CBSE Class 10 English Language and Literature 2026-27

Sample Paper with Solutions

Conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)

Time Allowed: 3 hours **Maximum Marks: 80**

General Instructions

(i) This question paper comprises **11 questions**. All questions are compulsory.

(ii) The question paper contains **THREE sections**: **Section A: Reading Skills** (20 marks), **Section B: Grammar and Creative Writing Skills** (20 marks), **Section C: Literature Textbook** (40 marks).

(iii) Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each Part.

(iv) There is no change in the Question Paper Design and Assessment Pattern for Academic Session 2026-27.

Section A: Reading Skills (20 marks)

20 marks.

1(I). Read the following passage.

(1) Have you ever really looked at a toy store shelf and wondered what you're actually looking at? Rows upon rows of plastic products - bright, shiny, and visually appealing. We barely question them anymore. But here's a question worth asking: does the type of toy we choose really matter? The answer might surprise you. It turns out that choosing between a conventional plastic toy and an eco-friendly alternative is about far more than just grabbing something off the shelf.

(2) Let's be honest - plastic toys are everywhere. They've been the default choice for generations, and there's a reason: they're affordable, they're designed to grab attention, and they work. However, what exactly are we getting when we buy a mass-produced plastic toy? Often, we're getting something made with chemicals like BPA* and lead, substances that make manufacturing cheaper. These aren't just abstract risks floating in the background. They're real concerns that affect real people, especially children who interact with these toys daily.

(3) This is precisely why eco-friendly toys matter so much. Crafted from organic cotton, sustainable wood, and recycled materials, they ask a fundamental question: what if toys could be safe, engaging, and environmentally responsible all at once? When we choose these alternatives, we're not just buying a toy - we're making a statement about what we value.

(4) Ever noticed how a wooden block can keep a child entertained for hours, while some plastic gadget loses its appeal in minutes? There's a reason for that. Eco-friendly toys often engage children's minds differently. Natural materials offer something special - rich textures, varied tactile experiences, and a kind of sensory richness that engages the brain in deeper ways. A wooden building set doesn't just entertain; it challenges children to think, problem-solve, and create. It demands imagination in a way that pre-programmed, plastic alternatives never can.

(5) Think about the typical lifespan of a plastic toy. It breaks, it ends up in landfills, and it's replaced. Eco-friendly toys, however, are designed to survive. They're built to last years, to be passed along, to become keepsakes rather than waste. This durability speaks volumes about the difference between toys made purely for profit and toys made with purpose.

(6) Ultimately, the choice between conventional and eco-friendly toys reflects something deeper: how we think about consumption itself. Do we want a world where toys are disposable trinkets, or do we want objects that matter - that are safe, engaging, and kind to the planet? It's not just about toys. It's about the choices we make every single day and what those choices say about who we are and what kind of future we're building.

***BPA: Bisphenol A, a chemical used primarily in the production of plastic items**

In Paragraph 1, what does the phrase 'rows upon rows of plastic products' emphasise? [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Find the phrase in the passage The phrase comes from Paragraph 1: 'Rows upon rows of plastic products - bright, shiny, and visually appealing.' The writer is describing a toy store shelf.

Step 2: Look at how the phrase is built The word 'rows' is repeated: 'rows upon rows'. Repeating a word like this is a way to show a very large number.
It makes the reader picture shelf after shelf, line after line, with no end in sight.

Step 3: Link it to the next sentence Right after the phrase the writer says, 'We barely question them anymore.' This tells us plastic toys are so common that we accept them without thinking.
So the phrase stresses two things: there is an overwhelming amount of plastic toys in stores, and plastic products have become a normal part of consumer culture.

Step 4: Write the answer A good answer is one or two lines. It names the idea (abundance, plastic everywhere) and links it to consumer culture.

Step 5: Conclusion The phrase 'rows upon rows of plastic products' emphasises the overwhelming abundance of plastic toys in stores and how common and normal they have become in consumer culture.

Quick Tip to Solve: Notice the repeated word 'rows' and read the very next sentence in Paragraph 1.

1(II). Complete the following with the correct option from the two given.

When the writer says, 'These aren't just abstract risks floating in the background', he refers to _. (paragraph 2) [1 mark]

(A) the potential health hazards present in mass-produced plastic toys that consumers often ignore or are unaware of.

(B) the general concerns about toy safety that exist in society but don't directly affect individual purchasing decisions.

Correct Answer: (A) the potential health hazards present in mass-produced plastic toys that consumers often ignore or are unaware of.

Solution:

Step 1: Find the line in the passage The sentence is in Paragraph 2: 'These aren't just abstract risks floating in the background.' We must find what 'these' points back to.

Step 2: Find what 'these' refers to The line before it says we often get a toy 'made with chemicals like BPA and lead, substances that make manufacturing cheaper.' So 'these risks' are the dangers from those chemicals.

Step 3: Read the lines that follow The writer goes on: 'They're real concerns that affect real people, especially children who interact with these toys daily.' An 'abstract risk' is a vague idea that feels far away. The writer says these risks are not vague. They are real and they touch children.
Also, the opening of the paragraph says buyers choose plastic toys because they are cheap and attractive. This hints that many buyers do not look at the chemicals at all.

Step 4: Check option (a) Option (a) talks about potential health hazards in mass-produced plastic toys that consumers often ignore or are unaware of. This matches the chemicals, the children and the idea that buyers miss the danger. So (a) is correct.

Step 5: Check option (b) Option (b) says the concerns are general and do not directly affect buying decisions. The passage says exactly the opposite: the concerns 'affect real people'. So (b) is wrong.

Step 6: Conclusion The phrase refers to the health hazards from chemicals in mass-produced plastic toys that buyers often overlook. This is option (a).

Quick Tip to Solve: Find what 'these' points back to in the line before, then read what the writer says about real people.

1(III). The writer mentions, 'organic cotton, sustainable wood, and recycled materials' in paragraph 3.

Which of the following is an example of 'recycled material'? [1 mark]

(A) Hand spun clothes certified by environmental organisations

(B) Cotton grown without pesticides or synthetic fertilisers

(C) Plastic bottles processed and converted into shoes

(D) Wood treated with chemical preservatives to extend lifespan

Correct Answer: (C) Plastic bottles processed and converted into shoes

Solution:

Concept:

- A 'recycled material' is something that was already used and has been processed again to make a new product.
- The raw material is not new.

Step 1: Check option A 'Hand spun clothes certified by environmental organisations' describes how the cloth is made and who approved it. It does not say the cloth was made from old material. So A is wrong.

Step 2: Check option B 'Cotton grown without pesticides or synthetic fertilisers' is organic cotton. The passage lists organic cotton as a separate item, so B is wrong.

Step 3: Check option C 'Plastic bottles processed and converted into shoes' takes used bottles and turns them into a new product. This is recycling, so C is correct.

Step 4: Check option D 'Wood treated with chemical preservatives to extend lifespan' is fresh wood with a chemical coating. Nothing is reused, and chemical treatment does not fit 'sustainable wood' either. So D is wrong.

Step 5: Conclusion Only option C shows used material being processed into something new. The correct option is C.

Quick Tip to Solve: Recycled means used material made into something new. Which option does that?

1(IV). In paragraphs 2 and 3, the writer contrasts the characteristics of plastic toys with eco-friendly toys.

What does this comparison reveal about the writer's perspective on consumer responsibility? [2 marks]

Solution:

Step 1: Recall what Paragraph 2 says about plastic toys Plastic toys are affordable, eye-catching and work well. But they are often made with chemicals like BPA and lead, which make manufacturing cheaper and put children at risk.

Step 2: Recall what Paragraph 3 says about eco-friendly toys They are crafted from organic cotton, sustainable wood and recycled materials. They are safe, engaging and good for the environment all at once.

Step 3: Read the writer's attitude in the contrast The writer does not praise plastic toys for low price or easy availability. He puts the harm to children next to the safe choice. At the end of Paragraph 3 he says buying a toy is 'making a statement about what we value'. So a purchase is a choice with meaning.

Step 4: Write what it reveals about consumer responsibility The contrast shows the writer believes

buyers are responsible for what they buy. They should not choose only for convenience or cost. They should put children's health and the planet first.
He also suggests that informed choices matter, both for each person and for society as a whole.

Step 5: Conclusion The comparison reveals that the writer sees consumer responsibility as going beyond convenience and affordability. By setting the harmful chemicals (BPA and lead) in plastic toys against the safer, sustainable materials in eco-friendly toys, he suggests that consumers should put children's health and the environment before cost. Making informed choices is both a personal and a collective responsibility.

Quick Tip to Solve: Put the harm in plastic toys next to the benefits of eco-friendly toys and ask what the writer wants buyers to prioritise.

1(V). Identify whether the following statement is True or False. (Paragraph 4)
The sensory richness of eco-friendly toys primarily enhances children's entertainment value rather than their cognitive development. [1 mark]

(A) True

(B) False

Correct Answer: (B) False

Solution:

Step 1: Go to Paragraph 4 The statement says the sensory richness of eco-friendly toys mainly improves entertainment value and not cognitive development. We must compare it with Paragraph 4.

Step 2: Read what Paragraph 4 says It says natural materials give 'rich textures, varied tactile experiences, and a kind of sensory richness that engages the brain in deeper ways'.
It adds that a wooden building set 'doesn't just entertain; it challenges children to think, problem-solve, and create.'

Step 3: Compare The writer says the sensory richness works the brain, which is cognitive development. Entertainment is only a small part. The statement reverses this and says entertainment matters more than cognitive development. This goes against the passage.

Step 4: Decide between True and False Because the statement contradicts the passage, it is False. The option True is wrong.

Step 5: Conclusion The passage says sensory richness builds thinking skills and does more than entertain. So the statement is False.

Quick Tip to Solve: Read Paragraph 4 and see whether the writer puts entertainment or thinking skills first.

1(VI). Complete the analogy by selecting one of the two correct options (a) or (b).
disposable trinkets: landfills:: _ : _ [1 mark]

(A) eco-friendly toys: environmental responsibility

(B) meaningful keepsakes: future generations

Correct Answer: (B) meaningful keepsakes: future generations

Solution:

Step 1: Find the relationship in the first pair 'Disposable trinkets: landfills'. A disposable trinket is a cheap item that is thrown away. Landfills are where such items finally end up. Paragraph 5 supports this: the plastic toy 'breaks, it ends up in landfills, and it's replaced'.
So the link is: an item and the place or fate where it ends up.

Step 2: Find the opposite idea in the passage Paragraph 5 says eco-friendly toys are 'built to last years, to be passed along, to become keepsakes rather than waste.' So a lasting keepsake ends up being passed to the next generation.

Step 3: Check option (a) 'Eco-friendly toys: environmental responsibility' links a type of toy with a value or quality it stands for. It does not show where the item ends up. The relationship is different, so (a) is wrong.

Step 4: Check option (b) 'Meaningful keepsakes: future generations' links an item with where it ends up, which is with the people it is handed down to. It keeps the same relationship as the first pair, and it is the opposite of landfill waste. So (b) is correct.

Step 5: Conclusion Just as disposable trinkets end up in landfills, meaningful keepsakes end up with future generations. The correct option is (b).

Quick Tip to Solve: What is the link between a disposable trinket and a landfill? Look for the same link in Paragraph 5.

1(VII). Read the statements (i-v) given below and select the option that correctly classifies them as Facts (F) or Opinions (O).
(i) BPA and lead are used in the production of mass-produced plastic toys.
(ii) Plastic toys are affordable and attractive, which makes them popular.
(iii) Eco-friendly toys are designed to survive longer and are not discarded as waste.
(iv) Wooden toys engage children's minds in deeper and more meaningful ways than plastic toys.
(v) The choice between plastic and eco-friendly toys is about mindful consumption. [1 mark]

(A) (i) O (ii) O (iii) F (iv) F (v) O

(B) (i) F (ii) F (iii) O (iv) O (v) F

(C) (i) O (ii) F (iii) F (iv) O (v) O

(D) (i) F (ii) O (iii) F (iv) O (v) O

Correct Answer: (D) (i) F (ii) O (iii) F (iv) O (v) O

Solution:

Step 1: Recall the difference A fact can be checked and proved from evidence. An opinion is a personal view or judgement, and different people may disagree.

Step 2: Check statement (i) 'BPA and lead are used in the production of mass-produced plastic toys.' Paragraph 2 states this as something that happens, and it can be checked. So (i) is a Fact (F).

Step 3: Check statement (ii) 'Plastic toys are affordable and attractive, which makes them popular.' Words like 'affordable' and 'attractive' are judgements, and the reason given is a claim. So (ii) is an

Opinion (O).

Step 4: Check statement (iii) 'Eco-friendly toys are designed to survive longer and are not discarded as waste.' Paragraph 5 describes how they are built, which can be checked. So (iii) is a Fact (F).

Step 5: Check statement (iv) 'Wooden toys engage children's minds in deeper and more meaningful ways than plastic toys.' 'Deeper' and 'more meaningful' are judgement words. So (iv) is an Opinion (O).

Step 6: Check statement (v) 'The choice between plastic and eco-friendly toys is about mindful consumption.' This is the writer's view of what the choice means. So (v) is an Opinion (O).

Step 7: Match with the options The pattern is (i) F, (ii) O, (iii) F, (iv) O, (v) O. Option A has (i) O, so it is wrong. Option B has (ii) F, so it is wrong. Option C has (i) O, so it is wrong. Option D matches every statement.

Step 8: Conclusion The correct classification is (i) F, (ii) O, (iii) F, (iv) O, (v) O. This is option D.

Quick Tip to Solve: A fact can be checked. Value words like 'affordable', 'deeper' and 'meaningful' signal an opinion.

1(VIII). What might be the author's purpose of asking rhetorical questions throughout the passage?**

** a figure of speech in which questions are asked for a reason other than to get an answer** [2 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- A rhetorical question is asked to make the reader think, not to get an answer.
- The footnote in the paper says the same.

Step 1: Spot them in the passage Examples: 'does the type of toy we choose really matter?' (Paragraph 1), 'what if toys could be safe, engaging, and environmentally responsible all at once?' (Paragraph 3), and 'Do we want a world where toys are disposable trinkets...?' (Paragraph 6).

Step 2: See what they do to the reader Each question pulls the reader into the talk. The reader has to stop and answer silently. Most readers will answer in favour of safe and lasting toys.

Step 3: Link to the writer's aim The writer wants readers to reflect on their own choices. The questions build a persuasive argument that leads readers towards eco-friendly alternatives.

Step 4: Write the answer For 2 marks give the purpose (engage the reader and provoke thought) and the effect (encourage critical thinking and persuade readers to accept eco-friendly toys).

Step 5: Conclusion The author uses rhetorical questions to engage readers directly and provoke thought. They make readers reflect on their choices, encourage critical thinking and build a persuasive argument that guides readers towards accepting the need for eco-friendly alternatives.

Quick Tip to Solve: Ask what a reader does when a question is put to him, and where the writer wants him to end up.

2(I). Read the following passage.

(1) A 2023 report found that 'audio routines' have become a mainstay in people's daily lives. Unlike traditional content, audio-based experiences offer a hands-free and eyes-free experience, allowing individuals to stay entertained or absorb information outside the confines of a screen or paper book. The audiobooks market in India is also witnessing intense growth, fuelled by the rapid adoption of smartphones and a rising preference for convenient, on-the-go content consumption.

(2) A survey found that half of audiobook listeners spend between 1-4 hours per week listening to audiobooks and 33% spend 5-10 hours a week. When asked in which scenarios they're most likely to hit play on an audiobook, commute was the most popular choice. 63% said they listen to audiobooks while on the go, 54% while completing household chores and 44% while relaxing or falling asleep. 56% of the listeners generally prefer to listen to fiction over non-fiction books.

(3) 67% of audiobook listeners say they read more with audiobooks compared to books in traditional text format. When integrated into daily routines, audiobooks serve as a channel for more people to enjoy literature, accommodating those with the busiest of schedules.

(4) The audiobook format also offers a user-friendly format that enables a diverse population, including individuals with physical or neurological limitations to have access to literature. Additionally, it serves as a valuable resource for individuals with attention span difficulties, allowing them to engage with books despite the challenges of sitting down and maintaining a focus on reading.

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

Complete the sentence by selecting the correct option from those given in the bracket.
The word 'mainstay' as used in Paragraph 1 suggests that audiobooks have _.
(overpowered people's lives/ become a support in people's lives) [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Find the word in the passage Paragraph 1 begins: 'a 2023 report found that audio routines have become a mainstay in people's daily lives.' The question asks what 'mainstay' tells us about audiobooks.

Step 2: Understand the meaning of 'mainstay' A mainstay is the chief support of something. It is a thing people depend on again and again. It is a steady part of daily life, not a harmful or forceful one. The same paragraph says audio is hands-free and eyes-free, so people can stay entertained or pick up information anywhere. This shows audio helps people in their routines.

Step 3: Check the first choice: overpowered people's lives 'Overpowered' means to defeat or take control of something by force. The passage never says audiobooks control or harm anyone's life. The tone of the paragraph is positive, so this choice is wrong.

Step 4: Check the second choice: become a support in people's lives This matches the meaning of 'mainstay' exactly. Audiobooks help people through their routines and are something they rely on. So this choice fits the word and the paragraph.

Step 5: Conclusion The word 'mainstay' means a chief support, so audiobooks have become a support in people's lives.

Quick Tip to Solve: A mainstay is something people depend on as a main support. Decide which bracket choice has the same positive meaning.

2(II). What does relationship between smartphone adoption and audiobook suggest about consumer preferences? (Paragraph 1) [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Locate the relevant sentence The last sentence of Paragraph 1 says: 'The audiobooks market in India is also witnessing intense growth, fuelled by the rapid adoption of smartphones and a rising preference for convenient, on-the-go content consumption.'

Step 2: Find the link between the two things The word 'fuelled' shows cause and effect. The rapid adoption of smartphones is pushing the growth of audiobooks. A phone lets a person carry and play audio anywhere.

Step 3: Read what the passage says about preference The sentence adds 'a rising preference for convenient, on-the-go content consumption'. So people are choosing content that is easy to carry and use while moving.

Step 4: Draw the conclusion about consumers Since audiobooks grow along with smartphones, consumers increasingly like digital content that fits a mobile lifestyle. They like it better than physical books or media that needs them to sit with a screen or page. This is the answer the question wants.

Step 5: Conclusion The link between smartphones and audiobooks suggests that consumers increasingly prefer convenient, digital, on-the-go content that suits their mobile lifestyle, rather than physical books or stationary screen-based media.

Quick Tip to Solve: Read the last sentence of Paragraph 1. The word 'fuelled' tells you which thing drives the other.

2(III). Select the option that is true for the assertion and reason given below.
Assertion: The most preferred scenario for listening to audiobooks is when travelling.
Reason: During travel, listeners struggle with short attention span problems. [1 mark]

(A) Both assertion and reason are true, and the reason is the correct explanation.

(B) Both are true, but the reason is not the correct explanation.

(C) The assertion is true, but the reason is false.

(D) The assertion is false, but the reason is true.

Correct Answer: (C) The assertion is true, but the reason is false.

Solution:

Concept:

- In an assertion and reason question we first judge the assertion alone, then the reason alone.
- Only if both are true do we ask whether the reason explains the assertion.

Step 1: Check the assertion Paragraph 2 says: 'When asked in which scenarios they're most likely to hit play on an audiobook, commute was the most popular choice. 63% said they listen to audiobooks while on the go.'
Travel (commute) is the top scenario, ahead of household chores (54%) and relaxing or falling asleep (44%). So the assertion is TRUE.

Step 2: Check the reason The reason says that listeners struggle with short attention span problems during travel. The passage never says this. Attention span difficulty is mentioned only in Paragraph 4, and there it is about a group of people who find it hard to sit down and focus on reading. It has nothing to do with travel.
The real reason for the travel preference is that audio is hands-free and eyes-free (Paragraph 1). So

the reason is FALSE.

Step 3: Why option A is wrong Option A needs the reason to be true and to explain the assertion. The reason is false, so A is wrong.

Step 4: Why option B is wrong Option B also says both statements are true. The reason is false, so B is wrong.

Step 5: Why option D is wrong Option D says the assertion is false. We found it is true in Paragraph 2, so D is wrong.

Step 6: Pick the matching option Assertion true and reason false matches option C.

Step 7: Conclusion The assertion is true but the reason is false. This is option (C).

Quick Tip to Solve: Paragraph 2 gives the most popular scenario. Then check if Paragraph 4's attention span point has anything to do with travel.

2(IV). Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.

All of the following are mentioned in paragraph 2 EXCEPT - [1 mark]

(A) 50% of audiobook listeners spend between one and four hours weekly listening to audiobooks.

(B) A little more than half of the audiobook listeners prefer fiction over non-fiction content.

(C) Approximately 30% percent of listeners spend less than one hour weekly listening to audiobooks.

(D) Audiobooks have made it possible for people to appreciate literature.

Correct Answer: (C) Approximately 30% percent of listeners spend less than one hour weekly listening to audiobooks.

Solution:

Concept:

- This is an EXCEPT question. Three options are stated in the text and one is not.
- We have to find the one that is NOT mentioned. The question says to look only at Paragraph 2.

Step 1: Recall what Paragraph 2 contains It says: half of the listeners spend between 1-4 hours a week; 33% spend 5-10 hours a week; commute is the most popular scenario (63% on the go, 54% on chores, 44% relaxing or sleeping); 56% prefer fiction over non-fiction.

Step 2: Check option A 'Half of audiobook listeners spend between 1-4 hours per week.' This is stated directly, 50% equals half. So A is mentioned.

Step 3: Check option B '56% prefer fiction over non-fiction.' 56% is a little more than half, so B is a correct restatement. B is mentioned.

Step 4: Check option C The paragraph gives 33% for 5-10 hours and half for 1-4 hours. It gives no figure for listening less than one hour a week, and 30% appears nowhere. So C is NOT mentioned. This is our answer.

Step 5: Check option D The idea that audiobooks let people appreciate literature appears in the passage, in Paragraph 3: 'audiobooks serve as a channel for more people to enjoy literature'. Strictly it sits one paragraph after Paragraph 2, but it is a real statement of the passage. Option C is different: its figure of 30% is stated nowhere in the passage. So C is the option that is not mentioned.

Step 6: Conclusion Option C gives a figure (30% listening under one hour) that is not found in the passage.

Quick Tip to Solve: Turn each option into a claim and look for its number in Paragraph 2. The option with a number you cannot find is the answer.

2(IX). Suggest one reason why the title, 'Rise of Audiobooks: Transforming Reading' is a suitable title for the passage. [1 mark]

Solution:

Concept:

- A good title covers the main idea of the whole passage, not only one paragraph.
- We must check whether 'Rise of Audiobooks: Transforming Reading' does this.

Step 1: Match the word 'Rise' Paragraph 1 speaks of 'intense growth' in the audiobook market. Paragraph 2 gives the hours people spend listening and the different times they listen. These all show the growing popularity, which is the 'rise'.

Step 2: Match the words 'Transforming Reading' Paragraph 3 says 67% of listeners read more with audiobooks, so audio changes how people read. Paragraph 4 shows audiobooks give access to literature for people with physical or neurological limitations and attention span difficulties. Reading is being changed for them.

Step 3: State one reason *Model answer:* The title is suitable because it captures the main themes of all four paragraphs: the growing popularity of audiobooks and the way they transform reading, as shown by the 67% of listeners who read more with them.

Step 4: Conclusion The title covers both the growth of audiobooks and the change they bring to reading, so it is suitable.

Quick Tip to Solve: Match 'Rise' with the growth data and 'Transforming Reading' with the 67% figure and the access benefits.

2(V). Compare the preference for fiction (56%) versus non-fiction in audiobooks. What might this suggest about listener expectations? (Paragraph 2) [2 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The passage says '56% of the listeners generally prefer to listen to fiction over non-fiction books.'

Step 1: Compare fiction with non-fiction 56% choose fiction. The rest, about 44%, lean to non-fiction or have no strong choice. So fiction is ahead, though by a modest margin. Non-fiction still has a large group of listeners.

Step 2: Think about why fiction does well in audio Fiction is built on a story. A narrator's voice can bring out the mood, the characters and the twists of a plot. Listeners can enjoy this while commuting, doing chores or relaxing, which are the scenarios listed in the same paragraph.

Step 3: Link the result to what listeners expect The lead for fiction suggests that most listeners expect audiobooks to give them an engaging, story-driven experience, a kind of entertainment. They expect the voice and the plot to hold their interest, not just to supply facts.

Step 4: Write the model answer *Model answer:* The strong fiction preference (56%) indicates that audiobooks are mainly used for narrative-driven content. Storytelling formats probably work better in audio, where the narrator's voice and the intricacies of the plot enhance engagement. Listeners therefore expect entertainment and an immersive experience, while a sizeable group still expects useful non-fiction as well.

Step 5: Conclusion Listeners expect narrative-driven, engaging content, because storytelling works especially well in audio.

Quick Tip to Solve: Give two points: what the 56% versus the rest shows, and why stories suit listening better than reading.

2(VI). Complete the sentence suitably. (Paragraph 3)
Audiobook adoption has worked well for people with busy lifestyles because _. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Find the lines about busy lifestyles Paragraph 3 says: 'When integrated into daily routines, audiobooks serve as a channel for more people to enjoy literature, accommodating those with the busiest of schedules.'

Step 2: Understand 'accommodating' To accommodate means to fit in with someone's needs. So audiobooks fit into the lives of the busiest people. 'Integrated into daily routines' means the audio is played along with other daily work.

Step 3: Explain the reason A busy person has no free hour to sit with a printed book. With audio they can listen while they do other tasks, such as travelling or doing chores. They do not have to set aside a separate block of time for reading.

Step 4: Complete the sentence ...because audiobooks allow people to enjoy literature while they do other activities, so they do not need special time for conventional reading.

Step 5: Conclusion Audiobooks let busy people enjoy literature while doing other things, so no separate reading time is needed.

Quick Tip to Solve: Read the second sentence of Paragraph 3 and think about what 'integrated into daily routines' allows a busy person to do.

2(VII). Identify the phrase from paragraph 4 that indicates that everyone would find audiobooks easy and comfortable. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Know what the question wants We need one phrase from Paragraph 4 that tells us audiobooks are easy and comfortable to use for everyone. The phrase must be copied from the passage.

Step 2: Read the first sentence of Paragraph 4 'The audiobook format also offers a user-friendly format that enables a diverse population, including individuals with physical or neurological limitations to have access to literature.'

Step 3: Find the phrase 'User-friendly' means easy to use and comfortable for the user. The phrase 'enables a diverse population' says that many types of people can use it. So 'user-friendly format' tells us that everyone would find audiobooks easy.

Step 4: Rule out other phrases 'Physical or neurological limitations' and 'attention span difficulties' describe the people who face problems, not the ease of use. 'Valuable resource' says audiobooks are useful, but it does not say they are easy to use.

Step 5: Conclusion The phrase is 'user-friendly format'.

Quick Tip to Solve: Look in the first sentence of Paragraph 4 for two words that mean 'easy to use'.

2(VIII). A student with reading difficulties wants to complete his reading assignments in school. Why would an audio book option be an advantage? (Paragraph 4) [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Find the related lines in Paragraph 4 Paragraph 4 says audiobooks are a valuable resource for people with attention span difficulties, 'allowing them to engage with books despite the challenges of sitting down and maintaining a focus on reading.' It also says people with physical or neurological limitations get access to literature.

Step 2: Link the student's problem to those lines A student with reading difficulties finds it hard to decode words and read sentences. In an audiobook the words are spoken to him, so he does not have to read the text himself.

Step 3: State the advantage The audio format removes the barrier of processing written text. The student can still follow the book and take part in the assignment, even though reading is hard for him.

Step 4: Write the answer *Model answer:* An audiobook would let the student engage with the book despite his reading challenges, because listening removes the need to decode words and read sentences.

Step 5: Conclusion Listening removes the text-reading barrier, so the student can engage with the book despite reading difficulties.

Quick Tip to Solve: Think about what a student with reading difficulties finds hard, and what the audio format does about it. Use Paragraph 4.

Section B: Writing Skills & Grammar (20 marks)

20 marks. Q3: complete any ten of the twelve tasks (1 mark each).

3(I). Complete any ten of the twelve following tasks, as directed.

Fill in the blank with the correct option to complete the opening line of a formal email:
Dear Ms. Sharma,
We are writing to confirm that your application for the scholarship programme _ by our selection committee last week. [1 mark]

(A) has been reviewed

(B) was reviewed

(C) has been reviewing

(D) will be reviewed

Correct Answer: (B) was reviewed

Solution:

Concept:

- The sentence says the application was dealt with "by our selection committee". The word "by" names the doer. The application is only receiving the action, so the verb must be in the passive voice.
- The words "last week" give a finished time in the past.

Step 1: Choose the tense and the form A finished past time needs the simple past tense. The passive of the simple past is "was/were + past participle".
The subject "application" is singular, so we use "was". The past participle of "review" is "reviewed".

The sentence becomes: "We are writing to confirm that your application for the scholarship programme was reviewed by our selection committee last week."

Step 2: Why the other options are wrong "has been reviewed" is present perfect passive. It is used when the time is not stated or is not finished, so it cannot sit with "last week".
"has been reviewing" is active and continuous. An application cannot review anything, so it makes no sense.
"will be reviewed" is future, but "last week" is already past.

Step 3: Conclusion The verb must be simple past passive because of "by" and "last week". The correct option is (B).

Quick Tip to Solve: Look at "by our selection committee" and "last week". One shows passive voice and the other shows a finished past time.

3(II). Report the doctor's statement.
Doctor: "You should reduce your sugar intake and exercise regularly." [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Identify the type of sentence The doctor says "You should reduce ... and exercise regularly." The word "should" shows that the doctor is giving advice. So the best reporting verb is "advised" (or "recommended").

Step 2: Remove the quotation marks and the word should Advice is reported with "advised + person + to + verb". So "should reduce" changes to "to reduce".
The second action "exercise regularly" is joined with "and", so it stays as it is.

Step 3: Change the pronouns The doctor is speaking to a patient, so "You" becomes "the patient". "your" becomes "his/her/their", because the patient is now a third person.

Step 4: Join the parts Reporting clause: The doctor advised the patient.
Reported clause: to reduce his/her sugar intake and exercise regularly.
So the full sentence is: "The doctor advised the patient to reduce his/her sugar intake and exercise regularly."

Step 5: Conclusion The advice is reported with the verb "advised" followed by "to + verb".

Quick Tip to Solve: "Should" shows advice. Use "advised" + person + "to" + verb, and change "you" and "your" to the third person.

3(III). Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option to complete the official notice:
Notification to All Students,
Please note that _ applicants who have submitted incomplete forms are required to resubmit their documents by Friday. [1 mark]

(A) these

(B) those

(C) this

(D) that

Correct Answer: (B) those

Solution:

Step 1: Study the noun after the blank The noun is "applicants". It is plural, so the word before it

must be plural too. That removes “this” and “that”, which go only with singular nouns.

Step 2: Look at what follows the noun The noun is described by the clause “who have submitted incomplete forms”. This clause picks out a particular group from all applicants.
When a plural noun is picked out by a “who” or “that” clause, English uses “those”: “those applicants who ...”

Step 3: Check the other plural option “These” points to something close to the speaker, like people standing nearby or things just mentioned. A notice that talks about a group defined by a rule is not pointing at anything near, so “these” does not fit as well.
“This” and “that” are wrong because they are singular and “applicants” is plural.

Step 4: Conclusion The group is defined by the clause “who have submitted incomplete forms”, so the plural word “those” is used. The answer is (B).

Quick Tip to Solve: Check the number of “applicants” first. Then see which word usually goes before a plural noun followed by a “who” clause.

3(IV). Read Isha’s statement to her class teacher about missing school:
“I was absent yesterday because I had to visit the dentist for my regular check-up.”
Report Isha’s statement by completing the following sentence:
Isha explained that _. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Note the reporting verb The sentence begins with “Isha explained”, which is in the past tense. So the reported part must shift one step back in time. This is called backshift.

Step 2: Change the pronouns “I” is Isha herself, so in the report it becomes “she”. “my” becomes “her”.

Step 3: Backshift the verbs “I was absent” is simple past, so it moves to past perfect: “she had been absent”.
“I had to visit” is also in the past. “Had to” is the past of “have to”. Past perfect of “have to” is “had had to”. So we write “she had had to visit”.

Step 4: Change the time word “Yesterday” becomes “the previous day” or “the day before” in reported speech, because the time is now measured from the past.

Step 5: Write the answer Isha explained that she had been absent the previous day because she had had to visit the dentist for her regular check-up.

Step 6: Conclusion Each past verb moves one tense back, the pronouns change to the third person, and “yesterday” becomes “the previous day”.

Quick Tip to Solve: Use backshift: simple past goes to past perfect. Change “I” and “my” to the third person, and “yesterday” to “the previous day”.

3(IX). Choose the correct option to fill in the blank.
Saira was disappointed when she saw there was _ food left to serve the guests. [1 mark]

(A) few

(B) least

(C) any

(D) little

Correct Answer: (D) little

Solution:

Step 1: Study the noun "Food" is an uncountable noun. We cannot count it as one food, two foods. So the word before it must suit uncountable nouns.

Step 2: Use the clue about feeling Saira was disappointed, because she found that there was hardly enough food. "Little" means "hardly any" and has a negative sense. It fits uncountable nouns, as in "little food".

Step 3: Why the others are wrong "Few" is used only with plural countable nouns, such as "few guests".
"Least" is a superlative form meaning the smallest amount, and it needs "the", as in "the least food". It does not fit after "was".
"Any" is used in negative or question sentences. "There was any food left" is wrong, because the sentence is positive in form.

Step 4: Conclusion The uncountable noun "food" and the sense of shortage point to "little". The answer is (D).

Quick Tip to Solve: Is "food" countable or uncountable? Then pick the word that means "hardly any".

3(V). Identify and correct the error in the given line from a technical report:
Neither the software developers nor the project manager were aware of the compatibility issues. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Find the pattern used The sentence uses "neither ... nor". This pair joins two subjects: "the software developers" and "the project manager".

Step 2: Recall the agreement rule With "neither ... nor", the verb agrees with the subject that is nearer to it. We ignore the first subject when we choose the verb.

Step 3: Apply the rule The subject nearer to the verb is "the project manager". It is singular. So the verb should be singular too.
The given verb "were" is plural, so it is the error. The singular past form is "was".

Step 4: Write the corrected line Neither the software developers nor the project manager was aware of the compatibility issues.
Error: were. Correction: was.

Step 5: Conclusion The verb must agree with "the project manager", the nearer subject.

Quick Tip to Solve: In "neither ... nor" sentences, look at the subject right next to the verb. Its number decides the verb.

3(VI). Select the correct option to complete the given sentence from the school's safety policy:
All students _ wear their identification badges at all times while on campus premises. [1 mark]

(A) might

(B) could

(C) must

(D) may

Correct Answer: (C) must

Solution:

Concept:

- The sentence comes from a school safety policy. A policy states rules.
- The rule here is that badges must be worn "at all times". So the blank needs a modal verb that shows a strong duty or rule.

Step 1: Pick the modal that shows duty "Must" shows that something is necessary or compulsory. "All students must wear their identification badges" is a clear rule with no choice.

Step 2: Why the other options are wrong "might" shows a weak possibility, which is not a rule.
"could" shows ability or a polite possibility, not a requirement.
"may" shows permission or possibility. It would mean students are allowed to wear badges, not that they have to.

Step 3: Conclusion A safety policy sets a compulsory rule, so the modal is "must". The answer is (C).

Quick Tip to Solve: A policy tells people what they have to do. Which modal shows a strong duty, not a choice or a chance?

3(VII). The given question has an error. Select the option that correctly identifies the error and the correction.
What among these books have you read before? [1 mark]

(A) Error: What; Correction: Which

(B) Error: among; Correction: between

(C) Error: these; Correction: this

(D) Error: have; Correction: has

Correct Answer: (A) Error: What; Correction: Which

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks about "these books".
- The speaker is pointing at a known, limited group of books and wants the listener to choose from it.

Step 1: Recall when to use which and what "Which" is used when we choose from a known and limited set. "What" is used when the choice is open and the set is not known.
Because "these books" is a fixed set, the right question word is "Which". So "What" is the error and "Which" is the correction.

Step 2: Check option B "Among" is correct for three or more things, and many books are there. "Between" is for two things, so changing it would create a new mistake.

Step 3: Check options C and D "These" is correct, as "books" is plural. "This" would need a singular noun.
"Have" agrees with the subject "you". "Has" goes with he, she or it, so it would be wrong here.

Step 4: Conclusion The corrected question is: "Which among these books have you read before?" The answer is option (A).

Quick Tip to Solve: Ask whether the set of books is known and limited. If yes, which question word is used?

3(VIII). Juhi asked her friend the following question:
"Are you prepared for the mathematics test next week?"
Report it correctly to complete the following sentence.
Juhi asked her friend _. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Identify the kind of question The question "Are you prepared ...?" can be answered with yes or no. A yes/no question is reported with "if" or "whether".

Step 2: Change the word order In the direct question the verb comes first ("Are you prepared"). In reported speech, a question becomes a statement, so the order is subject first and verb next: "she was prepared". We also drop the question mark.

Step 3: Change pronoun and tense "You" is Juhi's friend. The sentence says "her friend", so the friend is a girl and "you" becomes "she". The reporting verb "asked" is past, so "are" moves back to "was".

Step 4: Change the time expression "Next week" becomes "the following week" in reported speech.

Step 5: Write the answer Juhi asked her friend if she was prepared for the mathematics test the following week.

Step 6: Conclusion A yes/no question is reported with "if", in statement order, with backshifted tense and the time word changed.

Quick Tip to Solve: A yes/no question is reported with "if" or "whether" in normal statement order. Change "you", "are" and "next week" too.

3(X). Identify the error and suggest the correction.

Each of the participants in the Science Fair have been given a set of guidelines to follow during the competition. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Find the real subject The sentence begins with "Each of the participants". The real subject is "Each", not "participants". The words "of the participants" only tell us more.

Step 2: Recall the rule "Each" always takes a singular verb, even when a plural noun follows "of". So the helping verb should be "has", not "have".

Step 3: Fix the sentence The verb group "have been given" is the error. We change "have" to "has" and the group becomes "has been given".
Correct sentence: Each of the participants in the Science Fair has been given a set of guidelines to follow during the competition.

Step 4: Conclusion The singular subject "Each" needs the singular verb "has". Error: have. Correction: has.

Quick Tip to Solve: "Each" is singular, whatever noun follows "of". Which verb form matches it?

3(XI). Fill in the blank to complete the teacher's advice by choosing the correct options from those given in brackets.
If you practice regularly, you _ win the quiz competition next month. (might / must) [1 mark]

Solution:

Concept:

- The sentence starts with "If you practice regularly".
- This tells us what may happen when the condition is met.
- The result is possible, but not certain.

Step 1: Know the meaning of each modal "Might" shows a possibility. "Must" shows a strong duty or a strong certainty.

Step 2: Choose the right one Practice improves the chance of winning, but it does not guarantee a win. Winning a quiz also depends on other students and on luck. So the correct modal is "might".

Step 3: Why must is wrong "You must win" would turn the teacher's advice into an order to win, or a sure result. A teacher cannot promise a win, so "must" does not fit.

Step 4: Conclusion The result of regular practice is only a possibility, so the word is "might".

Quick Tip to Solve: Does regular practice make a win certain, or only possible? Choose the modal that matches.

3(XII). Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb given in the brackets from a travel blog.
This hill station _ (lose) its natural beauty since the last time I saw it. [1 mark]

Solution:

Concept:

- The sentence contains the word "since": "since the last time I saw it". "Since" joins a point in the past with the present.
- It shows the change that started then and is still true now.

Step 1: Choose the tense For an action or a result that connects the past with the present, we use the present perfect tense: "has/have + past participle".

Step 2: Fix the verb form The subject "This hill station" is singular, so we use "has". The past participle of "lose" is "lost". So the verb is "has lost".

Step 3: Why other forms are wrong "Lost" (simple past) does not link to the present. "Loses" gives a general fact and does not suit "since". "Is losing" shows an action in progress and does not suit "since the last time I saw it".

Step 4: Conclusion The word "since" asks for the present perfect tense, so the answer is "has lost".

Quick Tip to Solve: "Since" links the past to now. Use the present perfect: has/have + past participle of "lose".

4(A). You are Maya Nair, a concerned resident of Green View Colony, Guwahati. You feel that your colony lacks adequate recreational and community spaces for residents of all age groups. The existing facilities are insufficient. Write a letter to the Secretary of your Resident Welfare Association (RWA) in 120 words, highlighting the need for establishing a community centre in the colony explaining how it will benefit the residents. [5 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks for a formal letter. The writer is Maya Nair, a resident of Green View Colony, Guwahati.
- The reader is the Secretary of the Resident Welfare Association (RWA). The purpose is to ask for a community centre and to explain how it will help the residents.
- The word limit is 120 words, and the letter carries 5 marks.

Step 1: Content points from the marking scheme The marking scheme lists five groups of points. A good letter touches each group briefly.
1. Issue and context: not enough recreational facilities, no space for community activities, no indoor play area, no venue for cultural events.
2. Need for a community centre: it promotes social bonding, gives a sense of belonging, offers a safe space for all age groups and bridges the gap between families.
3. Benefits for children and youth: indoor games, safe recreation away from traffic, workshops that build skills.
4. Benefits for adults and the elderly: a place for meetings, cultural programmes, fitness and yoga classes, and social events that reduce isolation.
5. Appeal to the RWA Secretary: request for timely action, a call for everyone's cooperation and a note on the urgency of the need.

Step 2: Format of a formal letter A letter to an official has these parts, in this order: sender's address, date, receiver's designation and address, subject line, salutation, body, subscription (complimentary close) and name. The body is usually in three or four short paragraphs: introduction, the problem, the benefits and the request. The format carries 1 mark. Content carries 2 marks, organisation of ideas 1 mark and accuracy (grammar, spelling, word limit) 1 mark.

Step 3: Plan the paragraphs Paragraph 1 gives the purpose of writing. Paragraph 2 explains the issue. Paragraph 3 explains how the centre will help children, adults and the elderly. Paragraph 4 makes the request. Keeping this order gives smooth flow, and the whole body fits into about 120 words.

Step 4: Write the model letter Green View Colony
Guwahati
10 January 2027

The Secretary
Resident Welfare Association
Green View Colony
Guwahati

Subject: Request to establish a community centre in Green View Colony

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a resident of Green View Colony and I request that a community centre be set up here.

Our colony has very few recreational facilities. There is no indoor play area for children and youth, and no hall for cultural programmes or gatherings.

A community centre would help everyone. Children could enjoy indoor games and workshops in a safe place away from traffic. Adults could hold meetings and celebrations there. Senior citizens could join yoga classes and social events, which would reduce loneliness. It would also bring families closer.

Kindly take this matter up at the RWA soon. I am sure all residents will cooperate.

Yours faithfully
Maya Nair

Step 5: Check the letter The body has about 106 words, which is close to the limit of 120. The tone is polite and formal. All five content groups are covered, the ideas follow a clear order, and the sentences are simple and correct.

Step 6: Conclusion A formal letter to the RWA Secretary, in correct letter format, within about 120 words, covering the issue, the need for a community centre, benefits for children, youth, adults and the elderly, and an appeal for early action.

Quick Tip to Solve: Use formal letter format. Cover the issue, the need, benefits for each age group and a request in about 120 words.

OR

4(B). You are Nandan Banerjee, a concerned citizen. Write a letter to the Editor of a local daily raising concern over the open burning of hospital and domestic waste in your city. Draw attention to its serious health implications, the need for scientific waste disposal practices and public awareness.

[5 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- This is a formal letter to the Editor of a local daily. The writer is Nandan Banerjee, a concerned citizen.
- He must raise the problem of open burning of hospital and domestic waste, show its serious health effects, state the need for scientific waste disposal and ask for public awareness. The letter carries 5 marks.
- No word limit is printed, so a body of about 120 words is a safe length.

Step 1: Content points from the marking scheme The marking scheme lists these groups of points.
1. Issue and context: hospital waste such as used syringes and bandages and domestic garbage are burnt in public spaces, on roadsides, in open plots and near homes. The practice is widespread and largely unchecked.
2. Health implications: toxic gases, soil and groundwater contamination, asthma, bronchitis and chronic lung damage, spread of infectious diseases, and special harm to children, the elderly and pregnant women.
3. Scientific waste disposal: strict biomedical waste protocols in hospitals and clinics, colour-coded bins for segregation, and regular municipal collection of domestic waste.
4. Public awareness: campaigns in hospitals, schools and colonies, RWAs helping in local monitoring, and media campaigns.
5. Appeal: ask the newspaper to highlight the issue, urge the Municipal Corporation and Pollution Control Board to act, and ask citizens to report violations.

Step 2: Format of a formal letter to the Editor Write the sender's address and date at the top. Then write the Editor's designation and the name of the newspaper. Add a subject line, the salutation, the body, the closing and the name. Format carries 1 mark, content 2 marks, organisation 1 mark and

accuracy 1 mark.

Step 3: Plan the paragraphs Paragraph 1 states why you are writing. Paragraph 2 describes the burning and its health effects. Paragraph 3 suggests scientific disposal and awareness. Paragraph 4 appeals to the authorities and the citizens.

Step 4: Write the model letter 25 Park Street
Kolkata
10 January 2027

The Editor
The Daily Chronicle
Kolkata

Subject: Open burning of hospital and domestic waste in the city

Sir/Madam,

Through your newspaper, I wish to raise a serious concern about the open burning of hospital and domestic waste in our city.

Used syringes, bandages and household garbage are burnt daily on roadsides and near homes. The smoke releases toxic gases, and the ash pollutes soil and groundwater. It causes asthma, bronchitis and lung damage, and unprocessed biomedical waste spreads infections. Children, the elderly and pregnant women suffer most.

Hospitals must follow strict disposal rules and use colour-coded bins for segregation. The municipal body should collect domestic waste on time, so that no one burns it. Awareness drives by schools, RWAs and the media are equally important.

I urge the authorities to act swiftly, and citizens to report violations.

Yours faithfully
Nandan Banerjee

Step 5: Check the letter The body has about 119 words. The tone is serious but polite. Every content group of the marking scheme is covered, and the paragraphs follow a clear order from problem to solution to appeal.

Step 6: Conclusion A formal letter to the Editor, in correct format, that describes the open burning of waste, its health effects, the need for scientific disposal and public awareness, and ends with an appeal to the authorities and citizens.

Quick Tip to Solve: Use formal letter format for an Editor. Cover the issue, health effects, scientific disposal, awareness and an appeal.

5(A). Read the product details mentioned on an e-commerce website for a student study desk organiser.
Multi-compartment storage with dedicated slots for books, stationery, and digital devicesEco-friendly bamboo wood construction with non-toxic finishAdjustable shelves to accommodate different item sizesCompact yet spacious design suitable for a small room spaceAnti-slip base prevents sliding on smooth surfacesAvailable in natural wood and light oak finishesBacked by a 5-year durability guaranteeNow, analyse why this desk organiser would be a good purchase for students. Write an analytical paragraph in about 120 words, considering factors such as its sustainability, organisational efficiency, optimal use of space, functionality, and student appeal. [5 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- An analytical paragraph is not a description of the given points and not a summary. It examines the given details and gives a reasoned opinion based on them.
- Here, the details are the features of a student study desk organiser. We must explain why it is a good purchase for students.
- The factors to cover are sustainability, organisational efficiency, optimal use of space, functionality and student appeal. The limit is about 120 words, and the paragraph has no title.

Step 1: Link each feature to a factor Match every detail to the factor it supports.
Sustainability: eco-friendly bamboo wood with a non-toxic finish.
Organisational efficiency: multi-compartment storage with slots for books, stationery and devices.
Optimal use of space: compact yet spacious design for a small room.
Functionality: adjustable shelves and the anti-slip base.
Student appeal: natural wood and light oak finishes, plus the 5-year durability guarantee that gives value for money.

Step 2: Plan the paragraph Start with one sentence that states your opinion. Then take the features one by one, using linking words such as firstly, moreover, finally. Explain what each feature means for a student. Close with a sentence on overall value. Do not give a heading.

Step 3: Write the analytical paragraph This study desk organiser is a smart buy for students for several reasons. Its multi-compartment storage, with separate slots for books, stationery and digital devices, keeps the desk tidy and saves time spent searching for things. Adjustable shelves let students store items of different sizes, which makes it highly functional. Because it is compact, it fits easily in a small room without crowding it. Moreover, the bamboo wood body with a non-toxic finish is eco-friendly and safe to use. The anti-slip base keeps it steady on smooth surfaces, and the natural wood and light oak finishes look attractive. Finally, the five-year durability guarantee gives long-term value for money.

Step 4: Check the paragraph The paragraph has about 108 words, in line with the limit of about 120. It does not just copy the bullet points. It explains what each feature gives the student. The marks are split as content 2, organisation of ideas 2 and accuracy 1.

Step 5: Conclusion A title-free analytical paragraph of about 120 words that argues the organiser is a good buy, using sustainability, organisation, space, functionality and appeal as reasons.

Quick Tip to Solve: Do not list the bullets. Link each feature to a factor such as sustainability or space, and explain what it means for a student.

OR

5(B). Vikram, a student of Grade X, has been offered the position of President of his school's Debate Club, which requires 5-7 hours weekly commitment. Study the SWOT notes and write an analytical paragraph in 100-120 to evaluate whether accepting this responsibility is advisable.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Develops public speaking and leadership skills	Significant time commitment away from studies	Recognition and awards when representing school in state or national level competitions	Risk of burnout balancing multiple responsibilities
Creates strong network of like-minded peers	Managing team conflicts and disagreements	Opportunity to collaborate with other school clubs for joint events	Conflicts with board examination preparation schedule & potential decline in academic performance
Access to debate mentors and senior members who can provide guidance and support	Limited time available for other activities	Useful for university admissions in future due to leadership experience	Criticism or negative feedback from members

[5 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- We have a SWOT table with notes on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of Vikram becoming Debate Club President. We must study these notes and write an analytical paragraph of 100-120 words that judges whether accepting the post is advisable.
- An analytical paragraph weighs the points and reaches a conclusion. It must not simply describe each box, and it has no title.

Step 1: Sort the SWOT points into gains and risks Gains (Strengths and Opportunities): public speaking and leadership skills, a strong network of like-minded peers, mentors and senior members, recognition and awards at state or national level, joint events with other clubs, and a boost for university admissions.
Risks (Weaknesses and Threats): a heavy time commitment of 5-7 hours a week, managing team conflicts, little time for other activities, burnout, a clash with board examination preparation, a possible fall in marks, and criticism from members.

Step 2: Plan the paragraph Open with the main view. Give the benefits first, then the challenges, using a contrast word such as however. Finish with a clear recommendation and the condition under which it holds.

Step 3: Write the analytical paragraph Becoming President of the Debate Club is a good opportunity for Vikram, but only with careful planning. On the positive side, the role would improve his public speaking and leadership skills, give him a strong peer network and bring guidance from senior debaters. Recognition and awards at state or national level, joint events with other clubs and a stronger university application are further gains. However, a weekly commitment of five to seven hours reduces time for studies and other activities. It can clash with board examination preparation and cause burnout and lower marks. Handling team conflicts and criticism also takes effort. Therefore, Vikram should accept only if he can manage his time well and keep academics first.

Step 4: Check the paragraph The paragraph has about 117 words, within the limit of 100-120. It uses points from all four parts of the SWOT table. It ends with a balanced recommendation. Marks

are content 2, organisation of ideas 2 and accuracy 1.

Step 5: Conclusion Vikram can accept the post only if he can manage time well and give first place to his studies, because the leadership gains are real but the time cost and exam clash are serious risks.

Quick Tip to Solve: Sort the SWOT notes into gains and risks, weigh them, and end with a clear recommendation.

Section C: Literature Textbook (40 marks)

40 marks.

6(A)(I). Read the given extracts A and B and answer ANY ONE of the two.

Extract A

Natalya: But what's this? Why, you're in evening dress! Well, I never! Are you going to a ball or what? Though I must say you look better...Tell me, why are you got up like that?
Lomov: [excited] You see, honoured Natalya Stepanova...the fact is, I've made up my mind to ask you to hear me out...Of course you'll be surprised and perhaps even angry, but a...[aside] It's awfully cold!
Natalya: What's the matter? [pause] Well?
Lomov: I shall try to be brief: You must know, honoured Natalya Stepanova, that I have long, since my childhood, in fact, had the privilege of knowing your family. My late aunt and her husband, from whom, as you know, I inherited my land, always had the greatest respect for your father and your late mother. (The Proposal)

OR

Extract B

Sweat broke out over her whole body. Would her stammering tongue again disgrace her? For the sake of this kind woman, however she decided to make an effort. She had such a soothing voice; she would not laugh at her.
"Bh-Bh-Bho-Bho," she began to stammer.
"Well done, well done," the teacher encouraged her. "Come on, now - the full name?"
"Bh-Bh-Bho-Bholi." At last she was able to see it and felt relieved as if it was a great achievement.
"Well done." The teacher patted her affectionately and said, "Put the fear out of your heart and you will be able to speak like everyone else."
Bholi looked up as if to ask, "Really?" (Bholi)

Which of the following statements best explains Natalya's attitude in the opening lines of the extract?

[1 mark]

(A) She is genuinely surprised by his formal attire and expresses sincere admiration while seeking an explanation.

(B) She mocks his formal dress with sarcasm to conceal her anxiety about his unexpected and unusual appearance.

Correct Answer: (A) She is genuinely surprised by his formal attire and expresses sincere admiration while seeking an explanation.

Solution:

Concept:

- Natalya's first words are: "But what's this? Why, you're in evening dress!

- Well, I neveri‘ These are the words of a person who did not expect what she sees. She then asks two plain questions: ”Are you going to a ball or whati¿‘ and ”Tell me, why are you got up like that?"

Step 1: Look at her tone In the middle she says, “Though I must say you look better...” This is a kind remark. Someone who is mocking would not add a compliment. She only wants to know the reason for his dress.

Step 2: Check option (a) Option (a) says she is surprised, praises him sincerely and asks for an explanation. Each part matches the lines above: surprise (“Well, I never!”), praise (“you look better”) and a request for a reason (“tell me, why”). So (a) is correct.

Step 3: Check option (b) Option (b) says she mocks him with sarcasm and hides her anxiety. Nothing in her words is sarcastic or anxious. She is curious and friendly at this point. So (b) is wrong.

Step 4: Conclusion Natalya is truly surprised, admires his looks a little, and wants him to explain. Option (a) is correct.

Quick Tip to Solve: Look at what Natalya says: is there any sign of mockery, or is she just curious and kind?

6(A)(II). What do the ellipses (...) in Lomov’s speech highlight? [1 mark]

(A) reveals his struggle to articulate his prepared thoughts

(B) shows his overconfidence and casual attitude

(C) demonstrates his anxiety and emotional turmoil

(D) indicates a lack of intelligence and education

Correct Answer: (C) demonstrates his anxiety and emotional turmoil

Solution:

Concept:

- In a dialogue, three dots show a pause or a break in speech.
- A speaker pauses like this when he is nervous, unsure, or searching for words.

Step 1: Look at Lomov’s lines Lomov says, “honoured Natalya Stepanova...the fact is, I’ve made up my mind to ask you to hear me out...” and then breaks off with “but a...” and says “It’s awfully cold!” to himself. He cannot finish his sentences. This shows he is tense and worried about the proposal.

Step 2: Check option C Option C says the ellipses show his anxiety and emotional turmoil. This matches the broken, hesitant speech. So C is correct.

Step 3: Why the other options are wrong Option A says he struggles to say prepared thoughts. His thoughts are clear, it is his nerves that stop him, so A is not the best fit. Option B says he is overconfident and casual. He is formal and nervous, so B is wrong. Option D says he lacks intelligence and education. Nothing in the text says this, so D is wrong.

Step 4: Conclusion The ellipses show Lomov’s anxiety and emotional turmoil. This is option C.

Quick Tip to Solve: Think about why a nervous person stops in the middle of a sentence.

6(A)(III). Complete the following suitably.

Lomov is quite formal in his conversation with Natalya and prepares lengthy justifications because he . [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Notice how Lomov speaks Lomov is wearing evening dress and says "honoured Natalya Stepanova". He then goes back to his childhood and talks about the respect his aunt and uncle had for her parents. This is a long and very polite way to begin.

Step 2: Find the reason He has come to propose marriage. He is nervous, so he tries to build a good case first. He wants Natalya to see that he knows her family well and that his intentions are respectful.

Step 3: Complete the sentence So the sentence becomes: Lomov is quite formal ... because he is nervous about proposing and wants to establish his worthiness and family credentials to win her approval.

Step 4: Why other reasons do not fit He is not trying to anger or tease her, and he is not just being polite out of habit. His own words, "you'll be surprised and perhaps even angry", show his fear of her reaction.

Step 5: Conclusion He is nervous and wants to win her approval by showing his respect and family ties.

Quick Tip to Solve: Why does a person give long reasons before asking something important?

6(A)(IV). How does the author's use of stage directions such as [excited] and [aside] enhance the dramatic tension in this extract? [2 marks]

Solution:

Step 1: Know what stage directions do Stage directions are the words in brackets that tell the actor how to speak or act. They also tell the reader what a character feels but does not say aloud.

Step 2: Study [excited] Lomov's words are very formal and calm in form, but the direction [excited] tells us that he is really agitated inside. The gap between his polite speech and his real state creates dramatic irony: the audience knows more than Natalya does.

Step 3: Study [aside] In "but a...[aside] It's awfully cold!" Lomov speaks only to the audience. Natalya cannot hear it. It lets us enter his private thoughts. It shows that he is so nervous that his body is shivering, and it adds humour and tension.

Step 4: Join the two points Together the two directions show Lomov's nervousness, which makes us wait to see how the proposal will go. The audience feels the tension because it knows what Natalya does not.

Step 5: Conclusion The directions reveal Lomov's hidden anxiety and keep the audience on edge.

Quick Tip to Solve: Compare what Lomov says aloud with what the brackets tell us he feels.

6(B)(I). Complete the sentence suitably.

Bholi shows some physical symptoms like sweat breaking out over her body and stammering. This shows she is . [1 mark]

Solution:

Concept:

- The extract says, "Sweat broke out over her whole body," and that she began to stammer.
- Sweating and a shaky voice are body signs of fear.

Step 1: Read her thoughts She asks herself, "Would her stammering tongue again disgrace her?" She worries that she will be laughed at. This is worry about being judged.

Step 2: Fill the blank A person who sweats and stammers because she fears shame is nervous and anxious. So the blank is filled with: extremely scared and anxious.

Step 3: Conclusion Bholi is extremely scared and anxious.

Quick Tip to Solve: What do sweating and stammering usually show about a person's feelings?

6(B)(II). Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.

"Would her stammering tongue again disgrace her?" The author has used this question as a narrative technique, with the aim of . [1 mark]

(A) convincing readers to judge Bholi

(B) showcasing Bholi's inabilities

(C) giving readers a peek into Bholi's thoughts

(D) showing sympathy for Bholi

Correct Answer: (C) giving readers a peek into Bholi's thoughts

Solution:

Step 1: Identify the technique The sentence is a question that is not asked to anyone. Bholi is asking it silently inside her own mind. This is a way of writing her inner thoughts, called an internal monologue.

Step 2: See what it does for the reader Because we read her private question, we know her fears and her worry about being laughed at. We see her feelings directly instead of being told about them from outside.

Step 3: Check option C Option C says it gives readers a peek into Bholi's thoughts. This is exactly what the technique does. So C is correct.

Step 4: Why the other options are wrong Option A is wrong because the writer does not ask us to judge her. Option B is wrong because the line does not list her inabilities, it shows her fear. Option D is a feeling readers may have, but the aim of the technique is to show her thoughts, not to demand sympathy directly.

Step 5: Conclusion The question lets readers enter Bholi's mind. The answer is option C.

Quick Tip to Solve: Who is asking the question in the line: Bholi herself, or someone else?

6(B)(III). The teacher's statement, "Put the fear out of your heart and you will be able to speak like everyone else." suggests that Bholi's primary obstacle is psychological rather than physical. Elaborate. [2 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The teacher says, "Put the fear out of your heart and you will be able to speak like everyone else." She does not say to fix the tongue or the throat.
- She says to remove fear.

Step 1: Look at the evidence in the scene At first Bholi stammers on "Bh-Bh-Bho-Bho". After the teacher says "Well done" and speaks in a soothing voice, Bholi manages the full name "Bholi". Her mouth did not change, only her fear went down.

Step 2: Explain the link So the problem is mostly in her mind. Her anxiety and fear of being laughed at make her stammer worse. When the teacher shows kindness and gives reassurance, her confidence grows.

Step 3: Write the conclusion Hence the main obstacle for Bholi is psychological. Compassion and encouragement help her to overcome her stammer.

Step 4: Conclusion Her stammer comes mainly from fear, and the teacher's kindness reduces it.

Quick Tip to Solve: Did Bholi's mouth change in the scene, or only the way she felt?

6(B)(IV). Fill in the blank with the correct word from the bracket.
Bholi's gesture of looking up 'as if to ask, Really?' reveals a mix of . (hope and hesitation/ disobedience and doubt) [1 mark]

Solution:

Concept:

- Bholi looks up and silently asks, "Really?" She has just heard that she can speak like everyone else if she loses her fear.

Step 1: Read the two pairs The first pair is "hope and hesitation". The second is "disobedience and doubt".

Step 2: Match Bholi wants to believe the teacher, so she has hope. She is also unsure because she has been hurt before, so she hesitates. She is not refusing to obey, so "disobedience" is wrong.

Step 3: Conclusion The gesture shows hope and hesitation.

Quick Tip to Solve: Does Bholi want to believe the teacher, and is she fully sure yet?

7(A)(I). Read the given extracts A and B and answer ANY ONE of the two.

Extract A
Don't eat that chocolate, Amanda!
Remember your acne, Amanda!
Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you,
Amanda! (Amanda)

OR

Extract B
Listen. The glass is breaking.
The trees are stumbling forward
into the night. Winds rush to meet them.
The moon is broken like a mirror,
its pieces flash now in the crown of the tallest oak. (The Trees)

Complete the sentence suitably.
The speaker connects chocolate consumption to acne, which reveals her concerns regarding . [1 mark]

Solution:

Concept:

- The speaker says, "Don't eat that chocolate, Amanda!
- Remember your acne, Amanda!" She links a food with a skin problem.

Step 1: Find the worry She believes chocolate will make Amanda's acne worse. So she is worried about how Amanda will look and about her skin health.

Step 2: Fill the blank The blank is: Amanda's physical appearance and health.

Step 3: Conclusion She is concerned about Amanda's appearance and health.

Quick Tip to Solve: What does acne affect: a person's looks and health, or her marks?

7(A)(II). How does the speaker's demand 'look at me when I'm speaking to you' suggest the dynamic between them? [1 mark]

(A) The speaker asserts authority which has a great influence on Amanda.

(B) Amanda is defiant and the speaker feels disrespected and ignored.

(C) Amanda is interested in listening to the speaker but is distracted.

(D) The speaker feels insecure and anxious about losing Amanda.

Correct Answer: (B) Amanda is defiant and the speaker feels disrespected and ignored.

Solution:

Concept:

- She says, "Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you." We only ask this of someone who is not looking at us.
- So Amanda is ignoring her.

Step 1: Understand the relationship The speaker is irritated because her words are not being heard. She feels ignored. Amanda is not obeying her and is acting independently, which is a form of defiance.

Step 2: Check option B B says Amanda is defiant and the speaker feels disrespected and ignored. This matches the line. So B is correct.

Step 3: Why the other options are wrong A says the speaker's authority greatly influences Amanda.

If it did, Amanda would be listening. C says Amanda wants to listen but is distracted. Nothing in the poem shows her interest. D says the speaker is afraid of losing Amanda. The poem shows irritation, not fear of loss.

Step 4: Conclusion Amanda ignores the speaker, who feels disrespected. This is option B.

Quick Tip to Solve: Why would someone ask you to look at them while they talk?

7(A)(III). Fill in the blank with ONE suitable word.
The speaker's use of 'Will you please' in the beginning of the third line suggests a rather than a demand. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Look at the phrase "Will you please" is a polite way of asking. The word "please" is used when we ask for something, not when we order.

Step 2: Compare with a demand A demand would be a command like "Look at me!". The speaker softens it by asking a question with "Will you please".

Step 3: Fill the blank The one word is: request.

Step 4: Conclusion The polite phrase makes it a request.

Quick Tip to Solve: Does "please" make a sentence sound like an order or like asking for something?

7(A)(IV). Analyse how the repetition of Amanda's name and the use of exclamation marks contribute to the tone and mood of the extract. [2 marks]

Solution:

Step 1: Notice the repeated name "Amanda" is used in all three sentences. A speaker who keeps repeating a name is trying hard to get attention. The repetition gives a nagging, insistent quality and shows frustration.

Step 2: Notice the exclamation marks The marks after "chocolate, Amanda!" and "Amanda!" show a raised voice. They convey urgency, exasperation and strong feeling.

Step 3: Explain the tone Together these devices set a tone of frustrated concern. The speaker cares, but she is annoyed at being ignored.

Step 4: Explain the mood The mood that the reader feels is one of tension and conflict between the speaker and Amanda.

Step 5: Conclusion The repetition and the exclamations create a tone of frustrated concern and a mood of tension.

Quick Tip to Solve: Think of how a parent sounds when she repeats a child's name with shouts.

7(B)(I). Complete the sentence suitably.

The word 'listen' at the opening of the extract creates a sense of , pulling the reader directly into the dramatic manner of nature's revolt. [1 mark]

Solution:

Step 1: Look at the first word The poem begins with a command, "Listen." It is a short word that asks us to stop and pay attention at once.

Step 2: Think about the effect Because the speaker tells us to listen right now, the events seem to be happening at this moment. It feels urgent.

Step 3: Fill the blank The blank is: immediacy or urgency.

Step 4: Conclusion The word creates a sense of immediacy and urgency.

Quick Tip to Solve: What does a sudden command at the start of a poem do to the reader?

7(B)(II). Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.

The phrase 'stumbling forward' suggests that the trees' movement is . [1 mark]

(A) graceful and purposeful

(B) deliberate and controlled

(C) unsteady and uncertain

(D) rapid and aggressive

Correct Answer: (C) unsteady and uncertain

Solution:

Concept:

- To stumble means to walk in an unsteady way and almost fall.
- It is not a smooth or planned movement.

Step 1: Apply to the trees The trees are pushed by the wind and move forward in a clumsy and shaky way. So their motion is unsteady and uncertain, even as they break through obstacles.

Step 2: Check option C Option C says unsteady and uncertain. It matches the meaning of stumbling. So C is correct.

Step 3: Why the other options are wrong A says graceful and purposeful. Stumbling is the opposite of graceful. B says deliberate and controlled. A stumble is not controlled. D says rapid and aggressive. The word does not say fast or violent, it says unsteady.

Step 4: Conclusion Stumbling means unsteady. The answer is option C.

Quick Tip to Solve: Think of how a person moves when he stumbles.

7(B)(III). Fill in the blank with ONE suitable word.

The repeated imagery of 'breaking' in the extract suggests that it is not destruction but a/an part of any meaningful change or liberation. [1 mark]

Solution:

Concept:

- The glass is breaking and the moon is broken like a mirror.
- But the moon's pieces then flash in the oak, which is a beautiful image.
- So breaking leads to something new and bright.

Step 1: Understand the idea The poem shows that change and freedom come only after something breaks. Breaking is a step that cannot be avoided.

Step 2: Fill the blank A fitting word is inevitable. The MS also accepts fundamental.

Step 3: Conclusion Breaking is an inevitable part of change.

Quick Tip to Solve: What word means something that cannot be avoided in a process of change?

7(B)(IV). How does the sequence of sensory experiences in the extract enhance meaning and impact readers? [2 marks]

Solution:

Step 1: Find the senses The poem begins with sound ("Listen. The glass is breaking"). Then comes movement (trees stumbling, winds rushing). It ends with sight (the moon broken like a mirror and its pieces flashing in the oak).

Step 2: See the order The order moves from a sound of chaos, to a struggle, to a final bright picture. This matches the process of change: it starts with disturbance, grows through struggle, and ends in beauty.

Step 3: Effect on the reader Using hearing, touch-like motion and sight together makes the scene feel real. The reader is inside the experience emotionally and does not just receive information.

Step 4: Conclusion So the sequence deepens the meaning of change and gives the poem a strong impact.

Step 5: Conclusion The sensory order mirrors transformation and immerses the reader.

Quick Tip to Solve: List the senses in order: what do you hear first, and what do you see last?

8(I). Answer any four of the following five questions, in about 40-50 words.

How does the poem use the 'cat metaphor' to characterise the fog's nature? (Fog) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question is about the poem 'Fog'. The poet says fog comes on little cat feet.
- We must explain what this comparison tells us about the nature of fog.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Fog arrives silently, like the quiet footfall of a cat.
It settles, looks over the harbour and city, then moves on without any disturbance.
So fog gets cat-like qualities: it is mysterious, aloof and watchful.
The comparison also links living and non-living things in nature and stays in the imagination.

Step 2: Write the model answer (45 words) "The poem compares fog to a cat that arrives silently

on soft feet, sits watching the harbour and city, and then moves on without disturbance. This gives fog cat-like qualities: it is quiet, mysterious, aloof and watchful. The metaphor also joins living and non-living nature."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Think of how a cat walks, sits and leaves, then match each action to fog.

8(II). The writer uses humour to simultaneously entertain readers and critique societal attitudes toward animals. Elaborate. (Mijbil the Otter) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks how humour in the chapter does two jobs at once: it entertains and it criticises.
- We need examples of the funny parts and say what attitude each one criticises.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Mijbil's tap-screwing frustration and playful mischief are funny and entertain readers.
The absurd guesses of Londoners and the labourer's angry reaction are also comic.
These scenes critique human arrogance, because people insist on fitting Mijbil into fixed categories like 'rat'.
This shows how disconnected people are from the natural world.

Step 2: Write the model answer (42 words) "Mijbil's tap-screwing frustration and playful mischief are humorous and entertain readers. The absurd guesses of Londoners and an indignant labourer, who insists he is a rat, critique human arrogance. People force animals into fixed categories and lose touch with the natural world."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Name one funny scene, then say what the people in it get wrong about animals.

8(III). How does the hailstorm function as more than just a weather event in the story? (A Letter to God) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks for the role of the hailstorm in the story, beyond being bad weather.
- Think of what it does to Lencho and to the plot.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text The hailstorm is a turning point that tests Lencho's faith.
It destroys his crops and creates a crisis.
It becomes the occasion to show his unwavering belief in God and the postmaster's compassion.
So the natural disaster reveals character and creates room for human kindness.

Step 2: Write the model answer (42 words) "The hailstorm is a turning point that tests Lencho's faith. It destroys his crops and creates his crisis, yet it also shows his unwavering belief in God and the postmaster's compassion. The natural disaster reveals character and creates room for human kindness."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Ask what the hailstorm makes Lencho and the postmaster do.

8(IV). Assess how the poem's message about not judging by appearances still relevant today. (The Tale of Custard the Dragon) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks us to explain why the poem's message, do not judge by looks, matters in today's world.
- We should link the story of Custard to modern habits of judging people.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Today people are often judged by superficial traits such as appearance, social media image or first impressions.
Custard looked cowardly, but he alone faced the pirate when the others ran away.
True character shows through actions under pressure, not outward appearance.
The poem challenges the modern habit of forming instant judgments.

Step 2: Write the model answer (42 words) "Today people are judged by appearance, social media image or first impressions. Custard looked cowardly, yet he alone faced the pirate when the others ran away. The poem stays relevant because true character appears in actions under pressure, not in outward looks."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Think of Custard's looks versus his action against the pirate.

8(V). Why has the writer included the legends about tea's origin-the Chinese emperor's story and Bodhidharma's tale in the narrative? (Glimpses of India- Tea from Assam) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks for the purpose of including two legends in the lesson on tea.
- Think about what legends add that plain facts and dates cannot.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text The legends humanise tea's history beyond facts and dates.
They add cultural richness.
They show Chinese and Indian civilisations valued tea for spiritual and medicinal reasons.
They show tea is not purely commercial, and they make the narrative engaging and memorable.

Step 2: Write the model answer (42 words) "The legends of the Chinese emperor and Bodhidharma humanise the history of tea beyond facts and dates. They add cultural richness and show that different civilisations valued tea for spiritual and medicinal reasons. They also make the narrative more engaging and memorable."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Ask what stories add that bare facts and dates cannot.

9(I). Answer any two of the following three questions, in about 40-50 words.

Compare Hari's initial approach to Anil with his honest smile at the story's end. What does this change reveal? (The Thief's Story) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks us to compare two moments: Hari's first dealings with Anil and his smile at the end.
- We then say what the change shows about Hari.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text At first Hari manipulates Anil through calculated charm and deception.
His final smile is genuine and spontaneous and needs no effort.
This shows an authentic change: from using relationships for gain to valuing human connection.
The effortless smile suggests the change is internal and not just good behaviour.

Step 2: Write the model answer (44 words) "Initially, Hari manipulates Anil through calculated charm and deception. His final smile is genuine and spontaneous, needing no effort. This contrast reveals authentic change: Hari moves from exploiting relationships to valuing human connection. The effortless smile suggests the change is internalised, not mere compliance."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Contrast a planned smile with a natural one.

9(II). Analyse how the writer uses irony throughout the story to convey the message that vanity and materialism lead to one's downfall. (The Necklace) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks where irony appears in the story and how it supports the message about vanity.
- We need two or three ironies and a closing link to the message.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Matilda sacrifices everything to replace a necklace that was worthless.
Ten years of poverty turn her into the very 'common woman' she despised.
Her pride becomes her downfall, and her suffering was entirely needless.
The writer uses irony to critique materialism and show vanity leads to self-inflicted tragedy.

Step 2: Write the model answer (47 words) "The story weaves multiple ironies. Matilda sacrifices everything to replace a necklace that was worthless. Ten years of poverty turn her into the very common woman she despised. Her pride becomes her downfall, and her suffering was needless. Irony thus exposes how vanity leads to self-inflicted tragedy."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Irony means the outcome is the opposite of the hope. Find Matilda's.

9(III). Why does Horace take off his gloves to give the young lady his lighter? What does this action tell us about his state of mind at that crucial moment? (A Question of Trust) [3 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks why Horace removes his gloves and what this shows about his mind.
- A burglar wears gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints, so removing them is a break from his routine.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Removing his gloves shows Horace has abandoned his careful criminal protocol.
He was emotionally manipulated and is so eager to please the lady and be released that he forgets basic safety.
The action reveals desperation and vulnerability, since she exploited his fear of prison.
He is emotionally compromised and no longer thinks like a criminal but like a desperate man seeking escape.

Step 2: Write the model answer (50 words) "Removing his gloves tells us that Horace has abandoned his careful criminal protocol due to emotional manipulation. He is so eager to please the lady and be released that he forgets basic safety. This reveals his desperation and vulnerability: he thinks like a desperate man seeking escape, not a criminal."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Why would a careful burglar ever take off his gloves?

10(A). Valli in 'Madam Rides the Bus' and the young seagull in 'His First Flight' are protagonists of the story who undergo personal transformation. Compare and contrast how the catalysts in these stories drive the change. [6 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks us to compare and contrast the forces (catalysts) that change Valli and the seagull.
- Plan: one line on what is common, then the seagull's catalyst, then Valli's catalyst, then what both do.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Both Valli and the young seagull undergo significant personal transformation.
The seagull's change is driven by acute biological necessity: prolonged hunger and family isolation force instinctive action. His catalyst is external and involuntary.
Valli's motivation includes curiosity and yearning for experience. She longs for dignity, independence and experience beyond domestic limits. Her catalyst is internal.
Both catalysts do the same job: they free suppressed potential and overcome fear and unwillingness.

Step 2: Write the model answer (115 words) "Both Valli in 'Madam Rides the Bus' and the young seagull in 'His First Flight' change in a big way, but their catalysts differ. The seagull is pushed by hunger. His family leaves him alone, and starvation forces him to dive, which shows the flying ability he never knew he had. His catalyst is outside him and not his choice. Valli, however, is moved by her own curiosity and longing. She has watched the bus with fascination and wants independence, dignity and experience beyond her home. Yet both catalysts work alike: each frees hidden potential and shows that change needs a force strong enough to overcome fear and unwillingness, whether it is hunger or desire."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Sort the two pushes into outside (hunger) and inside (longing), then say what both achieve.

OR

10(B). The poems, 'The Ball Poem' and 'Dust of Snow' capture brief moments that teach lasting lessons. How do these poems propose that momentary events generate a lasting impact? [6 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks how a very short event in each poem leaves a long effect.
- Plan: say what is common, then take each poem, then the way both speakers feel the moment.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Both poems show that important learning can happen instantly, not slowly over time.
In 'The Ball Poem' the ball falls into the water and the boy understands loss's permanence quickly. Berryman suggests he will remember the lesson forever.
In 'Dust of Snow' the snow falls and the mood shifts immediately. The change is not only for a few minutes, it transforms how the speaker sees the day.
Neither the boy nor the speaker reasons step by step. They feel the moment deeply and directly.

Step 2: Write the model answer (104 words) "In both poems a small, quick event gives a deep and lasting lesson. In 'The Ball Poem' the ball falls into the water and the boy understands at once that loss is permanent. Berryman suggests he will remember this lesson forever, since one lost ball teaches him loss and responsibility, which shape the rest of his life. In 'Dust of Snow' a crow shakes snow on the speaker. The mood changes at that instant, and it transforms how he sees his day. Neither the boy nor the speaker reasons it out. Each feels the moment directly, so a quick moment leaves a lasting mark."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Say how long the event lasts and how long its effect lasts, for each poem.

11(A). In the story, 'The Midnight Visitor' the 'balcony' functions as the story's central plot device, yet it never physically exists. Discuss what the balcony symbolises in the story. [6 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks what an imaginary balcony stands for in the story.
- Plan: balcony as narrative power, then truth versus perception, then storytelling over fact.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text The balcony symbolises the power of narrative to create reality. It exists only in language, in Ausable's description and Max's belief, and becomes more real than the room itself.
Ausable builds it with plausible details such as the building's history, access routes and previous intrusions.
It shows the focus on truth versus perception: Max accepts it because Ausable's account matches what he expects of a Paris hotel.
Ultimately it stands for the triumph of storytelling over material facts. Controlling the narrative gives

absolute power.

Step 2: Write the model answer (108 words) "In 'The Midnight Visitor' the balcony shows the power of storytelling to create reality. It exists only in language: Ausable describes it in detail and Max believes it, so it feels more real than the room itself. Ausable adds the building's history, the access routes and earlier break-ins, so every detail sounds possible. The imaginary balcony also shows the gap between truth and perception. Max accepts it because Ausable's account matches what he expects of a Paris hotel. In the end, the balcony stands for the triumph of storytelling over material facts. Whoever controls the narrative holds power, and the unreal balcony becomes stronger than any physical barrier."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Ask what idea a balcony that exists only in words can stand for.

OR

11(B). In 'The Book that Saved the Earth', Think-Tank rules Mars with absolute authority and arrogance, yet he makes ridiculous mistakes throughout the play. Evaluate how this impacts his leadership. [6 marks]

Solution:

Concept:

- The question asks us to judge how Think-Tank's arrogance and silly mistakes affect his rule.
- Plan: his refusal to admit errors, how his power makes it worse, then the climax.

Step 1: Collect the points from the text Think-Tank shows the danger of absolute power combined with ignorance. He mistakes books for sandwiches, then hats, then weapons, but claims each error proves his genius and that he is never wrong. His intelligence is useless without humility.
Nobody challenges him, so he gets no honest feedback. His crew's fearful obedience prevents a reality check, and errors escalate: nursery rhymes become military threats.
At the climax, seeing Humpty Dumpty's image he panics and orders Mars's evacuation. Arrogance plus refusal to acknowledge mistakes leads to catastrophic decisions. His massive brain becomes a liability.

Step 2: Write the model answer (104 words) "Think-Tank is the ruler of Mars, but absolute power joined with ignorance makes him a poor leader. He mistakes books for sandwiches, then hats, then weapons, yet he insists each error proves his genius. When corrected, he claims he knew it all along. His authority makes this flaw dangerous, because nobody dares to challenge him. His crew obeys in fear, so he never hears honest feedback and his errors grow. Nursery rhymes become military threats. At the climax, seeing Humpty Dumpty's image, he panics and orders Mars to be evacuated. His huge brain becomes a liability, since arrogance without humility leads to destructive decisions."

Step 3: Conclusion The answer should cover the points above in the stated word limit.

Quick Tip to Solve: Judge him on three things: admitting errors, hearing feedback, and the final decision.