilt"?
- a) People become more independent when spoiled.
 - b) Spoiling someone helps them grow and improve.
 - c) Nobody benefits from being spoiled.
 - d) Spoiling makes people stronger.
- ii) What is Mrs. Fitzgerald criticizing in this statement?
- a) She is criticizing people who do not help others.
 - b) She is criticizing people who refuse to work.

- c) She is criticizing people who stay at home while others go out.
- d) She is criticizing the idea of serving others constantly and neglecting one's own needs.
- iii) How can Mrs. Fitzgerald be described based on these statements?
 - a) Modest, humble, shy
 - b) Pessimistic, traditional, patronizing
 - c) Assertive, empathetic, confident
 - d) Indifferent, reserved, insecure
- iv) What does the phrase "run after them" mean in this context?
 - a) Serve or attend to them constantly
 - b) Chase them physically
 - c) Ignore their needs
 - d) Follow their instructions without question

B. Perhaps I was mistaken, I thought, perhaps it isn't her. I had seen her only once, fleetingly, and that was years ago. It was most probable that I had rung the wrong bell. The woman let go of the door and stepped to the side. She was wearing my mother's green knitted cardigan. The wooden buttons were rather pale from washing. She saw that I was looking at the cardigan and half hid again behind the door. But I knew now that I was right.

- i) What is the narrator's initial feeling in this extract?
 - a) Confidence in recognizing the person
 - b) Doubt and uncertainty
 - c) Excitement to meet someone again
 - d) Anger for making a mistake
- ii. What piece of information about the woman makes the narrator suspect it is the right person?
- iii) What does the woman's action of "half hid again behind the door" suggest?
 - a) She was scared to meet the narrator.
 - b) She was playing a game.
 - c) She was trying to avoid being recognized.
 - d) She was trying to greet the narrator politely.
- iv) What does the word "fleetingly" mean in this context?
 - a) For a long time
 - b) Briefly or quickly
 - c) With uncertainty
 - d) With great detail

13. Answer ANY TWO of the following questions in 40-50 words.

3x2=6

- i) How did the narrator and his family respond to the severity of the storm? What does this reveal about their character?
- ii) Briefly comment on Tsetan's help and support to the author during his journey to Mount Kailash in 'Silk Road'.
- iii. In 'Father to Son', do you think the father is responsible for the present situation? Give reasons. What does the father expect from the son?
- iv. Why does the rain say it is "the poem of the earth"?

14. Answer ANY ONE of the following questions in 40-50 words.

3x1=3

- . How does the final decision on who should rule the city after the king's death point out the absurdity of the situation?
- . What traits of the Garoghlanian family are highlighted in the story?

15. Answer ANY ONE of the following questions in 120-150 words.

6x1=6

- Discuss the significance of Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in the context of archaeology.
- Discuss the significance of the photograph in "A Photograph" and its role in conveying the poem's themes.

16. Answer ANY ONE of the following questions in 120-150 words.

6x1=6

- How does A.J. Cronin portray the relationship between the doctor and the patient in 'Birth'?
- Analyze the relationship between Mrs. Pearson and her family. How does it change by the end of the play?

MARKING SCHEME

SECTION A: READING SKILLS - 26 MARKS

1. Answers

1 mark to be awarded for each correct answer. Total: 10 marks

- . b) Carefully selected or organized
- . b) Superficial and shallow conversations
- . a) People post only positive aspects of their lives, creating unrealistic expectations
- . c) The author believes social media has both positive and negative effects
- . c) To explain the benefits and drawbacks of social media on communication
- . b) Social media has both positive and negative effects on communication and relationships
- . b) Social media allows for easier and quicker communication.
- . b) By maintaining a balance between online interactions and real-life conversations.
- . b) Social media can be beneficial if used responsibly, but it must not replace in-person interactions.
- . c) Mental health issues such as anxiety and loneliness could increase.

2. Answers

1 Mark is to be awarded for each correct answer. Total: 8 marks

- . a) praised
- . b) Tigers are difficult to spot since they are good at hiding.
- . a) Sundarbans
- . c) only (i), (ii) and (iii)
- . b) Central India and Eastern Ghats
- . b) illegal gathering, transportation and distribution of protected wildlife
- . b) Central India and Eastern Ghats
- . a) The tiger population has more than doubled between 2006 and 2018.
- . d) North East Hills and Brahmaputra Plains

3. Answers

- . Note making: 5 marks

Title-1, Numbering and indenting-1, Key/glossary to abbreviations-1, Content/notes with subheadings-2

- Summary: 3 marks

Content-2, Expression-1

SECTION B - 23 MARKS

GRAMMAR AND CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS

Grammar: 1 mark for each correct answer. total:

7 marks

4.

- i) c) after
 - ii. b) What
 - ii. a) will have finished
 - ii. d) had known
- i) b) Children under the age of eighteen are not permitted to drive.
ii) a) Last Sunday, the railway platform was particularly busy.
iii) c) The withered plant was being watered by some girls.
iv) d) All the fodder has been eaten by the cattle.

Creative Writing Skills

Total: 3 marks (Format-1, Content-1, Expression-1)

Clearly states the reason for the advertisement along with relevant details

Uses a persuasive yet formal tone

Uses a catchy title for the advertisement

Presents information in a clear and concise manner

Adheres to the word count

Follows the correct format for an advertisement (heading in capital letters at the top, body, contact details)

Uses correct grammar, spelling and other language mechanics

7. Total: 3 marks Format-1, Content-1, Expression-1

Relates to the main topic with a strong sense of purpose

Answers the questions 'who', 'what', 'why', 'when', and 'where' for the information in the poster

Uses an appropriate tone relevant to the given topic and displays creativity by including details that captures the reader's attention

Uses an appropriate vocabulary that is relevant to the context and fulfils the word count requirement

Includes all aspects of a poster (title, message, issuing authority details, contact information)

Uses a combination of text and graphics with a creative layout

Language Mechanics

Uses correct grammar, spelling and other language mechanics

8. Total: 5 marks Format-1, Content-2, Expression-2

States the main idea with a strong sense of purpose

Presents focused points that support the main idea. Incorporates relevant anecdotes, examples and facts

Manages to inform or persuade the reader

Uses appropriate choices of words and expressions relevant to the main idea

Fulfils the word count requirement

Organization: Presents viewpoints in an organized manner

Starts with a proper address to the audience and ends with an appropriate

Conclusion:

Avoids deviating from the main topic

Emphasizes the main idea in the concluding paragraph

Language Mechanics

Uses correct grammar, spelling and other language mechanics

9. Total: 5 marks

Format-1, Content-2, Expression-2

Takes a clear stand on the given topic

Provides strong and valid arguments to support the stand

Provides interesting examples and factual details to support the stand

Avoids repetition of ideas and sentences

Uses engaging and persuasive vocabulary to present the

Fulfills the word count requirement

Organization: Presents viewpoints in a clear and orderly manner

Maintains consistency in viewpoints presented

Language Mechanics: Uses correct grammar, spelling and other language mechanics

Section C- 31 Marks Literature

10. 1 mark for each correct answer. Total: 3 marks

A)

i. b) the beginning of adulthood

ii) a) the poet is unsure about the exact moment when childhood ended

iii) b) reflective and somewhat disillusioned

B)

i) c) the bird's activity, its energy and sounds

ii) b) the bird's activity causes physical vibration in the tree.

iii) c) the road was a ribbon of moonlight

11. 1 mark for each correct answer. Total: 3 marks

A)

i) a) he was surprised and confused

ii) b) he trusts history books as an accurate account of events

iii) d) he is keen to investigate and uncover the truth

B)

i) b) It caused a sense of separation and unhappiness for the old lady

ii) because the lessons focused on science and did not include teachings about God and the scriptures.

iii) a) passed quickly and continuously

12. 1 mark for each correct answer. Total: 4 marks

A)

i) c) nobody benefits from being spoiled.

ii) d) She is criticizing the idea of serving others constantly and neglecting one's own needs.

iii) c) assertive, empathetic, confident

iv) a) serve or attend to them constantly.

B.

i) b) doubt and uncertainty

ii) the green knitted cardigan

iii) c) She was trying to avoid being recognized

iv) b) briefly or quickly

13. Content- 2, Expression- 1

Total: 3 marks

- The narrator and his family responded to the severity of the storm by continuously working together to keep the boat afloat, repairing damage, and bailing out water. This shows their resilience, teamwork, and determination to survive despite overwhelming challenges. They understood that even in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds, it is essential to stay calm, focused, and hopeful. Their journey instilled in them a sense of humility and the realization that survival requires not only physical strength but also emotional and mental fortitude.
- Tsetan was a local Tibetan whose job was to transport tourists to various places of interest in Tibet. He was skilled at driving through the challenging, rough, high-altitude roads. He drove cautiously, prioritizing the safety of his passengers. As they travelled, Tsetan provided insightful information about the places they passed. When the narrator fell ill, Tsetan took him to the Darchen Medical College and ensured that he received the necessary care for his health. He fixed the tyre of their vehicle lest the narrator have to undergo trouble.
- In the poem 'Father to Son', the father expects his son to understand him, maintain a close relationship, and share similar values and beliefs. He longs for communication, mutual respect, and emotional connection. The father hopes for his son to recognize the love and effort he has put into their relationship and to restore the bond they once had, but he is disappointed and frustrated as his son seems increasingly distant and independent. The father's expectations reflect his desire for a deeper, more meaningful connection with his son, despite the growing emotional gap between them.
- The rain calls itself "the poem of the earth" because it is a natural expression of life and renewal, much like a poem is an expression of emotions and thoughts. The rain, like a poem, brings beauty and nourishment to the earth. Just as a poem expresses emotions, beauty and truth, the rain, through its life-giving journey, embodies the essence of nature's harmony and rejuvenation. The rain's cycle of rising, purifying and returning to nourish the Earth parallels the way a poem can rise from inspiration, be shaped by the poet and leave a lasting impact on its audience.

14. Answer: Content- 2, Expression- 1 Total: 3 marks

- The final decision on who should rule the city is made by the people. After a series of absurd judgments, the King, in his frustration, leaves it up to the common citizens. The people, seeing the absurdity of the situation, elect a melon as the ruler of the city, which highlights the ridiculousness of the previous decisions and the arbitrary nature of leadership.

ii) The Garoghlanian family, though now poor, were famous for their honesty even when they were wealthy. They were proud of their family first, honest next, and after that, they believed in right and wrong. None of them would take advantage of anybody in the world. They would not steal. No member of the Garoghlanian family could be a thief. Thus, the qualities highlighted are: honour, integrity, pride in their heritage, generosity, deep family bond, and moral responsibility

15. Content- 3, Expression and Accuracy- 3 Total: 6 marks

- The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb by British archaeologist Howard Carter in 1922 is considered one of the most significant events in the history of archaeology. It not only advanced the understanding of Ancient Egypt but also marked a milestone in the development of modern archaeological methods.

Unprecedented Preservation: provided a rare opportunity to study the material culture of Ancient Egypt in its entirety. The tomb's preservation gave archaeologists invaluable insights into the religious, social, and artistic practices of the time. Scientific Advancements: The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb marked a breakthrough in archaeological excavation techniques. Popularization of Egyptology: The finding of Tutankhamun's tomb captivated the imagination of the public. The immense treasures and the mystery

surrounding the young king's life and death became a global sensation. This greatly contributed to the popularization of Egyptology and fueled a wider interest in Ancient Egyptian history and culture. Inspiration for Future Discoveries: The success of Carter's discovery encouraged other archaeologists to continue searching for ancient tombs and artefacts, which led to further significant findings in the Valley of the Kings and other ancient Egyptian sites. Cultural and Historical Impact: Beyond the realm of archaeology, the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb had a lasting cultural and historical impact. It provided the world with a direct connection to the past, offering a glimpse into the life of Ancient Egypt's royal court.

In summary, Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb was a groundbreaking event in archaeology.

- ii. The photograph in "A Photograph" serves as a powerful symbol that encapsulates the poem's themes of memory, loss, and the passage of time. It is through this photograph that the poet reflects on her mother's life and death, bringing into sharp focus the fleeting nature of life and the permanence of death.

The photograph serves as a frozen moment in time — a snapshot of the poet's mother as a young girl, filled with life and joy. However, as the poet looks at the photograph in the present, she is faced with the stark reality that her mother is no longer alive. The photograph, once a cherished memory, now becomes a symbol of absence and loss. The poet's mother, who had once posed for the picture, is no longer physically present, but the image of her youth remains frozen in time.

The photograph acts as a medium through which the poet's reflections on time and death are conveyed. It represents a link between the past and the present, but it also emphasizes the transitory nature of human existence. It shows the inevitability of death and the swift passage of time.

In addition, the photograph highlights the theme of nostalgia. The poet longs for the time when her mother was alive, and this longing is intensified by the photograph, which serves as a reminder of what is now gone. The photograph, while preserving the memory of her mother's youthful smile, also reinforces the poet's grief and the pain of loss.

Overall, the photograph in the poem serves as a powerful tool to convey the themes of mortality, the passage of time, and the bittersweet nature of memory. It encapsulates the contrast between life and death, youth and old age, presence and absence.

16. Content- 3, Expression and Accuracy- 3

Total: 6 marks

Answer:

- . In "Birth" by A.J. Cronin, the relationship between the doctor and the patient is portrayed as one of professional detachment, initially, which gradually evolves into a deeper understanding of the human aspects of medicine. At the beginning of the story, Dr. Andrew is a competent, skilled and professional doctor who views childbirth in technical terms. His approach to the young woman's labour is primarily clinical, and he is confident in his ability to handle the situation. However, as the complications arise, and the mother's and baby's lives become at risk, the relationship between the doctor and the patient becomes more personal and emotionally charged. Dr. Andrew is forced to confront the emotional and human side of medicine, which he had previously underestimated. The mother, despite her fear and pain, entrusts him with her life, and the doctor's professional pride is shaken when he realizes he may not be able to save both. Through this evolving relationship, Cronin portrays the complex nature of the doctor-patient dynamic, emphasizing that medicine is not only about technical skill but also about emotional connection, empathy and understanding the fragility of life.

- ii. At the beginning of the play, Mrs. Pearson has a strained and imbalanced relationship with her family. Her husband, Mr. Pearson, and her children treat her as though she is merely there to serve their needs. They take her for granted, never considering her feelings or acknowledging her sacrifices. Her family members are selfish, demanding, and disrespectful, which causes Mrs. Pearson to feel unappreciated and neglected.

The turning point in the play occurs when Mrs. Pearson, with the help of a fortune teller, transforms into a more assertive and confident version of herself. She begins to stand up for herself, demanding the respect she deserves. The change in her demeanour and behaviour forces her family to reevaluate their treatment of her. By the end of the play, her husband and children have realized how much they depend on her and how little they have appreciated her. They express their remorse and make an effort to change their behaviour.

Thus, by the end of the play, the relationship between Mrs. Pearson and her family evolves into one of mutual respect. The family members begin to appreciate Mrs. Pearson as an individual with her own needs and desires, not just as a caretaker. The play ends on a note of hope, suggesting that with open communication and assertiveness, family dynamics can improve.

Note: The answers given above are only suggestive. Any other appropriate answer/response by the student must be awarded marks accordingly. Full marks may be awarded for content if sufficient befitting points are written by the student.

ADDITIONAL CONTENT LINKS-

For more content, click on the link provided or copy paste to a browser -

1) **READING PASSAGES** - <https://shorturl.at/aioyg>

2) **CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS** –

DEBATE –<https://shorturl.at/D6nGD>

SPEECH - <https://tinyurl.com/nhf7zynz>

POSTERS - <https://rb.gy/z32lm1>

3) **MINDMAPS** - <https://tinyurl.com/22j73568>

4) **CBSE CURRICULUM 2026-27-**

https://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/CurriculumMain26/SrSec/English_core_SrSec_2025-26.pdf

5) **SAMPLE PRACTICE PAPERS 2026-27** <https://tinyurl.com/bdfk8zww>



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KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA SANGATHAN

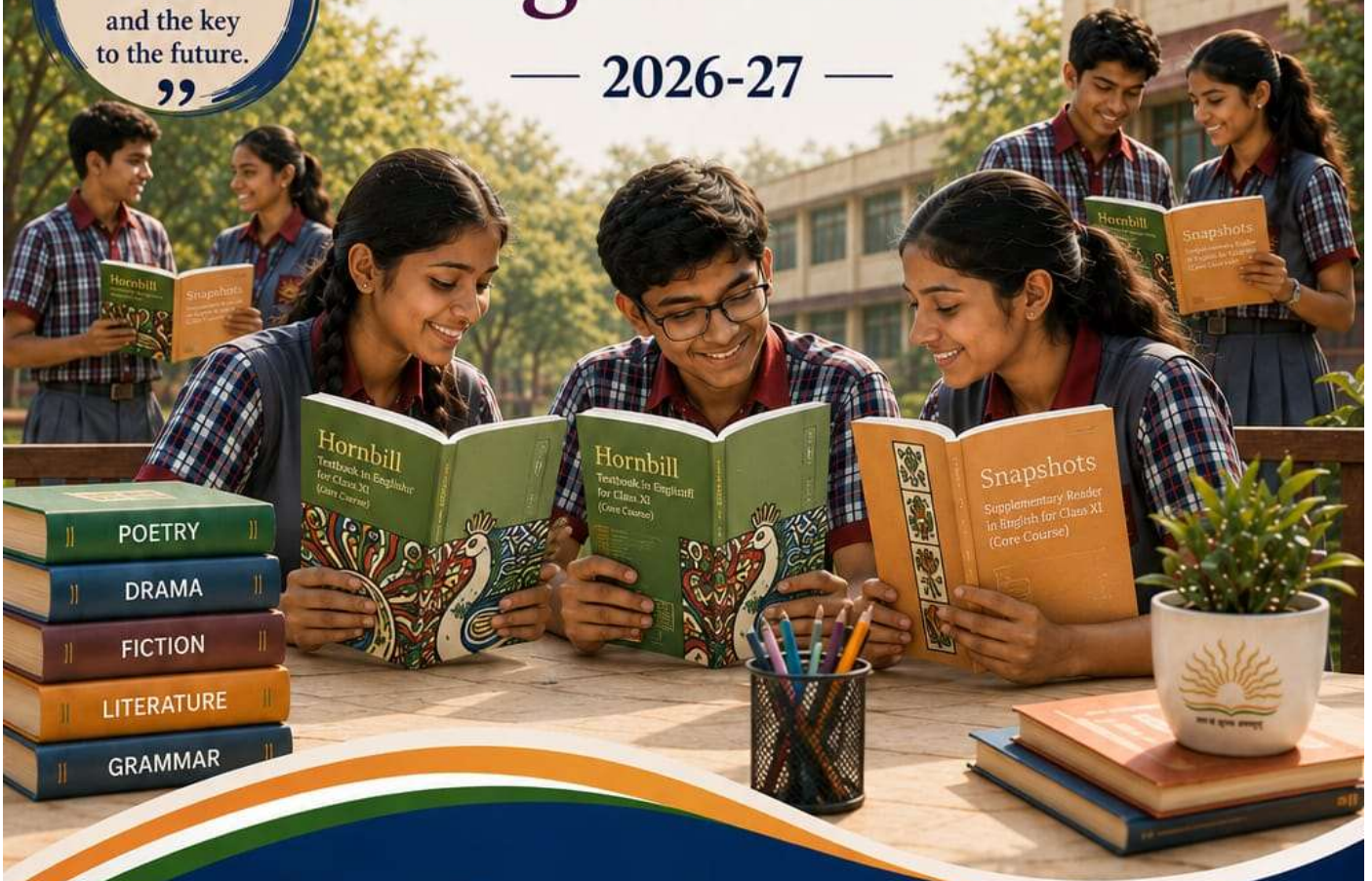
Class XI

Student Support Material -

English Core

— 2026-27 —

“
Language
is the bridge
to ideas
and the key
to the future.
”



READ



THINK



EXPRESS



CONNECT



GROW

— Read. Reflect. Express. Excel. —