

HALF YEARLY EXAMINATION, 2024-25

ENGLISH

Time – 3:00 Hrs.

Class – XII

M.M. : 80

Date – 10.09.2024 (Tuesday)

Name of the student _____ Section _____

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The Question Paper contains 3 sections-READING, WRITING and LITERATURE.
2. Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part. All questions of that particular section must be attempted in the correct order.
3. Write the correct question number in your answer sheet to indicate the option/s being attempted.
4. Separate instructions are given with each part / question wherever necessary.
5. Do not exceed the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

SECTION – A (READING SKILLS)

Q.1 Read the passage carefully:

[12]

1. Mahesh Das or Raja Birbal, was a Hindu advisor in the court of the Mughal emperor, Akbar. Birbal was appointed by Akbar as a poet and singer in around 1560. He is mostly known in the Indian subcontinent for the folk tales which focus on his wit. In the local folk tales he is presented as a very clever person. These tales are popular in India. These tales involve him being smarter or making fool of other courtiers and sometimes even Akbar, using only his intelligence and cunningness. From the twentieth century onwards, plays, movies and books based on these folk tales were made. Some of these folk tales are in children's comics and school books.
2. Akbar-Birbal duo are very popular historical figures in India among Indian readers. Krishnadevaraya and Tenali Ramakrishna duo too is very familiar among Indians. Emperor Akbar was one of the greatest Mughal Emperors. During Emperor Akbar's Reign, there was a poor man in Agra who was thought to bring bad luck. People believed that if anyone looked at his face in the morning, they would have a bad day. "Get lost, you ugly fellow!" he would be called by one and all. "Hide your face before you kill someone with your Evil eye!" The emperor soon heard of this man's reputation and wanted to see him. The poor fellow, who had not harmed a single person in his life, was brought to Akbar. Akbar took a look at him and asked him to be brought back in the evening.
3. That particular day was an especially full and tiring day for the emperor and his courtiers. So many matters had to be attended to, that Akbar even forgot to eat by the end of the day, the emperor was exhausted. To make matters worse, Akbar was informed that his favourite child, little prince Salim, had fallen ill. Then the emperor suddenly remembered that he had seen the face of the 'unlucky' man that morning. 'That was it. it was the man's entire fault', Akbar decided.
4. Akbar called his courtiers and told them that he was going to have the unlucky man executed. All of them agreed immediately. That is, all except Birbal. Instead, Birbal let-out a short laugh. "What's the matter, Birbal?" asked the Angry Emperor. "You seem to find something funny!" "Nothing, Your Majesty," replied Birbal. "You say this man brings bad luck because you had to go without food ever. Since you saw him in the morning. Look at his luck. Yours was the first face he had seen sir today, and he has to die because of it." Akbar immediately realised his folly and rewarded Birbal for his wisdom.

Answer the following questions, based on the given passage.

- (i) Which of the following is/ are not true in the context of the passage?

(1)

(A) Akbar worried too much after meeting the poor man.

(B) Akbar had his food with the poor man

(C) Akbar decided to execute the poor man

A) Only A

B) Both B and A

C) All A, B and C

D) Only C

- (ii) What was Birbal's response when Akbar decided to execute the man who was believed to bring bad luck
- A. Birbal immediately agreed with Akbar's decision and supported the execution. (1)
- B. Birbal laughed and mocked Akbar for his belief, highlighting the irony in the situation.
- C. Birbal remained silent and did not express any opinion regarding the execution.
- D. Birbal tried to convince Akbar to postpone the execution and reconsider his decision.

- (iii) Which of the following describes Birbal? (1)

A. He was a famous merchant

B. He had lost his senses

C. He was very poor

D. He possessed good logical thinking

- (iv) Why had the king not eaten his food? (2)

- (v) How did Birbal endeavour to elucidate to the emperor and the populace the irrationality of superstitions? Explain in about 40 words. (2)

- (vi) Why did the king decide to execute the poor man? (1)

A. The poor man cursed the king and in fact he was very unlucky.

B. The king had had a very bad day after seeing him.

C. His attendants told him to do so.

D. The poor man brought a luck for everyone.

- (vii) Birbal was awarded because _____ (1)

A. He was in agreement with the King's decision.

B. He made the king realise his mistake.

C. He brought the poor man to the king

D. He wanted to teach a lesson to the poor man.

- (viii) Which of the following is/are correct about the poor man? (1)

A) The allegation against the poor man was logical and scientific, based on rationality.

B) The incidents of misfortune attributed to the poor man were coincidental, with no direct correlation to his presence or actions.

A. Only A

B. Only B

C. Neither A nor B

D. Both A and B

- (ix) What does Akbar's reward for Birbal reveal about Akbar's personality and leadership approach? (2)

Q.2 Read the following passage carefully. [10]

- (1) In the recent years, there has been a surge in both group and solo travel among young adults in India. A survey conducted among young adults aged 18-25 aimed to explore the reasons behind their travel preferences and recorded the percentage variation for 10 common points that influence travel choices.
- (2) Among those who prefer solo travel, the most common reason cited was the desire for independence and freedom (58%), followed closely by the opportunity for introspection and self-discovery (52%). Additionally, solo travellers appreciated the ability to customize their itinerary to their preferences (44%) and the chance to meet new people on their own terms (36%).
- (3) On the other hand, those who prefer group travel often cited the desire for socializing and making new friends (61%) as their primary reason. Group travel also provided a sense of security and safety in unfamiliar places (52%) and allowed for shared experiences and memories with others (48%). Additionally, group travellers enjoyed the convenience of having pre-planned itineraries and organized transportation (38%).

- (4) Interestingly, both groups had similar levels of interest in exploring new cultures and trying new experiences (40% for solo travellers, 36% for group travellers). Similarly, both groups valued the opportunity to relax and escape from the stresses of everyday life (36% for solo travellers, 32% for group travellers).
- (5) However, there were also some notable differences between the two groups. For example, solo travellers placed a higher priority on budget-friendly travel options (38%) compared to group travellers (24%). Conversely, group travellers were more likely to prioritize luxury and comfort during their travels (28%) compared to solo travellers (12%).
- (6) Overall, the survey results suggest that both group and solo travel have their own unique advantages and appeal to different individuals, based on their preferences and priorities.

(Courtesy: Shaala.com)

Answer the following questions, based on the given passage.

- (i) Infer two possible ways that the survey, mentioned in paragraph (1) could be beneficial. Answer in about 40 words. **(2)**
- (ii) Which travel choice point of the survey would influence tour operators to incorporate group dinners, social events, and shared accommodations in their itinerary? **(1)**
- A. Freedom to customise itinerary B. Luxury and comfort
C. Security and safety D. Desire for making new friends
- (iii) What do the top choices in the survey, for traveling solo and in a group suggest about young adults? **(1)**
- (iv) Based on the information provided in para 5, identify the solo traveller from the following three traveller
- (a) Reshma- I don't want to keep hunting for rickshaws or taxis. A pre-booked vehicle is perfect. **(1)**
(b) Nawaz-I'm happy sharing a room in a hostel. I don't need hotel accommodation.
(c) Deepak-I'm not worried about my well-being, even while exploring remote areas.
- (v) Which of the following is an example of an opportunity for self-discovery, as mentioned in paragraph 2?
A. Trying new cuisine B. Hiring a tour guide **(1)**
C. Purchasing local artefacts D. Advance booking travel tickets
- (vi) How might the differences in budget priorities between solo and group travellers impact the types of accommodations and activities offered by the travel industry in India? **(2)**
- (vii) Complete the sentence appropriately. The similarities in the percentage of both solo and group travellers who are interested in exploring new cultures and trying new experiences may be due to **(1)**
- (viii) State TRUE or FALSE. The title, "Wanderlust: The Solo Travel Trend Among Young Adults in India", is appropriate for this passage. **(1)**

SECTION - B (CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS) - 18 Marks

Q.3 Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in about 50 words. **[4]**

- (a) You are Kumar/Ankita, Secretary, West End Cooperative Group Housing Society, Century Eden. Write a notice in not more than 50 words, requesting the members to attend a meeting of the society to discuss the problem of irregular supply of drinking water to the residents.

OR

- (b) As a part of its silver jubilee celebrations, the Allanhalli Government School has decided to honour the meritorious old students who are now holding important positions in life. As a Head Boy/Girl, Draft a notice in about 50 words inviting students of classes IX and XII to attend the function in the school hall.

Q4 Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in about 50 words

[4]

- (a) On the occasion of World Health Day, your school is conducting an awareness camp on the importance of mental well-being among today's youth. As the Principal of the school, draft a formal invitation to Mr. Swapnil Joshi, an eminent Clinical Psychologist and motivational speaker to address the students on this occasion.

OR

- (b) You are Aashima, an avid reader of books. Write an informal invitation to your best friend, Nimisha who is equally interested in books to be a part of 'Book Hour' and read out some of her favourite literary passages or verses to the like-minded gentry, being hosted by you in the Clubhouse of your housing society.

Q.5 Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in about 120-150 words.

[5]

- (a) You are Atif/Aiswarya, parent of a class 12 student. You were recently invited among others by the school to attend a two-day workshop on "Preparing youth for the road ahead". Write a letter to the Editor, 'The Hindu' expressing your views on the need for such workshops to create awareness of skill development and future opportunities. You may use the following cues along with your own idea:

- Skill development
- Vocational education, apprenticeship and internship
- Entrepreneurship
- Skills for greater employment prospects and economic progress.

OR

- (b) You are Gagan /Ginie of Richmond town, Bengaluru. You feel sad to notice the people litter the roads with utter disregard for sanitation and cleanliness. As a responsible citizen, write a letter to the Editor of a national daily highlighting the need for educational institutions to in still civic responsibilities among school students. You may use the following cues along with your own idea to compose this letter.

- Cleanliness drive
- Spreading awareness campaigns
- Eco club activities in schools
- Volunteer for cleanup
- Workshops, seminars.

Q.6 Attempt ANY ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in about 120-150 words.

[5]

- (a) Choice of course after clearing Senior School Examination produces a great deal of stress on the minds of our students. Counselling can be of great help to them. Write an article in 120-150 words on the topic "Role of counselling in choice of course" You are Motilal/ Manav. Use the following clues.

Clues

- deciding a career goal important
- discover their potential and interests
- the pressure starts building up- at the threshold
- strengths and weaknesses
- counselling can help-decide your career based on your aptitude, skills, interests, performance and personality
- Counsellor identifies that unique quality and guides informed choice.
- Even in the future, counselling helps in setting goals and gives directions to life

OR

(b) You are Vinita, a student of Class XII. You decide to write an article on "Impact of OTT Platforms on Youth" for your school magazine. You may use the cues given below along with your own ideas to compose this article.

- easy to access
- Insomnia
- Teens' addiction to OTT
- Violent and brutal scenes

Suggestions

- Censor for OTT
- Choice of content
- Time limitation
- Parental monitoring

SECTION - C (LITERATURE TEXTBOOK AND SUPPLEMENTARY READING TEXT) - 40 marks

Q.7 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). [6]

A. And such too is the grandeur of the dooms

We have imagined for the mighty dead;

All lovely tales that we have heard or read:

An endless fountain of immortal drink,

Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

(A Thing of Beauty)

(i) Which of the following themes is best represented in the given extract? (1)

- A. The beauty of nature
- B. The power of imagination
- C. The immortality of art and literature
- D. The inevitability of death

(ii) State whether the given statement is TRUE or FALSE, with reference to the extract. By referring to the dead as "mighty", the poet emphasizes their importance and the power they exerted on the people. (1)

(iii) Complete the sentence appropriately.

The "endless fountain of immortal drink" is an apt analogy for the tales of the mighty dead because

(iv) The use of the word "brink" in the extract suggests that the immortality that is being poured unto us is on the verge of overflowing. This creates a powerful image of

(v) Based on the poem rhyme scheme, evident in lines 2-5, of the given extract, which word would rhyme with line 1? (1)

- 1. thinks
- 2. Tombs
- 3. things

(vi) Select the option that is NOT true about the lack of punctuation at the end of line 1 in the extract.

- A. Creates a sense of continuity and flow that connects the line with the second line.
- B. Encourages the reader to continue reading seamlessly without any pause. (1)
- C. Creates a sense of anticipation and expectation for the reader.
- D. Encourages the revisit to the ideas in the preceding lines.

OR

B. ...I looked again at her, wan, pale

as a late winter's moon and felt

that old familiar ache, my childhood's fear,

but all I said was, see you soon, Amma,

all I did was smile and smile

and smile.....

(My mother at Sixty-six)

(i) What is the speaker's emotional state when looking at her mother? (1)

- A. Confused and disoriented
- B. Nostalgic and longing
- C. Empathetic and understanding
- D. Fearful and apprehensive

- (ii) What does the use of the word "but" at the beginning of the line, ' but all I said..', suggest ? (1)
- (iii) Select the word that WILL NOT complete the sentence appropriately. (1)

The description of the mother as "wan, pale / as a late winter's moon" creates a vivid image of _____

- A. vulnerability
- B. sensitivity
- C. frailty
- D. mortality

- (iv) State whether the given statement is TRUE or FALSE. (1)

The poetic device used in the line, 'pale as a winter's moon' is the same as the one used in the line, 'the winter wind wistfully wailed at night'.

- (v) What message do these lines highlight, in the context of familial relationships, and the speaker's sense of anxiety and fear at the prospect of losing her mother? (1)

- (vi) Complete the sentence appropriately. (1)

The repetition of the word, 'smile' suggests that.....

Q.8 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). [4]

A. Students on Ice, the programme I was working with on the Shokalskiy, aims to do exactly this by taking high school students to the ends of the world and providing them with inspiring educational opportunities which will help them foster a new understanding and respect for our planet. It's been in operation for six years now, headed by Canadian Geoff Green, who got tired of carting celebrities and retired, rich, curiosity-seekers who could only 'give' back in a limited way. With Students on Ice, he offers the future generation of policymakers a life-changing experience at an age when they're ready to absorb, learn, and most importantly, act.

- i. The writer refers to the educational opportunities as 'inspiring' because..... 1
- ii. Which of the following would NOT be a 'life changing experience'? 1
 - A. Being given a lead role in a play.
 - B. Going on an adventure trip.
 - C. Playing a video game.
 - D. Meeting a great leader whom you admire.
- iii. Why does the writer refer to 'act' as more important than 'absorb' or 'learn'? 1
- iv. The rich curiosity seekers failed to fulfil Geoff Green's objective as _____ 1

OR

B. Have you ever been there? It's a wonderful town still, with big old frame houses, huge lawns, and tremendous trees whose branches meet overhead and roof the streets. And in 1894, summer evening were twice as long, and people set out on their lawns, the men smoking cigars and talking quietly, the women waving Palm-leaf fans, with the fire-flies all around, in a peaceful world. To be back there with the First World War still 20 years off, and World War II over 40 years in the future.... I wanted two tickets for that.

- (i) Which place is the narrator talking about? (1)
- (ii) The society represented in the above extract is..... (1)
- (iii) Why does the narrator wish to visit that place ? (1)
- (iv) "Tremendous trees whose branches meet overhead and roof the streets" is not an example of (1)
 - 1. Imagery 2. Metaphor 3. Alliteration 4. Anachronism
 - (a) Options 1 and 2 (b) Options 1 and 3 (c) Options 2 and 3 (d) Options 2 and 4

Q.9 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B). [6]

A. Usually when the school began, there was a great bustle, which could be heard out in the street, the opening and closing of desks, lessons repeated in unison, very loud, with our hands over our ears to understand better, and the teacher's great ruler rapping on the table. But now it was all so still! I had counted on the commotion to get to my desk without being seen; but, of course, that day everything had to be as quiet as a Sunday morning. Through the window I saw my classmates, already in their places, and M. Hamel walking up and down with his terrible iron ruler under his arm. I had to open the door and go in before everybody. You can imagine how I blushed and how frightened I was. (The Last Lesson)

- (i) The narrator feels anxious about entering the classroom because _____ (1)
a. the teacher was in bad mood. b. all the students were looking at him.
c. he was late and the classroom was quiet. d. there were villagers sitting at the back of the classroom
- (ii) The phrase "as quiet as a Sunday morning" suggests that _____. (1)
- (iii) What does the term 'terrible iron ruler' indicate about M. Hamel? (1)
- (iv) Find a word in the extract which means the same as 'chaos.' (1)
- (v) Which of the following headlines best suggests the central idea of the extract? (1)
a. The Fears of a Latecomer b. The Importance of Punctuality
c. The Rigidity of the School System d. The Anxiety of young students
- (vi) How did the narrator plan to get into the class without being noticed that he was late? (1)

OR

B. I went to the pool when no one else was there. The place was quiet. The water was still and tiled bottom was as white and clean as a bathtub. I was timid about going in alone, so I sat on the side of the pool to wait for others. I had not been there long when came a big bruiser of a boy, probably eighteen years old. He had thick hair on his chest. He was a beautiful physical specimen, with legs and arms that showed rippling, muscles. He yelled. "Hi, Skinny! How'd you like to be ducked?" (Deep Water)

- (i) What is the purpose of the description of the bully? Present your views. 1
- (ii) Select the option that completes the given sentence appropriately. 1
When the narrator went to the pool it was _____.
(a) pleasant and lively (b) thrilling and attractive (c) dirty (d) still and clean
- (iii) What did the big bruiser of a boy do? 1
- (iv) Identify the textual clue that allows the reader to infer that the big boy was a bully? 1
- (v) Why did the narrator sit on the side of the pool? 1
(a) To enjoy the beauty of the pool (b) He was afraid of venturing into the pool alone
(c) To wait for the coach (d) To prepare himself mentally to enter
- (vi) Complete the sentence with one word. 1
The word 'bruiser' in the extract means _____.

Q.10 Answer ANY FIVE of the following questions in about 40-50 words. [2x5=10]

- (i) Why did Edla close the door when the ironmaster opened the door for the peddler to leave?
- (ii) Give a brief account of the life and activities of the Bangladeshi squatters like Saheb-e-Alam settled in Seemapuri.
- (iii) How did the poet prove that there can be life under apparent stillness in the poem 'Keeping Quiet'?

- (iv) We miss a thing when we are in fear of losing it. Substantiate this statement with two examples from “The Last Lesson”, how the people in the story suddenly realised how precious their language was to them?
- (v) How can ‘mighty dead’ be a ‘thing of beauty’?
- (vi) It is said that the “Face is a mirror of one’s emotions”. Why did the poet ‘smile and smile’?

Q.11 Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions in about 40-50 words.

[2x2=4]

- (i) What were the feelings of Dr. Sadao and his wife on seeing the wounded man? What did they finally decide to do?
- (ii) What arguments does Charley offer to show his disagreement with the psychiatrist’s diagnosis?
- (iii) “My Antarctica experience was full of such epiphanies,” says Tishani Doshi. Which experience does she consider the best and why?

Q12. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions in about 120-150 words.

[5]

- A. The joy of wearing bangles in seven colours of a rainbow is derived at the expense of the labour of eyes that are more adjusted to the dark than to the light outside. Justify this statement with reference to the plight of bangle makers as described in the lesson and also highlight the irony contained therein.

OR

- B. The tenacity and determination on the part of Douglas helped him to shirk away the fear factor. Discuss.

Q13. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions in about 120-150 words.

[5]

- A. The lesson ‘The Tiger King’ also speaks about cruelty against animals. In order to defy his destiny, the Tiger King killed as many as 99 tigers unaware of the consequences of his imprudent act. Humans and animals have equal rights to co-exist on this planet to maintain the ecological balance. Consider yourself as an ardent environmentalist who is involved in the ‘Save the Tiger’ Campaign. You have been asked to deliver a speech in a seminar related to your campaign and the need for the youth to be involved in such campaigns. Draft your speech appropriately.

OR

- B. Tom, the POW reaches home safe. He feels blessed and is very grateful to Dr Sadao and his wife for their thoughtfulness, dedication and being compassionate throughout the treatment and till he’s sent back home. After reaching home, he writes his thoughts reflecting on how being an enemy Dr Sadao and his wife Hana prove that “The greatness of humanity is not in being human, but in being humane.” Imagine yourself as Tom and express these thoughts. You may start with....

Wednesday xx September 20XX

10.00 p.m.

Dear Diary

May God bless Dr Sadao and his family-the angels in human disguise with long life! I owe my life to them....

Good night, Diary

