



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

MARKING SCHEME

Class: X
Date: 17.01.26
Admission no:

Time: 3 hrs
Max Marks: 80
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)

Question 1: Neuroplasticity (12 marks)

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.

II. Complete the following with the correct option:

Answer: constantly changing and evolving

III. Differentiate between structural plasticity and functional plasticity with reference to brain reorganization. (2 marks)

Answer:

Structural plasticity involves physical changes in the brain's architecture, such as growth of dendrites, formation of new synapses, and generation of new neurons. Functional plasticity allows undamaged areas of the brain to assume functions previously handled by damaged regions, particularly observed in stroke recovery patients.

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

(b) were incapable of learning new skills or forming new connections.

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

Answer: (a) direct correlation between experience and measurable brain changes.

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

Answer: (b) Maladaptive Plasticity: When the Brain Rewires Harmfully

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

Answer:

"In education, recognizing that intelligence is not fixed but malleable empowers learners to embrace challenges; In rehabilitation, targeted therapies exploit plasticity; Emerging technologies, such as brain-computer interfaces and neurofeedback, harness plasticity."

VIII. Fill in the blank by choosing the appropriate option:

Answer: case study

IX. How does the passage suggest that neuroplasticity raises ethical concerns about cognitive enhancement? (2 marks)

Answer:

The passage states that as we deepen understanding of how experience shapes the brain, we "unlock unprecedented potential for human flourishing—and confront profound ethical questions about cognitive enhancement and identity." This suggests concerns about whether enhancing cognition affects individual identity and raises questions about fairness, access, and the definition of human capability.

Question 2: Remote Work Statistics (10 marks)

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)

Answer:

USA & India

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

Correct Answer: (c) Canada (18%)

III. State which of the following is True:

Correct Answer: (a) More employees prefer remote work than employers actually permit it.

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

Answer:

The discrepancy reveals a perception gap. Employees strongly believe remote work increases their productivity, but employers remain skeptical or unconvinced. This could indicate:

- Employers lack sufficient metrics to measure remote productivity
- Employer concerns about oversight, control, and collaboration
- Employees may be more motivated but output not visibly quantifiable to management
- Generational or management mindset resistance to remote models

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

Correct Answer: (b) Hybrid arrangements are a compromise between traditional and fully remote models.

VI. Fill in the blank:

Correct Answer: the value employees place on workplace flexibility and autonomy

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

Correct Answer: (a) Computer & IT (42%) and Professional Services (35%) = 77%

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?

Answer:

- Developing economies will experience exponential growth in remote work adoption
- India's projected 60-90 million remote workers (from ~12.7% currently) indicates a shift in labor dynamics
- Tech-enabled jobs will dominate in emerging markets
- This growth suggests developing nations are leapfrogging traditional office infrastructure and investing in digital infrastructure
- Potential for job creation, outsourcing, and global talent competition will intensify
- Remote work could reduce rural-urban migration pressure and distribute opportunities geographically

SECTION B: WRITING SKILLS (22 marks)

Question 3: Formal Application (3 marks)

Model Answer:

Respected Sir/Madam,

I, Aditya Kumar (Class X-A), request permission to use the school grounds and auditorium for the inter-school Cultural Fest Committee rehearsals and performances from [Date] to [Date]. Over 200 students from multiple schools will participate in celebrating diverse traditions and art forms. Your kind permission is requested.

*Sincerely,
Aditya Kumar*

(Word Count: ~50 words)

Question 4: Factual Description (4 marks)

Model Answer:

Community Reading Library Initiative

Our locality's "Community Reading Library" project, launched in Central Park, aims to promote literacy and provide free book access to underprivileged children and senior citizens. The initiative collects donated books from residents and local businesses, organized by trained volunteers into age-appropriate categories. Volunteers coordinate library schedules, conduct story hours for children, and facilitate reading sessions for seniors.

To date, the library has distributed 2,500+ books, engaged 400+ regular readers, and improved literacy skills in 150+ children. Community participation has exceeded expectations, with monthly donations increasing. Pre- and post-literacy assessments show a 35% improvement in reading comprehension among child participants, significantly impacting neighborhood education levels.

(Word Count: ~100 words)

Question 5A: Letter to Editor - Physical Education (7 marks)

Model Answer:

Dear Editor,

I write to highlight the alarming decline of physical education in schools. Most institutions are eliminating PE classes due to academic pressures, creating a sedentary lifestyle crisis among students.

This reduction directly impacts student health—rising obesity, poor cardiovascular fitness, and reduced mental well-being. Physical activity is proven to enhance focus, reduce stress, and improve academic performance. Yet schools ignore these benefits.

Physical education must be a core curriculum component, not an optional luxury. I urge education boards to mandate 45 minutes of daily PE, integrate sports into academics, and design flexible schedules. Schools should provide quality facilities and trained instructors.

Sports build confidence, discipline, and teamwork—essential life skills. Balancing academics with physical development isn't optional; it's essential.

Yours

Neha Gupta, 16, Riverside Colony, Delhi

sincerely,

(Word Count: ~120 words)

Question 5B: Letter to Editor - Public Transport (7 marks)

Model Answer:

Dear Editor,

I urgently address the critical failure of public transport systems affecting student safety and city congestion. Overcrowded, inefficient buses force parents to rely on private vehicles, choking city roads with traffic.

This crisis has severe consequences: students face safety risks in crowded transit, delayed school arrivals affecting academics, and environmental pollution from increased private vehicle use. Families waste time and money on unreliable transport.

I recommend immediate action:

- *Dedicated student transit corridors with discounted fares*
- *Modern, safe buses with trained staff*
- *Integrated digital booking systems for reliability*
- *Peak-hour student-exclusive services*

City planners must prioritize student transportation as a public health issue. Safe, efficient public transit reduces congestion, emissions, and accidents while ensuring equitable access for all.

Yours

Rohan Singh, 16, Model Town, Chandigarh

sincerely,

(Word Count: ~120 words)

Question 6A: Article - Technology as Equalizer (8 marks)

Model Answer:

Technology as an Equalizer: Bridging Educational Divides

Educational disparity between urban and rural areas remains a critical barrier to equitable development. Rural schools lack quality teachers, modern resources, and infrastructure, while urban students access cutting-edge education. This inequality perpetuates poverty cycles.

Digital platforms revolutionize this landscape. Online classes connect rural students with expert teachers globally. Interactive learning apps make education accessible 24/7, transcending geographic limitations. Coding platforms and virtual labs provide STEM exposure previously impossible in remote areas.

Successful initiatives prove technology's power: Khan Academy reaches 50+ million students; India's e-Pathshala serves rural learners nationwide; Google Classroom enables low-cost collaborative learning. Our school's initiative linking rural students with digital resources has increased enrollment by 40% and improved learning outcomes significantly.

However, challenges persist: unreliable internet connectivity, device affordability, and digital literacy gaps. Sustained investment in broadband infrastructure, affordable devices, and teacher training is essential.

Schools and NGOs must champion this mission—investing in technology and training to ensure every child, regardless of location, accesses quality education and realizes their potential.

(Word Count: ~150 words)

Question 6B: Article - Vocational Skills (8 marks)

Model Answer:

Vocational Skills: Preparing Students for Real-World Success

Traditional academics alone cannot equip students for today's dynamic job market. Vocational training bridges the critical gap between theoretical knowledge and practical employability.

Our school's new programs—electrical work, plumbing, coding, and digital marketing—address real-world skill demands. These courses teach technical expertise, problem-solving, and work ethics. Students gain hands-on experience while earning certifications recognized by industries, enhancing employability immediately after Class XII.

Vocational education revolutionizes entrepreneurship: graduates start small businesses, creating jobs locally. A student trained in plumbing or electrical work earns respectably without expensive higher education, breaking poverty cycles.

Yet stigma persists—society views vocational learning as "inferior" to academics. This misconception undermines millions of capable students. Reality: plumbers and electricians earn more than many graduates, and digital marketers command high salaries. Demand for skilled technicians far exceeds supply.

Schools must address this bias through awareness campaigns, showcasing vocational success stories. Well-rounded graduates combine academic knowledge with practical skills, becoming job-ready professionals. This holistic approach ensures no student is left behind, preparing confident, skilled, and economically independent citizens.

(Word Count: ~150 words)

SECTION C: GRAMMAR (10 marks)

Question 7: Fill in the Blanks (3 marks)

Correct Answers:

- (i) integrating – Present participle form required (gerund following "views")
- (ii) were considered – Past passive voice (historical context, third person plural)
- (iii) have been recognised – Present perfect passive (recent discovery/recognition)

Question 8: Paragraph Editing - Do Any Four (4 marks)

Original Paragraph with Errors & Corrections:

Sentence	Error	Correction
"the dog stands before the blind"	stands	stood
"man wagging its tail and gazing on"	on	at
"A blind man asked, 'Who is there?'"	A	the
"At whom the dog went up"	At whom	To whom

Question 9: Rearrangement & Reporting (3 marks)

I. Rearrange the jumbled sentence (1 mark):

Jumbled: reading / is / habit / a / developing / best / vocabulary / for / the

Rearranged: Reading is the best habit for developing vocabulary.

II. Report the conversation (2 marks):

a. Original: "The scientist said, 'The data that we collected yesterday contradicts our previous assumptions.'"

Reported: The scientist said that the data that they had collected the previous day contradicted their previous assumptions.

b. Original: "The scientist said to the students, 'When will you analyse the samples that were collected last month?'"

Reported: The scientist asked the students when they would analyse the samples that had been collected the previous month.

SECTION D: LITERATURE (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."

1. Who is he?

Ans. He is Coachman Ali.

2. Why had he understood the meaning of love and separation now?

Ans. Ali's daughter Miriam had gotten married and gone away to the Punjab with her husband and he had not heard from her for the past five years.

3. How had he reacted to hunting partridges earlier?

Ans. Earlier, Ali had laughed at the young partridges who had been separated from their parents.

4. Find a synonym of confused from the extract.

Ans. Bewildered

B. Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,

The glorious Sun uprist:

Then all averred, I had killed the bird

That brought the fog and mist."

1. Why is the sun referred to as being glorious?

Ans. The Sun is referred to as being glorious because it had just appeared after a long period of time. The atmosphere had been hazy and misty before this.

2. Name a poetic device employed in the above lines.

Ans. Simile "Nor dim nor red, like God's own head."

3. These lines indicate a change in the sailor's attitude. What is that change?

Ans. The sailors had earlier denounced the killing of the bird since it was believed to be a favourable omen and had led the ice to break and the breeze to now be blamed for bringing the fog and mist.

4. Explain: 'Glorious sun' and 'like God's own head'.

Ans. It is the blazing sun, which is illuminating everyone equally. The halo that surrounds the sun is like the halo that surrounds God's head. After several days of fog, the sun was shining gloriously.

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.

Q1. Where are the speakers? Who has come to meet Caesar?

Ans- The speakers are at Caesar's house. Decius Brutus has come to meet Caesar.

Q2. What message does Caesar wish to send? To whom?

Ans- Caesar wishes to send a message to the senators, saying that he will not come to the senate that day.

Q3. Who are the 'greybeards'? Why is Caesar not afraid of them?

Ans- Caesar mockingly calls the senators old men or 'greybeards'. He is not afraid of them because he is a mighty conqueror.

Q4. What is the lie mentioned in the above lines'?

Ans- Calpurnia, Caesar's wife tells Decius to tell a lie to the senators that Caesar will not come as he is lying sick. In reality, Caesar is not sick.

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?

Ans. The boys' response demonstrates their spirit of surrender and readiness to put in a lot of effort. It demonstrates that they were exercising their sweet will rather than being forced to work. It appears as though they had a certain objective in mind and it was the only thing on their minds.

ii. Do you think the tiger shooting organized by the villagers was a serious affair? Give reasons for your answer.

The tiger shooting was a serious affair for the villagers because they were eager to earn the reward money. They helped Mrs. Packletide by arranging a tiger of 'respectable antecedents', got a goat as a bait to lure the tiger.

They even posted children at the outskirts of the jungle day and night to prevent the tiger from escaping. A platform was constructed by them from where she could aim at the tiger easily.

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.

Ans. This is an extremely clever pun that Elsie Brown, the author, used in her narrative. Above board translates as true and sincere. Here, John, if he was flirting it was only on the Ouija board. Nothing about it was a secret.

iv. How did the frog convince the nightingale that she needed a trainer?

Ans- The frog introduced himself as a music critic who was in charge of overseeing all musical performances in the bog. By doing this, he makes an impact on the nightingale and encourages her to ask about her song. He makes the observation that her technique was fine, but that she needed a certain power, which could only come from receiving instructions from a professional like him. And the nightingale missed no chance to woo him into being her mentor.

v. Why does Cassius caution Brutus against allowing Antony to speak in the funeral of Caesar?

Ans. Cassius was fully aware of Antony's oratory prowess. Additionally, he was aware of Antony's intelligence and his capacity to use this knowledge against them. He worries that he would inspire the populace to oppose them. His worries prove to be accurate.

vi. Why was Michael surprised to see Sebastian Shultz' photograph in the newspaper?

Ans- Michael was taken aback when he read about Sebastian's recovery and saw a picture of him in the newspaper. Sebastian Shultz was a character with whom he had been playing psycho-drive games. When he discovered that Sebastian, the gamer he had helped, was a real person, he was shocked.

Question 12: Long Answer - Any One Question (8 marks)

Option A: Family Bonds in "Virtually True" & "The Dear Departed"

Question: "It is often said that blood is thicker than water. Does this hold true for Sebastian Schultz 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."

Model Answer (150 words):

The saying "blood is thicker than water" suggests family bonds supersede all others. However, "Virtually True" and "The Dear Departed" complicate this notion, revealing that familial duty can crumble under greed, while chosen bonds of care prove more authentic.

In "The Dear Departed," family bonds prove hollow. Upon Grandpa's supposed death, his family members—parents and children alike—rush to claim his possessions: the grandfather clock, furniture, and valuables. Their greed overshadows genuine grief or filial respect. Blood relation becomes merely a legal claim to inheritance, not an emotional commitment. They deceive, quarrel, and prioritize material gain over familial dignity. When Grandpa awakens alive, their hypocrisy is exposed.

Conversely, in "Virtually True," Michael's care for Sebastian—a stranger—proves genuine. Though not blood-related, Michael's commitment to helping Sebastian transcends biological duty. He risks his real life to assist someone he believed was a character. This chosen bond demonstrates that authentic care and responsibility matter more than heredity.

Both texts suggest family ties are valuable only when coupled with genuine love, respect, and duty. Without these qualities, blood proves insignificant; with them, even chosen bonds become sacred.

Option B: Legacy & Death in "Ozymandias" & "Julius Caesar"

Question: "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."

Model Answer (150 words):

Both "Ozymandias" and "Julius Caesar" explore how mighty power and legacies inevitably crumble before time and mortality, conveying a sobering message about human grandeur's futility.

In "Ozymandias," the once-mighty Egyptian king built colossal monuments to immortalize his name and power. Yet the poem presents only broken ruins in a barren desert—the statue's face is half-buried, inscriptions mocking: "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings; Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!" The irony is devastating: his boasted immortality is contradicted by complete destruction. The poem demonstrates that no monument, however grand, withstands time.

Similarly, Caesar in Shakespeare's play commanded respect and wielded absolute power, yet he falls victim to assassination, his grand legacy crumbling within hours. His murderers rationalize tyranny concerns, but ultimately, death levels all power—Caesars and commoners alike.

Both texts reveal: ambition is hollow, legacies are temporary, and death is universal. Ozymandias's ruins and Caesar's corpse symbolize the transient nature of human achievement. True legacy, the works suggest, lies not in monuments or power but in humility before time's inevitable erosion.