SAMPLE PAPER 03

ENGLISH CORE (301)

CLASS-XII EXAM 2026-27

Time Allowed : 3 Hrs. **Maximum Marks : 80**

General Instructions :

Read the following instructions very carefully and follow them :

i. This question paper has 13 questions. All questions are compulsory.

ii This question paper contains three sections :
Section A : Reading Skills
Section B : Creative Writing Skills
Section C : Literature.

iii. Attempt all questions based on specific instructions for each part. Write the correct question number and part thereof in your answer sheet.

iv Seperate instructions are given with each question/part, wherever necessary.

v. Adhere to the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

SECTION A - READING SKILLS 22

1. Read the following passage. **12**

1. The old library stood at the end of a quiet street, its walls showing signs of age. Inside, the air smelled of old books, a reminder of the knowledge stored here over the years. Tall wooden shelves were filled with books that seemed to hold endless stories. The only sound was the gentle rustling of pages, creating a peaceful atmosphere for anyone who visited. The library had stood for over a century, a silent witness to the countless people who had come in search of knowledge, solace, or simply an escape from the rush of everyday life.

2. Sunlight shone through the large, stained-glass windows, creating colorful patterns on the floor. The light was a quiet reminder of how time was passing by, even though the library itself seemed to stay the same. For many, the library was a place of escape, where the busy world outside didn't matter. Some visitors found comfort in its stillness, while others appreciated the opportunity to disconnect from the constant barrage of notifications and demands of modern life. Others, however, felt that the library was becoming outdated in a world where everything was available online at the click of a button.

3. In the quietest corners of the library, where dust gathered on untouched books, there was still something special. It wasn't just about reading; it was about discovering forgotten wisdom and stories. Holding a book, feeling its weight, and turning its pages was a connection to the past—a time when stories were shared through paper, not screens. For some, this act of reading provided a sense of nostalgia, while for others, it was a reminder of the simple pleasures that technology could never replace.

4. Despite the rise of technology, the library remained a symbol of human curiosity and the desire for knowledge. In today's fast-paced world, the library encouraged visitors to slow down and take their time. It wasn't about how much information they could get, but about enjoying the experience of reading and thinking. Libraries represented a rare space where reflection and deep thinking were valued over speed.
5. In this space, time was measured not by the ticking of clocks but by how deeply one could lose themselves in a story. While the modern world seemed obsessed with speed, the library offered a different kind of richness—the kind that could only be found in the pages of a book, in the quiet moments of reflection. For those who appreciated it, the library was not just a place, but an experience, a pause from the relentless pace of life.

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

i. According to paragraph 1, what does the scent of old books in the library symbolize? 1

ii. How does the author use the sunlight coming through the stained-glass windows to show the passage of time in paragraph 2? 1

iii. Read and complete the following sentence suitably. 1
The phrase 'something special' in paragraph 3 suggests that beyond the dust and forgotten books, there is still an element of magic in the act of choosing and reading a book, connecting readers to the past.
Choose the correct response from the two options to complete the sentence.
The 'something special' refers to _____.
(A) a collection of rare and valuable artifacts
(B) untold stories and knowledge waiting to be discovered

iv. Complete the following with ONE reason, with reference to paragraph 2 : 1
The library is considered a place of escape because _____.

v. Why does the author describe reading physical books in the library as a 'connection to the past' in paragraph 3? 1
Because
(A) It brings readers closer to an old way of learning and storytelling.
(B) It offers a sense of nostalgia for those who miss the past.
(C) It provides a more authentic experience than reading on screens.
(D) It preserves books that have been forgotten by time.

vi. Provide ONE textual evidence with reference to paragraph 3, to support the following : 1
The act of reading a book is more than just gathering information.

vii. In the line, 'In today's fast-paced world, the library encouraged visitors to slow down...' (Paragraph 4), what does the phrase 'slow down' mean in this context? 2

viii. Complete the analogy with ONE word from paragraph 4 : 1
rest: relax :: library: _____
(A) read (B) discover
(C) think (D) slow

ix. Why is it fair to say that the statement 'In this space, time was measured not by the ticking of clocks but by how deeply one could lose themselves in a story' in paragraph 5, uses contrast? 1
(A) It shows the difference between regular time and the emotional experience of losing oneself in a book.
(B) The author is pointing out the slow pace of the library compared to the busy modern world.
(C) The writer contrasts how people experience time in the library versus the outside world.
(D) The statement highlights the difference between time spent reading and time spent on other activities.

x. Evaluate the potential benefits or challenges of keeping libraries relevant in the digital age, as suggested in paragraph 4. 2

2. Read the following carefully. **10**

1. Introduction :
In recent years, the rise of e-commerce has transformed the way people shop, affecting both consumer behavior and the traditional retail industry. This case study aims to explore the purchasing preferences of different age groups when it comes to online shopping versus in-store shopping and their impact on the retail market.
2. Methodology :
A survey was conducted among individuals of varying age groups to determine their preferred shopping method. Participants were asked to indicate whether they primarily shop online, in physical stores, or a combination of both. Data was collected and analysed to observe trends in purchasing behavior and the factors influencing their choices.
3. Survey Examination :
The survey looked into the preferences for online and in-store shopping, focusing on convenience, product variety, and price comparison. Participants were encouraged to elaborate on why they favored one method over the other, offering insights into the influence of technology, accessibility, and personal habits on their shopping choices.

4. Results :
The survey results revealed the following shopping preferences across age groups:

Age Group	**% Prefer Online Shopping**	**Reasons for Preference**
Teenagers	75%	Convenience, Technology familiarity, Peer influence
Young Adults	65%	Time-saving, Price comparison, Product variety
Middle-aged	45%	In-store experience, Product inspection, Customer service
Elderly	30%	Familiarity with physical stores, Trust, Personal interaction

5. Implications for Interventions :
The findings suggest that retail businesses should adopt strategies that cater to the preferences of different age groups. For example, enhancing the online shopping experience for younger consumers while improving in-store customer service for older shoppers could lead to increased customer satisfaction. Retailers can also focus on integrating technology in physical stores to bridge the gap between online and in-store shopping experiences.

6. Conclusion :
This study provides key insights into how the rise of e-commerce is reshaping consumer habits. By understanding the different shopping preferences across age groups, businesses can tailor their strategies to meet the needs of both online and in-store shoppers, ultimately improving customer engagement and competitiveness in the market.

Answer the following questions, based on given passage.

i. Complete the following suitably. 1
In the introduction, the researcher links e-commerce with consumer behavior and the retail industry to highlight _____.

ii. What would the following be classified as? 1
To explore the purchasing preferences of different age groups when it comes to online shopping versus in-store shopping.
Select the appropriate response.
(A) Research outcome (B) Method of analysis
(C) Secondary objective (D) Primary objective

iii. Give two points to support why e-commerce was included as a focus in the survey on purchasing preferences. 2

iv. Paragraph 3 includes words – 'technology' and 'habits.' 1
Classify the following sentences as 'technology' or 'habit':
Sentence 1: The familiarity with smartphones and apps leads teenagers to prefer online shopping.
Sentence 2: Elderly shoppers prefer in-store shopping due to their long-standing habits.

v. Read the following : 1
Aman is a teenager who enjoys the convenience of shopping online. His older brother, Rohit, prefers the flexibility of comparing prices and buying both online and in stores. Their father, Rajesh, values the personal interaction he gets from in-store shopping.
Select the option that identifies the correct age group for Aman, Rohit, and Rajesh.
(A) Aman – young adult; Rohit – middle-aged; Rajesh – elderly
(B) Aman – teenager; Rohit – young adult; Rajesh – middle-aged
(C) Aman – teenager; Rohit – middle-aged; Rajesh – elderly
(D) Aman – young adult; Rohit – elderly; Rajesh – teenager

vi. Although young adults and teenagers both show a strong preference for online shopping, why is the percentage highest among teenagers? 1

vii. Analyse how improving the in-store shopping experience for older age groups can benefit retailers. (Paragraph 5) 2

viii. What is the ultimate goal for stakeholders, based on the insights from the study? 1
(A) Improve technology used in online shopping
(B) Create a more personalized shopping experience
(C) Increase sales across all shopping platforms
(D) Expand the number of physical stores

SECTION B - CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS 18

All the names and addresses used in the questions are fictitious. Resemblance, if any, is purely coincidental.

3. Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (A) or (B), in about 50 words. $1 \times 4 = 4$

A. You are, Aditi Mohan, School Prefect. Draft a notice for the noticeboard about a trekking holiday that your school is organising, giving all necessary details in about 50 words and asking the interested students to give their names.

OR

B. You are Niti Singhal, studying at Bright Future High School, Mysuru and an active member of the school sports club. Recently, your school had organized an Inter-School Cricket Championship. After the final match was over, you found an unclaimed cricket kit on your school playground and have been asked to draft a notice to locate its owner.

4. Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (A) or (B), in about 50 words. $1 \times 4 = 4$

A. You are David/Disha, the Secretary of the English Literary and Cultural Society of St. Joseph's Academy, Agra. You have to organize an Inter-zonal extempore competition at the +2 level. You wish to invite Dr. Hansa Bhogle, an eminent educationist, to preside over the function to be held on 15 October at 9:30 a.m. at Govt. Model Sr. Sec. School, Agra. Draft an invitation in about 50 words requesting her to come and grace the occasion.

OR

B. Your friend Antriksh is staying in the school hostel. You wish to invite him at your house for Diwali celebration. Invite him in not more than 50 words. Invent necessary details.

5. Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (A) or (B), in 120-150 words. $1 \times 5 = 5$

A. You are Srikhant, living at 7C-189, Ist floor, Ramjas Colony, Muzzafarpur. Write a letter to the Editor of a newspaper about the burden of heavy bags the young children carry to school.

OR

B. Draft an application for the post of an accountant in Gurukul Public School that was advertised in the Times of India. Also, include your biodata. You are Anil/Anita.

6. Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (A) or (B) in 120-150 words. $1 \times 5 = 5$

A. Deepak/Deepa has been involved as a student volunteer in the 'Adult Literacy Drive' and has been working in the slums for the last six months. He/She has to write an article in about 120-150 words on the 'Need for a Literate Nation'.

OR

B. You recently attended a seminar on "Tiger Reserve: Economic and Environmental Win-Win" at India International Centre, New Delhi. Write a report on the same in about 120-150 words for your school magazine. You are Rohan Pandey, Secretary, Cultural Club, Doon School, Dehradun.

SECTION C- LITERATURE 40

7. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). $1 \times 6 = 6$

A.

Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the Earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits.

(A Thing of Beauty)

i. Pick the option that enumerates what 'noble natures' would include.

(A) Selflessness (B) Judiciousness
(C) Enthusiasm (D) All of these

ii. Select the phrase that suggests the following:
Human life in full of hardships.

iii. Read the assertion and the reason below, with reference to the given extract.
Assertion : The poet believes that beauty helps us stay connected to life and lifts the gloom from our spirits.
Reason : Despite the hardships and challenges of life, beauty has the power to ease our sorrows and bring us hope.
Choose the correct option regarding their relationship:
(A) Both the assertion and the reason are true, and the reason is the correct explanation of the assertion.
(B) Both the assertion and the reason are true, but the reason is not the correct explanation of the assertion.
(C) The assertion is true, but the reason is false.
(D) The assertion is false, but the reason is true.

iv. Complete the following suitably.
Poetic devices used in 'of noble natures' is _____.

v. Select the correct option from those given in brackets, to fill in the blank.
The poet says that we wreath a flowery band that binds us to Earth. He means to state that nature's beauty fills man with a _____ (depression/spirit) of living.

vi. What makes our life full of inhuman dearth?

OR

B.
Driving from my parent's
home to Cochin last Friday
morning, I saw my mother
beside me
doze, open mouthed, her face
ashen like that
of a corpse and realized with
pain
that she thought away, and
looked but soon...

(My Mother at Sixty-Six)

i. What is the speaker's emotional state when looking at her mother?
(A) Empathetic and understanding (B) Fearful and apprehensive
(C) Nostalgic and longing (D) Confused and disoriented

ii. Where is the poetess going when she said, "home to Cochin last Friday"?

iii. Select the correct option from those given in brackets, to fill in the blank.
The theme of the given extract is _____ (stolen childhood/fear of loss).

iv. Read the assertion and the reason below, with reference to the given extract.
Assertion : The poet feels a deep sense of fear and sorrow as she notices her mother's aging and frail condition.
Reason : The mother's ashen, corpse-like appearance makes the poet painfully aware of her mother's mortality, prompting her to momentarily look away.
Choose the correct option regarding their relationship:
(A) Both the assertion and the reason are true, and the reason is the correct explanation of the assertion.
(B) Both the assertion and the reason are true, but the reason is not the correct explanation of the assertion.
(C) The assertion is true, but the reason is false.
(D) The assertion is false, but the reason is true.

v. What message do these lines highlight, in the context of familial relationships, and the speaker's sense of anxiety and fear at the prospect of losing her mother?

vi. Complete the following suitably.
The phrase 'that of a corpse' means that she has lost her _____ .

8. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). $4 \times 1 = 4$

A. MR LAMB : Rubbish? Look, boy, look.... what do you see?
DERRY : Just....grass and stuff Weeds.
MR LAMB : Some call them weeds. If you like, then.... a weed garden, that. There's fruit and there are flowers, and trees and herbs. All sorts. But over there.... weeds. I grow weeds there. Why is one green, growing plant called a weed and another 'flower'? Where's the difference? It's all life.... growing. Same as you and me.
DERRY : We're not the same.
MR LAMB : I'm old. You're young. You've got a burned face, I've got a tin leg. Not important. You're standing there.... I'm sitting here. Where's the difference?
(On The Face of It)

i. Why does Mr Lamb draw Derry's attention and stress on 'looking?

ii. What are the fundamental differences between Derry's and Mr Lamb's understanding of the world and life? These are:
(A) Derry: introvert; Mr Lamb: extrovert
(B) Derry: nervous; Mr Lamb: domineering
(C) Derry: self-pity; Mr Lamb: accepting
(D) Derry: unseeing; Mr Lamb: appreciative

iii. How is Derry's tone when he says, "We're not the same?"

iv. Why does Mr Lamb emphasise the importance of weeds? What is the idea behind it?

OR

B. Sadao knew that his education was his father's chief concern. For this reason he had been sent at twenty-two to America to learn all that could be learned of surgery and medicine. He had come back at thirty and before his father died he had seen Sadao become famous not only as a surgeon but as a scientist. Because he was perfecting a discovery which would render wounds entirely clean, he had not been sent abroad with the troops. Also, he knew, there was some slight danger that the old General might need an operation for a condition for which he was now being treated medically and for this possibility Sadao was being kept in Japan.

(The Enemy)

i. What role does Sadao's father in Sadao's life?

ii. Choose the correct option that best describes Sadao as a perfect son.
(A) Sadao went to America as desired by his father.
(B) Sadao returned to Japan before his father's death.
(C) Sadao gained fame as a doctor as well as scientist while his father was alive.
(D) Sadao stayed with his father and did not go abroad with the troops.

iii. Complete the sentence appropriately.
Sadao was a famous surgeon and _____.

iv. For how many years did Sadao study in America?

9. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). $1 \times 6 = 6$

A. Listening to them, I see two distinct worlds-one of the family, caught in a web of poverty, burdened by the stigma of caste in which they are born; The other a vicious circle of the sahukars, the middleman, the policemen the keepers of law, the bureaucrats and the politicians. Together they have imposed the baggage on the child that he cannot put down. Before he is aware, he accepts it as naturally as his father. To do anything else would mean to dare. And daring is not part of his growing up.

(Lost Spring)

i. List any two details about two distinct worlds.

ii. "...The other vicious circle of Sahukasrs..." In this line 'vicious circle' refers to _____.
(A) passing the occupation to next generation
(B) trap made by moneylenders for workers
(C) carrying the tradition of family
(D) none of these

iii. Complete the sentence appropriately.
Ironically, millions of children have lost _____.

iv. Pick evidence from the extract that helps one infer that the baggage has been imposed on the children.

v. How does the child accept the burden?

vi. Which of the following headlines best suggests the central idea of the extract?
(A) The passion of children (B) The web of poverty
(C) The desire of adults (D) The happiness of children

OR

B. This settlement was adopted unanimously by the commission. Gandhi explained that the amount of the refund was less important than the fact that the landlords had been obliged to surrender part of the money and, with it, part of their prestige. Therefore, as far as the peasants were concerned, the planters had behaved as lords above the law. Now the peasant saw that he had rights and defenders. He learned courage.

(Indigo)

i. Why is it that the big planters agreed to pay the refund to small farmers?

ii. Replace the underlined word with its antonym from the extract.
The party has now abandoned its policy of free trade.
(A) Adopted (B) Obliged
(C) Defenders (D) Concerned

iii. What did the peasants learn from this incident?

iv. As per the settlement, how much was to be refunded.
(A) 50% (B) 75%
(C) 25% (D) 20%

v. Why does Gandhiji accept only that per cent of settlement?

vi. Complete the sentence appropriately.
The phrase 'lords above the law' in the extract means _____.

10. Answer ANY FIVE of the following six questions in 40-50 words each : $5 \times 2 = 10$

i. Why are the bangle makers unable to organize themselves into a cooperative?
(Lost Spring)

ii. Describe the boy who had thrown Douglas in water. What was his reaction later?
(Deep Water)

iii. Why do country people ask for money? *(A Roadside Stand)*

iv. Why is Aunt Jennifer terrified? *(Aunt Jennifer's Tigers)*

v. What three things in school surprised Franz the most that day? *(The Last Lesson)*

vi. Why are the young trees described as sprinting? *(My Mother at Sixty-Six)*

11. Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions in 40-50 words each : $2 \times 2 = 4$

i. Did the servants support Dr. Sadao in his mission to save the American? Why/Why not? *(The Enemy)*

ii. Why was Zitkala-Sa in tears on the first day in the land of apples? *(Memories of Childhood)*

iii. In what way does Mr Lamb inspire Derry to overcome his physical disability? *(On the Face of It)*

12. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. $1 \times 5 = 5$

A. "Now I have become sad, she thought. And it is a hard burden to carry, this sadness. Sitting here waiting and knowing he will not come I can see the future and how I will have to live with this burden." Sadness is really difficult to carry. And more difficult is to carry unfulfilled desires. After reading the above statement with reference to 'Going Places', how far do you feel that sadness and unfulfilled desires can't be carried for a long time? Write a paragraph in about 120-150 words.

OR

B. The world has become a global village, and people across boundaries, nationalities and communities are now connected to one another. With the advancement of technology, and the advent of social media, do you think that the task of keeping quiet, as envisaged by Neruda, has become easier or more complicated? Justify your stance. *(Keeping Quiet)*

13. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. $1 \times 5 = 5$

A. Imagine you are an ardent environmentalist who is involved in the Save the Tiger campaign. You have been asked to deliver a speech in a seminar related to your campaign and the need for the youth to be involved in such campaigns. Draft your speech. *(The Tiger King)*

OR

B. There is an intersection of time and space in the story 'The Third Level'. Imagine yourself to be Douglas, and express your thoughts in about 120-150 words.