



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 – 2**

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: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (12 marks)

I. Why does the passage describe humanity's relationship with biodiversity as 'paradoxical'?

Correct Answer: (b) Because humans depend entirely on biodiversity yet actively contribute to its destruction.

II. Complete the following with the correct option:

Answer: invisible but essential processes

III. Give two examples of how regulating services moderate natural phenomena. (2 marks)

Model Answer:

Regulating services include wetlands that absorb floodwaters (preventing floods) and forests that sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Additionally, bees pollinating crops is also a regulating service. These services help control natural processes and protect us from natural disasters.

IV. What does the phrase 'rarely reflected in conventional financial accounting' suggest about how ecosystems are valued economically?

Correct Answer: (b) undervalued because their benefits are not easily priced or included in budgets.

V. The reference to the Irish Potato Famine brings up the idea of:

Correct Answer: (b) demonstrating the vulnerability of ecosystems lacking diversity.

VI. What would be the most suitable title for Paragraph 5?

Correct Answer: (b) The Urgent Need to Reverse Biodiversity Loss

VII. Which phrase from Paragraph 3 provides evidence that ecosystem services have tangible economic worth?

Answer (choose any one or two):

- "A single hectare of wetland can provide water filtration worth thousands of dollars annually"
- "Coral reefs protect coastlines from storm surges, saving billions in potential damage"

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

Answer: analogy

IX. How does the passage suggest that safeguarding biodiversity benefits humanity directly? (2 marks)

Model

Answer:

The passage states that biodiversity loss is "not an act of charity toward nature—it is an investment in humanity's own survival and prosperity." It also explains that diverse ecosystems are more resilient and can adapt to climate change, providing humans with "crucial flexibility in an uncertain future." This means protecting biodiversity protects our own future.

Question 2: Youth Mental Health Crisis (10 marks)

I. According to Table 1, what percentage of youth with diagnosed mental health conditions do NOT receive treatment? What does this gap suggest about global mental health infrastructure? (2 marks)

Answer:

According to Table 1, 40%+ of youth with mental health conditions have unmet mental health needs, meaning they don't receive treatment.

What this gap suggests:

This shows that global mental health infrastructure is inadequate. Even though we know many teens (14.3%) have mental health conditions, we're not providing treatment to 40% or more of them. This means:

- Not enough therapists or counselors worldwide
- Mental health services are not accessible to everyone
- Many countries lack proper mental health programs
- There's likely not enough funding for mental health care

II. Based on Table 2, the percentage of U.S. youth reporting anxiety symptoms increased from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 by:

Correct Answer: (b) 1%

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

Correct Answer: (b) Girls and LGBTQ+ youth experience disproportionately higher rates of emotional distress compared to the general youth population.

IV. What does the data in Chart 1 reveal about youth attitudes toward mental health support?

Model Answer:

Chart 1 reveals that youth attitudes toward mental health are heavily influenced by stigma and self-reliance beliefs:

- 85% think "I should handle it myself" — This shows youth believe they must be strong and solve problems alone

- 68% worry "what people will think" — This shows shame and fear of judgment
- 62% worry about privacy — This shows fear of exposure
- 48% believe "treatment won't help" — This shows hopelessness

Overall, youth don't trust others with their problems, fear judgment, and lack confidence in treatment. This is why the biggest barrier to help is psychological/emotional, not financial. We need to change how young people view mental health—making it okay to ask for help.

V. Which of the following best explains the increase in "difficulty accessing mental health care" from 52% to 54% even as school-based services expand?

Correct Answer: (c) Growing awareness of mental health challenges may have increased recognition of unmet needs.

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

Correct Answer: significant variations in access and outcomes across different countries and regions

VII. Based on Chart 2, which demographic groups are at particularly elevated risk and may require targeted interventions?

Correct Answer: (b) Girls and LGBTQ+ youth

VIII. If 20% of adolescents are receiving mental health therapy but 54% report difficulty accessing care, what can be inferred about mental health service delivery in the USA? (2 marks)

Model Answer:

This shows that mental health services in the USA are INADEQUATE and unevenly distributed:

- Only 20% get therapy, but 54% say it's hard to access = There aren't enough services for those who need them
- The gap of 34% between those who need help and get it shows serious supply-demand problems
- This suggests: Limited therapists in many areas, long waiting lists, high costs, lack of awareness, and unequal distribution of services (some neighborhoods have clinics, others don't)
- Schools are trying to expand services, but it's still not enough to meet the huge demand from students struggling with mental health issues.

SECTION B: WRITING SKILLS (22 marks)

Question 3: Formal Application (3 marks)

Model Answer:

Respected Sir/Madam,

I, Priya Sharma, President of the Environmental Club (Class X-B), request permission to organize an awareness campaign about our school's solar panel project. We wish to conduct this program in the school auditorium during lunch recess on Friday to educate students and parents about the renewable energy initiative and its sustainability benefits.

Thanking you for your consideration.

Yours respectfully,
Priya Sharma

Question 4: Factual Description (4 marks)

Model Answer:

Digital Literacy Program for Underprivileged Children

Our school conducted a "Digital Literacy Program" in a nearby slum community to bridge the technology gap. The program aimed to teach underprivileged children basic computer skills, internet safety, email communication, and document creation—skills essential in today's world.

Training modules included hands-on practice with computers, lessons on online safety dangers (cyberbullying, sharing personal info), and how to use educational apps. Local volunteers and Class X students acted as mentors, working with 120+ children over three months.

The results were impressive: 95% of students learned basic typing and computer navigation, 80% understood internet safety, and several children gained confidence to explore online learning resources. Parents reported increased interest in education. The program proved technology access can transform opportunities for underprivileged youth.

(Word Count: ~100 words)

Question 5A: Letter to Editor - Plastic in Schools (7 marks)

Model Answer:

Dear Editor,

I write to highlight the environmental crisis caused by single-use plastics in school cafeterias daily. Our school uses disposable plastic plates, bottles, and cutlery that end up in landfills, creating tonnes of waste.

This practice harms both health and environment. Plastic breaks into microplastics poisoning our soil and water. Students inhale plastic fumes and consume plastic particles in food. Environmentally, landfills overflow, oceans choke with plastic, and wildlife dies from ingestion.

I urge schools to immediately adopt biodegradable alternatives—compostable plates, metal water bottles, wooden cutlery. Schools should implement plastic-free cafeteria policies, reward students using personal bottles, and educate on sustainability.

Schools shape future citizens. If we teach environmental responsibility through action, not just words, students will become eco-conscious adults protecting our planet.

Yours sincerely,
Arjun Menon, 16
Green Avenue, Mumbai

Question 5B: Letter to Editor - Screen Addiction (7 marks)

Model Answer:

Dear Editor,

Today's students are trapped in a digital cage. Most spend 5-8 hours daily on phones and social media, sacrificing sleep, studies, and real friendships for virtual validation.

The causes are clear: Social media's addictive algorithms, peer pressure to stay connected, parents using phones as babysitters, and lack of boundaries. The damage is severe: eyesight deteriorates, sleep cycles

break (causing poor concentration), mental health suffers through anxiety and depression, grades drop, and real relationships weaken.

I recommend immediate action:

- Schools: Designate phone-free hours, teach digital literacy, involve parents
- Parents: Set strict screen-time limits, monitor usage, model healthy habits
- Students: Challenge themselves with phone-free days, join offline activities

We must reclaim our lives from screens. Technology serves us—we shouldn't serve technology. A balanced digital life is possible with collective effort and intention.

Yours sincerely,
Isha Kulkarni, 15
Sector 7, Bangalore

Question 6A: Article - Mental Wellness in Schools (8 marks)

Model Answer:

Mental Wellness Matters: Creating Safe Spaces in Schools

Adolescence is turbulent—exams stress, peer pressure, family expectations, and identity confusion swirl together. Mental health isn't a luxury; it's essential. Our school's new confidential counselling cell and peer support program addresses this crisis.

Why it matters: Depression and anxiety affect 1 in 4 students today. When ignored, mental pain leads to academic failure, isolation, and worse. Schools must actively build safe spaces where seeking help is normal, not shameful.

Common student stressors: Exam pressure (85%), friend conflicts (73%), family problems (62%), and future uncertainty. These aren't weakness—they're real challenges requiring real support.

Our solutions work: Peer support reminds students they're not alone. Professional counsellors provide expert guidance. Mindfulness activities (meditation, yoga) reduce stress and improve focus. These create a supportive culture where students open up.

Call to action: Let's destigmatize mental health! Talk about feelings, support struggling friends, and access counselling without shame. Mental wellness isn't weakness—it's strength.

Question 6B: Article - AI in Classroom (8 marks)

Model Answer:

AI in the Classroom: Opportunities and Challenges

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping education. Our school's AI-powered learning platforms offer personalized tutoring and real-time feedback. But like any tool, AI brings both promise and pitfalls.

Opportunities: AI identifies each student's learning gaps instantly, adapting difficulty in real time. Shy students get patience from AI tutors without judgment. Students needing extra help access 24/7 support. Accessibility improves—AI translates languages, reads for visually impaired students, and customizes content for learning disabilities. Learning becomes personalized, not one-size-fits-all.

Challenges exist: Screen fatigue harms eyes and posture after hours of staring. Over-reliance on AI weakens critical thinking—students expect answers without effort. AI can't replace human connection, mentorship,

and emotional support teachers provide. Privacy concerns emerge—tracking student data requires protection.

The balance: AI is a tool, not a teacher. The best learning combines technology's power with human warmth, creativity, and mentorship. Schools must limit screen time, teach AI literacy, and ensure technology serves learning—not replaces teachers.

The future isn't tech vs. humans. It's tech AND humans, together.

SECTION C: GRAMMAR (10 marks)

Question 7: Fill in the Blanks (3 marks)

Answers:

- (i) have been submitted – Present perfect passive voice (multiple proposals across time)
- (ii) has been made – Present perfect passive (action in the past with present relevance—"so far")
- (iii) may have been delayed – Perfect infinitive in passive voice (hypothetical possibility about a past action)

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

Original with Errors & Corrections:

Line	Error	Correction
(a)	"have saw"	"have seen"
(b)	"They was"	"They were"
(c)	"that we are"	"that we be"
(d)	"has did"	"has done"

Question 9: Rearrangement & Reporting (3 marks)

I. Rearrange the jumbled words to create a meaningful sentence (1 mark)

Jumbled: improve / framework / a / ensure / learning / to / holistic / must / schools / they

Rearranged: Schools must have a framework to ensure they improve holistic learning.

II. Report the conversations (2 marks)

Original Conversation 1:

Riya asked her mentor, "Why are the robotics modules being postponed again?"

Reported:

Riya asked her mentor why the robotics modules were being postponed again.

Original Conversation 2:

The editor said, "What an insightful article you have written!"

Reported:

The editor praised/complimented, saying that she had written a very insightful article.

OR: The editor exclaimed that it was an insightful article she had written.

SECTION D: LITERATURE (26 marks)

Question 10: Extract-Based Questions - Any Two (8 marks)

EXTRACT A: From Julius Caesar

Extraction Analysis: "If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him, I spurn thee like a cur out of my way."

i) Identify the speaker:

Answer: Julius Caesar

ii) Who was bending, praying, and fawning?

Answer: metilus Cimber

iii) In what context have these words been spoken?

Answer: He considers such behaviour weak and beneath his dignity. He looks down on Cimber who shows weakness, viewing him as worthless ("like a cur"—a stray dog).

iv) What do these words reveal about the speaker's character?

Answer:

- Extremely proud and arrogant – He thinks he's superior to everyone
- Contemptuous – He despises weakness and begging
- Harsh and cruel – He compares people to stray dogs and "spurns" them (kicks them away)
- Unempathetic – He has no compassion for common people
- Self-centered – He only respects strength and power, not humanity
- Dangerous – His attitude could lead to conflict and harm

EXTRACT B: From "The Letter" (Ali & His Daughter)

Extraction Analysis: "They will be useful to you, and they can never be to me. But will you do one thing?" "What?" "What do you see up there?" said Ali, pointing to the sky.

i) Identify the person spoken to:

Answer: The person spoken to is Laxmi Das.

ii) What does the word 'They' refer to?

Answer: "They" refers to Ali's savings/money.

iii) Why did Ali say 'They can never be useful to him'?

Answer: Because Ali is old and won't live much longer.

iv) What opinion do you form of Ali based on this extract?

Answer: Ali is revealed as:

- Selfless and sacrificing –

EXTRACT C: From Shakespeare's Sonnets

Extraction Analysis: "So, till the judgment that yourself arise, You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes."

i) According to the poet, what will last after monuments have decayed?

Answer: The person's beauty and image as preserved in the poem/art will last. The sonnet itself (the

ii) Why does the poet refer to "lovers' eyes" as making someone immortal?
Answer: Because people who love/admire always remember and think about the beloved. As long as lovers gaze upon the beloved (through the poem), they stay alive in memory and hearts. Being remembered by those who love you is a form of immortality.

iii) How does this couplet reinforce the enduring strength of poetry?
Answer: This couplet shows that poetry is more powerful than physical things like monuments, tombs, or statues. Poetry can:

- Preserve beauty eternally through words
- Survive longer than stone – buildings decay, but poems are recopied and passed down
- Touch hearts – poems create emotional connections that make people remember
- Transcend time – a poem written centuries ago still moves readers today
- Defeat death – through poetry, the dead live on in readers' imaginations

iv) What does this imply about the poet's view on the legacy left by art?
Answer: The poet believes that art (especially poetry) creates the most meaningful, lasting legacy:

- More powerful than time itself – Art defeats mortality
- More valuable than wealth or power – A person isn't remembered for money; they're remembered through art
- Deeply personal – Art touches hearts, making immortality emotional, not just physical
- Universal – A poem can be read by anyone, anywhere, forever
- The ultimate human achievement – Creating art is how we achieve true immortality

Question 11: Short Answer Questions - Any Five (10 marks)

i. Mrs. Packletide goes to great lengths to shoot a tiger. What does her obsession reveal about her character?

Mrs. Packletide is a self-centered, vain woman who cares more about impressing others than anything real or meaningful. Her character shows how dangerous vanity can be.

ii. Why do the children and adults rush to take items from Grandpa's house before his funeral is over?

The family cares more about stuff than about Grandpa or each other. Their rush to grab his belongings shows their selfishness and lack of real love.

iii. How does the Ouija board become a tool for mischief? What does John's behavior reveal about him?

Any value based answer

iv. Why does Michael find it hard to distinguish between online games and real life?

Michael is so obsessed with gaming that the virtual world feels more real to him than actual life. He forgets that real people and real problems need his attention more than game characters.

v. How does the tiger escape despite being trapped? What does this symbolize?

The tiger's escape symbolizes that nature is more powerful than human vanity. You can't fake success or steal glory—real achievements must be earned honestly. The tiger is the hero; Mrs. Packletide is ridiculous.

vi. What is the main irony in the ending of *The Dear Departed*?

The biggest irony is that Grandpa is alive! The family's shameful behavior—fighting over his things, stealing, lying—turns out to be completely pointless and humiliating. The author uses this twist to mock family greed.

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

OPTION A: Obsession with Wealth & Status

Question: "Obsession with wealth and status can blind people to truth and goodness." How do Mrs. Packletide and the family in *The Dear Departed* support this statement? Discuss what each loses through selfish behavior and how their greed affects others.

Model Answer (150 words):

Obsession with wealth and status destroys moral judgment, as shown in both stories.

Mrs. Packletide's obsession blinds her to truth: She wants status through a tiger shoot to impress Loona Bimberton. This obsession makes her:

- Dishonest: She fakes the hunt's difficulty and lies to newspapers
- Exploitative: She uses villagers for money and manipulates them
- Oblivious: She doesn't see the tiger's beauty or nature's power—only a prize for vanity
- She loses: Real achievement, integrity, and the respect of readers (we see her as ridiculous)
- Others harmed: Villagers are used, the tiger's life is threatened, and her rival remains unmoved

The Dear Departed family's greed blinds them to decency: Facing Grandpa's supposed death, they:

- Abandon love: No grieving—only scheming to steal his belongings
- Betray family: They fight each other over his possessions
- Show dishonesty: They hide items and lie about ownership
- They lose: Family unity, moral dignity, and face humiliation when Grandpa wakes
- Others harmed: Grandpa's memory is disrespected, and his trust is betrayed

Conclusion: Both characters prove that chasing wealth/status corrupts judgment. People become willing to deceive, betray, and harm others. Ultimately, they lose what matters—integrity, love, and self-respect.

OPTION B: False Authority & Manipulation

Question: "The most dangerous people are those who hide behind false authority." Discuss the Frog in *The Frog* and the Nightingale and Cassius in *Julius Caesar*. How do both manipulate through deception and flattery? What is the ultimate price?

Model Answer (150 words):

False authority is weaponized deception. Both the Frog and Cassius prove that people claiming expertise they don't possess can destroy others.

The Frog's false authority: He claims to be a "music critic" overseeing all performances in the bog. Using this fake authority, he:

- Flatters then criticizes: He praises the nightingale's technique but claims she lacks "power"—making her doubt herself
- Creates dependency: He positions himself as the only one who can help her improve
- Exploits insecurity: She becomes desperate for his validation
- Ultimate price: The nightingale trains so hard at his instruction that she dies of exhaustion, still believing his lies. He destroys her entirely

Cassius's false authority: He manipulates Brutus by:

- Flattering Brutus: Calling him a noble, worthy leader
- Exaggerating his own judgment: He claims to understand Caesar's tyranny better than Brutus does
- Using forged letters: Fake evidence appears to confirm his warnings
- Ultimate price: Brutus joins the conspiracy, murders his friend Caesar, faces civil war, and ultimately commits suicide. Cassius himself dies too. His manipulation destroys everyone—including himself

Conclusion: Both characters hide behind invented authority (fake critic, false wisdom) to control others. Their deception doesn't empower—it destroys. The nightingale and Brutus become tragic victims of manipulation.

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