

# Sample Question Paper (2025-26)

Subject: English (Core)

Class: XI

## SECTION - A: Reading Skills

1. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow. Do any *one*.  $1 \times 10 = 10$
- (A) In a world increasingly driven by material pursuits and personal ambition, the value of volunteerism and social work often goes unnoticed. Yet, these acts of selflessness are the very threads that hold the fabric of society together. Whether it is distributing food in underserved communities, tutoring underprivileged children, or cleaning public spaces, volunteering helps bridge the gap between privilege and need.

Social work is not limited to large organisations or professional social workers. Every individual has the capacity to contribute meaningfully to society. Students, especially, can benefit greatly from engaging in such activities. It enhances their sense of empathy, builds leadership qualities, and instills a deep sense of civic responsibility. In fact, many educational institutions around the world now require community service as part of their curriculum.

Moreover, volunteering provides real-world experience that cannot be gained from textbooks alone. Working with people from different walks of life nurtures emotional intelligence and broadens perspectives. It also boosts mental well-being, as numerous studies have shown that helping others increases feelings of happiness and reduces stress.

In essence, volunteerism is not just about giving—it is also about growing. It teaches humanity, compassion, and the joy of contributing to something larger than oneself. In a time when the world often seems divided, acts of service remind us of our shared humanity.

### Questions:

- (i) The author of the passage wants to:
- (a) Build a utopian society without needy, hungry and poor people
  - (b) Make people aware of their surroundings and connect with each other
  - (c) Foster the feeling of volunteerism and social work in people from all walks of life
  - (d) All of these
- (ii) Helping others \_\_\_\_ happiness and \_\_\_\_ stress.
- (a) increases; increases
  - (b) decreases; increases
  - (c) increases; decreases
  - (d) decreases; decreases
- (iii) The fact that many educational institutions have included community service in their curriculum signifies that:
- (a) They want to over-burden students with extra tasks.
  - (b) They want to foster the feeling of humanity in children.
  - (c) They want students to feel egoistic about themselves.
  - (d) They want the poor to feel inferior.

- (iv) Why does the act of working selflessly go unnoticed, according to you?
- (a) The people don't care about the poor anymore due to rising scams by such people.
  - (b) Individualism and busy life may be a cause for not noticing the surroundings.
  - (c) In a world driven by material pursuits, people just want to get more and more money.
  - (d) All of these may be potential causes.
- (v) What does social work lead to?
- (a) Bridging gap between the privileged and the needy
  - (b) Happiness on the sides: the donor and the receiver
  - (c) Increased stress and anxiety due to loss of money
  - (d) Both (a) and (b)
- (vi) What are some ways in which we can help poor people?
- (vii) How is social work not limited to big organisations?
- (viii) What are some benefits of working with people coming from different walks of life?
- (ix) How can students benefit from volunteerism and social work?
- (x) Give a suitable title to the passage.

**OR**

(B) Drug addiction is a serious problem that affects individuals, families, and communities. Often, people fall into addiction due to peer pressure, stress, emotional trauma, or even curiosity. In some cases, the easy availability of drugs and lack of awareness about their harmful effects lead young people to try substances that can destroy their health and future.

Preventing drug addiction begins with education. When young people are informed about the long-term consequences of substance abuse—such as mental illness, financial problems, or broken relationships—they are more likely to make healthier choices. Parents, schools, and the media must work together to spread awareness and provide emotional support to those at risk.

For individuals already affected by addiction, seeking help is the first step toward recovery. Drug deaddiction centres offer medical treatment and counselling. Many recovering addicts also benefit from support groups, where they share their experiences and encourage one another. The road to recovery may be challenging, but with the right support system and strong willpower, people can reclaim their lives.

As a society, we must show compassion rather than judgement. Addiction is a health issue, not a crime. Creating a safe, understanding environment helps people open up, seek help, and take the first steps toward a drug-free future.

**Questions:**

- (i) How can one prevent getting addicted to drugs?
- (a) Getting aware about harmful effects of drugs
  - (b) Trying drugs just out of curiosity
  - (c) Not going to Drug Deaddiction Centres
  - (d) All of these
- (ii) Drug addiction affects:
- (a) Individuals only
  - (b) Both societies and communities
  - (c) Only societies
  - (d) Individuals, their families, societies and communities
- (iii) The best way to treat drug addicts is to:
- (a) Socially boycott them
  - (b) Support their addiction
  - (c) Let them be as they are
  - (d) Bringing them help
- (iv) "Prevention is better than cure." How?
- (a) Preventing drug addiction is as easy as combatting it after addiction.
  - (b) Drugs are a way of escapism; there is no need to prevent it.
  - (c) Cure of drug addiction is really difficult and challenging.
  - (d) Curing drug addiction is really, a one-step process.
- (v) What does 'compassion' mean?
- (a) Kindness, empathy and helpfulness
  - (b) Vileness, agility and bluntness
  - (c) Realness, monotony and melancholy
  - (d) Idleness, inaction and passivity
- (vi) What are some reasons for drug addiction?
- (vii) What role do parents play in prevention of drug addiction?
- (viii) How is drug addiction cured?
- (ix) List some steps for a drug-free future.
- (x) Give a suitable title to the passage.

2. Read the passage given below and make notes by supplying suitable headings, sub-headings etc. and using abbreviations (minimum 4). Supply a list of abbreviations used. Give a suitable title to the passage.

$$4 + 1 = 5$$

Sun Tzu, the ancient Chinese military strategist and author of *The Art of War*, believed that the greatest victories are won not through brute force but through careful strategy and deep understanding. Although his work was written over 2,500 years ago, his principles remain relevant today—not only in warfare but also in leadership, business, and personal growth.

One of Sun Tzu’s most famous teachings is: “If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.” This highlights the importance of self-awareness and observation. In modern life, this could mean knowing your strengths and weaknesses as well as understanding the challenges you face—whether they are exams, competitions, or emotional struggles.

Another striking principle is: “The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.” This suggests that true wisdom lies in resolving conflict without aggression. In school life, this might apply to handling arguments without shouting, or solving problems with calm reasoning instead of reacting impulsively.

Sun Tzu also emphasised adaptability: “Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows.” This reminds us that success often depends on how we adjust to our circumstances. In a rapidly changing world, those who are flexible in thought and action often move ahead.

Ultimately, Sun Tzu’s teachings are not just about war—they are about understanding, patience, and strategy. If we reflect on these lessons, we may find that life itself is a kind of battlefield where the wisest warriors are not those who fight the most, but those who think the best.

## SECTION - B: Writing Skills

3. Attempt any *one* from the given alternatives in about 50 words: 5
- (A) You are Ram/Rama, head boy/girl of GSSS Kalanaur. Your school is organising a debate competition on the topic: ‘Rise of A.I. in Learning: Boon or Bane’. Draft a notice inviting the names of interested students. Invent necessary details.
- OR**
- (B) You are Ashish/Asha, resident of 569, DC Colony, Faridabad. You are moving out to Delhi as you got transferred. Hence, you want to rent your house. Write a classified advertisement for the same to be published in a local daily.
- OR**
- (C) Make a poster on the topic: ‘Causes of Climate Change’.
4. Attempt any *one* from the given alternatives in about 100 words: 5
- (A) You are Ashutosh/Atishi, resident of 234, Bharat Nagar, Delhi. Due to frequent power cuts in your area, students are not able to study well. The exams are approaching and the power cuts are hampering children’s studies. Write a letter to Operations Manager of Electricity Board complaining for the same.
- OR**
- (B) Write an application to the Principal of your school as head boy/girl, seeking his/her permission to organise a symposium on ‘Mindfulness and Healthy Lifestyle’, stating the need for the same in present time.
5. Attempt any *one* from the given alternatives in about 100 words: 5
- (A) You are Sushil/Sushila, secretary, Red Cross Society Unit of your school. The Red Cross Society organised a blood donation camp at your school. Write a report for the same.
- OR**
- (B) Write a paragraph on the topic: ‘India’s Unity in Diversity’.

## SECTION - C: Grammar

6. Attempt any *ten* questions out of the *twelve* given:

1 × 10 = 10

(A) Fill in the blanks with correct *form of the verb*:

- (i) If I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a superhero, I could've saved his life.
- (ii) The doctor \_\_\_\_\_ (be) late; the patient had already died.

(B) Fill in the blanks with suitable *modals*:

- (iii) We \_\_\_\_\_ to serve our country.
- (iv) You \_\_\_\_\_ quit smoking. (*Compulsion*)

(C) Identify the *parts of speech* underlined in the given sentences:

- (v) She will meet you at 9.
- (vi) The old man I told you about is one of the best actors.

(D) Identify the type of *clause* underlined in the given sentences:

- (vii) I don't know why she left so early.
- (viii) She sings better than I expected.

(E) Fill in the blanks with correct *determiners*:

- (ix) \_\_\_\_\_ of the time has been wasted. (Much/Many)
- (x) \_\_\_\_\_ child is important. (Every/Each)

(F) Change the *voice* of the given sentences as directed:

- (xi) Who has written this letter? (Direct → Indirect)
- (xii) Let the match begin. (Indirect → Direct)

## SECTION - D: Literature

### [I: Hornbill (Prose)]

7. Read the passages given below and answer the questions that follow. Do any *one*. 1 × 5 = 5

(A) Amenhotep III — Tut's father or grandfather — was a powerful pharaoh who ruled for almost four decades at the height of the eighteenth dynasty's golden age. His son Amenhotep IV succeeded him and initiated one of the strangest periods in the history of ancient Egypt. The new pharaoh promoted the worship of the Aten, the sun disk, changed his name to Akhenaten, or 'servant of the Aten,' and moved the religious capital from the old city of Thebes to the new city of Akhetaten, known now as Amarna. He further shocked the country by attacking Amun, a major god, smashing his images and closing his temples. "It must have been a horrific time," said Ray Johnson, director of the University of Chicago's research centre in Luxor, the site of ancient Thebes. "The family that had ruled for centuries was coming to an end, and then Akhenaten went a little wacky."

**Questions:**

- (i) Name the chapter and the author.
  - (a) Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues; A.R. Butler
  - (b) Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues; A.R. Williams
  - (c) The Portrait of Akhenaten's Deeds; Khushwant Singh
  - (d) Silk Road; Nick Middleton
- (ii) Which of the following is the correct order of succession (assuming Amenhotep III to be Tut's grandfather)?
  - (a) Amenhotep III → Akhenaten → Amenhotep II
  - (b) Amenhotep III → Akhetaten → Tutankhamun
  - (c) Amenhotep III → Akhenaten → Tutankhamun
  - (d) Amenhotep II → Amenhotep III → Tutankhamun

- (iii) Which of the following was the religious capital at the time of reign of Amenhotep III?
- Amarna
  - Akhetaten
  - Thebes
  - Valley of Kings
- (iv) Which of the following things was/were done by Akhenaten, which shocked the country?
- Smashing Amun's images
  - Closing Amun's temples
  - Worshiping Aten (sun disk)
  - All of these
- (v) What is the difference between Akhenaten and Akhetaten?
- Former is the name of a pharaoh while the latter is a place
  - Former is a place while the latter is the name of a pharaoh
  - Former was the religious capital of Egypt at the time of Amenhotep III while the latter is that at the time of Amenhotep IV
  - There is no difference as these both mean the same.

**OR**

(B) These beasts would cock their great big heads when they became aware of our approach and fix us in their sights. As we continued to draw closer, they would explode into action, speeding directly towards us, like a bullet from a gun and nearly as fast. These shaggy monsters, blacker than the darkest night, usually wore bright red collars and barked furiously with massive jaws. They were completely fearless of our vehicle, shooting straight into our path, causing Tsetan to brake and swerve. The dog would make chase for a hundred metres or so before easing off, having seen us off the property.

**Questions:**

- (i) Name the chapter and the author.
- Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues; A.R. Butler
  - Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues; A.R. Williams
  - The Portrait of Akhenaten's Deeds; Khushwant Singh
  - Silk Road; Nick Middleton
- (ii) Which breed of dog is being referred to in this passage?
- German Shepherd
  - Golden Retriever
  - Tibetan Mastiff
  - Snow Leopard
- (iii) Which of the following features is **INCORRECT** with respect to the breed of dogs being referred to?
- Shaggy
  - Small
  - Black
  - Fast
- (iv) How did Tsetan react to the incoming dog?
- Patted the dog
  - Braked and Swerved
  - Fed the dog
  - Kept looking at the dog

(v) Arrange the following events in the order of their appearance in the passage:

- I. The dogs look at the car.
- II. The dogs sense the approaching car.
- III. The dogs chase the car.
- IV. The dogs cross the path of car.
- V. Tsetan drives away.

- (a) I → II → III → IV → V
- (b) V → IV → III → II → I
- (c) II → I → IV → III → V
- (d) III → IV → II → V → I

8. Answer any one of the following questions in about 100 words:

5

Describe the relation of author with his Grandmother. How was the relationship of author and his Grandmother more like friends? Correlate it with your experiences with your grandparents.

*(The Portrait of a Lady)*

**OR**

*"The Earth's vital signs reveal a patient in declining health."* How is this statement proved in the chapter? What are some steps that you can take to "heal" the "ailing planet"?

*(The Ailing Planet: the Green Movement's Role)*

9. Answer any four of the following questions in about 30-40 words each:

2 × 4 = 8

(i) What was the first sign of the impending disaster that wreaked havoc upon the family?

*(We're Not Afraid to Die...if We Can All Be Together)*

(ii) What did Gaitonde go through at Azad Maidan?

*(The Adventure)*

(iii) What did Howard Carter do in 1920s because of which the mummy was in bad condition?

*(Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues)*

(iv) Why did the author feel relieved to meet Norbu? Why was his happiness short-lived?

*(Silk Road)*

(v) What happened to the bond between author and his Grandmother in the city?

*(The Portrait of a Lady)*

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### **[II: Hornbill (Poetry)]**

10. Read the stanza given below and answer the questions that follow. Do any one.

1 × 5 = 5

(A) *Till the goldfinch comes, with a twitching chirrup*

*A suddenness, a startlement, at a branch end.*

*Then sleek as a lizard, and alert and abrupt,*

*She enters the thickness, and a machine starts up*

*Of chitterings, and of tremor of wings, and trillings –*

*The whole tree trembles and thrills*

*It is the engine of her family.*

*She stokes it full, then flirts out to a branch-end*

**Questions:**

(i) Name the poem and the poet.

- (a) The Laburnum Top; William Douglas
- (b) The Laburnum Top; Ted Hughes
- (c) Goldfinch; Ted Hughes
- (d) Childhood; Markus Natten

- (ii) Which poetic device is used in “sleek as a lizard”?
- Metaphor
  - Alliteration
  - Simile
  - Personification
- (iii) What does “stokes it full” imply?
- Fills its young ones’ stomachs
  - Fuels up the tree
  - Shakes the tree
  - Doesn’t give food to her young ones
- (iv) The poem depicts two phases of life: monotony and happenings. Which phase is shown in these lines?
- Monotony
  - Happenings
  - None of these
  - Both (a) and (b)
- (v) How is activity shown in these lines?
- Chittering
  - Trilling
  - Tremor of Wings
  - All of these

**OR**

(B) *When did my childhood go?*

*Was it the day I ceased to be eleven,  
Was it the time I realised that Hell and Heaven,  
Could not be found in Geography,  
And therefore could not be,  
Was that the day!*

**Questions:**

- (i) Name the poem and the poet.
- The Laburnum Top; William Douglas
  - The Laburnum Top; Ted Hughes
  - Goldfinch; Ted Hughes
  - Childhood; Markus Natten
- (ii) Ceased to be eleven means:
- Having eleven friends initially, now having twelve
  - Aging to be twelve from the age of eleven
  - Not being able to score eleven marks
  - Stopping at the eleventh mile stone
- (iii) What is the poet trying to find out?
- When he lost his childhood
  - Why he lost his childhood
  - How he lost his childhood
  - To whom he lost his childhood

- (iv) What does the poet suggest about Hell and Heaven?
- They exist.
  - They don't exist.
  - Maybe they exist.
  - They can be found on map.
- (v) 'Was' is in the beginning of several lines of the given stanza. This poetic device is called Anaphora, in which a word or a phrase is repeated at the beginning of several lines in a stanza. Which of the following options shows Anaphora?
- I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up...  
I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia...  
I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi...*
  - See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.*
  - I'm a Pepper, he's a Pepper, she's a Pepper, we're all a Pepper!*
  - Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country.*

11. Answer any *two* of the following questions in about 40-50 words each: 3 × 2 = 6

- Why aren't the father and son able to communicate? (Father to Son)
- How is the water cycle depicted in the poem? (The Voice of the Rain)
- What is the central idea of the poem 'A Photograph'?

### **[[III: Snapshots]**

12. Answer any *one* of the following questions in about 100 words: 5

Why did Aram and Mourad return the horse to John Byro? If you were in their place, would you have done so? If yes, why? (The Summer of a Beautiful White Horse)

**OR**

How was Mrs. Pearson manipulated by her own son, daughter and husband? Why do you think it was necessary for Mrs. Fitzgerald to step in? What would have happened, according to you, if Mrs. Fitzgerald would not have stepped in? (Mother's Day)

13. Answer any *three* of the following questions in about 30-40 words each: 2 × 3 = 6

- Why did Mrs. S's daughter want to go back? (The Address)
- How did the doctor save the baby? (Birth)
- Why was melon crowned as the king? (The Tale of Melon City)
- Mention two traits of Garoghlanian Tribe. (The Summer of a Beautiful White Horse)

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