

**SET-4****Series Q3SPR****Q.P. Code 28**

Roll No.

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Candidates must write the Q.P. Code on the title page of the answer-book.

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NOTE

- (I) Please check that this question paper contains **15** printed pages.
- (II) Q.P. Code given on the right hand side of the question paper should be written on the title page of the answer-book by the candidate.
- (III) Please check that this question paper contains **13** questions.
- (IV) **Please write down the Serial Number of the question in the answer-book at the given place before attempting it.**
- (V) 15 minute time has been allotted to read this question paper. The question paper will be distributed at 10.15 a.m. From 10.15 a.m. to 10.30 a.m., the candidates will read the question paper only and will not write any answer on the answer-book during this period.

**ENGLISH (Elective)***Time allowed : 3 hours**Maximum Marks : 80***General Instructions :***Read the following instructions very carefully and strictly follow them :*

- (i) This question paper has **13** questions. **All** questions are **compulsory**.
- (ii) This question paper contains **three** sections — Section A, B and C.
Section A : **Reading**, Section B : **Grammar and Writing**,
Section C : **Literature and Fiction**.
- (iii) Separate instructions are given with each part and question, wherever necessary.
- (iv) Do not exceed the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.



SECTION A

Reading

(20 marks)

1. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow : 12

- (1) On the first clear September day, towards the end of the rains, I visited the pine knoll, my place of peace and power.
- (2) It was months since I'd last been there. Trips to the plains, a crisis in my affairs, involvements with other people and their troubles, and an entire monsoon had come between me and the grassy, pine-topped slope facing the Hill of Fairies (Pari Tibba to the locals). Now I tramped through late monsoon foliage — tall ferns, bushes festooned with flowering convolvulus — and crossed the stream by way of its little bridge of stones before climbing the steep hill to the pine slope.
- (3) When the trees saw me, they made as if to turn in my direction. A puff of wind came across the valley from the distant snows. A long-tailed blue magpie took alarm and flew noisily out of an oak tree. The cicadas were suddenly silent. But the trees remembered me. They bowed gently in the breeze and beckoned me nearer, welcoming me home. Three pines, a straggling oak and a wild cherry. I went among them and acknowledged their welcome with a touch of my hand against their trunks — the cherry's smooth and polished; the pine's patterned and whorled; the oak's rough, gnarled, full of experience. He'd been there the longest, and the wind had bent his upper branches and twisted a few, so that he looked shaggy and undistinguished. But like the philosopher who is careless about his dress and appearance, the oak has secrets, a hidden wisdom. He has learnt the art of survival!
- (4) While the oak and the pines are older than me and have been here many years, the cherry tree is exactly seven years old. I know, because I planted it.
- (5) One day I had this cherry seed in my hand, and on an impulse I thrust it into the soft earth, and then went away and forgot all about it. A few months later I found a tiny cherry tree in the long grass. I did not expect it to survive. But the following year it was two feet tall. And then some goats ate its leaves, and a grass cutter's scythe injured the stem, and I was sure it would wither away. But it renewed itself, sprang up even faster; and within three years it was a healthy, growing tree, about five feet tall.



- (6) I left the hills for two years — forced by circumstances to make a living in the city — but this time I did not forget the cherry tree. I thought about it fairly often, sent telepathic messages of encouragement in its direction. And when, a couple of years ago, I returned in the autumn, my heart did a somersault when I found my tree sprinkled with pale pink blossom. (The Himalayan cherry flowers in November.) And later, when the fruit was ripe, the tree was visited by finches, tits, bulbuls and other small birds, all come to feast on the sour, red cherries.
- (7) Last summer I spent a night on the pine knoll, sleeping on the grass beneath the cherry tree. I lay awake for hours, listening to the chatter of the stream and the occasional *tonk-tonk* of nightjars, and watching through the branches overhead, the stars turning in the sky. And I felt the power of the sky and the earth, and the power of a small cherry seed...
- (8) And so when the rains are over, this is where I come, that I might feel the peace and power of this place.
- (9) This is where I will write my stories. I can see everything from here — my cottage across the valley; behind and above me, the town and the bazaar, straddling the ridge; to the left, the high mountains and the twisting road to the source of the great river; below me, the little stream and the path to the village; ahead, the Hill of Fairies and the fields beyond; the wide valley below, and another range of hills and then the distant plains. I can even see Prem Singh in the garden, putting the mattresses out in the sun.
- (10) From here he is just a speck on the far hill, but I know it is Prem by the way he stands. A man may have a hundred disguises, but in the end it is his posture that gives him away. Like my grandfather, who was a master of disguise and successfully roamed the bazaars as fruit vendor or basket maker. But we could always recognize him because of his pronounced slouch.
- (11) Prem Singh doesn't slouch, but he has this habit of looking up at the sky (regardless of whether it's cloudy or clear), and at the moment he's looking at the sky.
- (12) Eight years with Prem. He was just a sixteen-year-old boy when I first saw him, and now he has a wife and child.



- (13) I had been in the cottage for just over a year... He stood on the landing outside the kitchen door. A tall boy, dark, with good teeth and brown, deep-set eyes, dressed smartly in white drill — his only change of clothes. Looking for a job. I liked the look of him, but —

‘I already have someone working for me,’ I said.

‘Yes, sir. He is my uncle.’

In the hills, everyone is a brother or an uncle.

‘You don’t want me to dismiss your uncle ?’

‘No, sir. But he says you can find a job for me.’

‘I’ll try. I’ll make inquiries. Have you just come from your village ?’

‘Yes. Yesterday I walked ten miles to Pauri. There I got a bus.’

‘Sit down. Your uncle will make some tea.’

He sat down on the steps, removed his white keds, wriggled his toes. His feet were both long and broad, large feet but not ugly. He was unusually clean for a hill boy. And taller than most.

- (14) ‘Your name is ...?’

‘Prem Singh.’

‘All right, Prem, I will try to do something for you.’

I did not see him for a couple of weeks. I forgot about finding him a job. But when I met him again, on the road to the bazaar, he told me that he had got a temporary job in the Survey, looking after the surveyor’s tents.

‘Next week we will be going to Rajasthan,’ he said.

‘It will be very hot. Have you been in the desert before ?’

‘No, sir.’

‘It is not like the hills. And it is far from home.’

‘I know. But I have no choice in the matter.’



Based on your understanding of the passage, answer any **twelve** out of the fifteen questions given below : $12 \times 1 = 12$

- (i) Which of the following is **not** true about the author ?
- (A) He visited the pine knoll every year at the end of the rains.
 - (B) His visit was delayed because of his engagement with other people's problems.
 - (C) He had not visited the pine knoll for months.
 - (D) He visited the pine knoll on the first clear day of September.
- (ii) Choose a word from the passage which is an apt synonym for 'leaves of a plant or tree'. (Paragraph 2 and 3)
- (A) convolvulus
 - (B) breeze
 - (C) cicadas
 - (D) foliage
- (iii) The sentence 'I went among them and acknowledged their welcome with a touch of my hand against their trunks,' reflects that the author was _____ to be back. (Paragraph 3)
- (A) happy and nostalgic
 - (B) confused and scared
 - (C) conflicted and wary
 - (D) indifferent and detached
- (iv) The arrival of the author at the pine knoll disturbed the _____.
- (A) Hill of Fairies
 - (B) monsoon foliage
 - (C) bubbling stream
 - (D) blue magpie and the cicadas
- (v) *Statement 1* : The oak looked shaggy and undistinguished.
Statement 2 : The wind had bent his upper branches and twisted a few.
- (A) Both Statements 1 and 2 are correct and Statement 2 is the reason for Statement 1.
 - (B) Both Statements 1 and 2 are correct, but Statement 2 is **not** the reason for Statement 1.
 - (C) Statement 1 is correct, but Statement 2 is incorrect.
 - (D) Both Statements 1 and 2 are incorrect.



- (vi) The phrase 'on an impulse' tells you that the author planted the cherry tree _____.
(A) after careful research and deliberation
(B) on instructions by the orchard owner
(C) without giving it a thought
(D) after fulfilling certain conditions
- (vii) The author was convinced that the cherry tree would wither away because _____.
(A) there was no monsoon that year
(B) the cicadas had eaten its leaves
(C) the grass cutter had damaged the stem
(D) the branch of the oak tree fell on it
- (viii) What literary device is used in the phrase 'my heart did a somersault' ?
(A) simile (B) personification
(C) irony (D) alliteration
- (ix) The author believes that spending time on the pine knoll gives him _____.
(A) company and friendship
(B) anxiety and restlessness
(C) melancholy and nostalgia
(D) peace and inspiration
- (x) Describe the sight that the author sees from the pine knoll.
- (xi) The author emphasizes on the vivid and sensorial images of nature in his writings. Justify with two examples from the extract.
- (xii) What was the intention of Prem Singh when he met the author for the first time ?
- (xiii) What is the posture or mannerism of Prem Singh that the author refers to ?
- (xiv) State whether the following opinion is *True* or *False*.
The author did not give Prem Singh a job initially because of his slouching posture.
- (xv) Why does Prem Singh tell the author, 'I have no choice in the matter' ?



2. Read the following poem 'The Rain' by Kamala Das :

4

The Rain

We left that old ungainly house
When my dog died there, after
The burial, after the rose
Flowered twice, pulling it by its
Roots and carting it with our books,
Clothes and chairs in a hurry.
We live in a new house now,
And, the roofs do not leak, but, when
It rains here, I see the rain drench
That empty house, I hear it fall
Where my puppy now lies.
Alone..

Based on your understanding of the poem, answer any **four** out of the five questions given below :

4×1=4

- (i) The image of the old ungainly house evokes the feeling of :
 - (A) optimism
 - (B) relief
 - (C) comfort
 - (D) melancholy
- (ii) The line 'but, when it rains here, I see the rain drench that empty house' indicates that memories are _____.
 - (A) fading
 - (B) transient
 - (C) enduring
 - (D) fleeting
- (iii) How does the poet contrast the new house with the earlier one ?
 - (A) sturdy and dilapidated
 - (B) modern and traditional
 - (C) expensive and cheap
 - (D) large and small
- (iv) Complete the sentence appropriately.

The poem ends with the poignant final word 'Alone' to emphasize _____.
- (v) Explain how, in the above poem, the image of rain serves as a catalyst of memory.



3. Read the passage given below :

4

Modern technology plays a vital role in reducing road accidents and improving traffic flow. A study in three major cities — Delhi, Bengaluru, and Mumbai — found that using smart cameras, GPS tracking, and automated traffic lights improved safety significantly. AI-based monitoring systems detect traffic violations and alert authorities instantly. Drivers using navigation apps report fewer delays and accidents. Advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), like lane departure warnings and automatic braking, have made vehicles safer.

	City	Accidents Before Tech Use (per month)	Accidents After Tech Use (per month)	Reduction %
1	Delhi	320	220	31
2	Bengaluru	280	190	32
3	Mumbai	350	240	31

Mobile apps now alert drivers about congested routes and road hazards. In India, the introduction of e-challan systems has improved traffic rule enforcement and reduced human error. Moreover, data from surveillance cameras helps authorities identify accident-prone areas for quick intervention. Technology not only saves time but also saves lives by ensuring safer, smarter roads.

Based on your understanding of the passage, answer any **four** out of the five questions given below :

4×1=4

- (i) Fill in the blank by selecting the appropriate option.

It is important to use technology in road management as it is _____ for decreasing road accidents.

- (A) vital (B) obligatory
(C) trivial (D) inessential

- (ii) How does AI help traffic management ?

- (iii) State *True* or *False* :

According to the data given in the table, accidents in Bengaluru were the lowest among the given cities at 190 and the reduction percentage was also the least.

- (iv) Complete the sentence appropriately.

Technology has helped improve road safety through _____.

- (v) State a point in support for the given opinion.

The role of technology in enhancing road safety and traffic management cannot be undermined.



SECTION B

Grammar and Writing

(28 marks)

4. Transform the following sentences according to the instructions given against each one. Attempt any **eight** out of the ten questions that follow : $8 \times 1 = 8$
- (a) The police arrived at the spot. The protesters ran helter-skelter.
(Start with : Hardly)
 - (b) Slum dwellers are the worst-hit people in the floods.
(Start with : The worst-hit)
 - (c) She started reading. She fell asleep.
(Start with : No sooner)
 - (d) He won't join the team unless he gets a uniform.
(Start with : If)
 - (e) If you do not study hard, you will fail.
(Rewrite using : Unless)
 - (f) He is very proud. He will not ask for help.
(Rewrite using : 'too')
 - (g) I have never seen such a beautiful painting before.
(Start with : Never)
 - (h) Have you seen my car keys, he asked.
(Start with : He asked)
 - (i) She wants to become a musician. She wants to become a skilled writer.
(Combine using : as well as)
 - (j) The Principal said, "Saturday will be a working day."
(Start with : The Principal informed)
5. Attempt any **three** of the following four questions in 120 – 150 words each : $3 \times 5 = 15$
- (a) 'Digital divide' creates inequalities in access to information, resources and opportunities, impacting education, employment and social participation. Write an analytical essay in 120 – 150 words on the impact of 'digital divide' in India and suggest ways to bridge it. Provide examples to illustrate your point of view.



- (b) Deforestation, urbanization, habitat loss, increased human population density and competition for resources have led to human – animal conflict. Discuss the importance of planned urbanization with reference to wildlife protection and environmental conservation in an essay of 120 – 150 words. Suggest how habitat loss can be contained and coexistence be maintained.
- (c) ‘Bagless days’ is an educational initiative suggested in various workshops where students attend school without carrying their usual school bags and textbooks. Its aim is to reduce physical strain, enhance mental well-being, reduce academic pressure, encourage experiential learning and skill development. Write an essay in 120 – 150 words on the advantages and challenges of this new initiative.
- (d) Family and friends are crucial for our well-being, offering emotional support and a sense of belonging. They are vital for navigating life’s challenges and maintaining a positive outlook. Write an article on the role of family and friends in your life in 120 – 150 words. You are Anoop/Anvita.

6. Read the questions given below and attempt any **one** of the following : $1 \times 5 = 5$

- (a) Taking cues from Kerala and Tamil Nadu Education Board initiative, your school conducted a seminar on ‘water bell’ system, providing short breaks (3 – 4 times a day), allowing students to hydrate and reduce the risk of heat-induced ailments. Write a report in 120 – 150 words on the event. You are Kanavi/Kanna, a reporter of The Times of India.
- (b) Youth today can serve the nation through civic engagement, community service, volunteering, and cultivating skills to solve social problems. Write an article in 120 – 150 words on how youth can play a crucial role in empowering the nation through service.



SECTION C
Literature and Fiction

(32 marks)

7. (I) Attempt any **one** of the two extracts (a) and (b) given below : **6**

(a) Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow : **6 × 1 = 6**

‘I only came to tell you that I dreamed about you last night,’ she said. ‘You must leave right away and not come back to Vienna for five years.’

Her conviction was so real that I boarded the last train to Rome that same night. As for me, I was so influenced by what she said that from then on I considered myself a survivor of some catastrophe I never experienced. I still have not returned to Vienna. (I Sell My Dreams)

- (i) What prompted her to tell him to leave right away ?
- (ii) Where did the author go, after leaving Vienna ?
- (iii) Why does the author say, he considered himself a survivor of some catastrophe he never experienced ?
- (iv) What do you infer about her attitude towards the author ?
- (v) Why did the author not return to Vienna ?
- (vi) Which word is an apt synonym for ‘conviction’ ?
 - (A) principle
 - (B) ambiguity
 - (C) submission
 - (D) certainty

OR



- (b) Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow : $6 \times 1 = 6$

Solomon Margolin regarded her quietly. She had had her own share of troubles. She had suffered in silence for her two brothers, even for Hans, the Nazi. She had gone through a prolonged change of life. Now her face was flushed and covered with beads of sweat. He earned more than enough to pay for a maid, yet Gretl insisted on doing all the housework herself, even the laundry. It had become a mania with her. Every day she scoured the oven. She was forever polishing the windows of their apartment on the sixteenth floor and without using a safety belt.

(A Wedding in Brownsville)

- (i) Who does 'she' refer to ?
- (ii) Why does the narrator say 'Gretl suffered in silence' ?
- (iii) Why was Gretl's face flushed and covered with beads of sweat ?
- (iv) What do you infer from the statement, 'He earned more than enough to pay for a maid, yet Gretl insisted on doing all the housework herself' ?
- (v) How does she demonstrate her manic behaviour ?
- (vi) Which word is an apt synonym for 'mania' ?
 - (A) apathy
 - (B) depression
 - (C) tranquility
 - (D) obsession



(II) Attempt any **one** of the two extracts (a) and (b) given below :

6

- (a) Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow : 6×1=6

What needs my *Shakespear* for his honour'd Bones,
The labour of an age in piled Stones,
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a Star-ypointing *Pyramid*?
Dear son of memory, great heir of Fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thy self a live-long Monument.

(On Shakespear. 1630)

- (i) What does the phrase 'his honour'd Bones' indicate about the poet's attitude towards Shakespeare ?
- (ii) Why does the poet question the need to bury Shakespeare's hallowed reliques ?
- (iii) What is a Star-ypointing Pyramid ?
- (iv) What does the poet call as 'weak witness of thy name' ?
- (v) How has Shakespeare built himself a 'live-long Monument' ?
- (vi) Which word is an apt antonym of 'astounding' ?
 - (A) surprising
 - (B) invisible
 - (C) unremarkable
 - (D) fascinating

OR



- (b) Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow : $6 \times 1 = 6$

Pity would be no more
If we did not make somebody Poor;
And Mercy no more could be
If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings peace,
Till the selfish loves increase:
Then Cruelty knits a snare,
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
And waters the ground with tears;
Then Humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

(The Human Abstract)

- (i) Why, according to the poet, has pity become a necessity ?
- (ii) When, according to the poet, would there be no mercy ?
- (iii) How long can peace exist ?
- (iv) What is meant by 'Cruelty knits a snare, And spreads his baits' ?
- (v) 'Only fears and tears can humble man.' Do you agree ?
- (vi) Which word is the apt antonym of 'bait' ?
 - (A) lure
 - (B) temptation
 - (C) deterrent
 - (D) ostentatious

8. Answer any **one** of the following questions in 30 – 40 words : $1 \times 2 = 2$

- (a) In the poem 'A Lecture Upon the Shadow', what does the metaphor 'shadow' represent ?
- (b) How does Tagore address the issue of women's empowerment in 'Chandalika' ?



9. Answer any **one** of the following questions in 40 – 50 words : $1 \times 3 = 3$
- (a) In 'Kubla Khan', what did the ancestral voices prophesy ?
 - (b) Eveline had two letters in her lap while she sat by the window and contemplated her future plans. What message did they contain ?
10. Answer any **one** of the following questions in 120 – 150 words : $1 \times 5 = 5$
- (a) What is Bergman's approach to film-making and how does he connect with his audience ?
 - (b) What is the contrast between the vitality of the swans and the decline of human life ?
11. Answer any **one** of the following questions in 30 – 40 words : $1 \times 2 = 2$
- (a) In the novel 'A Tiger for Malgudi', why does the tiger say 'crow is a treacherous bird' ?
 - (b) Why did Margayya refuse to part with his purse ?
12. Answer any **one** of the following questions in 40 – 50 words : $1 \times 3 = 3$
- (a) Why did the long-tailed, black-faced langur advise the tiger to take great care to avoid going near a porcupine ?
 - (b) Why was Margayya's house known as 'Tooth Powder House' ?
13. Answer any **one** of the following questions in 120 – 150 words : $1 \times 5 = 5$
- (a) What was the jungle superstition about how the tiger came to have the stripes and whom did he blame for it ? Why did the tiger feel helpless in tackling the situation ?
 - (b) Discuss the 'House of Enlightenment' and what it symbolizes for Balu.

