

**ENGLISH CORE-Code No. 301  
SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER  
CLASS-XII-(2025-26)**

**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. Separate 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 marks)**

**1. Read the following passages.**

12

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within twenty miles of the sea. My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. The low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip.

“Hold your noise!” cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the bushes. “Keep still, or I’ll make you pay!”

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, limped, and shivered, and glared, and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me.

“Tell us your name!” said the man. “Quick! Give it mouth!”

“Pip. Pip, sir.”

“Show us where you live,” said the man. “Point out the place!”

The man, after looking at me for a moment, emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread which he ate ravenously.

"Now lookee here!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"

"There, sir!" said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

"Oh!" said he, coming back. "Who's that?" he asked, pointing.

"My sister, sir, —Mrs. Joe Gargery, —wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir."

"Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg.

After darkly looking at his leg, he came close to me, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

"Now lookee here," he said, "You know what a file and wittles is?"

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me."

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said, "If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more."

He did. Then, he held me by the arms, in an upright position, and went on with his terms.

*Source: Great Expectations by Charles Dickens / 448 words*

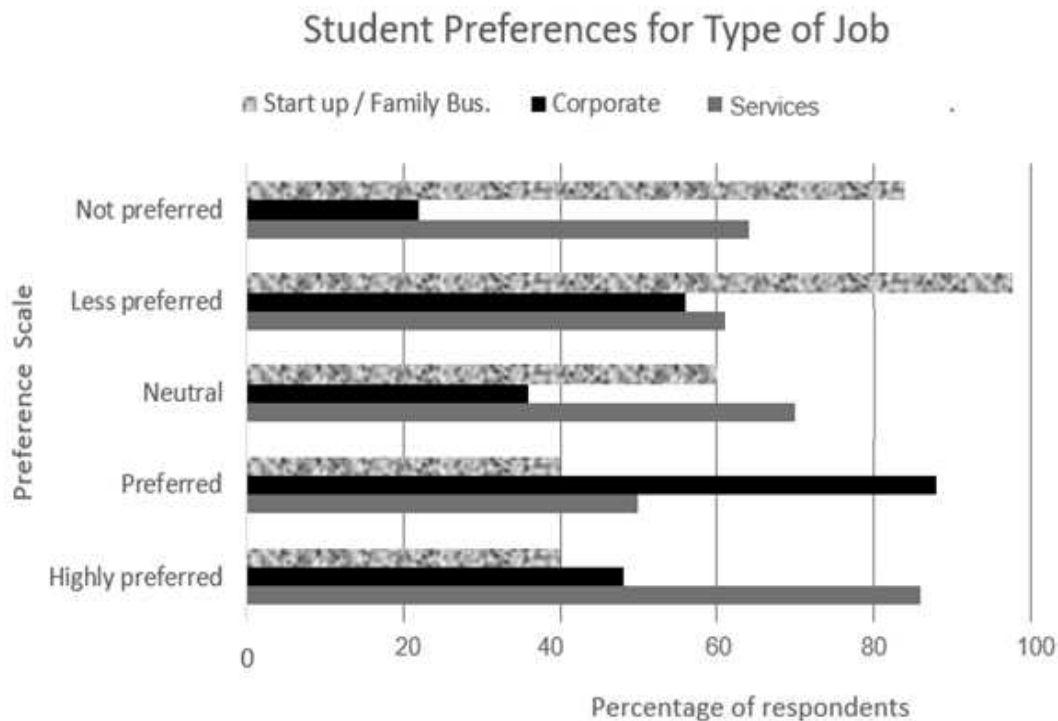
**Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.**

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| I   | Which textual evidence tells us that Pip was trembling?   | 1 |
| II  | Complete the following with a suitable reason.<br>The writer refers to the sea as a 'savage lair' in order to tell the reader that ____.  | 1 |
| III | The writer emphasises Pip's vulnerability in all of the following ways EXCEPT —<br>A. through the description of the harsh landscape<br>B. via the behaviour of the frightening man<br>C. through Pip's helplessness and fear<br>D. via Pip's knowledge of the surrounding area | 1 |
| IV  | What type of statement is made in the phrase "Keep still, or I'll make you pay!"?<br>A. caution<br>B. threat<br>C. prediction<br>D. announcement  | 1 |

- V Based on his initial appearance, how can we say that the 'fearful man' was in a state of discomfort? (Any one reason) 1
- VI. Which one of the following statements best explains the phrase "Give it mouth!"? 1  
 A) Speak loudly B) Open your mouth wide C) Answer the question
- VII. The man ate the bread 'ravenously'. What does this suggest about his condition? 1
- VIII What does the man's question, "Where's your mother?" and his reaction when Pip points to her suggest about his intentions? (Answer in about 40 words) 2
- IX How does the man's action of forcing Pip to look up at him contribute to the tension in the scene? (Answer in about 40 words) 2
- X Complete the following with the most suitable option. 1  
 The main idea of the text is \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. Pip's encounter with a frightening man who demands information  
 B. the harshness of Pip's environment and the fear it creates  
 C. Pip's struggle to understand the man's intentions and stay calm  
 D. the importance of family relationships in Pip's life

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

- 1 A recent survey was conducted among 2,000 college students and young professionals to analyse preferences for different types of jobs, including corporate roles, personal start-ups or family businesses, and service professions (example - defense, nursing, police). The study aimed to identify trends in career aspirations, the factors influencing these preferences, and their implications for workforce planning and education systems. Participants were asked to rank their preferences on a five-point scale.
- 2 The study covered respondents across urban and semi-urban areas, representing diverse educational, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Researchers ensured diversity in gender, socioeconomic status, and career stages to make the findings representative of a broad spectrum of opinions. Data collection involved online questionnaires and in-person interviews, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of job preferences. The data was displayed as a bar graph given below.



- 3 Corporate jobs were commonly associated with financial stability, growth opportunities, and access to structured career paths. Start-ups and family businesses, on the other hand, appealed to those valuing autonomy, creativity, and the chance to work in more flexible environments. Service professions were perceived as fulfilling and prestigious, especially among individuals motivated by a sense of duty.
- 4 The survey also highlighted several challenges. Geographic variations were significant, with urban respondents gravitating more toward corporate roles, while semi-urban participants showed a stronger inclination for service professions and family businesses. Respondents indicated limited mentorship opportunities and a lack of clarity about the long-term prospects of non-corporate careers as barriers influencing their decisions.
- 5 The findings provide a foundation for further research into how cultural, regional, and generational influences shape career choices. Future studies could explore factors such as gender-based preferences, emerging industries, mentorship availability, and the role of technological advancements in shaping job markets. Additionally, longitudinal research could track how these preferences evolve as respondents advance in their careers. This could help educational institutions and employers develop tailored strategies to better align with the aspirations and values of young job seekers. Moreover, policies encouraging skill development and mentorship programmes may bridge the gaps identified in this survey, ensuring more informed career decisions among youth.

*Created for academic usage / 348 words*

**Answer the following questions, based on the given passage.**

- I. What was the main purpose of the survey conducted among 2,000 college students and young professionals? 1

- A. To determine the popularity of specific jobs in rural areas versus urban areas
- B. To explore patterns in career aspirations and the factors influencing them
- C. To analyse the success rate of startups and family businesses
- D. To assess the salary expectations of young professionals opting for jobs

- II. Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in brackets. 1

The study ensured diversity in gender, socioeconomic status, and career stages to make the findings \_\_\_\_\_ (accurate / representative / specific).

- III. Fill in the blank with reference to the given bar graph chart.

The profession preference for which policymakers primarily need to provide encouraging incentives is \_\_\_\_\_. 1

**For the Visually Impaired Candidates**

Complete the following suitably.

When the researcher uses the phrase 'a broad spectrum of opinions' in the line 'to make the findings representative of a broad spectrum of opinions', the researcher refers to \_\_\_\_\_. (Ref: Paragraph 2)

- IV. Based on the bar graph, which of the following statements best reflects the correct trend in job preferences?

- A. Corporate jobs are more in the 'Least preferred' category than service professions. 1
- B. Service professions are less preferred than corporate jobs on the 'Neutral' scale.
- C. Service professions have a higher percentage of respondents marking them as 'Highly Preferred' compared to corporate jobs.
- D. Corporate jobs and service professions have an equal percentage of respondents marking them as 'Preferred.'

**For the Visually Impaired Candidates**

Why does the researcher associate start-ups and family businesses with individuals who value autonomy? (Ref: Paragraph 3)

- A. They allow individuals to independently make decisions and innovate.
- B. They guarantee long-term financial security and growth.
- C. They require minimal risk-taking and provide fixed schedules.
- D. They are managed by corporate guidelines ensuring stability.

- V. Riya wishes to have a regular salary and defined growth in her career. Why is a corporate job better suited for her compared to joining a start-up or family business? 2  
(Ref: Paragraphs 3 & 4)
- VI. When the researcher says 'Respondents indicated limited mentorship opportunities,' what does s/he mean by 'limited mentorship opportunities'? 1
- A. Lack of financial resources to hire mentors for jobs  
B. Absence of training programmes in semi-urban areas  
C. Reluctance of respondents to seek career advice from unknown people  
D. Difficulty in finding experienced professionals to guide career paths  
(Ref: Paragraph 4)
- VII. How might further studies in the understanding of emerging industries and technological advancements empower youth to make well-informed career decisions? 2  
(Ref: Paragraph 5)
- VIII. Select the option that is **NOT** addressed in this study. 1
- A. The purpose of the survey  
B. The impact of gender on career preferences  
C. Regional and demographic variations in preferences  
D. Challenges faced by respondents  
E. The methodology used for data collection

## SECTION B

### CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (18 marks)

***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 1×4=4

- A. You are Daljeet Kaur, a member of the Teen Well-Being Association, Chandigarh. The Association is planning to organise free pottery classes every Sunday morning at the community hall to encourage creativity among young residents. Write a notice in about 50 words, informing the residents of the event and inviting registrations. Include all the necessary details. Put your notice in a box.

**OR**

- B. You are Keerthi, the Secretary of the Environmental Club of ABC School, Madurai. Your school is organising an 'Eco-Fiesta' to raise awareness about environmental issues. Draft a notice in about 50 words, inviting students to participate in various activities and setting up of food stalls. Include all the necessary details. Put your notice in a box.

4. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 50 words. 1x4=4

- A. As the Cultural Secretary, Vignesh Kumar, of JKL School, Jamshedpur, draft an invitation for the Annual Music Festival, inviting Gajendra Hansda, an acclaimed local musician, to perform and judge the event. Provide the essential details in about 50 words.

OR

- B. You are Bina Bedekar, currently residing at 45, Ashok Vihar, Nagpur. You have been invited to inaugurate a science exhibition at your alma mater, National Public School, Mumbai. Write a formal reply in about 50 words, accepting the invitation and expressing your gratitude.

5. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in 120-150 words 1x5=5

- A. You are Pranab Chauhan, residing at 13-A, Gol Bazaar, Jaisalmer. Write a letter to the editor of *The Nation Today*, highlighting the need to assess sports talent at a young age by sports teachers and coaches to ensure that talent does not go unrecognised. Emphasise the importance of grooming young sportspersons to create a larger pool of talented athletes for the future. Draft the letter using your own ideas as well as the cues given.

- Spotting natural abilities during formative years.
- Building foundational skills early for long-term success.
- Instilling discipline, teamwork, and sportsmanship from a young age.
- Creating a larger pool of skilled athletes for the future.
- Building a strong sports culture and national pride.

OR

- B. You are Lakshmi Kapur from 51/A, second floor, Shalimar Vihar, Delhi. You have come across the following advertisement in *The Urban Echo* for the post of a Junior Marketing Executive at a leading marketing firm. Write a letter expressing your interest in the position. Include your bio-data along with the application.

**Join the Trendsetters Digital Agency**

We are a leading marketing firm looking for dynamic individuals with:

- Strong communication skills
- An understanding of digital marketing
- Ability to work well in a team

**Educational Requirements:** Graduate in Marketing, Communication, or related field

**Experience:** Not mandatory, but prior exposure to digital marketing is an advantage

Interested candidates should send their applications with a resume.

**Contact:**

*Trendsetters Digital Agency*  
Address: 12-B, Green Street,  
New Delhi, 110001

1x5=5

**6. Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in 120-150 words**

- A. Digital communication tools have revolutionised the educational landscape. The introduction of online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and interactive tools has made education more accessible and engaging. You are Nooran Sheikh. Write an article for the monthly magazine edition of *The Progressive Educator* and *discuss* the role of digital communication in education. Write the article using your own ideas as well as the cues given.

- Student engagement
- Accessibility of education
- Teachers and students' roles
- Learning outcomes

**OR**

- B. The cultural festival in LMN School, Kochi, was held recently to celebrate the school's achievements. As the senior editorial board member, Devaki Fernandes, write this report for the school magazine detailing various aspects of the festival. Write the report using your own ideas as well as the cues given.

- Organisation and significance
- Performances and exhibition
- Participant engagement
- Overall success.

**SECTION C  
LITERATURE**

(40 marks)

**7. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). 1x6=6**

A ... I saw my mother,  
beside me,  
doze, open mouthed, her face  
ashen like that  
of a corpse and realised with  
pain  
that she was as old as she  
looked but soon  
put that thought away, and  
looked out at Young Trees sprinting, the merry children spilling  
out of their homes...

(My Mother at Sixty-six)

- I. What does the imagery of the 'ashen face' of the mother suggest about her physical condition? 1
- II. Complete the following with the correct option. 1

The speaker's use of the word 'realised' suggests that her awareness was \_\_\_\_\_  
(delayed / expected / sudden).



- III. How does the phrase 'merry children spilling out of their homes' contribute to the tone of the passage? 1
- IV. Complete the sentence by filling in the blank with a suitable phrase. 1
- The primary theme highlighted in the extract is the \_\_\_\_\_, as the narrator reflects on her mother's frailty and aging.
- V. What can be inferred about the emotional state of the speaker in the extract? 1
- a) Distracted by the liveliness of the surroundings
  - b) Concerned about her mother's discomfort
  - c) Overwhelmed by a sense of anguish
  - d) Preoccupied with thoughts about life experiences
- VI. All of the following are true for the extract EXCEPT – 1
- a) The comparison to a 'corpse' highlights the speaker's fear of losing her mother.
  - b) The poet makes exclusive use of melancholic imagery in the given lines.
  - c) The speaker's internal conflict creates a relatable portrayal of human relationships.
  - d) The universality of themes makes the lines relevant to the readers.

**OR**

- B When Aunt is dead, her terrified hands will lie  
Still ringed with ordeals she was mastered by.  
The tigers in the panel that she made  
Will go on prancing, proud and unafraid (Aunt Jennifer's Tigers)
- I What does the phrase 'terrified hands' suggest about Aunt's life? 1
- II Complete the following suitably. 1
- The tigers' proud and playful movements reflect \_\_\_\_\_.
- III Examine briefly how the tigers in the panel contrast with Aunt's life experiences. 1
- IV. Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in the brackets. 1
- The phrase 'still ringed' refers to both the literal \_\_\_\_\_ (shape of the embroidery panel / wedding band on her finger) and the figurative 'ring' of constraints and ordeals imposed by her marriage.

- V. If a student were to interpret the word 'prancing' in a real-world context, which of the following would it best represent? 1
- An employee working under the pressure of deadlines.
  - A soldier standing firm and ready for battle at the frontier.
  - A child playing freely in a park, unburdened by responsibilities.
  - A bird trapped in a cage, longing to be free and fly high.
- VI. What does the poet imply about the art in the line 'The tigers in the panel that she made will go on prancing'? 1
- Art is a timeless expression that outlives its creator, continuing to embody their spirit and desires.
  - The tigers symbolise Aunt Jennifer's fleeting empowerment, which will fade over time.
  - The panel is a temporary escape for Aunt Jennifer, offering solace only during her lifetime.
  - The permanence of the tigers in the panel contrasts with the transient nature of Aunt Jennifer's struggles.
8. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). 4x1=4
- A. My three hundred dollars bought less than two hundred in old-style bills, but I didn't care; eggs were thirteen cents a dozen in 1894.  
But I've never again found the corridor that leads to the third level at Grand Central Station, although I've tried often enough. Louisa was pretty worried when I told her all this, and didn't want me to look for the third level any more, and after a while I stopped; I went back to my stamps. But now we're both looking, every weekend...
- (The Third Level)
- What does Charley's indifference to the cost of old-style bills and his focus on the price of eggs in 1894 suggest about his view of the past? 1
  - Complete the sentence suitably. 1  
Charley has been unsuccessful in finding the corridor to the third level despite \_\_\_\_.
  - Where is the irony in Louisa's reaction to Charley's search for the third level in this extract? 1
  - Complete the following with a correct option based on the context in the extract. 1  
The phrase 'I went back to my stamps' suggests \_\_\_\_.
- finding comfort in a hobby that is familiar
  - choosing a new hobby to forget earlier pursuits
  - attempting to engage together in a new hobby
  - approaching a familiar hobby with enthusiasm

OR

B. Derry: What they think.

Mr Lamb: What do they think, then?

Derry: You think.... 'Here's a boy.' You look at me...and then you see my face and you think. 'That's bad. That's a terrible thing. That's the ugliest thing I ever saw.' You think, 'Poor boy.' But I'm not. Not poor. Underneath, you are afraid. Anybody would be. I am. When I look in the mirror, and see it, I'm afraid of me.

Mr Lamb: No, Not the whole of you. Not of you.

Derry: Yes!

[Pause]

(On the Face of It)

I. What does Mr. Lamb mean when he says, "No. Not the whole of you. Not of you"? 1

II. What might Derry be thinking during the pause after he insists, "Yes!"? 1

Choose the most appropriate option:

A. "Why doesn't he understand me?"

B. "He's pretending to care like everyone else."

C. "Maybe he really sees more than just my face."

D. "I should leave. He doesn't get it."

III. Fill in the blank with a suitable word: 1

Mr. Lamb's response suggests that he sees Derry's face as only one \_\_\_\_\_ of who he is.

IV. What does this exchange reveal about the emotional distance Derry feels and Mr. Lamb's attempt to bridge it? 1

9. Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). 1x6=6

A. She said this in such a friendly manner that the rattrap peddler must have felt confidence in her.

'It would never have occurred to me that you would bother with me yourself, miss,' he said. 'I will come at once.'

He accepted the fur coat, which the valet handed him with a deep bow, threw it over his rags, and followed the young lady out to the carriage, without granting the astonished blacksmiths so much as a glance.

But while he was riding up to the manor house he had evil forebodings.

"Why the devil did I take that fellow's money?" he thought. "Now I am sitting in the trap and will never get out of it."

(The Rattrap)

- I. Which of the following best reflect the 'friendly manner' Edla exhibits toward the rattrap peddler as referred to in the extract? 1
1. Pay a compliment
  2. Show kindness
  3. Provide financial support
  4. Be respectful
  5. Speak in an excited tone

Select the most suitable option.

- A. 1 and 5
- B. 2 and 4
- C. 1, 2 and 3
- D. 3, 4 and 5

- II. Fill in the blank with a correct option from those given in the brackets, based on the information in the extract. 1

The peddler threw the fur coat over his rags and followed Edla out to the carriage, \_\_\_\_\_ (enthusiastically / silently / reluctantly).

- III. How did the peddler feel toward Edla after accepting the fur coat and making his statement? 1
- A. He decided to humour her gesture.
  - B. He felt obligated to trust her kindness.
  - C. He remained unsure about her true intentions.
  - D. He recognised and appreciated her compassion.

- IV. What might have been the most likely reason the blacksmiths were astonished when the peddler accepted the coat and left with Edla? 1

- V. Justify that guilt was the primary cause of the peddler's sense of evil foreboding, based on the information in the extract? 1

- VI. Complete the following suitably. 1

When the peddler says, "...I will never get out," his statement stems from his guilt over stealing 'that fellow's' money and his fear that \_\_\_\_\_ .

**OR**

- B. "She thinks money grows on trees, don't she, Dad?", said little Derek, hanging on the back of his father's chair.

Their mother sighed. Sophie watched her back stooped over the sink and wondered at the incongruity of the delicate bow which fastened her apron strings. The delicate-seeming bow and the crooked back.

The evening had already blacked in the windows and the small room was steamy from the stove and cluttered with the heavy-breathing man in his vest at the table and the dirty washing piled up in the corner. Sophie felt a tightening in her throat. She went to look for her brother Geoff.

(Going Places)

- I. Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option from those given in the brackets. 1

The literal meaning conveyed via the phrase 'the evening had already blacked in the windows' is the \_\_\_\_\_ (arrival of night / shadow over ambitions).

- II. What was mother most likely thinking when she sighed? 1

1. "Life would have been different if money did grow on trees!"
2. "I wish he would stop troubling my dear Sophie."
3. "We can only wish; we've never had enough anyway."
4. "I'm too tired to respond to such comments anymore."
5. "Our struggles will never end; no matter what Sophie dreams of."

Select the most suitable option.

- A. 1, 3 and 5
- B. 2, 4 and 5
- C. 1 and 4
- D. 2 and 3

- III. The delicate bow on Sophie's mother's apron and her crooked back highlights the theme of \_\_\_\_\_. 1

- A. appearance vs. reality
- B. resilience through hardship
- C. the fragility of youth
- D. the complexity of familial love

- IV. The line from the extract that correctly captures Sophie's emotional response to the contrast between her dreams and the limitations of her current circumstances is '\_\_\_\_\_'. 1

- V. What does the writer emphasise by associating the term 'cluttered' with 'heavy breathing'? 1

- VI. How does the setting of the room contribute to the mood of the extract? 1

10. **Answer any five of the following six questions in 40-50 words each :** 5x2=10
- I. What role does the French language played in 'The Last Lesson', in the context of the narrator's feelings towards it? 2
  - II. What lesson can individuals learn from Douglas's experience in overcoming his fear of water? 2  
(Deep Water)
  - III. Based on what Keats' suggests in 'A Thing of Beauty,' how can recognising the lasting value of beauty help someone in the real world cope with challenges or difficulties? 2
  - IV. What does the reference to fishermen not harming whales and the man gathering salt looking at his hurt hands signify in the poem? 2  
(Keeping Quiet)
  - V. How does Rudyard Kipling's refusal to be interviewed point towards the intrusive and unwelcome nature of interviews? 2  
(The Interview I & II)
  - VI. What is the significance of a narrator in 'Lost Spring' as opposed to a plain narrative? 2
11. **Answer any two of the following three questions in 40-50 words each :** 2x2=4
- I. How can participating in educational programmes like 'Students on Ice', which take students to places like Antarctica, help raise awareness about the impact of geological changes and environmental issues? 2  
(Journey to the End of the Earth)
  - II. What does Zitkala-Sa's description of being 'tossed about in the air like a wooden puppet' reveal about her feelings of powerlessness and cultural displacement? 2  
(The Memories of Childhood: The Cutting of My Long Hair)
  - III. What does Derry's remark, "Think, you might have been blinded, or born deaf, or have to live in a wheelchair..." reveal about his perspective on how people console others? 2  
(On the Face of It)
12. **Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words.** 1x5=5
- A. How do 'Indigo' by Louis Fischer and 'The Roadside Stand' by Robert Frost, highlight the theme of exploitation, and what similarities do they reveal about the plight of marginalised communities?
- OR**
- B. How can the character of the office boy in 'Poets and Pancakes,' who harbours dreams, be compared to Sophie from 'Going Places,' who is quite aspirational? Consider their ambitions and the obstacles they face in their respective

environments.

13. Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words 1x5=5

A Justify how Sadao's character arc is more central to the moral dilemma in the 'The Enemy' as opposed to Hana's.

**OR**

B Analyse how the narrative technique used in 'The Tiger King', enhances the impact of the story on the reader.