

SET General English

Sample Paper – 1

Duration: 16 Minutes

Maximum Marks: 16

Instructions

- This paper contains **16** Multiple Choice Questions (Single Correct Answer), modelled on the General English section of **SET** (Symbiosis Entrance Test).
- Each correct answer carries **+1 mark**. There is **no negative marking** for incorrect or unattempted answers.
- Only **one** option is correct. Choose carefully.
- Syllabus level: **Class 10–12 English: Reading Comprehension, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Usage.**
- Use of mobile phones, calculators, or electronic gadgets is strictly prohibited.



The rise of social media has profoundly reshaped the daily lives of young people worldwide. Platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok offer teenagers a space for self-expression and peer connection, yet mounting research suggests that excessive use is linked to heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. The curated nature of online content exposes adolescents to unrealistic standards of beauty, success, and lifestyle, leading many to engage in unfavourable comparisons with peers. Studies indicate that teenagers who spend more than three hours daily on social media are significantly more likely to report feelings of loneliness and inadequacy.

Paradoxically, a medium designed to connect people can intensify feelings of isolation. Cyberbullying, a form of harassment conducted through digital platforms, affects nearly one in five teenagers and carries consequences far graver than traditional bullying because the harm is public, permanent, and inescapable. Experts recommend that schools and families set clear boundaries around screen time and encourage adolescents to pursue offline hobbies and face-to-face interactions. Developing digital literacy – the ability to critically evaluate online content – is increasingly recognised as an essential life skill that can help young people navigate the virtual world responsibly and protect their mental well-being.

Q1. Which of the following best states the **main idea** of the passage?

- (A) Social media should be banned for teenagers under the age of sixteen.
- (B) While social media offers connectivity, its excessive use poses significant risks to youth mental health.
- (C) Cyberbullying is the single most dangerous aspect of social media for young people.
- (D) Teenagers who use social media report higher academic performance than those who do not.

Q2. What can be **inferred** from the phrase “curated nature of online content” as used in the passage?

- (A) Online content is always professionally edited before being posted.



- (B) Social media platforms employ strict fact-checking teams.
- (C) Users selectively present an idealised version of their lives on social media.
- (D) The government regulates what teenagers may post on social media.

Q3. The word “**inadequacy**” as used in the passage most nearly means:

- (A) A feeling of not being good enough.
- (B) Excessive pride in one’s achievements.
- (C) Indifference towards social interactions.
- (D) Reluctance to use digital technology.

Q4. According to the passage, which of the following is stated as a **recommended measure** to protect youth mental health in the context of social media?

- (A) Completely banning teenagers from using any social media platform.
- (B) Increasing the number of counsellors available in schools.
- (C) Encouraging teenagers to use social media only for educational purposes.
- (D) Developing digital literacy and setting clear boundaries on screen time.

Q5. Choose the **synonym** of the word: **Ephemeral**

- (A) Transient
- (B) Permanent
- (C) Stable
- (D) Enduring

Q6. Choose the **antonym** of the word: **Gregarious**

- (A) Sociable



- (B) Outgoing
- (C) Solitary
- (D) Friendly

Q7. Identify the correct **passive voice** transformation of the following sentence:

“The committee announces the results every year.”

- (A) The results are announced by the committee every year.
- (B) The results were announced by the committee every year.
- (C) The results have been announced by the committee every year.
- (D) The results will be announced by the committee every year.

Q8. Choose the option that correctly **completes** the sentence:

“She _____ her project two days before the deadline last week.”

- (A) has submitted
- (B) have submitted
- (C) had been submitting
- (D) submitted

Q9. The sentences given below, when properly arranged, form a coherent paragraph. Choose the option that gives the **correct sequence**.

P. Governments and citizens alike must collaborate to reverse this trend before irreversible damage occurs.

Q. Environmental conservation has become one of the most pressing challenges of the twenty-first century.

R. Deforestation, pollution, and the overexploitation of natural resources have accelerated the loss of biodiversity.

S. Small individual actions, such as reducing plastic use and planting trees, can collectively make a significant difference.

- (A) P – Q – S – R



- (B) Q – R – P – S
- (C) R – S – Q – P
- (D) S – P – R – Q

Q10. The sentences given below, when properly arranged, form a coherent paragraph. Choose the option that gives the **correct sequence**.

P. It sharpens critical thinking, expands vocabulary, and fosters empathy by exposing readers to diverse perspectives.

Q. Despite the dominance of digital media, reading remains one of the most valuable habits a person can cultivate.

R. Educators therefore urge students to set aside at least thirty minutes each day for purposeful reading.

S. Regular readers consistently outperform their peers in communication skills and academic achievement.

- (A) R – Q – S – P
- (B) P – S – R – Q
- (C) Q – P – S – R
- (D) S – R – Q – P

Q11. Identify the option that **corrects** the subject-verb agreement error in the following sentence:

“Neither the manager nor the employees was informed about the policy change.”

- (A) Neither the manager nor the employees were informed about the policy change.
- (B) Neither the manager nor the employees has been informed about the policy change.
- (C) Neither the manager nor the employees is informed about the policy change.
- (D) Neither the manager nor the employees had been inform about the



policy change.

Q12. Choose the option that **correctly fills** the blank in the sentence:

“_____ the principal _____ the teachers attended the emergency board meeting.”

- (A) Either ... or
- (B) Both ... and
- (C) Not only ... but also
- (D) Neither ... nor

Q13. Choose the **one-word substitution** for the following expression:

“A person who collects stamps as a hobby.”

- (A) Numismatist
- (B) Philatelist
- (C) Bibliophile
- (D) Archivist

Q14. What is the **meaning** of the idiom “Bite the bullet”?

- (A) To speak harsh words in anger.
- (B) To avoid a difficult situation at all costs.
- (C) To endure a painful or difficult situation with courage.
- (D) To make a hasty decision without thinking.

Q15. Choose the **correct article** to fill in the blank:

“She is _____ honest officer who has served the department for twenty years.”

- (A) an
- (B) a



- (C) the
- (D) no article needed

Q16. Choose the **correct preposition** to fill in the blank:

“The committee has been deliberating _____ the proposal for the past three days.”

- (A) about
- (B) for
- (C) at
- (D) on



Detailed Solutions**Q1.****Solution**

Concept — Reading Comprehension (Main Idea): The main idea of a passage is the central message that the author intends to convey throughout the entire text, not merely in one paragraph.

Step 1 — Analyse the passage: The passage discusses both the benefits (self-expression, peer connection) and the drawbacks (anxiety, depression, cyberbullying) of social media for youth, ultimately recommending protective measures such as digital literacy and screen-time boundaries.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A: The passage never recommends a ban; it advocates responsible use.
- Option C: Cyberbullying is one issue mentioned, not the sole focus.
- Option D: The passage states the opposite – heavy use is linked to negative outcomes.

Final Answer: Social media offers connectivity but poses risks to youth mental health. ⇒ **B**

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 1](#)

Q2.**Solution**

Concept — Reading Comprehension (Inference / Vocabulary-in-context): “Curated” means carefully selected and arranged; in the context of social media, users choose only their best moments to share.

Step 1 — Identify context: The passage links “curated nature of online content” directly to “unrealistic standards” and “unfavourable comparisons,” implying content is selectively presented to appear idealised.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A: Professional editing is not mentioned; “curated” refers to user selection.
- Option B: Fact-checking by platforms is not the subject of this phrase.
- Option D: Government regulation is not discussed in the passage.



Final Answer: Users selectively present an idealised version of their lives. ⇒ C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 2](#)

Q3.

Solution

Concept — Reading Comprehension (Vocabulary-in-context): “Inadequacy” derives from “inadequate” (not sufficient/good enough). In the passage it describes the internal feeling of falling short compared to peers.

Step 1 — Check the context: The sentence reads: “teenagers . . . are significantly more likely to report feelings of loneliness and **inadequacy**.” This refers to the emotional state of feeling one is not good enough relative to the idealised images seen online.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option B: Excessive pride is the opposite of inadequacy.
- Option C: Indifference does not capture the negative self-evaluation implied.
- Option D: Reluctance to use technology is unrelated to this context.

Final Answer: A feeling of not being good enough. ⇒ A

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 3](#)

Q4.

Solution

Concept — Reading Comprehension (Detail / Factual): Detail questions require locating specific information stated explicitly in the passage.

Step 1 — Locate the recommendation: The final sentence of the passage states: “Experts recommend that schools and families set clear boundaries around screen time and encourage adolescents to pursue offline hobbies . . . Developing digital literacy . . . is increasingly recognised as an essential life skill.”

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A: A complete ban is never recommended.
- Option B: More counsellors are not mentioned.
- Option C: Educational-only use is not stated as a recommendation.

Final Answer: Developing digital literacy and setting clear screen-time bound-



aries. ⇒

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 4](#)

Q5.

Solution

Concept — Synonyms (Ephemeral): “Ephemeral” means lasting for a very short time; it originates from the Greek *ephemeros* (lasting a day).

Step 1 — Match with synonym: “Transient” means passing quickly, temporary – the closest in meaning to ephemeral.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option B: Permanent – opposite in meaning (lasting forever).
- Option C: Stable – implies constancy, not brevity.
- Option D: Enduring – means long-lasting; again an antonym.

Final Answer: Transient. ⇒

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 5](#)

Q6.

Solution

Concept — Antonyms (Gregarious): “Gregarious” means fond of company; liking to be with other people.

Step 1 — Identify the antonym: The opposite of gregarious (sociable, preferring company) is “Solitary” (preferring to be alone, avoiding company).

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A: Sociable – a synonym, not an antonym.
- Option B: Outgoing – similar to gregarious; also a synonym.
- Option D: Friendly – related to being sociable; not the antonym.

Final Answer: Solitary. ⇒

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 6](#)



Q7.

Solution

Concept — Grammar (Active and Passive Voice): In the passive voice, the object of the active sentence becomes the subject. For simple present tense, the passive is formed as: *subject + is/are + past participle + by + agent*.

Step 1 — Transform the sentence:

- Active: *The committee (subject) announces (verb) the results (object) every year.*
- Passive subject: “The results” (originally object).
- Verb form: *are announced* (simple present passive with plural subject “results”).
- Agent: *by the committee*.

Correct passive: *The results are announced by the committee every year.*

Why other options are wrong:

- Option B: “were announced” is simple past passive; the original is simple present.
- Option C: “have been announced” is present perfect passive; tense mismatch.
- Option D: “will be announced” is future passive; tense mismatch.

Final Answer: The results are announced by the committee every year. ⇒ A

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 7](#)

Q8.

Solution

Concept — Grammar (Tenses – Simple Past vs Present Perfect): The simple past tense is used for completed actions at a **specific** time in the past. The present perfect is used for actions with a connection to the present or without a specific past time.

Step 1 — Identify the time marker: The sentence contains the time expression “*last week*,” which specifies a definite past time. Whenever a specific past time is mentioned, the **simple past** tense is required.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A: “has submitted” – present perfect; cannot be used with “last week.”



- Option B: “have submitted” – present perfect plural; incorrect subject agreement and tense.
- Option C: “had been submitting” – past perfect continuous; implies ongoing action, not a single completed one.

Final Answer: submitted (simple past – specific past time “last week”). ⇒ D

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 8](#)

Q9.

Solution

Concept — Para Jumble (Environmental Conservation): To find the correct order, identify the opening sentence (introduces the topic), the supporting sentences (provide evidence/detail), and the closing sentence (gives a resolution or call to action).

Step 1 — Identify the opening sentence: Q introduces the broad topic of environmental conservation as a pressing challenge – this is clearly the topic sentence that begins the paragraph.

Step 2 — Build the logical flow:

- Q: Introduces environmental conservation as the challenge.
- R: Gives specific causes (deforestation, pollution, overexploitation).
- P: Calls for government–citizen collaboration to reverse the trend.
- S: Ends with a note on individual actions making a collective difference.

Correct sequence: Q – R – P – S.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A (P–Q–S–R): Begins with a call to action before the problem is introduced.
- Option C (R–S–Q–P): Places causes before the topic sentence.
- Option D (S–P–R–Q): Begins with individual action, which should logically come last.

Final Answer: Q – R – P – S. ⇒ B

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 9](#)



Q10.

Solution

Concept — Para Jumble (Importance of Reading): Identify topic sentence, development sentences, and the concluding recommendation.

Step 1 — Identify the opening sentence: Q introduces the thesis – reading remains valuable despite the dominance of digital media. It is the most general statement and the natural starting point.

Step 2 — Build the logical flow:

- **Q:** States that reading is valuable despite digital media.
- **P:** Explains *why* – sharpens thinking, expands vocabulary, fosters empathy.
- **S:** Provides evidence – regular readers outperform peers.
- **R:** Concludes with educators' recommendation (thirty minutes daily).

Correct sequence: Q – P – S – R.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A (R–Q–S–P): Starts with a recommendation before the topic is introduced.
- Option B (P–S–R–Q): Places the topic sentence at the end.
- Option D (S–R–Q–P): Leads with evidence before the claim is made.

Final Answer: Q – P – S – R. ⇒ C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 10](#)

Q11.

Solution

Concept — Sentence Correction (Subject-Verb Agreement with Neither...nor): When two subjects are joined by “neither...nor” (or “either...or”), the verb agrees with the subject that is **closer** to it (the proximity rule).

Step 1 — Apply the proximity rule:

- The two subjects are “the manager” (singular) and “the employees” (plural).
- The subject closer to the verb is “the employees” (plural).
- Therefore, the verb must be plural: *were informed*.

Correct sentence: *Neither the manager nor the employees **were** informed about the policy change.*



Why other options are wrong:

- Option B: “has been informed” – singular; does not agree with the nearer subject “employees.”
- Option C: “is informed” – singular; same error.
- Option D: “had been inform” – “inform” should be “informed”; grammatically incorrect.

Final Answer: Neither the manager nor the employees were informed ... ⇒ A

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 11](#)

Q12.

Solution

Concept — Conjunctions (Neither ... nor / Either ... or): “Neither ... nor” is used to make a negative statement about *two* items, meaning “not one and not the other.”

Step 1 — Analyse the sentence: The sentence conveys that *both* the principal *and* the teachers were **absent** from the meeting – a double negative (neither one attended). This requires “neither ... nor.”

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A (Either ... or): Implies one of them attended; does not fit the meaning of total absence.
- Option B (Both ... and): Implies both attended; contradicts the intended meaning.
- Option C (Not only ... but also): Implies both were present; incorrect here.

Final Answer: Neither ... nor. ⇒ D

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 12](#)



Q13.

Solution

Concept — One-Word Substitution (Philatelist): One-word substitutions replace a descriptive phrase with a single precise word.

Step 1 — Identify the correct term: A person who collects postage stamps as a hobby is called a **philatelist**. The hobby itself is *philately*, from Greek *philos* (loving) + *ateleia* (exemption from tax – referring to prepaid postage).

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A: Numismatist – a person who collects coins or currency.
- Option C: Bibliophile – a person who loves or collects books.
- Option D: Archivist – a person who maintains archives/records; not a collector of stamps.

Final Answer: Philatelist. ⇒ B

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 13](#)

Q14.

Solution

Concept — Idioms and Phrases (Bite the bullet): Idioms are fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be deduced word by word. “Bite the bullet” originated from the practice of having wounded soldiers bite on a bullet during surgery to endure pain.

Step 1 — Meaning: “Bite the bullet” means to **endure a painful or difficult situation with courage and stoicism**, accepting the hardship as unavoidable.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A: Speaking harsh words – this describes “lashing out,” not this idiom.
- Option B: Avoiding a difficult situation – the opposite; this idiom means to face it, not flee.
- Option D: Making a hasty decision – this describes “jumping the gun,” a different idiom.

Final Answer: To endure a painful or difficult situation with courage. ⇒ C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 14](#)



Q15.

Solution

Concept — Articles (a / an / the): The article “an” is used before words that begin with a **vowel sound** (not necessarily a vowel letter). “Honest” begins with a silent ‘h’, so the first sound is a vowel, requiring “an.”

Step 1 — Determine the sound: “Honest” → the ‘h’ is silent → the word sounds like “*on-est*” (starts with vowel sound) → use **an**.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option B (a): Used before consonant sounds; “honest” begins with a vowel sound.
- Option C (the): The definite article is used for specific nouns already known to the listener; here the officer is introduced for the first time (indefinite reference).
- Option D (no article): An article is required before a singular countable noun used in an indefinite sense.

Final Answer: an (vowel sound). ⇒ A

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 15](#)

Q16.

Solution

Concept — Prepositions (deliberating on): Certain verbs and verbal phrases require specific prepositions. “Deliberate” in the sense of discussing or considering formally collocates with the preposition **on**.

Step 1 — Colocation check: “The committee has been deliberating **on** the proposal” – the preposition “on” indicates the subject of deliberation (the topic being formally considered). This is the standard colocation in formal/official English.

Why other options are wrong:

- Option A (about): While “about” can follow “discuss,” it is not the standard colocation with “deliberating” in formal usage.
- Option B (for): “for” indicates duration or purpose, not subject matter; grammatically and idiomatically incorrect here.
- Option C (at): “at” indicates location or direction; does not collocate with “deliberating.”



Final Answer: deliberating **on** the proposal. $\Rightarrow$ D

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 16](#)



Answer Key

Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans
1	B	2	C	3	A	4	D	5	A
6	C	7	A	8	D	9	B	10	C
11	A	12	D	13	B	14	C	15	A
16	D								

