

SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER

CBSE
2025-26

ENGLISH
Language & Literature

General Instructions :

Read the instructions very carefully and strictly follow them:

1. This question paper comprises 11 questions. All questions are compulsory.
2. The question paper contains THREE sections –
Section – A: Reading Skills
Section – B: Grammar and Creative Writing Skills
Section – C: Literature Textbooks
3. Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part.

Time Allowed : 3 hours

Maximum Marks : 80

SECTION A

READING SKILLS

(20 Marks)

1. Read the following text.

(10)

- (1) The story of Grace Darling has captured imaginations for over a hundred years. Grace was an ordinary young woman who was boldly and unequivocally labelled a 'heroine' after the events of a stormy night in 1838. Being the daughter of a lighthouse keeper and having lived in various lighthouses, Grace was used to the harsh and dangerous environment around her. However, she had never experienced real danger until the night of the 7th September 1838 — the night that she entered the history books.
- (2) On the 5th September the steamship SS Forfarshire set off from Hull to Dundee. On board the vessel were 60 crew members and passengers as well as containers of valuable cargo. Disaster struck the next day when the ship's boiler began to leak and by the morning of the 7th September the engine had stopped. The Forfarshire began to drift. Suddenly at about 4 a.m., there was a thunderous crash as the steamship collided with Big Harcar Rock. The impact was sudden and there was no time for the passengers to be called from their cabins and into smaller boats that would have taken them to safety.
Within 15 minutes, the ship had broken in to two. The sea waves pounded relentlessly at the fragile remnants of the ship until it had been reduced to a disintegrating wreck. The back half of the boat was swept away by the billowing waves and was quickly overpowered. The 48 people on board lost their fight for survival and were tragically consumed by the raging sea.
- (3) That night, Grace Darling and her parents were in the lighthouse. They knew a fierce storm was blowing and they watched as huge waves battered their lighthouse walls. Grace who knew the sea intimately, who, within minutes of being in the sea's presence could tell the mood it was in, who read the signs and predicted its behaviour, had already sensed that something sinister was brewing. As a result, Grace stood by the lighthouse window that night and watched nervously as her long-time companion transformed into an unrecognisable and brutal force of death. It wasn't long before Grace saw some desperate and shadowy figures waving, their cries inaudible above the deafening crash of the savage sea.

- (4) Grace's father knew that the local lifeboat service would not be able to launch their ship because of the brutal conditions; if these people were to have any chance of survival then he and Grace were their only hope. Armed with blankets to warm any survivors, William and Grace took their tiny rowing boat and went into the vast and wild sea. Each wave appeared bigger than the last and the force of the rain stung their cheeks. It was almost impossible to see where they were heading and the boat was being thrown off course constantly. They knew the area around the Farne Islands was notorious for being a ship's graveyard and yet they rowed with determination towards almost certain death.
- (5) As they approached the scene of the disaster, William went into the water to attempt to pull as many survivors into their boat as possible whilst Grace rowed frantically backwards and forwards just so she could stay in the same place and not crash into the reef. The storm whirled around her and the waves were like mountains. It was too late for many of the victims but William and Grace rescued nine people that night and rowed them back to safety. They arrived back to the lighthouse exhausted yet safely. Grace worked hard to care for the victims before they were returned to the mainland.
- (6) Within a few days of the rescue, news of Grace's bravery had spread across the country. Newspaper reporters flocked to the village wanting to follow her every move. Requests for her to visit different places flooded in and many artists wanted her to sit for portraits. Such extraordinary bravery was a source of inspiration for many. Queen Victoria sent her £50 and she was awarded gold medals from a number of societies. However, Grace soon became increasingly weary of all attention and the commitments that came with it, feeling that she was unable to live a normal life any more. In a cruel twist of fate, Grace Darling succumbed to tuberculosis a mere four years later.

Answer the following questions, based on the given passage.

- i. Grace was used to the harsh and dangerous environment around her as she _____. (1)
- ii. Why did Grace stand by the lighthouse window that night? Write your answer, in about 40 words. (2)
- iii. Based on the reading of the passage, describe, in about 40 words, how Grace and William saved the victims that night. (2)
- iv. The rescue mission seemed more like a suicide mission. Which line/phrase supports this statement? (1)
 - A. They watched as huge waves battered their lighthouse walls.
 - B. Each wave appeared bigger than the last and the force of the rain stung their cheeks.
 - C. They rowed with determination towards almost certain death.
 - D. They went in the water to attempt to pull as many survivors into their boat.
- v. Select the option that makes the correct use of "notorious", as used in the passage, to fill in the blank. (1)
 - A. The new Italian restaurant is _____ for its risotto.
 - B. The pet made _____ noise as the master came home.
 - C. Maxwell road is _____ for its deathly traffic accidents.
 - D. Harry is always the one being _____ in the class for his impeccable handwriting.
- vi. Which attributes can be used for describing Grace Darling ? (1)
- vii. Complete the sentence appropriately.
 "Newspaper reporters flocked to the village wanting to follow her every move." By this line the author meant, Grace was dealing with _____. (1)
- viii. In the last paragraph, the author makes Grace's act of bravery sound like a burden. Which phrase/lines implies that? (1)
 - A. News of Grace's bravery had spread across the country.
 - B. Many artists wanted her to sit for portraits.

- C. She succumbed to tuberculosis a mere four years later.
- D. She was unable to live a normal life any more.

2. Read the following text.

(10)

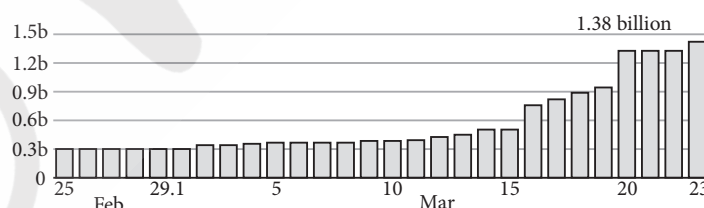
COVID-19 has turned the world upside down. Everything has been affected. How we live and interact with each other, how we work and communicate, and how we move around and travel. Every aspect of our lives has been affected. Decisions made now and in the coming months will be some of the most important in generations. They will affect people all around the world for years to come. It is imperative that governments making those decisions have access to the best information available. Throughout this crisis, the international statistics community has continued to work together in partnership with national statistical offices and systems around the world to ensure that the best quality data and statistics are available to support decision-making during and after the crisis. This report gives a small flavour of that cooperation. It has been compiled jointly by 36 international organizations under the aegis of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA).

The United Nations and other partner organizations of the CCSA make a wealth of impartial data and statistics available in the spirit of promoting fact-based planning. Children already left behind will likely bear the brunt of the pandemic's impact, whether through missing out on life-saving vaccinations, an increased risk of violence, or interrupted education.

Many children, especially those in the poorest households and the poorest parts of the world, risk losing their lives to pneumonia, diarrheal diseases, malaria, HIV, and other preventable diseases unless urgent action is taken to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. For instance, any further disruptions to immunization services will result in more children dying from pneumonia, which already kills around 800,000 children under the age of five every year—about 2,200 per day.

Nearly three-quarters of the population in sub-Saharan Africa lacks basic handwashing facilities at home, a fundamental mechanism to prevent COVID-19, leaving already vulnerable people at further disadvantage. As many as 3 billion people lack handwashing facilities with soap and water available: 1.6 billion have facilities lacking soap or water, and 1.4 billion have no facilities at all. In short, for many people, the most basic and effective method of preventing the spread of COVID-19 is out of reach.

When school closure is instituted as a containment measure, such alternatives as distance education (e.g., TV or radio programmes) and online learning are deployed as alternatives in some countries. However, less than half of households around the world have access to the internet. While 73% of urban households possess television, only 38% of rural households do so. The pandemic risks aggravating the learning crisis and leaving the most deprived children behind. As communities are disrupted, children already at risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse will find themselves even more vulnerable.



Of the world's 13 million child refugees, those who reside in camps face similar challenges. They, along with a million child asylum-seekers and 17 million displaced children, are among those most likely to be excluded from social protection and to be negatively affected by movement restrictions that may keep them from obtaining a more secure status.

Answer the following questions, based on the given passage.

- i. Complete the given sentence based on your understanding of paragraph 1.
The international statistics community has continued to collaborate in cooperation with national statistical offices and systems throughout the world _____.

(1)

- ii. Fill in the blank with the appropriate option to complete the following statement. (1)
Children already left behind will probably be hardest hit by the pandemic's effects, whether it be through _____ (a lack of/lack of) access to potentially life-saving vaccinations, an increase in the likelihood of violence, or a _____ (eruption/disruption) in their schooling.
- iii. Justify the following statement in about 40 words. (2)
Children will find themselves more vulnerable. Why?
- iv. The most effective method of preventing the spread of COVID-19 is out of reach. Which statement in the passage concludes this? (1)
- v. According to the graph given, on which date did the numbers of learners between March 15 and March 20 cross the mark of 0.9b? (1)
- vi. Consider the given statements and select the most appropriate option. (1)
Statement I : Of the world's 13 billion child refugees, those who reside in camps face similar challenges.
Statement II : Any further disruptions to immunisation services will result in more children dying from pneumonia, which already kills around 80,00,000 children under the age of five every year.
A. Statement I is the effect of Statement II.
B. Statement II is the effect of Statement I.
C. Statement I is correct but Statement II is incorrect.
D. Both the Statements I and II are incorrect.
- vii. Select the option that is not a synonym of the word 'imperative'. (1)
A. Incumbent B. Peremptory C. Dispensable D. Involuntary
- viii. How did the pandemic aggravate the learning crisis? (1)
- ix. A fundamental mechanism to prevent COVID-19 is _____. (1)

SECTION B : GRAMMAR AND CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (20 marks)

GRAMMAR (10)

3. Complete ANY TEN of twelve of the following tasks, as directed.
- i. Fill in the blank by using the correct form of the word in the bracket, for the given portion of a letter: (1)
Dear Sir
This is with reference to committee's letter of recommendation that _____ (highlight) the nominations for 'Safe Residential Area' award for this current year.
- ii. Read the given sentence from a recipe review article. Identify the error and supply the correction in the sentence. (1)
This delightful recipe must keep your hunger pangs at bay with its balanced spices and oriental flavour.
Use the given format for your response.
- | Error | Correction |
|-------|------------|
| | |
- iii. Simran's mother wished her for her entrance exam. Report her statement. (1)
Radha : May you crack this entrance exam in first attempt!
- iv. Read the dialogue between Shabnam and her mentor, Sara, regarding her summer internship programme. (1)
Sara: Why did you choose to participate in this internship programme?
Shabnam: Ah! I am convinced this programme has the potential to enhance my abilities.
Select the correct option to complete the reporting of the above dialogue.
Sara asked Shabnam _____ in that internship programme.

Shabnam sighed and exclaimed that she was convinced that the programme had the potential to enhance her abilities.

- A. why to choose to participate B. to choose participation
C. about her choice to participate D. with her choice in participating

v. **Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option.**

Most men would have _____ mad after one or two years of solitary confinement. (1)

- A. goes B. went C. going D. gone

vi. **Identify the error and supply correction for the given sentence from a commercial company's current marketing strategy.** (1)

The company aimed at increasing authority in areas frequently visited by the clients.

Use the given format for your response.

Error	Correction

vii. **Select the option that identifies the error and supplies the correction for the closing line, from an analytical report.** (1)

In conclusion, this study explores the association among short-sleep pattern and overweight youngsters.

Option No.	Error	Correction
A.	explores	explore
B.	and	or
C.	among	between
D.	In	for

viii. **Complete the given narrative, by filling the blank with the correct option.** (1)

The experience of nursing an injured bird left me _____ grateful for knowing the importance of being kind and compassionate to all creatures.

- A. feeling B. having felt C. felt D. feels

ix. **Report the dialogue between a vendor and his customer, by completing the sentence:** (1)

Vendor: It is nice to see you, Sir!

Customer: Yes, indeed! Unlike last month, I have been away for quite some time this month.

The vendor greeted his customer respectfully and mentioned that he was pleased to see him.

The customer answered in the affirmative and explained that _____.

x. **Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option to complete a letter.** (1)

The problem can be easily _____ with by spreading awareness about the issue.

- A. deal B. dealing C. has dealt D. dealt

xi. **Complete the line from a self- awareness song, by filling the blank with the correct option.** (1)

*The river runs through your veins
The trees and mountains _____ your name
The moon and stars watch over
You're guiding your way back home
To dream the night away.*

- A. will call B. call C. had called D. calls

- xii. Identify the error and supply correction for the following note in a passengers' flight instruction manual: (1)

Note: Passengers will not reach the airport late in order to avoid a fine equivalent to 5% of the basic fare.

Use the given format for your response.

Error	Correction

CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS

(10)

- 4.A. This summer vacation, you are planning to visit Shimla. Write a letter to a travel agency in Shimla, in about 120 words, requesting them to book you a room in a five-star hotel. Give other details of your journey and the facilities you require there. Sign your name as Sonam, C/5, West Bengal. (5)

OR

- 4.B. Roadside vendors occupy most of the space on roads disturbing the flow of traffic and causing difficulties even to the pedestrians. Write a letter to the Editor of a national daily, in about 120 words, expressing your views, and suggesting ways and means to curb this problem. You are Rosie, 15, Navkunj Apartments, Delhi. (5)

- 5.A. You are the Head of the School's Literary Society. Two renowned writers — Mr. Anuj Bhatia and Ms. Ramaya Sen — have written to express their interest to serve as keynote speakers in your upcoming inter-school literary fest. Below are excerpts from their letters:

Excerpt 1:

: "...Over the past decade, I have published five novels and delivered workshops in multiple schools and colleges. My specialty lies in empowering young writers to find their voice and hone their storytelling style. I have acknowledged invitations from literary societies nationwide and always seek to spark enthusiasm for creative writing in students."

Best Regards

Mr. Anuj Bhatia

Excerpt 2:

"...It would be a delight to address your students at the literary fest. I have lectured on the intersection of social change and literature at countless international symposiums. My forte is connecting literature to real life challenges and motivating students to use writing as advocacy. I hope to share insights from my journey and help students see literature not only as art but also as a force for good."

Yours sincerely

Ms. Ramaya Sen

Analyse the above information in a paragraph and select the most suitable speaker, justifying your decision considering how their strengths complement your society's goals. (5)

OR

- 5.B. Omar, Editor for the school magazine and a literacy enthusiast, wants to start a 'Literacy Club' at school to endorse reading among lower classes, organise reading competitions, peer tutoring, and authors' visits. He's passionate about literature and narrative, proficient at motivating students to read, but grapples with organized scheduling, liaising with authors, or maintaining consistent meeting structure. He has to choose among Anju, Trehan, and Laveena to be his partner in launching the club. The profiles of these candidates are:

Anju: Anju is organized, punctual, good at scheduling, maintaining attendance, organizing logistics for guest speakers, and ensuring smooth meetings. However, she is less comfortable leading discussions or inspiring younger students about reading.

Trehan: Trehan's love for books is deep, can impart inspiring talks, read widely across genres, brilliant at engaging younger students, but administrative tasks like booking meeting rooms or keeping track of borrowed books tend to slip through his hands.

Laveena: Laveena has ample organizing experience and is confident in discussion. She's balanced, can lead sessions, plan some logistics, but sometimes struggles with follow through on finer details (e.g., she starts something but finishes late or forgets tasks).

Taking into consideration the features of each candidate, analyse and choose who would be the best partner for Omar especially thinking of splintering tasks to cover his weaknesses, maximizing club impact and sustainability? Contemplate on teamwork and complementary strengths. (5)

SECTION C

LITERATURE TEXTBOOKS

(40 marks)

6. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given. (5)

A. It was during the meal that, just as Lencho had predicted, big drops of rain began to fall. In the north-east, huge mountains of clouds could be seen approaching. The air was fresh and sweet. The man went out for no other reason than to have the pleasure of feeling the rain on his body.

- i. What can be expected in the north-east region? (1)
- ii. Why did Lencho move out while having his meals? (2)
- iii. Which word has the same meaning as 'advance towards' in the given extract? (1)
 - A. Predicted
 - B. Pleasure
 - C. Went out
 - D. Approaching
- iv. 'Huge mountains of cloud's means _____. (dark and large clouds/very small white clouds) (1)

OR

B. I looked down again at the little dog. That was the trouble. Tricki's only fault was greed. He had never been known to refuse food; he would tackle a meal at any hour of the day or night. And I wondered about all the things Mrs Pumphrey hadn't mentioned.

"Are you giving him plenty of exercise?"

"Well, he has his little walks with me as you can see, but Hodgkin, the gardener, has been down with lumbago, so there has been no ring-throwing lately."

- i. What had happened to Tricki? (1)
- ii. Select the most appropriate option for the following. (1)
tackle : handle :: neglect : _____
 - A. overlook
 - B. regard
 - C. support
 - D. focus
- iii. Pick the most appropriate reason why the little dog was not doing enough exercise. (1)
 - A. He has grown too big.
 - B. He keeps sleeping for the whole day and night.
 - C. He has hurt his leg.
 - D. The gardener who took him for the walk was down with body-ache.

iv. How would you describe the reaction of Dr. Harriot on seeing Tricki's condition? (2)

7. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given. (5)

A. "Ink trickled down to the bottom of the household,
And little mouse Blink strategically mouseholed.
But up jumped Custard, snorting like an engine,
Clashed his tail like irons in a dungeon,
With a clatter and a clank and a jangling squirm,
He went at the pirate like a robin at a worm"

- i. Which option lists the quotes that support the ideas in the extract? (1)
- (1) Fear makes strangers of people who would be friends.
 - (2) If you're brave enough to start, you're strong enough to finish.
 - (3) Courage doesn't mean you don't get afraid. Courage means you don't let fear stop you.
 - (4) You get in life what you have the courage to ask for.
 - (5) Fear has a large shadow, but he himself is strong.
- A. 1 and 5 B. 2, 3 and 4 C. 2 and 3 D. 1, 3 and 5
- ii. What is the poet's purpose of using the onomatopoeic words given in the extract? (1)
- A. It is to emphasize the might and boldness of Custard.
 - B. It is to introduce the character Custard to the readers.
 - C. It is to impress upon the readers that Custard was ready.
 - D. It is to make Custard bold enough to face the situation.
- iii. Select the option that fits with the reaction of the characters in the context of the extract. (1)
- Ink: terrified : : Blink : 1) _____
Pirate: 2) _____ :: Custard: undaunted
- A. (1) shocked (2) displeased
 - B. (1) petrified (2) wondered
 - C. (1) upset (2) dazed
 - D. (1) petrified (2) shocked
- iv. "He went at the pirate like a robin at a worm". (2)
- Why has this comparison been used in the extract? Answer in about 40 words.

OR

- B. All night the roots work
to disengage themselves from the cracks
in the veranda floor.
The leaves strain toward the glass
small twigs stiff with exertion
long-cramped boughs shuffling under the roof
like newly discharged patients
half-dazed, moving
to the clinic doors.
- i. Choose the option that lists the examples of exertion. (1)
- (1) Neha had been up all-night keeping accounts and now she's resting.
 - (2) Swati was running for five miles non-stop last evening.
 - (3) Hemant is watching his favourite show and having snacks.
 - (4) Sachin helped a senior citizen board a flight in the morning.
- A. 1 and 2 B. 2 and 3
C. 3 and 4 D. 1 and 4
- ii. Choose the correct option that mentions the correct poetic device against the correct example. (1)
- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) | simile | long-cramped boughs |
| | metaphor | like newly discharged patients |
| (2) | personification | small twigs stiff with exertion |
| | simile | like newly discharged patients |

(3)	refrain	under the roof
	simile	leaves strain toward the glass
(4)	personification	like newly discharged patients
	refrain	half-dazed, moving

- A. Option (1) B. Option (2) C. Option (3) D. Option (4)

iii. Long-cramped and half-dazed are combination of two words joined together to form compound words.

Choose the option that correctly fits the definition of the same. (1)

1. discharged 2. backstage 3. comeback

4. toward 5. knighthood

- A. 1, 3 and 5 B. 2, 3 and 4 C. 2, 3 and 5 D. 1, 2 and 4

iv. What does the phrase “newly discharged patients” suggest? Justify your answer in about 40 words. (2)

8. Answer ANY FOUR of the following five questions, in about 50 words each. (4 × 3 = 12)

- Why, according to the author, did the baker and his family never starve?
- Give one reason why, ‘The Tale of Custard the Dragon’ is more a fable than a ballad.
- Why did Prince Siddhartha Gautam leave the palace and become a beggar?
- What does Chubukov at first suspect that Lomov has come for? Is he sincere when he later says “And I’ve always loved you, my angel, as if you were my own son”? Find reasons for your answer from the play.
- Why did Valli stop herself from going to the stall to have a drink? What does this instance show about Valli?

9. Answer any two of the following three questions, in about 40-50 words. (2 × 3 = 6)

- What instances show that Bholi was a neglected child?
- How are the relations between the Martians and humans in the 25th century?
- What was the significance of the balcony in the story, The Midnight Visitor?

10. Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 100-120 words. (1 × 6 = 6)

- A. One can learn a lot from the characters and the surroundings in the lesson “Madam Rides the Bus”. Valli learns a lot from others. Describe the qualities of her character that enable her to take information from others and interact with her surroundings.

OR

- B. Life is full of trials and tribulations. Kisa Gotami also passes through a period of grief in her life. How does she behave in those circumstances? What lesson does a reader learn from the story of her life? Give any two points how you would like to act in the midst of adverse circumstances.

11. Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 100-120 words. (1 × 6 = 6)

- A. Matilda suffered in life because she was not content in her life. Her desires led to her disaster. What do you learn from her mistake in life?

OR

- B. Excess of everything is bad. Comment in the wake of Mrs Pumphrey’s love for Tricki.