Roll No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Q.P. Code 1/1/1

ENGLISH (CORE)

CBSE Class XII Board Examination 2026

Time allowed: 3 hours **Maximum Marks: 80**

General Instructions:

1. The paper has 13 questions; all are compulsory.
2. It has three sections: Section A – Reading Skills, Section B – Creative Writing Skills, Section C – Literature.
3. Follow the specific instructions given with each question or part, and write the correct question number and part in the answer sheet.
4. Keep to the word limit stated for each answer.
5. All names, addresses and other details in the questions are imaginary.

SECTION A

Reading Skills (22 marks).

1. *Unseen passage — a literary passage based on Richard Bach's 'Jonathan Livingston Seagull', about a gull who flies for the joy of flight, is cast out by his flock and learns that freedom of thought is the true law — not reproduced. Q1 (i)–(x) are based on it: MCQs, sentence completion, an analogy item and textual-evidence items (1 mark each) and short answers (2 marks each).* **12**

2. *Unseen passage — a factual report on road safety in India (2023 accident figures, a table of causes of accidents, school-zone safety measures, a student helmet campaign, AI traffic technology and personal responsibility) — not reproduced. Q2 (i)–(viii) are based on it: MCQs, a word-meaning item, sentence completion and a data-inference item (1 mark each) and short answers (2 marks each).* **10**

SECTION B

Creative Writing Skills (18 marks). Each question has an internal choice: attempt (A) or (B).

3. Notice (about 50 words): Your school is holding a career counselling session for Classes XI and XII so that students can choose their future careers wisely. As Riya/Rohan, Head Girl/Head Boy of M.L.C. School, write a notice giving all the details of the session. Put the notice in a box. **4**

OR

Notice (about 50 words): As Kavya/Karan, Chief Editor of the school magazine 'Parakh', write a notice asking students to send articles, stories, poems, artwork and similar entries for the special annual edition. Entries go to the Chief Editor. Give the necessary details and put the notice in a box.

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4. Formal invitation (about 50 words): As Satupa/Satish, President of Surya Vikas RWA, write an invitation to the M.L.A. of your constituency asking him/her to be the Chief Guest at a function honouring residents who have done outstanding work for the colony. Mention one attractive highlight of the programme. **4**

OR

Formal reply (about 50 words): You are Dr. Vora, a certified art therapist from Manipur. Green Valley Public School, Jammu has invited you to conduct a seminar for students on 'Art Therapy, the Way Forward'. Write a reply accepting the invitation.

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5. Letter to the editor (120-150 words): You are Kaneshta/Shirish, a keen follower of yoga. Write to the editor of a newspaper sharing your views and urging people, especially students and young adults, to make yoga part of their daily life. Cues you may use: the need for a disciplined exercise routine; yoga reduces stress and improves physical and mental health; it increases focus; schools and colleges should encourage it. **5**

OR

Job application with bio-data (120-150 words): You are Roshni/Rohan, a final-year Computer Science degree student. 'Tech Innovate Solutions', Markhande Lane, Pune has advertised in 'The National Times' for AI Engineers: Bachelor's degree in CS/IT; skill in AI frameworks, data science, PyTorch and Python; 1-2 years of work experience, projects or certifications. Apply to the Public Relations Officer with your bio-data.

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6. Article (120-150 words): You are Aanya/Ankit, troubled that quiet moments and an unhurried way of living are disappearing from our fast lives. Write a newspaper article titled 'The Vanishing Art of Slowing Down'. Cues: hustle culture and technology harming mental health; losing touch with nature, people and ourselves; value of mindful celebrations and slow living; role of schools, communities and media; need for digital limits, reflection and simple joys. **5**

OR

Report (120-150 words): Your school held a 'Tastes of India' Week to teach students about the variety of Indian food. As Arti/Aryan of Class XII, Secretary of the School Magazine Editorial Board, write a detailed report on the activities of the week – the events, participation, the chief guest and the overall effect on the school. Use What–When–Where–Who–Why–How.

SECTION C

Literature (40 marks).

7. Extract from 'Keeping Quiet' (Pablo Neruda): the poet imagines a strange, peaceful moment with no hurry and no machines, when people are together, fishermen spare the whales and the salt-gatherer looks at his injured hands. **6**

(i) What does 'an exotic moment' stand for? (A) a dream-like pause from mechanical human activity that allows reflection and unity (B) a ritual stop to honour traditional and ecological wisdom (C) a sudden event that makes all human labour useless (D) an unusual break in routine that shows cultural diversity and isolation

(ii) Complete: The words 'we' and 'together' signify ____.

(iii) Fill in from the brackets: The poet ____ (condemns/glorifies) the moment without rush and engines.

(iv) The tone of the poet here is best described as: (A) despairing and cynical (B) aggressive and accusatory (C) meditative and hopeful (D) humorous and sarcastic

(v) Complete: 'Hurt hands' is a symbol of ____.

(vi) What message does the poet give through this extract?

OR

Extract from 'A Roadside Stand' (Robert Frost): the farmer at the roadside stand is annoyed with city travellers who pass by without buying; he says the spoiling of scenery is not his real grievance but the silent sorrow of rural people who hope city money will improve their lives and give them the comfortable life promised (in films and by the ruling party) but kept from them.

(i) What emotion does the speaker show when he tells the passer-by that if he wants to be mean he may keep his money and go on? (A) curiosity (B) bitterness (C) indifference (D) detachment

(ii) What does the speaker mean when he says the harm to the scenery would not be his complaint?

(iii) Complete: The word 'expand' (making their being expand) shows a longing for ____.

(iv) Assertion (A): The speaker criticises the ruling party for keeping opportunities away from the rural poor. Reason (R): The extract praises the government for its promise of a life like the movies. Options: (A) Both true, R explains A (B) Both true, R does not explain A (C) A true, R false (D) A false, R true

(v) Which concern is NOT discussed in the extract? (A) political exploitation of rural dreams (B) discrimination due to religious policies (C) the purely commercial gap between city and village (D) effect of unfulfilled hopes

(vi) In one sentence, what advice would you give politicians based on this extract?

8. Extract from 'Memories of Childhood' (Zitkala-Sa's part): Zitkala-Sa describes the moment her long braid was cut off at the boarding school, the humiliations she had suffered since leaving her mother, and her feeling that she was just one of many animals being driven by a herder. **4**

(i) Complete: Her words 'Then I lost my spirit' show that she ____.

(ii) What does her mention of having 'suffered extreme indignities' tell us about prejudice in that society?

(iii) Why did she long for her mother at that painful moment?

(iv) The narrator's tone is best described as: (A) bitter and strong-willed (B) detached and impersonal (C) pained and despairing (D) grateful and reflective

OR

Extract from 'On the Face of It' (Susan Hill): Derry tells Mr. Lamb that he is not afraid – it is others who are afraid of him; people pretend, but he can see they think his burnt face is the ugliest thing and pity him, and even he is afraid of himself in the mirror. Mr. Lamb replies that they are not afraid of the whole of him.

(i) Which emotion dominates Derry's words? (A) superiority (B) shrewdness (C) vulnerability (D) indifference

(ii) Complete: According to Derry, people pretend when they see him because ____.

(iii) By saying 'No, not the whole of you. Not of you,' Mr. Lamb means: (A) your face will heal and your ideas about it will change (B) you are not just your face or your injury – that is not all of you (C) I am afraid of your face (D) avoid mirrors so you don't feel low

(iv) In one sentence, what advice would you give people who look away when they see Derry's face?

9. Extract from 'Poets and Pancakes' (Asokamitran): the author describes the Gemini Studios make-up room with its bright incandescent lights and mirrors, its staff drawn from many regions of India (showing national integration long before AIR and Doordarshan), their heavy use of pancake that made actors look monstrous, the mostly indoor shooting and the strict hierarchy in the department. **6**

(i) Why did the make-up room look like a hair-cutting salon?

(ii) What does the 'fiery misery' of people being made up suggest? (A) emotional stress of the actors (B) physical discomfort from heat and lights (C) anger of irritated make-up men (D) discomfort of a cramped room

(iii) Complete: The author's tone in 'hideous crimson hued monster' is ____.

(iv) Why was heavy make-up thought necessary at Gemini Studios at that time? (A) it cut the cost of sets and costumes (B) the creative heads and stars ordered it (C) it matched theatre traditions the studio admired (D) it made up for the lack of advanced lighting and camera technology

(v) What does 'became too big for the studio and left' suggest about the Bengali make-up man?

(vi) Complete: The author mentions people from different regions in the department to ____.

OR

Extract from 'The Rattrap' (Selma Lagerlöf): the peddler tells the ironmaster that the whole world is a big rattrap whose good things are only bait to catch a poor man, and warns that one day the ironmaster too may be caught; the ironmaster laughs and says they might leave the sheriff alone on Christmas Eve.

(i) What does the speaker mean by calling the world a big rattrap? (A) the world offers many chances of success (B) life's temptations are traps that lead people into trouble (C) good deeds are always rewarded with cheese rinds (D) justice is not guaranteed for all

(ii) The phrase 'cheese rinds' stands for: (A) temptation (B) affirmation (C) gluttony (D) deprivation

(iii) Fill in from the brackets: By calling himself a 'poor fellow', the speaker stresses his ____ (vulnerability/credibility).

(iv) What does the peddler hint at through his warning to the ironmaster?

(v) The ironmaster's remark about leaving the sheriff alone on Christmas Eve shows that he is: (A) materialistic (B) understanding (C) conniving (D) enterprising

(vi) Complete with a reason: It is implied that the speaker might be locked up because ____.

10. *Answer any five of the following six questions in 40–50 words each (2 marks each).* **10**

(a) 'My Mother at Sixty-six' (Kamala Das): How does the poem bring out the relationship between the mother and her daughter? Comment (40-50 words).

(b) 'The Interview': What does Umberto Eco mean when he calls himself 'a professor who writes novels on Sundays'? (40-50 words)

(c) 'Indigo': In the Champaran dispute the British landlords agreed to return 25% of the money to the sharecroppers. Why was this event significant? (40-50 words)

(d) 'Deep Water' (William O. Douglas): How did his experience at the beach in California affect him? (40-50 words)

(e) 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' (Adrienne Rich): Explain how the restrictions of Aunt Jennifer's married life have left her frightened and emotionally scarred. (40-50 words)

(f) 'The Last Lesson' (Alphonse Daudet): Franz wonders whether they will make even the pigeons sing in German. What does this remark show about the forcing of German on schools in Alsace? (40-50 words)

11. *Answer any two of the following three questions in 40–50 words each (2 marks each).* **4**

(a) 'Memories of Childhood – We Too are Human Beings' (Bama): What does Bama's decision to study hard and excel reveal about her character? (40-50 words)

(b) 'The Third Level' (Jack Finney): How did the newspaper 'The World' help Charley believe that the third level existed? (40-50 words)

(c) 'The Tiger King' (Kalki): Assess how the court astrologer influenced the course of the Tiger King's life. (40-50 words)

12. 'Going Places' and 'Lost Spring': Sophie and Mukesh both dream of a better life, but forces outside them shape their reality and opportunities. Discuss (120-150 words). **5**

OR

'My Mother at Sixty-six' and 'A Thing of Beauty': How do these poems show that beauty and life are short-lived? (120-150 words)

13. 'Journey to the End of the Earth' (Tishani Doshi): Examine how having school students on the Antarctic expedition supports the message of environmental responsibility and hope. (120-150 words) **5**

OR

'The Enemy' (Pearl S. Buck): How does the story explore the conflict between humanity and patriotism? Support your answer from the text. (120-150 words)

— END —

Questions restated from the CBSE Class XII Board Examination 2026 (set 1/1/1) for practice. Reading passages and map items are described, not reproduced.