

Marking Scheme Strictly Confidential (For Internal and Restricted use only) Senior Secondary School Examination, 2026 (XII) SUBJECT NAME : English Core (Q.P. CODE 301/1-5-3)	
<u>General Instructions: -</u>	
1	The CBSE has decided to introduce On Screen Marking (OSM) for the evaluation of Class XII answer Book with the 2026 Examination.
2	You are aware that evaluation is the most important process in the actual and correct assessment of the candidates. A small mistake in evaluation may lead to serious problems which may affect the future of the candidates, education system and teaching profession. To avoid mistakes, it is requested that before starting evaluation, you must read and understand the spot evaluation guidelines carefully.
3	“Evaluation policy is a confidential policy as it is related to the confidentiality of the examinations conducted, evaluation done and several other aspects. Its leakage to public in any manner could lead to derailment of the examination system and affect the life and future of millions of candidates. Sharing this policy/document to anyone, publishing in any magazine and printing in Newspaper/Website, etc. may invite action under various rules of the Board and IPC.”
4	Evaluation is to be done as per instructions provided in the Marking Scheme. It should not be done according to one’s own interpretation or any other consideration. Marking Scheme should be strictly adhered to and religiously followed. However, while evaluating, answers which are based on latest information or knowledge and/or are innovative, they may be assessed for their correctness otherwise and due marks be awarded to them. In Class-XII, while evaluating two competency-based questions, please try to understand given answer and even if reply is not from marking scheme but correct competency is enumerated by the candidate, due marks should be awarded.
5	The Marking scheme carries only suggested value points for the answers. These are in the nature of Guidelines only and do not constitute the complete answer. The students can have their own expression and if the expression is correct, the due marks should be awarded accordingly.
6	The Head-Examiner must go through the first five answer books evaluated by each evaluator on the first day, to ensure that evaluation has been carried out as per the instructions given in the Marking Scheme. If there is any variation, the same should be zero after deliberation and discussion. The remaining answer books meant for evaluation shall be given only after ensuring that there is no significant variation in the marking of individual evaluators.
7	Evaluators will mark (√) wherever answer is correct. For wrong answer CROSS ‘X’ be marked. Evaluators will not put right (✓) while evaluating which gives an impression that answer is correct and no marks are awarded. This is most common mistake which evaluators are committing.

8	If a question has parts, please award marks on the right-hand side for each part in the OSM Portal. Marks awarded for different parts of the question will be totalled up by the OSM System.
9	If a question does not have any parts, marks must be awarded in the left-hand margin in the OSM Portal. This may also be followed strictly.
10	No marks to be deducted for the cumulative effect of an error. It should be penalized only once.
11	A full scale of marks _____ (example 0 to 80/70/60/50/40/30 marks as given in Question Paper) has to be used. Please do not hesitate to award full marks if the answer deserves it.
12	Every examiner has to necessarily do evaluation work for full working hours i.e., 8 hours every day and evaluate 20 answer books per day in main subjects and 25 answer books per day in other subjects (Details are given in Spot Guidelines). This is in view of the reduced syllabus and number of questions in question paper.
13	Ensure that you do not make the following common types of errors committed by the Examiner in the past :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers marked as correct, but marks not awarded. (Ensure that the right tick mark is correctly and clearly indicated. It should merely be a line. Same is with the X for incorrect answer.) • Half or a part of answer marked correct and the rest as wrong, but no marks awarded.
14	While evaluating the answer books if the answer is found to be totally incorrect, it should be marked as cross (X) and awarded zero (0) Marks.
15	The Examiners should acquaint themselves with the guidelines given in the “ Guidelines for Spot Evaluation ” before starting the actual evaluation.
16	The candidates are entitled to obtain photocopy of the Answer Book on request on payment of the prescribed processing fee. All Examiners/Additional Head Examiners/Head Examiners are once again reminded that they must ensure that evaluation is carried out strictly as per value points for each answer as given in the Marking Scheme.
17	If a candidate attempts both alternatives/options in a question where only one option/ alternative is required to be attempted, the Evaluator shall award marks in both the options. The system will take the higher of two scores and disregard the other response.
18	In a question having two options/alternatives, if a candidate has attempted only one, then the evaluator shall mark “NA” (Not attempted) against the option that has not been attempted by the candidate.

MARKING SCHEME**Senior Secondary School Examination 2026 (XII)****ENGLISH CORE (Subject Code- 301)****(PAPER CODE: 1/5/3)****IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS:****Maximum Marks: 80**

1. The answers given below are suggestive. Any independent interpretation should be discussed with the HE before awarding marks.
2. No marks shall be deducted for exceeding the word-limit.
3. If a spelling error is recurring, it should be penalized only once.

SUGGESTED VALUE POINTS			
	SECTION A READING SKILLS	Steps	22 marks
	NOTE: The objective of the reading section is to focus on testing a candidate's ability to comprehend. No mark(s) should be deducted for mistakes in usage and grammar, spelling or word-limit. Full marks may be awarded if a student has been able to identify the core ideas. If a student literally lifts a portion of the given passage as an answer to a question, no mark(s) to be deducted for this, as long as it is relevant.		
1.	Answer the following questions, based on the above passage.		12 marks
i.	According to paragraph 1, what impact has robotics had on healthcare operations? Mention any two.		
Ans.	revolutionizing the way medical procedures are executed / patients are managed / hospital operations are streamlined / makes healthcare more precise, efficient, and accessible / enhances workflow efficiency / improves clinical outcomes (any two)	Step 1: 0.5 mark Step 2: 0.5 mark	1
ii.	What does the use of the phrase 'from surgical theatres to outpatient clinics' convey about the scope of robotics in healthcare? (Paragraph 1).		
Ans.	widespread or wide range of application or usage or function across various healthcare settings / extensive or varied use in healthcare / expanding role from surgical precision to hospital automation and personalized patient care	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	The phrase 'superior visualization, refined control and pinpoint accuracy' emphasizes the advanced capabilities of robotic systems in surgery. (Paragraph 2) Choose the correct response from the two options (A) or (B) to complete the following sentence. This highlights that robotic-assisted surgery primarily enhances _____.		

	(A) the mechanical speed of operations with minimal supervision. (B) the precision and safety of complex surgical procedures.		
Ans.	(B) the precision and safety of complex surgical procedures.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iv.	(iv) How does the writer emphasize the benefits of robotic-assisted surgery ? (Paragraph 2) (A) highlights how robotics can replace surgeons in all types of procedures (B) shows how advanced systems improve accuracy and reduce patient trauma (C) suggests robotic surgeries are faster but less reliable than traditional ones (D) claims that robotics will eliminate the need for doctors in the future		
Ans.	(B) shows how advanced systems improve accuracy and reduce patient trauma	Step 1: 1 mark	1
v.	Complete the following suitably with one reason, with reference to paragraph 3. Today, rehabilitation therapy is a more individualized and effective process because _____.		
Ans.	Robotic exoskeletons and motion-guided therapy systems / robotics enable real time monitoring / adaptive treatment planning	Step 1: 1 mark	1
vi.	Complete the analogy with one word from paragraph 4. necessary : essential : : emergence : _____ (A) advent (B) automation (C) detection (D) intervention		
Ans.	(A) advent	Step 1: 1 mark	1
vii.	Support with evidence from paragraph 4, how robotics are being deployed to help maintain strict sanitation protocol.		
Ans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used in room disinfection contactless - service delivery / food delivery / medicine delivery reducing exposure risks by maintaining stringent hygiene protocol (any two)	Step 1: 1 mark Step 2: 1 mark	2
viii.	Why is there a need to develop assistive robots? (Paragraph 5)		
Ans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> medication reminders vital sign monitoring provide social engagement offer physical and emotional support help combat loneliness / cognitive decline (any two)	Step 1: 1 mark Step 2: 1 mark	2
ix.	The integration of robotics into healthcare according to the given text is ironic because _____. (A) very few patients register for robotics-assisted therapy (B) the country is not equipped to provide robots in villages (C) it has resulted in an increase in human isolation (D) human interaction has been enhanced with the use of AI		

Ans.	(C) it has resulted in an increase in human isolation	Step 1: 1 mark	1
x.	<p>Which of the following best explains why robotics is considered a catalyst for innovation in healthcare despite its challenges? (Para 7)</p> <p>(A) Robotics merges technological precision with patient-centred care, improving both efficiency and empathy in healthcare delivery.</p> <p>(B) It eliminates human involvement in healthcare, making systems fully automated and cost-effective.</p> <p>(C) Although robotics comprises emotional connection, it is not favoured in spite of being faster than traditional care.</p> <p>(D) The high cost and complexity of robotics are outweighed by its ability to make healthcare impersonal but scalable.</p>		
Ans.	(A) Robotics merges technological precision with patient-centred care, improving both efficiency and empathy in healthcare delivery.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
Passage 2			
2.	Answer the following questions, based on the given passage.		10 marks
i.	Complete the following suitably: In the introduction, the author links deforestation with the global environment to highlight _____.		
Ans.	loss of biodiversity / climate change / irreversible consequences / harmful impact on indigenous tribes	Step 1: 1 mark	1
ii.	<p>What would the following be classified as?</p> <p>These communities face not only the loss of their physical homes but also the erosion of their cultural identity.</p> <p>Select the appropriate response.</p> <p>(A) Primary purpose (B) Secondary objective</p> <p>(C) Method of analysis (D) Research outcome</p>		
Ans.	(D) Research outcome	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	What does the phrase ‘aligned with seasonal forest rhythms’ suggest about the Arava’s cultural practices and way of life? (Any two points) (Paragraph 2)		
Ans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ceremonial and cultural practices deeply connected with nature / seasonal cycles of nature lifestyle symbiotically tied / life is interdependent with their natural surroundings / nature peaceful coexistence with nature / rainforest reflects deep ecological integration harmony between their culture and environment <p>(any two)</p>	Step 1: 1 mark Step 2: 1 mark	2
iv.	Paragraph 3 includes the words — ‘encroached’ and ‘impact’. Classify the following sentences as ‘encroached’ or ‘impact’.		

	Sentence 1: Illegal logging operations, cattle ranching and agricultural expansion have been systematically clearing forest area. Sentence 2 : Plant species vital for medicine disappeared and waterways pollution compromised health.		
Ans.	Sentence 1 – encroached Sentence 2 – impact	Step 1: 1 mark	1
v.	Give two points to support how Arava’s diet and lifestyle reflects ecological integration.		
Ans.	Diet: consists of local forest sourced fruits, nuts, wild game and fresh water fish Lifestyle: their shelters are constructed from indigenous materials / sustainable resource management / ceremonial practices are aligned with nature or seasonal forest rhythms (any two – one from each aspect/part)	Step 1: 0.5mark Step 2: 0.5 mark	1
vi.	Analyse how indigenous communities face both physical loss and erosion of cultural identities.		
Ans.	Physical Loss: encroachment of their ancestral lands / forced displacement / loss of physical homes / medicinal plants disappearing / traditional hunting grounds shrinking / pollution of waterways – compromising health and access to clean water Cultural Loss: destruction of sacred sites within the forests harms their spirituality / traditional knowledge becomes less relevant in deforested landscape / breakdown of community structures (any two – one at least from each aspect/part)	Step 1: 1 mark Step 2: 1 mark	2
vii.	Which statement most accurately captures the fundamental message conveyed by the passage? (A) Deforestation has contributed to changes in diet and health patterns among forest dwellers. (B) Environmental degradation causes irreversible spiritual and economic damage to modern societies. (C) Indigenous tribes are impacted by deforestation, losing their environment, traditions, identity and culture. (D) The efforts to preserve forests must prioritize biodiversity over tribal welfare.		
Ans.	(C) Indigenous tribes are impacted by deforestation, losing their environment, traditions, identity and culture.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
viii.	According to the given table, which two social or cultural impacts of deforestation are rated as most severe? (A) forced displacement and increased poverty		

	(B) destruction of sacred sites and cultural erosion (C) breakdown of community structure and heightened conflict (D) vulnerability to diseases and loss of identity		
Ans.	(A) forced displacement and increased poverty	Step 1: 1 mark	1
	SECTION B CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS		18 marks
	OBJECTIVES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To test the ability to think logically and express clearly. To use a style appropriate to the given situation. To plan, organize and present ideas coherently. 		
3.	Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in about 50 words :		1x4=4 marks
	Distribution of marks Format -1 Content – 2 Expression – 1 FORMAT - Name of issuing authority- organization / agency, NOTICE, heading, date of issue, signature, name, designation (bottom left), all enclosed in a box <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mark for format if content is irrelevant or missing. Full credit of 1 mark if all aspects are mentioned. Partial credit of ½ mark if any of the aspects is missing. EXPRESSION - grammar, spelling, punctuation, organisation and coherence of ideas		
	NOTICE WRITING		
(a)	You are Sarika/Sohum, Secretary of the Student Volunteer Club Safai. Draft a notice inviting students to join a clean-up drive of the parks adjoining the school premises. Mention relevant details regarding day, date, timings and venue. Put your notice in a box.		
Ans.	Suggested value points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> name of the event date, time, venue, purpose invite students to participate contact information (inputs given in the question may be included) (any other relevant point)	Step 1: Format-1 mark Step 2: Content-2 marks Step 3: Expression-1 mark	4
	OR		
(b)	Draft a notice informing students of class XI about an international on-the-spot essay writing competition. The essay will be related to challenges faced by teenagers today. The first 3 winners will be awarded cash prizes and their essays will be published in the international magazine 'Youth Today'. You are Rohena/Rohit, the President of the Creative Writing Club, RST School. Put your notice in a box.		

Ans.	<p>Suggested value points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of the event • date, time, venue, purpose • target class • other details- cash prize and publication • deadline for submitting names • contact information <p>(inputs given in the question may be included) (any other relevant point)</p>	<p>Step 1: Format-1 mark Step 2: Content-2 marks Step 3: Expression-1 mark</p>	4
4.	Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in about 50 words.		1x4=4 marks
	<p>Distribution of marks Format -1 Content – 2 Expression – 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mark for format if content is irrelevant or missing. • Full credit of 1 mark if all aspects are mentioned. • Partial credit of ½ mark if any of the aspects is missing. <p>EXPRESSION- grammar, spelling, punctuation, organisation and coherence of ideas</p>		
	INVITATION LETTER (FORMAL)		
(a)	You are Mahima/Mohit, lead architect of Cosmos, a design firm. Draft an invitation requesting Mr. Raghav Supori, Dean of International School of Architecture to be the lead speaker in an annual conclave on design and innovation organized by your firm.		
Ans.	<p>Format: Formal letter: Sender's address, Date, Receiver's address, Subject and Salutation/ Salutation and Subject, Complimentary Close, Sign/Name</p> <p>Suggested value points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of the event • date, time, venue, purpose • seek confirmation of availability by a given date • formal and cordial tone <p>(inputs given in the question may be included) (any other relevant point)</p>	<p>Step 1: Format-1 mark Step 2: Content-2 marks Step 3: Expression-1 mark</p>	4
	OR		
	INFORMAL REPLY		
(b)	Your friend Rohan has invited you to her/his engagement party. Write an informal reply accepting the invitation. You are Monica/Mohan.		
Ans.	<p>Format: Informal letter: Sender's address, Date, Salutation, Complimentary Close, Sign/Name</p> <p>Suggested value points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • congratulate • acknowledge and express thanks with event details – date, time, venue • acceptance • informal and friendly tone 	<p>Step 1: Format-1 mark Step 2: Content-2 marks</p>	4

	(inputs given in the question may be included) (any other relevant point)	Step 3: Expression-1 mark	
5.	Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in 120 - 150 words.		1x5=5 marks
	Distribution of marks: Formal Letter Format -1 Content – 2 Expression – 2 FORMAT – Sender's address, Date, Receiver's address, Subject and Salutation/ Salutation and Subject, Complimentary Close, Sign/Name •No mark for format if content is irrelevant or missing. •Full credit of 1 mark if all aspects are mentioned. •Partial credit of ½ mark if any of the aspects is missing. EXPRESSION - grammar, spelling, punctuation, organisation and coherence of ideas		
LETTER TO EDITOR			
(a)	You recently visited Prayatna, a women's training centre in your city. In this centre women were being empowered through skill training and entrepreneurship experience. You are Bela/Balak, an activist for human rights. Write a letter to the editor expressing your views on the need to empower women and make them self-reliant. You may use the given cues along with your own ideas. 1. setting up of NGOs to provide skill-based learning 2. government support and CSR funding 3. awareness of government and private-led initiatives and business opportunities		
Ans.	Suggested value points: Need to empower women: get more opportunities, gain equality, become financially independent, become self-reliant Visit to women's training centre: saw women were being empowered through skill training and entrepreneurship experience / need to empower women and make them self-reliant Ways to empower women: setting up of NGOs to provide skill-based learning / government support and CSR funding / awareness of government and private-led initiatives and business opportunities (inputs given in the question may be included) (any other relevant point) (any four points with at least one from every parts)	Step 1: Format-1 mark Step 2: Content-2 marks Step 3: Expression-2 marks	5
OR			
JOB APPLICATION			

(b)	<p>You are Priya/Pranav Desai of Pinewood Apartments, Sagarnagar. You read the given advertisement in the newspaper and wish to apply for the same. Write an application along with your bio-data.</p> <p>BRIGHT MINDS ACADEMY PEAKTOWN REQUIRES CONTENT WRITERS Qualification : Graduate in Mass Communication or English Honours Skills : Excellent command of English, creative-writing, Editing and proof reading Ability to write academic blogs, newsletters and educational articles Minimum 2 years experience preferred Apply to the Director, Bright Minds Academy, Peaktown</p>		
Ans.	<p>Cover letter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference to the advertisement • suitability for the post • offer candidature <p>Bio-Data/ Resume / CV:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal details • qualifications • experience • skills / hobbies / achievements • references <p>Note- no marks to be deducted if the Bio-data/ Resume/ CV is included in the covering letter (inputs given in the question may be included)</p>	<p>Step 1: Format-1 mark Step 2: Content-2 marks Step 3: Expression-2 marks</p>	5
6.	<p>Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in 120 - 150 words.</p>		1x5=5 marks
	<p>Distribution of marks: Format -1 Content – 2 Expression - 2 FORMAT -1 - Title and by-line •No mark for format if content is irrelevant or missing. •Partial credit of ½ mark if any of the aspects is missing. EXPRESSION- grammar, spelling, punctuation, organisation and coherence of ideas</p>		
	ARTICLE WRITING		
(a)	<p>India is facing an increasing water crisis due to overuse, pollution and poor conservation policies. Water scarcity is becoming a serious concern. Write an article for 'Nature' Magazine on the need to conserve water and promote sustainable practices. You are Devina/ Dev. You may use the cues given below along with your own ideas.</p>		

	<p>– why is water conservation important?</p> <p>– causes of water scarcity</p> <p>– effective water-saving methods</p> <p>– how can individuals, communities and government help solve the problem?</p>		
Ans.	<p>Suggested value points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • importance of water conservation – without it life is not possible • causes of water scarcity - over extraction / wastage / poor planning • effective water-saving methods - rainwater harvesting / fixing leaks promptly / no water wastage / use water judiciously • role of individuals, communities and government - awareness campaigns in schools, colleges and neighbourhoods / strict laws and punishment for polluting rivers and lakes / community-level water conservation drives <p>(inputs given in the question may be included) (any other relevant point) (any four points)</p>	<p>Step 1: Format-1 marks Step 2: Content-2 marks Step 3: Expression-2 mark</p>	5
	OR		
	REPORT WRITING		
(b)	<p>You are Mansi/Manas of Class XII C, student reporter of your school magazine. Your school recently organized an inter-school science exhibition in the school auditorium. Write a comprehensive report on the event including details of the theme, participation, exhibits and the outcome of the event. You may organise your report by using the following cues. Who – What – When – Where – Why – How</p>		
Ans.	<p>Suggested value points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What – name and theme of exhibition • When – day, date, time, • Where – venue of event • Why – purpose of the exhibition • Who – chief guest, judges, invitees, number of schools/students participating • How – important guests / details of participants/ description of innovative exhibits / judgement criteria, winners, prizes / overall response from students, teachers and visitors <p>(inputs given in the question may be included) (any other relevant point)</p>	<p>Step 1: Format-1 mark Step 2: Content-2 marks Step 3: Expression-2 marks</p>	5
	SECTION C-LITERATURE		40 marks
	<p>NOTE: The objective of this section is to test a candidate's ability to understand and interpret the prescribed text through short and long answer type questions. Long answer type questions have been set to test the students' understanding of the text and their ability to</p>		

	interpret, evaluate and respond to the issues raised therein. Hence, no particular answer can be accepted as the only correct answer. All presentations may be accepted as correct with consultation of the HE, if they have been duly supported by the facts drawn from the text. The student should be able to justify his / her viewpoint. In the Inter-textual questions reference to both the texts must be included.		
7.	Read the following extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the given two, (a) or (b) :		1x6=6 marks
(a)	Driving from my parent's home to Cochin last Friday morning, I saw my mother, beside me, doze, open mouthed, her face ashen like that of a corpse and realized with pain that she was as old as she looked ... (My Mother at Sixty-six)		
i.	What underlying concern does the poet have while recalling the memory of the drive with her mother? (A) A reflection on the irreversible passage of time and looming mortality (B) A moment of nostalgia for shared childhood memories (C) A comparative portrayal of mother as youthful and old (D) A symbolic reference to the generational divide between them		
Ans.	(A) A reflection on the irreversible passage of time and looming mortality.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
ii.	What does the phrase 'ashen like that of a corpse' suggest about the mother's frailty ?		
Ans.	approaching death / weakness / signs of ageing / dull and pale	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	Complete the following suitably: The image of the mother like 'a corpse' and the subsequent realisation symbolizes _____.		
Ans.	approaching death / mortality of life / transience of life / inevitability of death	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iv.	Select the correct option from those given in brackets, to fill in the blank. The speaker's use of the word 'doze' suggests that the mother was _____. (pained/exhausted)		
Ans.	exhausted	Step 1: 1 mark	1
v.	Why has the poet placed the word 'pain' in a separate line?		
Ans.	to highlight or emphasise the speaker's emotion / emphasising the difficulty in accepting mother's approaching death (any other relevant point)	Step 1: 1 mark	1

vi.	<p>Read the assertion and the reason below, with reference to the given extract. Choose the correct interpretation of the following.</p> <p>Assertion : The poet attempts to mentally shield herself from her mother's physical decline.</p> <p>Reason : She is emotionally unprepared to confront the inescapable reality of her mother's ageing.</p> <p>Choose the correct option :</p> <p>(A) The assertion is supported but the reason is ambiguous.</p> <p>(B) The assertion lacks clarity, while the reason is clearly expressed.</p> <p>(C) Both the assertion and the reason are strongly implied in the text.</p> <p>(D) Neither the assertion nor the reason can be supported by the text.</p>		
Ans.	(C) Both the assertion and the reason are strongly implied in the text.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
	OR		
(b)	<p>A flowery band to bind us to the earth, Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth Of noble natures, of the gloomy days, Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all, Some shape of beauty moves away the pall From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon, Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon</p> <p>(A Thing of Beauty)</p>		
i.	<p>Select the option that does <i>not</i> agree with the ideas as conveyed in the above given extract:</p> <p>(A) Beauty in nature offers comfort during times of despair.</p> <p>(B) Even in a world of sorrow, beautiful things continue to heal us.</p> <p>(C) The poet suggests that man-made inventions promote the Earth's natural beauty.</p> <p>(D) Natural elements like the sun, moon and trees are our sources of hope.</p>		
Ans.	(C) The poet suggests that man-made inventions promote the Earth's natural beauty.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
ii.	<p>Complete the following suitable:</p> <p>In the line, 'of the inhuman dearth of noble natures', the phrase 'dearth of' refers to _____.</p>		
Ans.	lack of / scarcity of / shortage of / less of	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	<p>Select the phrase that suggests the following:</p> <p>despite our feelings of sadness and depression</p>		
Ans.	Spite of despondence	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iv.	<p>Choose the correct option and fill in the blank.</p> <p>The tone of the poet in the above extract is _____. (ironic and cynical/reflective and reassuring)</p>		

Ans.	reflective and reassuring	Step 1: 1 mark	1
v.	In the context of the poem, the word ‘pall’ most closely means: (A) a dense fog that obscures light. (B) a metaphorical shroud symbolizing grief. (C) an ornamental veil signifying delight. (D) a supernatural entity haunting humans.		
Ans.	(B) a metaphorical shroud symbolizing grief.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
vi.	Based on the given extract, state in one sentence, your views on the simple joys of beauty.		
Ans.	beauty has the power to remove darkness and negativity / has healing or soothing power / helps one cope with troubles of life (any other relevant word or phrase)	Step 1: 1 mark	1
8.	Read the following extracts and answer ANY ONE of the given two, (a) or (b):		1x4=4 marks
(a)	The corridor I was in began angling left and slanting downward and I thought that was wrong, but I kept on walking. All I could hear was the empty sound of my own footsteps and I didn’t pass a soul. Then I heard that sort of hollow roar ahead that means open space and people talking. The tunnel turned sharp left; I went down a short flight of stairs and came out on the third level at Grand Central Station. For just a moment I thought I was back on the second level, but I saw the room was smaller, there were fewer ticket windows and train gates, and the information booth in the centre was wood and old-looking. And the man in the booth wore a green eyeshade and long black sleeve protectors. (The Third Level)		
i.	What initially made the narrator uncertain about the corridor he was walking through? (A) The corridor changed direction unexpectedly. (B) Dim lights and strange signs. (C) The walls echoed with unfamiliar voices. (D) The floor felt uneven and unstable underfoot.		
Ans.	(A) The corridor changed direction unexpectedly.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
ii.	The ‘hollow roar’ that the narrator heard signifies _____.		
Ans.	open spaces and people talking	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	Complete the sentence : The narrator’s realization that he was not on the second level was triggered by _____.		
Ans.	the smaller room / fewer ticket windows and train gates / the information booth was made out of wood and old looking / the man in the booth wore a green eyeshade and long black sleeve protectors or was dressed differently	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iv.	Read the assertion and the reason below, with reference to the given extract. <i>Assertion</i> : The narrator got confused about his location in the Grand Central Station.		

	<p>Reason : The third level of the Grand Central Station was smaller than the second level.</p> <p>Choose the correct option: (A) Both the assertion and the reason are true and the reason is the correct explanation of the assertion. (B) Both the assertion and the reason are true, but the reason is <i>not</i> the correct explanation of the assertion. (C) The assertion is true, but the reason is false. (D) The assertion is false, but the reason is true.</p>		
Ans.	(A) Both the assertion and the reason are true and the reason is the correct explanation of the assertion.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
	OR		
(b)	<p>My Antarctic experience was full of such epiphanies, but the best occurred just short of the Antarctic Circle at 65.55 degrees south. The <i>Shokalskiy</i> had managed to wedge herself into a thick white stretch of ice between the peninsula and Tadpole Island which was preventing us from going any further. The Captain decided we were going to turn around and head back north, but before we did, we were all instructed to climb down the gangplank and walk on the ocean. So there we were, all 52 of us, kitted out in Gore-Tex and glares, walking on a stark whiteness that seemed to spread out forever. Underneath our feet was a metre-thick ice pack, and underneath that, 180 metres of living, breathing salt water. In the periphery Crabeater seals were stretching and sunning themselves on ice floes much like stray dogs will do under the shade of a banyan tree. It was nothing short of a revelation: everything does indeed connect.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Journey to the end of the Earth)</p>		
i.	The author describes the moment near the Antarctic Circle as the best of epiphanies because _____.		
Ans.	of sudden realisation/revelation that everything does indeed connect / she felt a strong communion in all that is present on Earth	Step 1: 1 mark	1
ii.	The author's experience of walking on the frozen ocean revealed _____.		
Ans.	that it seemed to spread out forever / the contrast between static ice and the dynamic ocean life / the idea that nature remains active even in extreme conditions / the expanse of Antarctica	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	Support with evidence from the given extract, the Captain's decision to walk on the ocean.		
Ans.	instructed to climb down the gangplank and walk on the ocean as their ship was stuck	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iv.	Which of the following is <i>not</i> a plausible interpretation of the phrase 'living, breathing' used to describe the water beneath the ice?		

	<p>(A) It evokes a sense of continuous motion and vitality under the frozen surface.</p> <p>(B) The phrase highlights the contrast between static ice and the dynamic ocean life.</p> <p>(C) It implies that the ocean lies dormant and lifeless during the winter months.</p> <p>(D) The words convey the idea that nature remains active even in extreme conditions.</p>		
Ans.	(C) It implies that the ocean lies dormant and lifeless during the winter months.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
9.	Read the following extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the given two, (a) or (b):		1x6=6 marks
(a)	<p>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.</p> <p>He was kneeling on the floor in the next room tinkering with a part of his motorcycle over some newspaper spread on the carpet. He was three years out of school, an apprentice mechanic, travelling to his work each day to the far side of the city. He was almost grown up now, and she suspected areas of his life about which she knew nothing, about which he never spoke. (Going Places)</p>		
i.	<p>Complete the following suitably:</p> <p>The phrase ‘the incongruity of the delicate bow ... and the crooked back’ of Sophie’s mother conveys _____.</p>		
Ans.	contrast or difference between the beautiful bow and crooked back / delicacy of the bow and the harshness of life / refined elegance or sophistication and harsh reality or heavy burden of manual life / appearance versus reality (any other relevant point)	Step 1: 1 mark	1
ii.	<p>Select the correct option from those given in brackets to fill in the blank.</p> <p>The description of Sophie’s ‘mother’s back’ in the extract expresses Sophie’s _____ (conflicted/confident) state of mind.</p>		
Ans.	conflicted	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	<p>What role does the man in the vest play in enhancing the tone of the passage?</p> <p>(A) he brings a sense of peace to the setting.</p> <p>(B) he deepens the oppressive atmosphere.</p> <p>(C) he reinforces the narrator’s emotional connection.</p> <p>(D) he introduces a moment of comic relief.</p>		

Ans.	(B) he deepens the oppressive atmosphere.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iv.	What is the most plausible interpretation of Sophie's physical reaction of 'a tightening in her throat'? (A) a desire to express something, restrained by uncertainty (B) apprehension about her upcoming encounter with Geoff (C) a surge of inner turmoil triggered by her surroundings (D) a symptom indicating that she may be unwell		
Ans.	(C) a surge of inner turmoil triggered by her surroundings	Step 1: 1 mark	1
v.	Why does Sophie decide to go look for Geoff ?		
Ans.	to escape the oppressive atmosphere / to search for relief / felt comfortable with her brother / he was the only one who listened to her / she liked talking to him	Step 1: 1 mark	1
vi.	What is Sophie's perception of Geoff's nature ?		
Ans.	introvert / quiet person / he spoke less / reserved / secretive / a good listener / mysterious	Step 1: 1 mark	1
OR			
(b)	Mukund: The English novelist and academic David Lodge once remarked, "I can't understand how one man can do all the things he [Eco] does." Umberto Eco: Maybe I give the impression of doing many things. But in the end, I am convinced I am always doing the same thing. Mukund: Which is? Umberto Eco: Aah, now that is more difficult to explain. I have some philosophical interests and I pursue them through my academic work and my novels. Even my books for children are about non-violence and peace... you see, the same bunch of ethical, philosophical interests. And then I have a secret. Did you know what would happen if you eliminate the empty spaces from the universe, eliminate the empty spaces in all the atoms? The universe will become as big as my fist. Similarly, we have a lot of empty spaces in our lives. I call them interstices. Say you are coming over to my place. You are in an elevator and while you are coming up, I am waiting for you. This is an interstice, an empty space. I work in empty spaces. While waiting for your elevator to come up from the first to the third floor, I have already written an article! (Laughs) (The Interview)		
i.	What does Umberto Eco mean when he says, "Maybe I give the impression of doing many things"? (A) work appears diverse but has the same core interests (B) multitasks constantly to prove his worth (C) hides his real work behind his many hobbies (D) doesn't enjoy working on too many things		
Ans.	(A) work appears diverse but has same core interests	Step 1: 1 mark	1
ii.	Complete the following suitably:		

	When Eco says that he is always doing the same thing he means _____.		
Ans.	same core interests / works on similar themes / uses similar ethical and philosophical ideas in all genres	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iii.	Select the correct option from those given in brackets to fill in the blank. Eco's secret to being productive, as implied in the passage is _____ (delegating tasks/managing time).		
Ans.	managing time	Step 1: 1 mark	1
iv.	What does the following line in the extract showcase about Eco's nature? 'Even my books for children are about non-violence and peace.' (A) bored (B) insolent (C) ethical (D) playful		
Ans.	(C) ethical	Step 1: 1 mark	1
v.	Read the assertion and the reason below, with reference to the given extract. Assertion : While waiting for the elevator, Eco has already written an article. Reason : He pursues his philosophical interests through his work. Choose the correct option : (A) Both the assertion and the reason are true and the reason is the correct explanation of the assertion. (B) Both the assertion and the reason are true, but the reason is <i>not</i> the correct explanation of the assertion. (C) The assertion is true, but the reason is false. (D) The assertion is false, but the reason is true.		
Ans.	(B) Both the assertion and the reason are true but the reason is not the correct explanation of the assertion.	Step 1: 1 mark	1
vi.	Complete the following sentence suitably. Eco's tone in the statement : 'I have already written an article!' is _____. (A) sympathetic (B) cynical (C) humorous (D) pensive		
Ans.	(C) humorous	Step 1: 1 mark	1
10.	Answer ANY FIVE of the following six questions in 40 - 50 words each:		5x2=10 marks
	Distribution of marks: Content – 1 Expression – 1		
i.	'I had counted on the commotion to get to my desk without being seen.' Why does Franz say these words? (The Last Lesson)		
Ans.	was late and was counting on the noise and confusion to enter the class unnoticed	Step 1: Content-1 mark	2

		Step 2: Expression-1 mark	
ii.	Where have the inhabitants of Seemapuri come from? Why? (Lost Spring)		
Ans.	They came from Dhaka / Bangladesh as their homes and fields were destroyed by storm / natural calamity to earn a living / in search of food and shelter (points for both 'where' and 'why' required)	Step 1: Content-0.5 mark Step 2: Content-0.5 mark Step 3: Expression-1 mark	2
iii.	How did Edla Willmansson win the confidence of the peddler? (The Rattrap)		
Ans.	her kind assurance that he would be allowed to leave just as freely as he came	Step 1: Content-1 mark Step 2: Expression-1 mark	2
iv.	What sort of a novel is Umberto Eco's 'The Name of the Rose'? (The Interview)		
Ans.	serious / detective novel that deals with metaphysics, theology and medieval history	Step 1: Content-1 mark Step 2: Expression-1 mark	2
v.	What does the author find amusing about the lawyer losing his job? (Poets and Pancakes)		
Ans.	as he belonged to the story department, he lost his job when the poets were asked to go home as the story department was shut down	Step 1: Content-1 mark Step 2: Expression-1 mark	2
vi.	Explain the statement with reference to the attitude and behaviour of the government officials: "Benefits that are calculated to soothe them out of their wits." (A Roadside Stand)		
Ans.	They are greedy good-doers / beneficent beasts of prey who manipulate / exploit / pretend to help the villagers	Step 1: Content-1 mark	2

		Step 2: Expression-1 mark	
11.	Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions in 40 - 50 words each.		2x2=4 marks
	Distribution of marks:- Content – 1 Expression– 1		
i.	The Tiger King’s royal power is both his strength and his greatest weakness. Discuss. (The Tiger King)		
Ans.	<p>Power as Tiger King’s strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> his power allowed him to do as his pleased launched a massive tiger-hunting campaign passed orders imposing a ban according to his will imposed and exempted land taxes nobody in the kingdom could defy him <p>Power as Tiger King’s weakness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> power blinds him to reason, making him arrogant causes his downfall he thinks he can defy fate or destiny <p>(any two – at least one from each)</p>	<p>Step 1: Content-0.5 mark</p> <p>Step 2: Content-0.5 mark</p> <p>Step 3: Expression-1 mark</p>	2
ii.	What prompted Sadao to put the unfinished report into the secret drawer of his desk? (The Enemy)		
Ans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> was not sure whether to hand over the prisoner of war or enemy to the police was not sure about the reaction of the old General was afraid that he may be seen as a traitor for saving the enemy / afraid of being arrested <p>(any one)</p>	<p>Step 1: Content-1 mark</p> <p>Step 2: Expression-1 mark</p>	2
iii.	‘Because if I don’t go there, I’ll never go anywhere else in this world again.’ What does the statement reveal about Derry’s transformation? (On The Face Of It)		
Ans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> marks Derry’s awakening / coming out of his shell / taking first step towards reclaiming his independence or his individuality shows his resolve to break free from his self-pity and isolation decides to move on from his inhibition or obsession with his burnt face <p>(any one)</p>	<p>Step 1: Content-1 mark</p> <p>Step 2: Expression-1 mark</p>	2
12.	Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions in 120-150 words.		1x5=5 marks
	Distribution of marks: - Content – 3 Expression– 2 EXPRESSION - grammar, spelling, punctuation, organisation and coherence of ideas		

(a)	‘Deep Water’ by William Douglas and ‘Keeping Quiet’ by Pablo Neruda represent a state of introspection that leads to growth, understanding and liberation. Discuss.		
Ans.	Both highlight looking inward / lead to a more enlightened / better state of being / life / introspection is essential for growth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Douglas realises – that the only thing to fear is fear itself – leads to conquering his fear / in death there is peace Keeping Quiet – introspection helps us realise we are hurting ourselves as well as nature – leads to a more peaceful / harmonious life / world (any other relevant point) (three points with at least one from each text)	Step 1: Content-3 marks Step 2: Expression-2 marks	5
	OR		
(b)	Aunt Jennifer from Adrienne Rich’s poem ‘Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers’ and Gandhi from ‘Indigo’ struggle against oppression to fight for freedom, even though the contexts are different. Discuss.		
Ans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aunt Jennifer: oppressed by husband/ patriarchal society while Gandhi was fighting for peasants oppressed by British landlords Aunt was alone in her struggle and suffered silently while Gandhi’s fight became a mass movement where peasants and lawyers united for the cause Aunt used art to vent out her feelings while Gandhi used civil disobedience to seek justice Gandhi won by getting 25% compensation for the peasants – thus empowering them, making them self-reliant but Aunt remains mastered by her ordeals even after her death (any other relevant point) (three points showing contrast between the two characters)	Step 1: Content-3 marks Step 2: Expression-2 marks	5
13.	Answer any one of the following two questions in 120-150 words.		1x5=5 marks
	Distribution of marks:- Content – 3 Expression– 2 EXPRESSION- grammar, spelling, punctuation, organisation and coherence of ideas		
(a)	Derry’s journey reflects an intense personal challenge that he overcomes through courage and determination. Elaborate. (On The Face Of It)		
Ans.	Derry’s challenge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not just a physical scar but the mental wall of self-pity / self-loathing and isolation he created around himself to protect himself from the insensitive / cruel world Shows courage and determination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> talking to Mr. Lamb makes him gather courage and face his deep insecurities 	Step 1: Content-3 marks Step 2: Expression-2 marks	5

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> starts seeing himself as a ‘whole person’, not just a burnt face / overcomes his obsession with his burnt face realises his potential and returns to garden / asserts his independence / ready to face the world determined to live on his own terms - no longer cares what others say but focuses on what he wants, thinks, feels <p>(any other relevant point) (any three points with one point from ‘challenge’ and any two points from ‘overcoming the challenge’)</p>		
	OR		
(b)	<p>‘... and heard them gnaw off one of my thick braids. Then I lost my spirit.’ This episode highlighted the indignity meted out to Zitkala-Sa. Support your answer with evidence from the text.</p> <p>(Memories of Childhood)</p>		
Ans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discriminated against as she was a native American / the school tried to suppress / destroy her cultural identity dragged out and tied in a chair / treated like an animal / tossed about like a wooden puppet forced cutting of her hair cried aloud but no one cared / everybody stared at her without sympathy / she was left alone traumatised her humiliation was not just physical but psychological <p>(any other relevant point) (any three)</p>	<p>Step 1: Content-3 marks</p> <p>Step 2: Expression-2 marks</p>	5
