



B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

SARALA BIRLA GROUP OF SCHOOLS
A CBSE DAY-CUM-BOYS' RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL



TERM I 2026-27

ENGLISH SET 2

Class: VII

Date: 02.09.26

Admission no:

Time: 3 hrs

Max Marks: 80

Roll no:

General Instructions:

1. The Question Paper contains THREE sections-READING, GRAMMAR & WRITING and LITERATURE.
2. Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part.

SECTION - A READING (22 Marks)

I. Read the following comprehension and answer the questions briefly:

(12 Marks)

The Hidden Language of Trees

For centuries, people believed that trees stood silently in forests, competing with one another for sunlight, water, and nutrients. However, recent scientific research has revealed a surprising truth. Trees are capable of forming underground connections that allow them to exchange resources and even send warning signals. This hidden communication system has changed the way scientists understand forests.

The connection is made possible by fungi that grow around the roots of trees. These fungi form delicate thread-like structures that link the roots of different trees, creating a vast underground network. Through this network, trees can share water, minerals, and nutrients with neighbouring trees, especially those that are young or weakened by disease. Some scientists have nicknamed this remarkable system the "Wood Wide Web" because it functions much like the internet, connecting different parts of a forest.

Studies suggest that trees can communicate during times of danger. When insects attack one tree, it may release chemical signals through the fungal network. Nearby trees receive these signals and begin producing protective chemicals before the insects reach them. This early warning system increases the chances of survival for many trees in the forest.

The underground network also demonstrates that forests are not simply collections of individual trees but complex communities that depend on cooperation. Older and larger trees, often called "mother trees," support younger saplings by sharing nutrients and helping them survive in areas where sunlight is limited. Without these connections, many young trees would struggle to grow.

Unfortunately, human activities such as deforestation, pollution, and climate change threaten these fragile underground networks. Destroying forests not only removes trees but also damages the invisible partnerships that help entire ecosystems remain healthy. Scientists believe that protecting forests means preserving both the visible plants above the ground and the hidden networks beneath it.

On the basis of your reading of the passage, answer the following questions:

1. Why do scientists compare the underground fungal network to the "Wood Wide Web"? (1)
 - a) It stores information like a computer.
 - b) It connects trees and allows them to exchange resources and signals.
 - c) It grows only near the roots of old trees.
 - d) It protects forests from floods.
2. Which statement best reflects the central idea of the passage? (1)
 - a) Trees compete constantly for survival.
 - b) Forests are made up of independent trees.
 - c) Trees cooperate through hidden underground networks that help forests survive.
 - d) Fungi are harmful to all plants.
3. Which of the following statements is NOT supported by the passage? (1)
 - a) Trees can warn one another about insect attacks.
 - b) Older trees may help younger trees survive.
 - c) Scientists have fully understood every aspect of tree communication.
 - d) Human activities can damage underground fungal networks.
4. Find a word from the passage which means "easily damaged or broken." (1)
5. Find a word from the passage which means "the act of working together." (1)
6. Which sentence from the passage best proves that forests function as communities rather than isolated trees? Write the sentence from the passage. (1)
7. Explain any two ways in which the underground fungal network benefits trees. (2)
8. Why are older trees described as "mother trees"? Give any two reasons based on the passage. (2)
9. Based on the passage, predict any two possible consequences if a forest loses most of its underground fungal network due to pollution. (2)

Answer Key

1. b) It connects trees and allows them to exchange resources and signals.
2. c) Trees cooperate through hidden underground networks that help forests survive.
3. c) Scientists have fully understood every aspect of tree communication.
4. fragile
5. cooperation
6. *"The underground network also demonstrates that forests are not simply collections of individual trees but complex communities that depend on cooperation."*
7. It allows trees to share water, minerals, and nutrients with neighbouring trees (especially young or weakened ones).
It enables trees to send chemical warning signals to nearby trees when insect attacks occur.
8. They support younger saplings by sharing essential nutrients.

They help younger saplings survive in shaded areas where sunlight is limited.
9. Young saplings would struggle to grow and survive due to lack of shared nutrients and sunlight support.
Trees would not receive early warning chemical signals, making them more vulnerable to insect attacks and diseases.

II. Read the following comprehension and answer the questions briefly: (10 Marks)

Today, books, newspapers, and magazines are printed quickly in millions of copies, but this was not always possible. Before the invention of the printing press, every book had to be copied by hand. This process took months or even years, making books rare and extremely expensive. Only wealthy people, religious institutions, and royal families could afford them.

In the fifteenth century, a German inventor named Johannes Gutenberg developed the movable-type printing press. His invention allowed individual metal letters to be arranged, reused, and printed rapidly on paper. This innovation made books much cheaper and easier to produce. As a result, knowledge spread more quickly than ever before, encouraging education, scientific discoveries, and cultural development across Europe.

The printing press also played an important role in preserving history and literature. Famous works of science, mathematics, medicine, and philosophy became available to ordinary people instead of remaining limited to a few scholars. Over time, newspapers, maps, dictionaries, and textbooks became widely accessible, improving communication and learning.

Although digital technology has changed the way people read today, printed books continue to hold great importance. Many readers still prefer printed books because they are easy to carry, do not require electricity, and reduce distractions. Libraries around the world continue to preserve printed books for future generations, ensuring that valuable knowledge is never lost.

On the basis of your reading of the passage, answer the following questions:

1. Before the printing press, books were _____. (1)

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Printed by machines | (b) Copied by hand |
| (c) Made of plastic | (d) Written on computers |

2. Who invented the movable-type printing press? (1)

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| (a) Isaac Newton | (b) Johannes Gutenberg |
| (c) Galileo | (d) Thomas Edison |

3. What was one result of the printing press? (1)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (a) Books became more expensive. | (b) Knowledge spread quickly. |
| (c) Libraries closed. | (d) Fewer people learned to read. |

4. Find from the passage the word meaning "kept safe." (1)
5. According to the passage, printed books do not require _____(1)
6. Which of the following became widely available after the invention of the printing press? (1)
- (a) Textbooks (b) Dictionaries (c) Newspapers (d) All of these
7. Mention any two advantages of the printing press. (2)
8. Why do many people still prefer printed books? Mention any two reasons. (2)

1. (b) Copied by hand
2. (b) Johannes Gutenberg
3. (b) Knowledge spread quickly.
4. Preserved
5. Electricity
6. (d) All of these
7. Any two:

- It made books cheaper and easier to produce.
- It helped knowledge spread quickly.
- It encouraged education, scientific discoveries, and cultural development.
- It preserved history and literature.

8. Any two:

- They are easy to carry.
- They do not require electricity.
- They reduce distractions.
- They preserve valuable knowledge for future generations.

SECTION B- WRITING & GRAMMAR

III. Writing Skills

(22 Marks)

1. Email Writing [3 Marks]

A: You forgot to bring your science project notebook to school on the day of submission. Write an email to your class teacher explaining the reason, apologizing, and asking if you can submit it early tomorrow morning.

OR

B: You and a few classmates want to form an after-school Board Games Club. Write a short email to your school Principal requesting permission to use a spare classroom once a week.

Format 1 Mark Content and Relevance 1 Mark Grammar and Vocabulary 1 Mark

2. Diary Entry [4 Marks]

A: You tried cooking a dish for your family for the first time today. Describe the chaotic experience in the kitchen, how the food actually turned out, and how your family reacted.

OR

B: Today was your first day at a new school after moving to a new city. Write a diary entry expressing your morning jitters, how your classmates treated you, and how you feel about the change by evening.

Format 1 Mark Content and Expressiveness 2 Marks Grammar and Vocabulary 1 Mark

3. Story Writing [7 Marks]

A: Starting line: "The streetlights flickered and went out completely, leaving the neighborhood in total darkness just as a strange melody started playing from the empty park..." Write a story following this opening.

OR

B: Write a story about a quiet, unassuming student who suddenly discovers they can hear what animals are thinking during a school trip to the local zoo.

Content and Plot Development 3 Marks Structure and Flow 2 Marks Grammar and Vocabulary 2 M

4. Newspaper Report or Formal Letter Writing [8 Marks]

A: Write a newspaper report on a Flash Flood / Heavy Rainfall Chaos in your town that caused traffic gridlocks, closed schools, and saw local citizens coming together to help rescue stranded commuters.

Format 2 Marks Content and 5 Ws 3 Marks Coherence and Structure 1 Mark Grammar and Tone 2 Marks

OR

B: Write a letter to your School Principal requesting permission to organize a charity book drive in the school to collect old textbooks and storybooks for underprivileged children.

Format 2 Marks Content and Suggestions 3 Marks Organization and Coherence 1 Mark Grammar and Tone 2 Marks

IV. Grammar

(10 Marks)

1. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate option from those in the bracket. $1 \times 3 = 3$

Yesterday, our class (i) _____ (attended / attends / will attend) a workshop on environmental conservation. By next term, our school (ii) _____ (introduces / will introduce / introduced) a new recycling program for all grades. If students participate actively, we (iii) _____ (will have achieved / achieved / achieve) our eco-friendly goals by the end of the academic year.

2. Fill in the blanks using the correct tense of the verb given in the bracket.

1 × 4 = 4

Rohan: Hi Kabir! Why were you so late to the library this morning?

Kabir: I (i) _____ for the bus when my uncle called me and offered me a lift. (*Past Continuous*)

Rohan: Oh, I see! How long (ii) _____ for the bus before he picked you up? (*Past Perfect Continuous*)

Kabir: I (iii) _____ for nearly forty minutes before his car arrived. (*Past Perfect Continuous*)

Rohan: That sounds exhausting! I hope you (iv) _____ home on time this evening. (*Simple Future*)

3. Complete the sentences using the correct form of Gerunds or Infinitives.

1 × 3 = 3

- i. _____ (Learn) a new language requires patience, but I hope _____ (speak) fluent Spanish one day.
- ii. He prefers _____ (cycle) to work rather than driving, as he wishes _____ (reduce) his carbon footprint.
- iii. She is looking forward to _____ (join) the drama club because she loves _____ (act) on stage.

Answers

1. i) attended
- (ii) will introduce
- (iii) will have achieved

2. Verb Tenses

- i. was waiting
- ii. had ... been waiting
- iii. had been waiting
- iv. will reach

3. Gerunds and Infinitives

1. Learning / to speak
2. cycling / to reduce
3. joining / to act (*or acting*)

SECTION C – LITERATURE (26 Marks)

V. Read the given extract and answer the questions briefly, for ANY TWO extracts, of the three, given. 2x4=8

A. " I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,

But I go on forever."

1. Why does the poet use the word "chatter" to describe the sound of the brook, and what literary device does it show?
2. What contrast does the brook draw between human life and its own existence in the last two lines?
3. What does the word "brimming" tell us about the river the brook is flowing into?
4. How does the movement of the brook symbolize the journey of a person's life?

1. "Chatter" creates a lively, continuous sound like rapid talking. The literary device is onomatopoeia (or personification).
2. Human life is short and temporary ("men may come and men may go"), whereas the brook's journey is permanent and eternal ("I go on forever").
3. "Brimming" means full to the top, showing that the river is large, deep, and overflowing with water.
4. Just like a human life moves through different stages (childhood enthusiasm to mature calm), the brook passes through noisy, fast struggles before finally reaching its final destination.

B. It was Monday morning. Swaminathan was reluctant to open his eyes. He considered Monday especially unpleasant in the calendar. After the delicious freedom of Saturday and Sunday, it was difficult to get into the Monday mood of work and discipline. He shuddered at the very thought of school: that dismal yellow building; the fire-eyed Vedanayagam, his class-teacher; and the Head Master with his thin long cane.

1. Why did Swaminathan consider Monday to be an "unpleasant" day in the calendar?
2. What phrase does the poet/writer use to describe the school building, and what feeling does it create about the school?
3. Name the two school authorities mentioned in the extract and state the physical feature or object associated with each.
4. What does Swami's reluctance to open his eyes reveal about his attitude towards school?

1. Monday was unpleasant because it marked the end of the "delicious freedom" of Saturday and Sunday and required getting back into the mood of work and discipline.
2. The phrase is "dismal yellow building". It creates a dull, gloomy, and depressing feeling about the school.
3. The class-teacher Vedanayagam (described as "fire-eyed") and the Head Master (associated with his "thin long cane").
4. It shows that Swami dreads going to school and wants to avoid facing the strict routines and teachers.

*C. Weavers, weaving at fall of night,
Why do you weave a garment so bright?...
Like the plumes of a peacock, purple and green,
We weave the marriage-veils of a queen. "Weavers, weaving solemn and still,
What do you weave in the moonlight chill?...
White as a feather and white as a cloud,
We weave a dead man's funeral shroud."*

1. What sudden change do you notice in the atmosphere and feelings of the weavers between stanza 2 and stanza 3?
2. Why does the poet use the bright colors "purple and green" for the marriage veil, but "white" for the funeral shroud?
3. How does the time of day change from "fall of night" to "moonlight chill", and what stage of life does this change show?
4. Name the figure of speech in "*White as a feather and white as a cloud*" and explain what feeling the word "chill" creates in the poem.

1. The atmosphere changes from happy and vibrant to serious, quiet, and sad.
2. Purple and green show the joy, excitement, and energy of youth/marriage, while white represents peace, silence, and death.
3. The time moves from late evening (twilight) to late night. This shows the shift from adult life to the end of life (death).
4. The figure of speech is a simile. The word "chill" creates a feeling of coldness, sadness, and silence associated with death.

VI. Answer any five of the following questions in about 50-60 words each.

2x5=10

1. What is the relation between Mr Behrman and the young artists? What was his masterpiece?

In O. Henry's *The Last Leaf*, Old Behrman's masterpiece was the single ivy leaf he painted on the brick wall during a cold, stormy night when the last real leaf fell. By creating a realistic leaf, he tricked the ailing Johnsy into regaining her hope to live, sacrificing his own life to pneumonia in the process. He was their neighbour.

2. Why did Ivan Dmitritch stop checking the newspaper immediately after seeing the winning series number (9,499)?

In Anton Chekhov's *The Lottery Ticket*, Ivan Dmitritch stopped checking because he was overwhelmed by the possibility of winning 75,000 rubles. He intentionally delayed looking at the actual ticket number (#26) so that he and his wife could prolong the sensation of hope and indulge in vivid daydreams of a wealthy future before facing potential disappointment.

3. What stage of human life is represented by the garment woven by the weavers at fall of night?

In Sarojini Naidu's poem *Indian Weavers*, the fall of night symbolizes adulthood and marriage. The weavers craft a vibrant purple and green veil, resembling the plumes of a peacock, which represents the passion, vitality, maturity, and bright celebrations of mid-life before old age sets in.

4. What made the vacation in *An Unusual Holiday* distinct from a conventional trip?

Unlike a standard trip filled with routine sightseeing and relaxation, this vacation became an extraordinary survival test due to a dangerous, unexpected encounter with a wild polar bear. The immediate life-and-death threat required composure and specialized wildlife skills, transforming a peaceful break into a high-stakes adventure.

5. Quote the famous refraining line from the poem that highlights the contrast between human life and nature.

In Lord Tennyson's poem *The Brook*, the refraining line—"For men may come and men may go, / But I go on forever"—serves as a central motif contrasting human mortality with nature's immortality. While human life is transient, marked by birth, aging, and death, nature remains continuous, eternal, and uninterrupted.

6. What core quality or theme enables individuals to overcome extreme physical or mental challenges in *Pushing the Limits*?

The core theme centers on unwavering determination, perseverance (grit), and mental resilience. The story emphasizes that overcoming severe adversity requires psychological fortitude and sheer willpower, proving that mental strength is often far more vital than raw physical capabilities when confronting extreme obstacles.

7. How did Vedanayagam punish Swaminathan when he got his arithmetic sums wrong?

In R.K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends*, the arithmetic teacher Vedanayagam punished Swaminathan severely by pinching his arm, crossing out all his sums, writing "Very Bad" across the page, and throwing the notebook directly at his face. This harsh treatment was meant to humiliate and intimidate Swami into paying attention.

8. Where does the central conflict or twist occur in *An Unusual Holiday*?

The central conflict occurs when the expected peace of a normal vacation is suddenly disrupted by an encounter with a deadly polar bear. This unexpected twist shifts the plot from a routine travel narrative into a suspenseful survival struggle where the protagonist must rely on quick thinking and caution.

VII. Answer ANY ONE of the following questions in about 150 words:

1x8=8

1. Both *Indian Weavers* and *The Brook* reflect on the journey of life. Analyze how both poets treat the theme of life, change, and the passage of time.

Both **Sarojini Naidu's *Indian Weavers*** and **Lord Alfred Tennyson's *The Brook*** explore the journey of life and the passage of time, but in different ways.

In *Indian Weavers*, the poet uses the work of weavers to represent the three stages of human life—**birth, marriage, and death**. The different times of the day and colours of the cloth show how life changes as time passes. The bright blue robe represents birth, the purple and gold veil symbolises marriage, and the white shroud represents death.

In *The Brook*, the brook describes its continuous journey from its source to the river. It flows through hills, valleys, bridges, and fields, showing that nature is always moving forward. The repeated line, "**For men may come and men may go, but I go on forever,**" highlights that human life is temporary, while nature continues endlessly.

Both poems show that **change is a natural part of life**. However, *Indian Weavers* focuses on the short journey of human life, whereas *The Brook* emphasises the everlasting cycle of nature. Together, they remind us that time never stops and every stage of life has its own meaning.

2. Both *The Last Leaf* and *Pushing the Limits* explore how individuals face overwhelming challenges. Compare and contrast how the theme of hope and perseverance during difficult times is developed in both texts.

Both *The Last Leaf* and *Pushing the Limits* highlight the importance of **hope, courage, and determination** in overcoming difficult situations.

In *The Last Leaf*, Johnsy loses hope after falling seriously ill and believes she will die when the last leaf falls. Behrman, an old artist, paints a realistic leaf on the wall during a storm. Seeing the leaf still standing gives Johnsy the courage to live and recover. Behrman's selfless sacrifice becomes a symbol of hope.

In *Pushing the Limits*, the main character faces physical and mental challenges while trying to achieve a difficult goal. Instead of giving up, the character works hard, remains determined, and continues despite failures. The story shows that success comes through **perseverance, confidence, and a positive attitude**.

Both texts teach that **hope gives people the strength to face hardships**. However, *The Last Leaf* shows how hope can come from another person's sacrifice, while *Pushing the Limits* focuses on inner determination and hard work. Together, both texts inspire readers to stay strong and never lose hope during difficult times.

*****ALL THE BEST*****

