



B.K. BIRLA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

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



PRE-BOARD 3 - 2025-26

ENGLISH COMMUNICATIVE (101)

SET - 1

Class: X

Time: 3 hrs

Date: 17.01.26

Max Marks: 80

Admission no:

Roll no:

General Instructions:

1. The question paper contains **FOUR** sections-**READING, GRAMMAR, WRITING and LITERATURE.**
2. Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part.

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (22 marks)

1. Read the following passage carefully: 12

Neuroplasticity: Rewiring the Human Brain

For decades, neuroscientists believed that the human brain was immutable after childhood—fixed in structure and incapable of significant change. This dogma has been thoroughly dismantled by discoveries in neuroplasticity, the brain's remarkable ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections throughout life. Far from being a static organ, the brain is now understood as a dynamic, adaptable system that responds to learning, injury, and environmental stimuli.

Neuroplasticity operates through two primary mechanisms: structural plasticity and functional plasticity. Structural plasticity involves physical changes in the brain's architecture, such as the growth of dendrites, formation of new synapses, and even the generation of new neurons in certain regions. Functional plasticity, on the other hand, allows undamaged areas of the brain to assume functions previously handled by damaged regions, a phenomenon often observed in stroke recovery patients. These processes are not confined to early development but persist across the lifespan, challenging the notion that cognitive decline in aging is inevitable.

Research has revealed that experiences sculpt the brain in profound ways. For instance, studies of multilingual individuals demonstrate increased grey matter density in regions associated with language processing. London taxi drivers, who must memorize intricate city layouts, exhibit enlarged hippocampi—brain structures crucial for spatial navigation. Even learning to juggle has been shown to induce measurable changes in brain structure within weeks. These findings underscore a fundamental principle: the brain's physical form reflects its functional demands.

However, neuroplasticity is not always beneficial. Maladaptive plasticity can occur when the brain reorganizes in response to chronic pain, addiction, or repetitive negative thoughts, reinforcing harmful patterns. Phantom limb pain, for example, arises when the brain fails to properly reorganize after amputation, creating persistent sensations in the absent limb. Similarly, addiction rewires reward pathways, making it increasingly difficult to break destructive habits. Understanding these dual aspects of plasticity is essential for developing therapeutic interventions.

The implications of neuroplasticity extend far beyond neuroscience. In education, recognizing that intelligence is not fixed but malleable empowers learners to embrace challenges and persist through difficulty. In rehabilitation, targeted therapies exploit plasticity to restore function after brain injury. Emerging technologies, such as brain-computer interfaces and neurofeedback, harness plasticity to enhance cognitive performance and treat neurological disorders. As we deepen our understanding of how experience shapes the brain, we unlock unprecedented potential for human flourishing—and confront profound ethical questions about cognitive enhancement and identity.

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above:

I. Why was the earlier belief that the brain is 'immutable after childhood' considered a 'dogma'?

- a) It was based on limited scientific evidence and later proven incorrect.
- b) It was universally accepted without questioning by all scientists.
- c) It suggested that brain structure could never be altered by experiences.
- d) It emphasized that cognitive abilities remain constant throughout life.

II. Complete the following with the correct option from those given in brackets.

In the line 'the brain is now understood as a dynamic, adaptable system', the word 'dynamic' indicates _____ (constantly changing and evolving / stable and predictable / responsive only during childhood). (Paragraph 1)

III. Differentiate between structural plasticity and functional plasticity with reference to brain reorganization. Answer in 30-40 words. 2 marks

IV. What does the phrase 'cognitive decline in aging is inevitable' suggest about earlier views on aging brains?

Select the correct option to complete the answer.

It suggests that scientists believed aging brains _____.

- a) could be enhanced through deliberate training.
- b) were incapable of learning new skills or forming new connections.
- c) responded differently to injury than younger brains.
- d) required medical intervention to maintain normal function.

V. Complete the following with the appropriate option.

The examples of multilingual individuals and London taxi drivers bring up the idea of a _____.

- a) direct correlation between experience and measurable brain changes.
- b) comparison between cognitive abilities of different professions.
- c) limitation of the brain's capacity to adapt to demands.
- d) unique phenomenon observed only in exceptional individuals.

VI. What would be the most suitable title for Paragraph 4?

- a) The Dangers of Neuroplasticity in Modern Life

- b) Maladaptive Plasticity: When the Brain Rewires Harmfully
- c) Understanding Phantom Limb Pain Through Neuroscience
- d) Breaking the Cycle of Addiction and Negative Thought

VII. Which phrase from Paragraph 5 provides evidence that neuroplasticity has applications beyond scientific research?

VIII. Fill in the blank by choosing the appropriate option from those given in brackets.

Paragraph 3 includes a _____ (hypothesis / generalization / case study) demonstrating how specific experiences lead to brain changes.

IX. How does the passage suggest that neuroplasticity raises ethical concerns about cognitive enhancement? Answer in 30-40 words. (Paragraph 5) 2 marks

2. Read the following.

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The Growing Shift Towards Remote Work: Global Trends and Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally transformed how the world works. What began as a temporary emergency measure has evolved into a permanent workplace revolution. Data from recent global surveys reveals striking trends in remote work adoption, employee productivity, and employer perspectives across industries.

Table 1: Remote Work Statistics – Global Comparison

Region/Country	Pre-Pandemic Remote Workers (%)	Peak Pandemic (2020-2021) (%)	Current Remote Workers (%) – 2024	Hybrid Work (%)
United States	5.4%	42%	16%	28%
European Union	6.2%	38%	14%	25%
India	2.1%	32%	12.7%	28.2%
Canada	8.1%	46%	18%	31%
Australia	7.3%	40%	15%	29%

(Source: International Labour Organization, 2024)

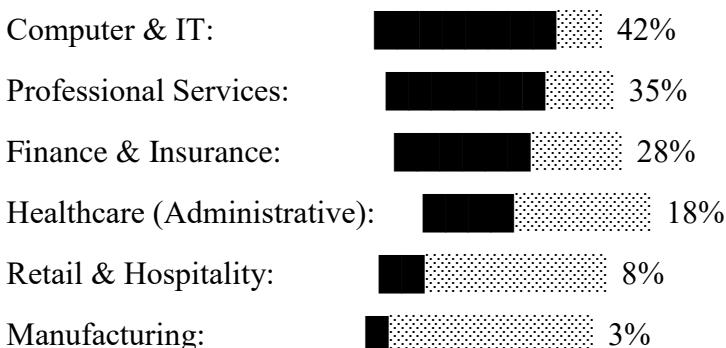
Table 2: Employee Preferences and Productivity Outcomes

Metric	Percentage (%)
Employees preferring to work remotely at least part-time	98%
Employees reporting increased productivity working from home	83%

Metric	Percentage (%)
Employers noting productivity improvements	27%
Employees citing reduced commute time as a benefit	76%
Workers willing to accept lower salary for remote work	42%

(Source: Global Workplace Survey, 2024)

Chart 1: Industry Distribution of Remote Work (USA)



Key Findings:

Nearly half of all employees worked remotely during the pandemic peak, but this figure has stabilized at around 15-18% full-time remote work.

Hybrid work arrangements have become increasingly popular, with 25-31% of workers now splitting time between home and office.

India is projected to see 60-90 million remote workers by 2025, reflecting the highest growth trajectory among developing nations.

Despite productivity claims, employers' enthusiasm for permanent remote work remains cautious, with only 27% reporting measurable productivity gains.

A significant gender gap persists: 58% of remote workers are men, while 42% are women, indicating unequal adoption across genders.

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the above information:

I. Based on Table 1, which region shows the largest absolute increase in remote workers from pre-pandemic to current levels? What might explain this difference? 2 marks

II. Complete the following with the correct option.

According to the data, the highest percentage of remote workers is currently found in ____.

- a) India
- b) European Union
- c) Canada
- d) United States

III. State which of the following is True, based on Tables 1 and 2.

- a) More employees prefer remote work than employers actually permit it.
- b) Computer & IT is the least remote-work-friendly industry in the USA.
- c) The majority of remote workers are women.

IV. What does the discrepancy between "Employees reporting increased productivity" (83%) and "Employers noting productivity improvements" (27%) suggest about workplace perspectives?

V. Which of the following statements is most strongly supported by the data?

- a) Remote work has replaced office-based work permanently.
- b) Hybrid arrangements are a compromise between traditional and fully remote models.
- c) Developing nations are abandoning remote work trends.
- d) Healthcare workers have fully transitioned to remote work.

VI. Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option.

The fact that 42% of workers are willing to accept lower salary for remote work demonstrates ____ (the financial burden of commuting / the value employees place on workplace flexibility and autonomy / employer resistance to remote policies).

VII. Using Chart 1, which two industries together account for approximately 70% of remote work opportunities?

- a) Computer & IT and Professional Services
- b) Professional Services and Finance & Insurance
- c) Healthcare and Manufacturing
- d) Finance & Insurance and Retail & Hospitality

VIII. Based on the projected growth for India (60-90 million workers by 2025), what can be inferred about the future of work in developing economies?

SECTION B WRITING SKILLS (22 marks)

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

3. You are Aditya Kumar, Class X-A, Coordinator of the School's Cultural Fest Committee. Your school is organizing an inter-school cultural festival celebrating diverse traditions, languages, and art forms. You need permission to use the school grounds and auditorium for rehearsals and final performances over two weeks. Write a formal application to the Principal (not more than 50 words) requesting permission to use the school facilities, mentioning the dates, purpose, and expected participants (students from multiple schools). 3M

4. Your locality initiated a "Community Reading Library" project in a public park to promote literacy and provide free access to books for underprivileged children and senior citizens. 4M

Write a factual description (not more than 100 words) of this community library initiative, explaining:

Its objectives and target beneficiaries

The methods used (book collection, volunteer coordination, organization)

The outcomes achieved so far (number of readers, community engagement, impact on literacy levels)

5. Attempt any ONE of the following in about 120 words:

7M

A. Physical education classes are being reduced or eliminated in many schools due to curriculum pressures and focus on academics alone. This is leading to a sedentary lifestyle among students. As Neha Gupta, 16, Riverside Colony, Delhi, write a letter to the editor of a national newspaper (not more than 120 words), addressing:

The alarming decrease in sports participation and physical activity

Consequences for student health, fitness, and mental well-being

The importance of integrating sports as a core curriculum component

Recommendations for balancing academics with physical development

OR

B. Public transport facilities in many cities are inefficient, overcrowded, and unsafe for school students, forcing parents to rely on private vehicles and creating traffic congestion. As Rohan Singh, 16, Model Town, Chandigarh, write a letter to the editor of a leading newspaper (not more than 120 words), discussing:

The challenges posed by inadequate public transport for student commuting

Environmental and safety implications

Need for dedicated student transit corridors and improved infrastructure

Policy recommendations for city planners and transport authorities

6. Attempt any ONE of the following in about 150 words:

8M

A. You are Diya Sharma, Class X. Your school recently launched an initiative connecting rural students with online classes and digital learning resources. You recognize the potential of technology to democratize education. Write an article for your school publication titled "Technology as an Equalizer: Bridging Educational Divides," (not more than 150 words) exploring:

The educational disparities between urban and rural areas

How digital platforms and internet connectivity can bridge this gap

Examples of successful tech-enabled learning initiatives

Challenges in implementation and the need for sustained funding and infrastructure

The role of schools and NGOs in this mission

OR

B. You are Arjun Malhotra, Class X. Your school recently introduced vocational training programs alongside academics, offering courses in electrical work, plumbing, coding, and digital marketing. You want to highlight their value. Write an article for your school magazine titled "Vocational Skills: Preparing Students for Real-World Success," (not more than 150 words) discussing:

Why vocational training is essential alongside traditional academics

The variety of skills offered and their market demand

How vocational education improves employability and entrepreneurship

Addressing societal stigma around skills-based learning

The role of schools in shaping well-rounded, job-ready graduates

SECTION C GRAMMAR (10 marks)

7. Fill in the blanks (i) – (iii) with the appropriate option from those in the brackets. (3 × 1 = 3 marks)

Contemporary urban planning increasingly views (i) _____ (integrate / integrating / integrated) green spaces as essential for sustainable development. While previously such spaces (ii) _____ (were

considered / are considered / have considered) only recreational areas, they now (iii) _____ (have been recognised / has recognised / recognises) for their ecological and health benefits.

8. The following paragraph has not been edited. There is one error in each line. Write the error and its correction in the space provided. Do any four. **(1×4 = 4)**

Sentence	Error	Correction
Stirred from the smell of food	e.g. from	by
the dog stands before the blind	(a)	
man wagging its tail and gazing on	(b)	
the bowl. A blind man asked, “Who	(c)	
is there?” At whom the dog went up	(d)	
and licked his hand.		

9. Do as directed. **(1 + 2 = 3 marks)**

I. Rearrange the following jumbled words/phrases in the given dialogue to create a meaningful sentence. (1 mark)

RAHUL: Teacher, does reading improve our vocabulary?

TEACHER: (i) reading / is / habit / a / developing / best / vocabulary / for / the.

II. Report the conversation given below. **(2 marks)**

- a. The scientist said, “The data that we collected yesterday contradicts our previous assumptions.
- b. The scientist said to the students, “When will you analyse the samples that were collected last month?”

SECTION D: LITERATURE TEXTBOOK (26 MARKS)

10. Read the given extract and answer the questions briefly, for any two extracts, of the three, given. **2 x 4 = 8**

A. “Now he understood the meaning of love and separation. He could no longer enjoy the sportsman’s pleasure and laughter at the bewildered terror of the young partridges bereft of their parents.”

- i. Who is he?
- ii. Why had he understood the meaning of love and separation now?
- iii. How had he reacted to hunting partridges earlier?
- iv. Find a synonym of confused from the extract.

B. Nor dim nor red, like God’s own head,
The glorious Sun uprise:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.”

- i. Why is the sun referred to as being glorious?
- ii. Name a poetic device employed in the above lines.
- iii. These lines indicate a change in the sailor’s attitude. What is that change?
- iv. Explain: ‘Glorious sun’ and ‘like God’s own head’.

C. CAESAR: And you are come in very happy time ,

To bear my greeting to the senators
And tell them that I will not come to-day:
Cannot, is false, and that I dare not, falser:
I will not come to-day: tell them so, Decius.

CALPURNIA: Say he is sick.

CAESAR: Shall Caesar send a lie?

Have I in conquest stretch'd mine arm so far,
To be afraid to tell graybeards the truth?
Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come.

- i. Where are the speakers? Who has come to meet Caesar?
- ii. What message does Caesar wish to send? To whom?
- iii. Who are the 'greybeards'? Why is Caesar not afraid of them?
- iv. What is the lie mentioned in the above lines'?

Q.11. Answer any five of the following in about 30-40 words.

(2 × 5 = 10 marks)

- i. The narrator asks the boys, "Must you work so hard? You both look rather tired." The boys replied, "We are not complaining, sir." What do you learn about the boys from their reply?
- ii. Do you think the tiger shooting organized by the villagers was a serious affair? Give reasons for your answer.
- iii. When confronted by Lavinia about his flirtations over the Ouija board, John insists that 'the affair was quite above-board, I assure you, my love'. Bring out the pun in John's statement.
- iv. How did the frog convince the nightingale that she needed a trainer?
- v. Why does Cassius caution Brutus against allowing Antony to speak in the funeral of Caesar?
- vi. Why was Michael surprised to see Sebastian Shultz' photograph in the newspaper?

Q.12. Answer any one of the following two questions in about 150 words.

1x8=8

It is often said that blood is thicker than water. Does this hold true for Sebastian Shultz and Able Merryweather in "Virtually True" and 'The Dear Departed'? Explore the bonds of family in contrast to chosen bonds with reference to the two chapters.

OR

In what ways do the narratives of 'Ozymandias' by Percy Bysshe Shelley and 'Julius Caesar' by Shakespeare reflect on the impermanence of legacy and the inevitability of death? Discuss how the fictional depiction of Ozymandias and Caesar's life and death convey a common message about the futility of human grandeur and the transient nature of power.

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