

KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA SANGATHAN ERNAKULAM REGION
PRE BOARD EXAMINATION 2025-26
CLASS XII ENGLISH CORE (301)

Time: 3 Hours.

Max. 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		22
1.	<p>Read the following passages:</p> <p>In the 21st century, success is often measured by how efficiently we manage our time. Yet, paradoxically, time management remains one of the most common struggles faced by students and professionals alike. With constant digital distractions, multitasking has become the norm. Many people pride themselves on being busy rather than being productive. However, true time management is less about filling every minute with activity and more about aligning tasks with purpose and priorities. It is not about doing more, but about doing what truly matters.</p> <p>The most successful individuals are not those who work continuously but those who understand when and where to invest their energy. They prioritise tasks that contribute to long-term goals and delegate or discard those that do not. This approach prevents the mind from being overloaded and allows greater focus on meaningful objectives. Time management, therefore, is a skill rooted in self-awareness. Knowing one’s strengths, weaknesses, and natural rhythms of concentration helps in designing a schedule that maximises efficiency without causing burnout.</p> <p>Ironically, technology—created to save time—often ends up consuming it. Social media notifications, endless scrolling, and constant checking of emails fragment attention and reduce deep focus. Studies show that the brain requires almost twenty minutes to fully refocus after an interruption. Thus, every “quick check” on a device may cost valuable minutes of lost productivity. Technology, therefore, can be both a powerful tool and a persistent distraction, depending on how it is used.</p> <p>To regain control, one must develop digital discipline. This means setting screen limits, disabling unnecessary alerts, and scheduling “no-device” hours to create space for uninterrupted work. Many productivity experts also emphasise the importance of taking short, mindful breaks. Brief pauses between tasks refresh the mind, prevent fatigue, and improve creativity. Such breaks, when used consciously, increase overall output rather than</p>	12

	<p>reducing it.</p> <p>Time, once lost, cannot be reclaimed—but it can be consciously directed. The real challenge is not managing time, but managing ourselves within it. Every person has the same twenty-four hours, but what differentiates success from struggle is how wisely those hours are used. By cultivating awareness, minimizing distractions, and focusing on purposeful actions, we can turn each day into a step toward our larger goals.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Created for academic usage only (405 words)</i></p> <p>Answer the following questions, based on the passage above:</p>	
I.	<p>According to the passage, many people mistake being busy for being _____.</p> <p>a) tired b) productive c) relaxed d) successful ____.</p>	1
II.	<p>What does true time management involve?</p> <p>a) Doing as many tasks as possible b) Avoiding rest and leisure c) Aligning tasks with purpose and priorities d) Delegating all responsibilities</p>	1
III.	<p>The phrase 'rooted in self-awareness' implies that effective time management depends on _____</p>	1
IV.	<p>What type of statement is made in the line “Time, once lost, cannot be reclaimed”?</p> <p>a. Warning b. Request c. Promise d. Complaint</p>	1
V.	<p>Which of the following best explains the phrase “digital discipline” as used in the passage?</p> <p>a) Strict use of digital tools b) Controlled and mindful use of technology c) Avoiding all digital platforms d) Learning coding skills</p>	1
VI.	<p>The statement 'Time, once lost, cannot be reclaimed' implies —</p> <p>a. Time is easily replaceable b. Time is irreversible and precious c. Time can always be regained d. Time is unimportant</p>	1
VII.	<p>According to the passage, how can technology both help and hinder time management?</p>	2
VIII.	<p>What is the main disadvantage of multitasking, according to the passage?</p>	1
IX.	<p>You are preparing for board exams and often feel exhausted by the end of the day. Using the concept of self-awareness discussed in the passage, how would you plan your daily study schedule to manage time more effectively?</p>	2
X.	<p>Complete the following with the most suitable option. The main idea of the passage is _____.</p> <p>a. The brain’s need for rest and recovery b. Time management is about prioritising and self-awareness c. The dangers of social media notifications d. The history of productivity tools</p>	1
2.	<p>Read the following carefully:</p> <p>Youth Perceptions on Remote Work and Productivity</p> <p>A recent survey conducted by the National Institute for Work and Technology (NIWT) among 2,500 university students and early-career professionals explored how remote and hybrid work options are shaping young people’s career priorities in a rapidly changing work environment. The transition to flexible work arrangements, once considered a temporary response to global disruptions, now appears to be a lasting trend that continues to redefine what employees value most in their careers.</p> <p>The main aim of the study was to identify patterns in work preferences and analyse how flexibility, work–life balance, and productivity influence job satisfaction. Researchers</p>	10

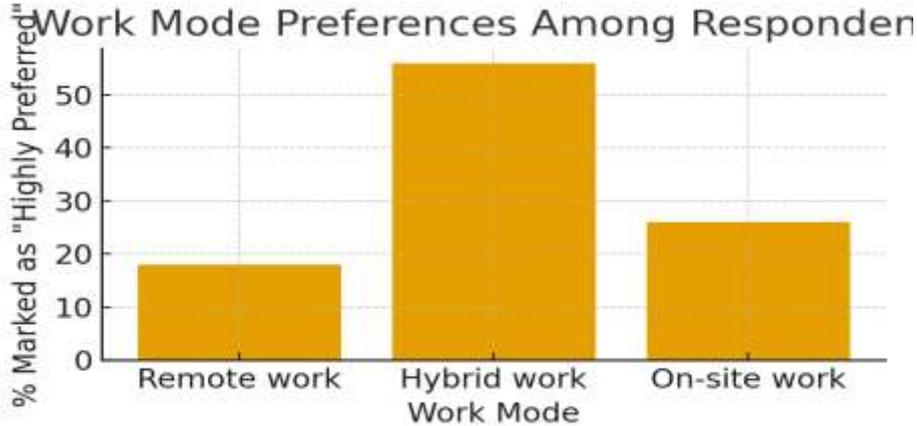
ensured that the sample was representative across gender, academic backgrounds, and employment sectors, ensuring that a broad spectrum of opinions could be accurately recorded. This approach gave the study greater credibility and allowed it to reflect the evolving aspirations of today’s workforce.

According to the survey, 61% of respondents said remote work improved their productivity, while 24% felt less motivated without in-person interaction. Interestingly, 72% preferred hybrid work models, combining both in-office and remote days. The research also revealed a strong connection between flexible work and mental well-being, especially among young professionals who value autonomy, reduced commuting stress, and greater control over their daily schedules.

However, the findings also brought attention to certain challenges. Respondents indicated limited mentorship opportunities and a growing sense of isolation while working remotely. Over 40% of early-career employees believed that learning from experienced professionals had become more difficult in virtual settings, impacting both collaboration and skill development.

To address these concerns, researchers suggested that future studies should explore how digital tools, AI-driven performance trackers, and virtual collaboration platforms might help bridge these gaps. The report concluded that understanding such emerging trends would empower youth to make informed career decisions and guide policymakers and employers in creating more balanced, supportive, and inclusive work environments for the next generation.

BAR GRAPH (Visual Input)



The bar graph shows work mode preferences among respondents:
 - Remote work – 18% marked it as “Highly Preferred”
 - Hybrid work – 56% marked it as “Highly Preferred”
 - On-site work – 26% marked it as “Highly Preferred”

Created for academic usage (343 words)

I	<p>Answer the following questions, based on the given passage.</p> <p>What was the main purpose of the NIWT survey conducted among 2,500 university students and young professionals?</p> <p>A. To evaluate salary trends across industries</p>	1
----------	--	---

	B. To explore patterns in work preferences and their impact on productivity C. To measure the rise in unemployment rates after the pandemic D. To assess digital tool usage among remote employees (1 mark)	
II	Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in brackets. The study ensured diversity in academic background and sector to make the findings _____. (accurate / representative / experimental)	1
III	Fill in the blank with reference to the given bar graph. The work mode for which policymakers primarily need to provide more structured mentorship opportunities is _____.	1
IV	Based on the bar graph, which of the following statements best reflects the correct trend in work preferences? A. Remote work is more preferred than hybrid work. B. On-site work is more preferred than remote work." C. Hybrid work is least favoured among respondents. D. Remote work and on-site work are equally preferred	1
V	Riya prefers a regular work schedule and enjoys face-to-face interaction with mentors. Why would an on-site work model suit her more than a fully remote one? (40–50 words)	2
VI	When the report says, “Respondents indicated limited mentorship opportunities,” what does it mean? A. There was a lack of experienced professionals to guide new employees. B. Mentorship was only available to senior employees. C. Virtual sessions replaced all in-person learning programmes. D. Employees were unwilling to participate in training	1
VII	How might studying emerging digital tools and collaboration platforms empower youth to make better career choices in the future? (40–50 words)	2
VIII	Select the option that is NOT addressed in the study. A. The purpose of the survey B. Work mode preferences C. The relationship between autonomy and flexibility D. Salary expectations across industries E. Challenges in remote work settings	1
Section-B Creative Writing Skills		18
<i>All the names and addresses used in the questions are fictitious. Resemblance, if any, is purely coincidental</i>		
3.	Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 50 words: A) You are Ananya, a member of the City Book Club, Bengaluru . The Club is planning to organise a ‘ Weekend Reading Marathon ’ every Saturday morning at the Community Library to encourage reading habits among teenagers. Write a notice in about 50 words, informing the residents of the event and inviting registrations. Include all necessary details. Put your notice in a box. OR B) You are Arjun, the Secretary of the Science Club of XYZ School, Jaipur . Your school is organising a ‘ Science Awareness Week ’ to educate students about innovative experiments and environmental science. Draft a notice in about 50 words, inviting students to participate in the events and workshops. Include all necessary details. Put your notice in	4

	a box.	
4.	<p>Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 50 words</p> <p>A) You are Aditya, Secretary of the Sports Club, DPS, Pune. Your school is organising an Annual Sports Meet and you want to invite Mr. Vikram Rao, a celebrated National athlete, to grace the occasion as the chief guest. Draft a formal invitation in about 50 words with all necessary details.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>B) You are Meera Joshi, currently residing at 34, Model Town, Lucknow. You have been invited to inaugurate a Student Art Exhibition at your alma mater, City Public School, Lucknow. Write a formal reply in about 50 words, accepting the invitation and expressing your gratitude.</p>	4
5.	<p>Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 120–150 words</p> <p>A.) You are Rashi Verma, residing at 21-B, Lake View Colony, Bhopal. Write a letter to the Editor of The National Herald, expressing concern about the increasing dependence of students on Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools for academic work. You may use the following cues:</p> <p>Highlight the need to strike a balance between technology use and genuine learning to ensure creativity and critical thinking are not compromised. Draft the letter in about 120–150 words using your own ideas as well as the cues given.</p> <p>Cues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Growing use of AI tools for assignments and projects. ❖ Risk of declining originality and creativity. ❖ Importance of guiding students on ethical use of technology. ❖ Encouraging critical thinking and real-world problem-solving. ❖ Building a balance between innovation and integrity in education. ❖ <p>OR</p> <p>B) You are Nisha Rao from 45, Green Avenue, Bengaluru. You came across the following advertisement in The Career Herald. Write a formal application expressing your interest in the position. Include your bio-data and qualifications.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SITUATION VACANT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Junior Content Writer – A leading digital media company requires creative individuals with strong writing skills and knowledge of social media content. Graduate in English/Journalism preferred. Prior internship is an advantage. Interested candidates may send applications with CV. To The Manager, Xcel Media, Bangalore</p> </div>	5
6	<p>Attempt any one of the two, (A) or (B), in about 120–150 words</p> <p>A) With the growing environmental concerns, schools and communities are increasingly focusing on sustainable living practices. You are Ishaan Verma, a student of Sunrise Public School, Delhi. Write an article for your school magazine on the topic “Sustainable Living: A Step Towards a Greener Future.” Use your own ideas as well as the cues given below.</p>	5

	<p>Cues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reducing waste and promoting recycling. ➤ Importance of renewable energy and eco-friendly habits. ➤ Role of youth in protecting the planet. ➤ Building a sustainable mindset for future generations. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>B) Your school, Renaissance International School, Pune, recently organised an Awareness Drive on Cyber Safety to educate students about responsible use of the internet and social media. As Nikita Das, the school’s Head Girl, write a report for the school magazine describing the event. Use your own ideas as well as the cues given below.</p> <p>Cues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Objective of the awareness drive. ▪ Key sessions and speakers. ▪ Student participation and response. ▪ Outcomes and impact of the event. 	
Section-C (Literature)		40
7	<p>Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B).</p> <p>(A) “For once on the face of the Earth Let’s not speak in any language, Let’s stop for one second, And not move our arms so much.” (Keeping Quiet)</p> <p>I. What is the poet urging people to do in the given lines? (1) II. Complete the following with the correct option. (1) The phrase “not move our arms so much” suggests – a) physical laziness b) resistance to violence and restlessness c) disinterest in communication d) a call for inactivity III. How does the poet’s appeal to silence contribute to the central idea of the poem? (1) IV. Fill in the blank with a suitable phrase. The poet believes that keeping quiet will help humanity achieve _____. (1) V. What emotion is the poet trying to evoke in the reader through these lines? (1) a) Anger b) Calmness and reflection c) Disappointment d) Excitement VI. All of the following statements are true for the extract EXCEPT – (1) a) The poet advocates for a temporary pause from human activity. b) The lines promote unity and peace across nations. c) The poet celebrates complete isolation and silence as a solution. d) The idea of stillness is symbolic of introspection.</p>	6

	<p>OR</p> <p>B) “Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing 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...”(A Thing of Beauty)</p> <p>I. What does the phrase “wreathing a flowery band to bind us to the earth” symbolise in the extract? (1)</p> <p>II. Complete the following sentence suitably. The poet’s reference to “inhuman dearth of noble natures” reflects his disappointment with _____ (1)</p> <p>III. How does the poet’s choice of natural imagery in these lines contribute to the central theme of the poem? (1)</p> <p>IV. Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in brackets. The phrase “Spite of despondence” indicates that beauty offers comfort _____ (in a world full of sorrow / through eternal fame). (1)</p> <p>V. If a student were to relate the idea of “binding us to the earth” to a real-world context, which of the following would it best represent? (1)</p> <p>a) Finding solace in nature amid life’s challenges. b) Feeling trapped by responsibilities and routine. c) Seeking fame and recognition in society. d) Rejecting all worldly pleasures.</p> <p>VI. What does the poet imply about beauty through the given lines? (1)</p> <p>a) Beauty is temporary and fades with time. b) Beauty offers a lasting sense of joy and hope despite life’s sorrows. c) Beauty distracts us from our real problems. d) Beauty is an illusion created by human imagination.</p>	
8	<p>Read the following extract and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B).</p> <p>(A) “If the man were whole again, he would be a menace to Japan,” Sadao said. “He would be better off dead then,” Hana whispered. “Yes, undoubtedly,” Sadao agreed. He stood gazing down on the motionless face of the young American soldier. “Yes, undoubtedly, he must die,” he repeated, but he was troubled in his mind. “Now that I have saved his life, can I take it away again?” he asked himself. (The Enemy)</p> <p>I. What does Sadao’s internal conflict in this extract reveal about his moral values? (1)</p> <p>II. Complete the sentence suitably. Hana’s reaction to the wounded man reflects her awareness of _____. (1)</p> <p>III. How is the irony in Sadao’s situation highlighted in these lines? (1)</p> <p>IV. Complete the following with the correct option based on the context in the extract. The line “Now that I have saved his life, can I take it away again?” best represents Sadao’s _____ (1)</p> <p>a) patriotism overpowering his ethics b) confusion between professional duty and loyalty to his nation c) regret at having saved the prisoner’s life</p>	4

	<p>d) complete detachment from his moral responsibility</p> <p>OR</p> <p>B) <i>Take care of the small things and the big things will fall into place. For example, the phytoplankton — those grasses of the sea that nourish and sustain the entire Southern Ocean’s food chain. These single-celled plants use the sun’s energy to assimilate carbon and synthesise organic compounds through photosynthesis. Scientists warn that a further depletion of the ozone layer will affect this microscopic existence, which will in turn affect the lives of all marine animals and birds of the region — and the global carbon cycle. (Journey to the End of the Earth)</i></p> <p>I. What does the author imply by the statement “Take care of the small things and the big things will fall into place”? (1)</p> <p>II. Complete the following sentence suitably. The mention of phytoplankton symbolises the _____ of all life forms on Earth. (1)</p> <p>III. How does the extract reflect the central environmental concern of the chapter? (1)</p> <p>IV. Complete the sentence with the correct option. The reference to the depletion of the ozone layer serves to underline _____.</p> <p>a) the threat of industrial pollution to marine life b) the fragile balance of ecological interdependence c) the need for human dominance over natural resources d) the irrelevance of microscopic life forms to human survival (1)</p>	
9	<p>Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B).</p> <p>(A) <i>It seemed a long way down. Those nine feet were more like ninety, and before I touched the bottom my lungs were ready to burst. But when my feet hit bottom, I summoned all my strength and made what I thought was a great spring upwards. I imagined I would bob to the surface like a cork. Instead, I came up slowly. I opened my eyes and saw nothing but water—water that had a dirty yellow tinge to it. I grew panicky. (Deep Water)</i></p> <p>I. Which of the following best captures the contrast in the narrator’s emotions before and after the jump? (1)</p> <p>1) Confidence and fear 2) Joy and anger 3) Relief and disappointment 4) Calmness and fatigue</p> <p>Select the most suitable option. A. 1 only B. 2 only C. 3 and 4 D. 1 and 3</p> <p>II. Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in brackets, based on the extract. The narrator’s belief that he would “bob to the surface like a cork” shows that he was _____ (overconfident / physically strong / indifferent to danger). (1)</p> <p>III. What does the narrator’s slow rise to the surface suggest? (1)</p> <p>A. He was calm and in control. B. He underestimated the difficulty of swimming. C. The pool was extremely shallow.</p>	6

	<p>D. He had successfully overcome his fear.</p> <p>IV. What does the description “water that had a dirty yellow tinge to it” symbolically convey about the narrator’s experience? (1)</p> <p>V. How does this incident act as a turning point in the narrator’s journey toward courage and self-belief? (1)</p> <p>VI. Complete the following suitably. The extract reveals that Douglas’s real struggle was not with the depth of the pool but with _____, which continued to haunt him long after the physical incident. (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>B) Under an ancient arrangement, the Champaran peasants were sharecroppers. Rajkumar Shukla was one of them. He was illiterate but resolute. He had come to the Congress session to complain about the injustice of the landlord system in Bihar, and somebody had probably said, “Speak to Gandhi. Gandhi told Shukla he had an appointment in Cawnpore and was also committed to go to other parts of India. Shukla accompanied him everywhere. Then Gandhi returned to his ashram near Ahmedabad. Shukla followed him to the ashram. For weeks he never left Gandhi’s side. “Fix a date,” he begged. Impressed by the sharecropper’s tenacity and story Gandhi said, “I have to be in Calcutta on such-and such a date. Come and meet me and take me from there.” (Indigo)</p> <p>I. What does the description of Rajkumar Shukla as “illiterate but resolute” tell us about his character? (1)</p> <p>A. He was educated and determined. B. He lacked knowledge but showed persistence. C. He depended completely on others for help. D. He was unsure about his goals.</p> <p>II. Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in brackets. Rajkumar Shukla’s continuous request to Gandhiji shows his _____ (patience/ indifference / lack of confidence). (1)</p> <p>III. Why had Rajkumar Shukla come to meet Gandhiji at the Congress session? (1)</p> <p>IV. What does Gandhiji’s final agreement to visit Champaran reveal about his attitude towards people’s problems? (1)</p> <p>A. He was willing to listen and respond with empathy. B. He avoided getting involved in local issues. C. He was more focused on his political popularity. D. He refused to trust poor peasants easily.</p> <p>V. Choose the correct option that best represents the relationship between Gandhiji and Shukla. (1)</p> <p>A. Formal and distant B. Casual and temporary C. Sincere and purpose-driven D. Conflicted and argumentative</p> <p>VI. Complete the following suitably. The extract highlights that social change often begins when _____.</p>	
10	Answer any FIVE of the following six questions in 40–50 words each:	5x2=

	<p>I. Why was Franz surprised to see his teacher dressed so formally and the villagers sitting quietly in the classroom? What did this reveal about the situation in Alsace? (The Last Lesson)</p> <p>II. Why does Saheb stop feeling happy after getting a job at the tea stall? What change in his life does this represent? (Lost Spring)</p> <p>III. What early experience created a fear of water in Douglas, and how did it affect his life for years? (Deep Water)</p> <p>IV. Why does the peddler compare the world to a rattrap? How does his own experience prove this comparison true? (The Rattrap)</p> <p>V. What does Gandhi’s visit to Champaran show about his concern for the poor peasants and his method of solving problems? (Indigo)</p> <p>VI. What does Asokamitran’s description of the make-up department at the Gemini Studios symbolise about the working conditions and hierarchy in the film industry? (Poets and Pancakes)</p>	10
11	<p>Answer any TWO of the following three questions in 40–50 words each:</p> <p>I. How does Charley’s discovery of the third level reflect his desire to escape from the pressures and complexities of modern life? (The Third level)</p> <p>II. How does Tishani Doshi use her journey to Antarctica to connect human history, evolution, and the need for environmental awareness? (Journey to the End of the Earth)</p> <p>III. How does Dr. Sadao’s treatment of the wounded American prisoner highlight the conflict between personal ethics and national loyalty? (The Enemy)</p>	2X2= 4
12	<p>Answer any ONE of the following two questions in about 120–150 words.</p> <p>A) Both The Last Lesson by Alphonse Daudet and Lost Spring by Anees Jung depict the loss of something valuable — language and childhood — due to forces beyond individual control. Discuss how these stories explore the theme of deprivation, and how the authors use personal experiences to reveal the impact of oppression on ordinary lives.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>B) Deep Water by William Douglas and The Rattrap by Selma Lagerlöf both focus on inner transformation — one through conquering fear, the other through moral awakening. Examine how both protagonists achieve self-realisation through struggle, and explain what these journeys suggest about the human capacity for change and redemption.</p>	5
13	<p>Answer any ONE of the following two questions in about 120–150 words:</p> <p>A) In The Cutting of My Long Hair and We Too Are Human Beings, both authors recall painful experiences of discrimination. Compare how Zitkala-Sa and Bama respond to cultural and social oppression, and explain how their personal journeys contribute to a broader message about identity and empowerment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>B) In The Enemy, Dr. Sadao is portrayed as both a patriot and a humanitarian. Critically examine how his internal conflict between loyalty to his country and duty as a doctor highlights the moral dilemmas individuals face during times of war. How does his decision ultimately define his character and values?</p>	5