

Half Yearly Examination (2025–26)

Subject: English (301)

Date: 08/08/25

Time: 3 Hours

Maximum Marks: 80

Name: _____

Class: 12 Division: _____

Roll No. _____

Invigilator's Sign _____



General Instructions:

15-minute prior reading time allotted for Q-paper reading.

The Question Paper contains THREE sections-READING, WRITING and LITERATURE.

Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part. Write the correct question number in your answer sheet to indicate the option/s being attempted.

Section A

Reading Skills (22 marks)

1. Read the passage and answer the following questions:

12 marks

1. Reaching the mountain's summit after hours of trekking, you are greeted by a view so breathtaking that it renders you momentarily speechless. The horizon stretches endlessly, dotted with far-off peaks bathed in hues of gold and amber. Below, the valleys are a patchwork of deep greens and browns, blending harmoniously with the glowing sky above. As you drop your backpack and find a comfortable spot, you realize that this moment was worth every ounce of effort.

2. The sun begins its slow descent, transforming the sky into a masterpiece of warm colors. Streaks of fiery orange, soft pink, and radiant purple spread outward, as if a giant paintbrush is sweeping across the heavens. Shadows from the peaks stretch longer, wrapping the valleys below in an embrace of deepening blue. The colors seem to shift with every passing moment, creating a dynamic, ever-changing panorama.

3. The air is cool and crisp, carrying the faint scent of pine trees and wildflowers, a contrast to the humid warmth of the day. A gentle breeze brushes against your face, carrying with it a sense of calm. The mountain is almost silent, save for the occasional rustling of leaves or the faint chirping of birds preparing for the approaching dusk. It feels as though the entire world is pausing, just as you are, to witness nature's most beautiful performance.

4. As the sun dips lower, the glowing orb turns into a fiery red, casting a warm light over the landscape. The mountains and trees seem to come alive in the glow, their details highlighted in the fading sunlight. You sit quietly, allowing your thoughts to drift like the clouds above. The silence isn't empty—it's full of memories, longings, and a sense of something greater than yourself.

5. With no phone signal, no schedule to keep, and no distractions, you feel a rare kind of clarity. The worries that once felt overwhelming now seem small, almost distant, as if the mountain itself has offered you a new perspective.

6. Finally, the sun touches the horizon, and the entire sky is set ablaze for one last, glorious moment before it slips away. The first stars begin to appear, tiny specks of light scattered across the darkening sky. The temperature drops, and the breeze carries a refreshing chill. You take a deep breath, letting the serenity of the scene wash over you.

7. The experience is humbling, a reminder of the immense beauty that exists beyond the distractions of daily life. As you begin your descent in the fading light, the memory of this sunset stays with you—a perfect, fleeting moment etched in time. (432 words)

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the passage above:

i. What does the narrator's reaction— 'momentarily speechless'—upon reaching the summit, suggest?

(Paragraph 1)

1

A. The narrator was too tired to speak after trekking. B. The view at the summit was unexpectedly ordinary.

C. The view left the narrator overwhelmed with awe. D. The narrator had no one to talk to at the summit.

ii. Imagine a friend tells you that trekking uphill is tiring and not worth the effort. Based on this paragraph, how would you respond based on information given in paragraph 1?

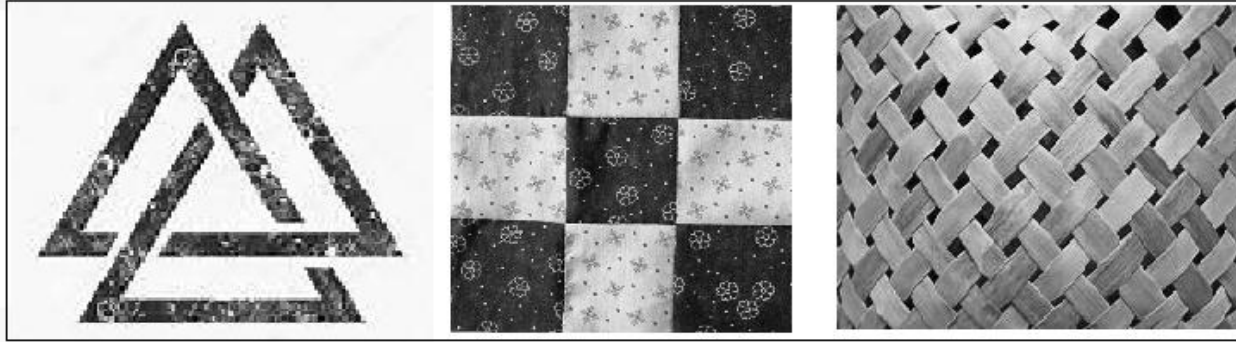
1

iii. In Paragraph 1, the valleys are described as a 'patchwork of deep greens and browns.'

2

Look at the images labelled (a), (b), and (c).

Which image best helps you understand what the word 'patchwork' means in that sentence, and why?



(a)

(b)

(c)

iv. All of the following are effective techniques used by the author in paragraph 2, to describe the sunset, **EXCEPT:**

1

- A. Use of visual imagery to paint a vivid picture of the sky.
- B. Personification of the landscape to create emotional depth.
- C. Use of a simile comparing the sky to an artist's canvas.
- D. Scientific explanation of how colors change during sunset.

v. Complete the following with a suitable explanation.

1

The heading '*The Music of the Mountains*' is suitable for paragraph 3 because _____.

vi. What does the paragraph suggest about the narrator's state of mind as the sun dips lower? (Paragraph 4)

2

vii. Which of the following situations is most similar to the narrator's experience in paragraph 5?

1

- A. A student studying for an exam with multiple tabs open and frequent notifications.
- B. An employee working in a green and sustainable office space with regular meetings.
- C. A person spending quiet time outdoors, away from crowds, reflecting on her thoughts.
- D. A tourist visiting multiple landmarks in a single day, documenting everything in his journal.

viii. Read the given reason.

1

Reason: The scene creates a powerful sense of calm and closure. (Paragraph 6)

Which of the following assertions best supports this reason?

- A. The narrator observes the fading light, cooling air, and arrival of stars, finding peace in the slow end of the day.
- B. The narrator watches the sky change colour as the valley becomes lively with birdsong and distant voices.

ix. Which of the following is directly stated in the paragraph 6?

1

- A. The sky is full of clouds as the sun sets in the orange sky.
- B. The narrator closes her/his eyes and falls asleep peacefully.
- C. The temperature drops, and the breeze carries an energising chill.
- D. The narrator begins to climb the mountain again, refreshed.

x. What does the word 'etched' suggest about the narrator's memory of the sunset?

1

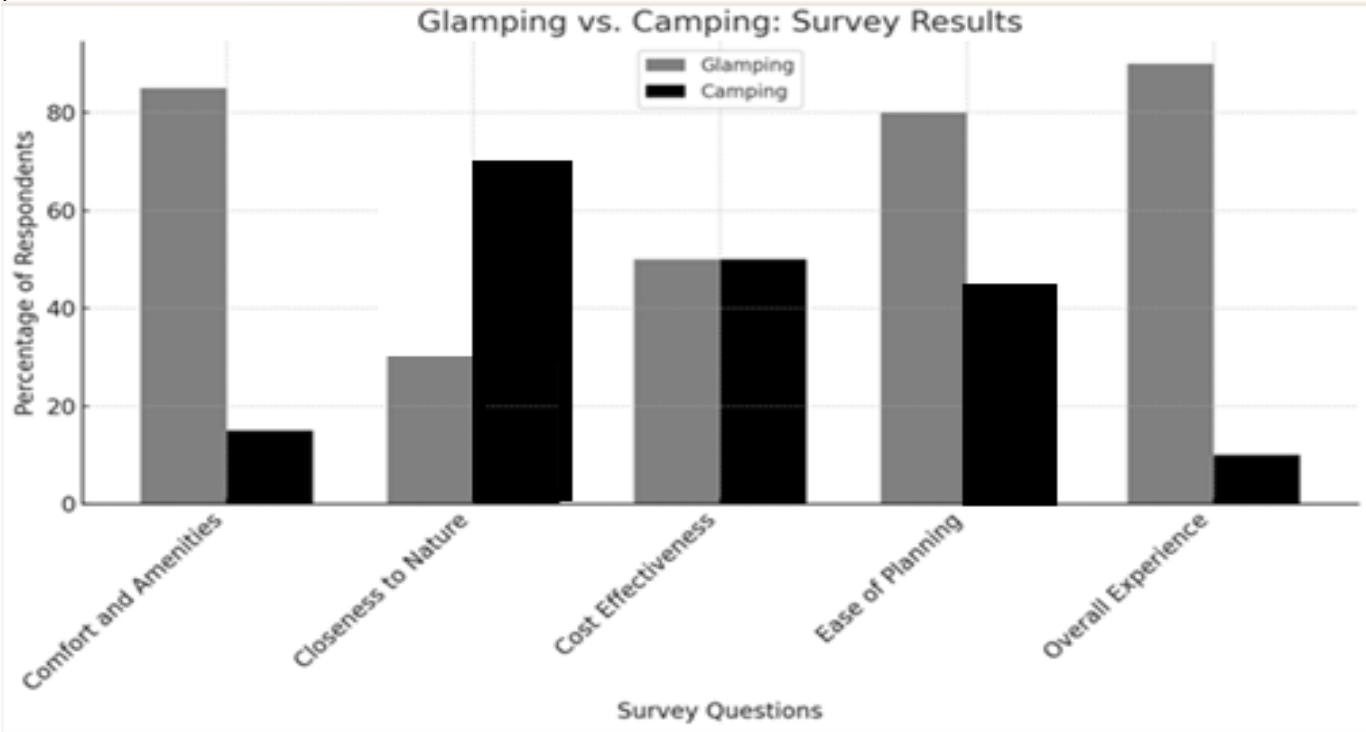
2. Read the following passage carefully

10marks

1. A leading tours and travels company conducted a survey to examine preferences between glamping, defined as a luxurious, amenity-filled version of camping, and traditional camping among individuals aged 20–45. The study aimed to understand the reasons behind the growing popularity of glamping and how it

compares to the classic outdoor camping experience.

2. The results highlighted that glamping appealed to a significant portion of respondents due to its comfort and ease. Traditional camping, however, retained a niche audience who valued its raw and authentic connection to nature. The survey asked participants to rate their preferences across five key parameters: Comfort and amenities, Closeness to nature, Cost effectiveness, Ease of planning, and Overall experience. The bar graph below represents the survey results for Glamping vs. Camping across these five key parameters:



3. Families and novice travellers particularly leaned toward glamping, viewing it as a safer and more manageable way to enjoy the outdoors. Camping, on the other hand, was preferred by those who value simplicity and a deeper connection to nature. Enthusiasts who chose camping emphasised the joy of self-sufficiency, setting up tents, and exploring untamed wilderness. Many noted that traditional camping fosters stronger bonds with travel companions through shared challenges and experiences, such as cooking over a fire or hiking in rugged terrains.

4. The survey also shed light on how these preferences have impacted the travel industry. Glamping has fuelled the growth of high-end travel offerings, with resorts and startups catering to this emerging segment. Camping, though smaller in scale, continues to influence eco-tourism and sustainability initiatives. Both forms have redefined the outdoor experience, making nature accessible to different types of travellers.

5. This study reflects a broader trend where travelers seek experiences tailored to their comfort and adventure levels. By offering both glamping and camping options, travel companies can cater to a wider audience, ensuring memorable outdoor experiences for all. (307 words)

Based on your understanding of the passage, answer the following questions.

- i. Why does the writer refer to camping as ‘traditional’ and ‘classic’ in the paragraph 1? 1

- ii. Which of the following situations best reflects ‘raw and authentic’ as described in paragraph 2? 1
 - A. A solo traveller hikes into a remote area, sets up her own tent, and cooks meals over a campfire.
 - B. A family stays in a luxury tent with a private chef and hot shower facilities in the forest.
 - C. A group enjoys a guided nature tour with pre-set tents, Wi-Fi, and scheduled meals.
 - D. A couple visits a nature-themed resort with spa services and guided stargazing.

- iii. A travel company is deciding between offering glamping or traditional camping to attract urban professionals aged 20–45. They refer to the given graph. 2
 If the company wants to target travellers who seek a close connection with nature but are also concerned about ease of planning, what challenge might they face in choosing between glamping and camping?

iv. A startup is planning to launch weekend outdoor retreats for working professionals who are short on time, value comfort, and prefer minimal effort in planning trips.

Based on the graph, which type of experience—glamping or camping—should they offer, and why? 2

v. Select the option that is true for both Assertion(A) and Reason (R) based on the given graph. 1

(A): Camping is significantly more cost-effective than glamping.

(R):The survey results show a noticeable gap between camping and glamping in cost-effectiveness ratings.

A. Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

B. Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.

C. A is false, but R is true.

D. Both A and R are false.

vi. Complete the following suitably. 1

Families and novice travellers prefer glamping because it feels safer and easier to manage. In contrast, traditional camping enthusiasts prefer _____. (Paragraph 3)

vii. Quote the strongest piece of conclusive evidence from paragraph 4, showing that the writer acknowledges value in both camping and glamping. 1

viii. What can you infer about the travel industry's approach to outdoor experiences, based on the concluding lines of the study? (Paragraph 5) 1

Section B

Creative Writing Skills (18 marks)

3. Attempt **any one** of the two, A or B in about 50 words. 4

A. Your school is planning to conduct an inter-class seminar on the topic–The Importance of Mental Health—to create awareness in adolescents. As the head of the organising committee, write a **notice** to inform all students about the seminar and invite registrations from classes XI-XII. Include other necessary details. Put your notice in a box.

OR

B. Your school is organising an inter-House webinar on enhancing coding skills, As the President of the Computer Club, write a **notice** to inform all House members from IX-XII about the webinar and specify the number of registrations invited per House. Include other necessary details. Put your notice in a box.

4. Attempt **any one** of the two, A or B, in about 50 words. 4

A. You are V. Gajender, the Secretary of the Literary Club of Model Public School, Vellore. Your club members are staging Anton Chekhov's play 'Uncle Vanya' as part of their annual showcase event. **Draft an invitation** for Mr. Mohan Rakesh, noted theatre and cinema artist and Chairperson of The Drama School, Chennai, requesting him to be the guest of honour for the event.

OR

B. You are Simran Sodhi, the Personal Assistant of the IG (Inspector General), Police, Chandigarh. The IG has received an invitation from the 'Women's Institute for Self Defence', Chandigarh (WISDC), to preside over the Graduation Ceremony of the current batch of women cadets and address them. You **draft a formal reply**, on behalf of the IG, to the Chairperson of WISDC, accepting the invitation. Write this reply and include all the necessary details.

5. Attempt **any one** of the two, A or B, in about 120- 150 words. 5

A. Financial literacy is increasingly recognized as a crucial 21st-century skill for young individuals. Write a **letter to the editor** of a local daily discussing the benefits of providing financial literacy education to children. Also, suggest effective ways to raise awareness about the importance of this education among parents and guardians. You may use some of the given cues along with your own ideas to draft the letter. You are a counsellor, Chitra/Chetan Mahapatra from Puri, Odisha.

- ♣ What are the long-term benefits of learning financial independence from a young age?
- ♣ Why is understanding the power of finances beneficial for young learners?
- ♣ Why skills learned during childhood tend to have a lasting impact.

OR

B. You are Maya/Mateo Syiem from Shillong. You read the given advertisement and wish to apply for the advertised post. Write this **job application** along with your biodata.

SITUATION VACANT

Join our Creative Team! A renowned publishing house in Shillong –A NEW WORLD– is seeking a talented illustrator for children's books. Creative individuals with a passion for storytelling through art, welcome. Experience, not mandatory. Team players with degree/ diploma in Fine Arts/ Graphic Design may apply with 5 samples from portfolio illustrating a variety of work. Write to the Project Lead, 23-C Rosewood Lane, Shillong-793005.

6. Attempt **any one** of the two, A or B, in about 120- 150 words.

5

A. In an era of rapid globalisation and technological advancement, the preservation of cultural heritage remains a vital challenge, particularly for the youth. India continues to navigate the complexities of maintaining tradition alongside modernity. **Write an article** exploring the role of cultural heritage in shaping the identities of today's Indian youth. Provide examples to illustrate your points wherever necessary. You may use some of the given cues along with your own ideas. You are Arti Nirula of Class XII-A.

- How have global interactions and technologies influenced or changed these traditional practices among today's youth?
- What are the benefits of preserving cultural heritage for young people? How does it contribute to their sense of identity and community?
- Suggest ways in which young people and institutions can work together to ensure the preservation of cultural heritage.

OR

B. On the occasion of National Youth Day, the draft NYD envisages a ten-year vision for youth development that India seeks to achieve by 2030. It is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and serves to 'unlock the potential of the youth to advance India. In this background, **write an article** on the role of youth in the noble mission of nation development, taking help from the given cues. You are Sudha/Sudhanshu Aggarwal.

Swami Vivekananda's belief in youth as the builders of modern India.
 India's demographic strength – the world's largest youth population.
 National Youth Day 2030 Vision – aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
 Youth as agents of change in education, technology, environment, and social reform.
 Need for skill development, employment opportunities, and innovation.
 Youth-led initiatives: Start-ups, climate activism, digital India, and volunteerism.
 Government support: Youth policies, entrepreneurship schemes, and awareness campaigns.
 Call to action: Youth must act responsibly, embrace values, and participate actively in nation-building.

Section C

Literature (40 marks)

7. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given:

(6x1=6)

A. . realised with
 pain
 that she was as old as she
 looked but soon
 put that thought away, and
 looked out at Young

Trees sprinting, the merry children spilling
out of their homes... (My Mother at Sixty-six)

i. List any one theme that the lines highlight.

ii. Why does the speaker say that she "soon put that thought away"?

- A. The speaker was in denial and didn't want to face the reality of aging and mortality.
- B. The realisation was agonising, and the speaker didn't want to dwell on negative thoughts.
- C. The speaker recognized the inevitability of her mother's demise and knew she couldn't do anything about it.
- D. The speaker wanted to focus on the beauty of nature and the happiness of children, instead of troubled thoughts.

iii. Give one reason why the phrase "as old as she looked" is an effective use of imagery.

iv. Complete the sentence appropriately. The phrase, 'Young Trees', has been capitalised in order to_____.

v. Select the option that DOES NOT completely complete the sentence with an appropriate response.

The word "spilling" suggests a sense of

- A. energy and liveliness
- B. movement and motion
- C. vitality and hope
- D. attachment with home

vi. What do "young trees sprinting" and "the merry children spilling out of their homes" contrast with?

OR

7B. Perhaps the Earth can teach us
as when everything seems dead
and later proves to be alive.

Now I'll count up to twelve
and you keep quiet, and I will go. (Keeping Quiet)

i. What does the use of the word "Perhaps" in the first line of the extract tell us?

ii. Select the option that displays what is UNLIKELY to be the learning from Earth, as per the extract.

- A. Cyclical nature of life
- B. Importance of rest and renewal
- C. Linking to the natural world
- D. Committing wholeheartedly to a cause

iii. Give a reason to support the point that the line, "I will go", signifies the importance of individual action and responsibility.

iv. How is the nature of the first three lines different from the last two, in the given extract?

v. When does the Earth seem "dead" and "alive"?

vi. Identify the option that displays the appropriate choice/s for the following.

The speaker sounds in the last two lines.

- (1) instructional
- (2) forgiving
- (3) commanding
- (4) doubtful
- (5) emotional

- A. (1) and (3)
- B. (2) and (5)
- C. Only (4)
- D. (1), (4) and (5)

8. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given: (4x1=4)

A. To visit Antarctica now is to be a part of that history; to get a grasp of where we've come from and where we could possibly be heading. It's to understand the significance of Cordilleran folds and Precambrian granite shields; ozone and carbon; evolution and extinction. When you think about all that can happen in a million

years, it can get pretty mind-boggling. Imagine: India pushing northwards, jamming against Asia to buckle its crust and form the Himalayas; South America drifting off to join North America, opening up the Drake Passage to create a cold circumpolar current, keeping Antarctica frigid, desolate, and at the bottom of the world. (Journey to the End of the Earth)

i. Complete the following suitably.

The passage suggests that visiting Antarctica offers insight into geological processes and Earth's history by _____.

ii. How does the author imply the role of geological knowledge in understanding the Earth's past and potential future changes?

iii. The writer says, 'When you think about all that can happen in a million years, it can get pretty mind-boggling.' What is the most likely impact on the writer?

- A. Feels overwhelmed by the vastness of geological time scales.
- B. Is uneasy about the rapid pace of geological changes.
- C. Feels indifferent towards geological phenomena.
- D. Is surprised by the lack of significant geological events over a million years.

iv. How might understanding the geological processes mentioned in the passage help scientists in predicting and mitigating future environmental changes, particularly in polar regions?

OR

B. "He remembered his old teacher of anatomy, who had been so insistent on mercy with the knife, and then he remembered the face of his fat and slatternly landlady. He had great difficulty in finding a place to live in America because he was a Japanese. The Americans were full of prejudice, and it had been bitter to live in it, knowing himself their superior. How he had despised the ignorant and dirty old woman who had at last consented to house him in her miserable home! He had once tried to be grateful to her because she had, in his last year, nursed him through, but it was difficult, for she was no less repulsive to him in her kindness."

(The Enemy)

i. Complete the sentence appropriately with reference to the extract.

_____ had cared for Dr Sadao when he fell ill in America.

ii. Select the option that completes the given sentence appropriately.

The Americans were full of prejudice, and it had been bitter to live in

- A. Dr Sadao's place B. The General's place C. America D. The White Man's place

iii. How were the Americans, according to Sadao?

iv. What difficulty did Dr Sadao face in America?

9. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given: (6x1=6)

A. My breath was gone. I was frightened. Father laughed, but there was terror in my heart at the overpowering force of the waves. My introduction to the Y.M.C.A. swimming pool revived unpleasant memories and stirred childish fears. But in a little while, I gathered confidence. I paddled with my new water wings, watching the other boys and trying to learn by aping them. I did this two or three times on different days and was just beginning to feel at ease in the water when the misadventure happened. (Deep Water)

i Choose the correct option with reference to the two statements given below.

Statement 1: The author's father laughed to mock his son's inability to swim.

Statement 2: The author wanted to swim just to prove to his father that he could swim.

- A. Statement 1 is true, but Statement 2 is false.
- B. Statement 1 is false, but Statement 2 is true.
- C. Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 cannot be inferred.
- D. Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 can be inferred.

ii "My introduction to the Y.M.C.A. swimming pool revived unpleasant memories and stirred childish fears."

It can be inferred that this was a clear case of

- A. suppression B. oppression C. depression D. repression

iii The misadventure that took place right after the author felt comfortable was that

- A. The author slipped and fell into the swimming pool.
 - B. A bully tossed him into the pool for the sake of fun.
 - C. his coach, forgot to teach him how to handle deep water.
 - D. His father couldn't help him from drowning in the water.
- iv. The contrast between the father's laughter and the narrator's fear highlights:
- A. A generation gap in understanding danger
 - B. The father's insensitivity to his son's feelings
 - C. The humorous nature of childhood fears
 - D. the narrator's overactive imagination
- v. The shift from "terror in my heart" to "gathered confidence" best illustrates:
- A. The fickleness of emotion
 - B. A steady process of healing
 - C. denial of fear
 - D. hallucination
- vi. Which part of the extract foreshadows the upcoming traumatic event?
- A. "My breath was gone."
 - B. "I paddled with my new water wings..."
 - C. "Trying to learn by aping them."
 - D. "I was just beginning to feel at ease in the water..."

OR

B. The old man was just as generous with his confidences as with his porridge and tobacco. The guest was informed at once that in his days of prosperity, his host had been a crofter at Ramsjo Ironworks and had worked on the land. Now that he was no longer able to do day labour, it was his cow which supported him. Yes, that bossy was extraordinary. She could give milk for the creamery every day, and last month, he had received all of thirty kronor in payment. The stranger must have seemed incredulous, for the old man got up and went to the window, took down a leather pouch which hung on a nail in the very window frame, and picked out three wrinkled ten-kronor bills. (The Rattrap)

- i. Based on the extract, which of these can we infer about the old man?
- A. He made more money at the creamery than as a crofter.
 - B. His occupation changed due to the limitations of old age.
 - C. His generosity increased as he became more prosperous in old age.
 - D. He preferred to earn by being his own boss rather than working under someone.
- ii. What is the author implying when she compares the old man's confidences with his porridge and tobacco?
- iii. Complete the given sentence appropriately.
- Based on the extract, we can infer that being a crofter paid the old man _____.

- iv. Which of these sentences uses 'supported' in the same way as the extract does?
- A. The pillars supported the thick ceiling that was made completely of stone.
 - B. Raman supported his friend's decision to find a job that pays her more money.
 - C. Lalitha supported her mother by sending some money home on a regular basis.
 - D. Few people supported the policy while the majority of the voters were against it.

v. Why would the peddler have seemed 'incredulous'? State a reason.

vi. Justify any one trait of the old man that the extract reveals.

10. Answer ANY FIVE of the following six questions, in about 40-50 words.

(5x2=10)

- i. Who was Rajkumar Shukla? What role did he play at Champaran? (Indigo)
- ii. How does the poet appreciate the gifts of nature? (A Thing of Beauty)
- iii. Why were the old men of the village present in the classroom? (The Last Lesson)
- iv. What are the different connotations of the word 'garbage' to the children and adult ragpickers of Seemapuri?

[Reference: It seems that for children, garbage has a meaning different from what it means to their parents.

For the children, it is wrapped in wonder, for the elders, it is a means of survival.]

- v. Explain 'soothe them out of their wits' with reference to the poem 'A Roadside Stand'.
- vi. What has the poet chosen 'twelve' in the poem "Keeping Quiet"?

11. Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions, in about 40-50 words. (2x2=4)

i. Why did the booking clerk refuse to accept the money from Charley? (The Third level)

ii. How did the tiger king acquire his name? (The Tiger King)

iii. What kind of relationship did Dr. Sadao Hoki share with his father? (The Enemy)

12. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. (5x1=5)

i. Both William Douglas in "Deep Water" and John Keats in "A Thing of Beauty" explore the idea of overcoming despair through personal experience and the enduring power of beauty or courage. Compare and contrast how the two texts depict the human response to fear and negativity, highlighting the role of perseverance and inner strength in shaping one's outlook on life.

ii. Imagine that Mahatma Gandhi from the text 'Indigo' visits Mukesh's town, Firozabad, as described in 'Lost Spring'. Gandhi sees how the poor bangle-makers are caught up in 'a vicious circle of the sahu-kars, the middlemen, the policemen, the keepers of law, the bureaucrats and the politicians.' True to his nature of being an activist and a social reformist, he decides to do something about it over a month. As Mukesh, write a diary entry on the last day of Gandhi's one-month stay, elaborating on any two things that he did that transformed the people's lives in Firozabad.

You may begin this way: Dear Diary, Today marks a month of Mahatma Gandhi being in our town...

13. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. (5x1=5)

i. Tishani Doshi, in Journey to the End of the Earth, shares that the Students on Ice programme on the Shokalsky, aims to take high school students to the ends of the world and provide them with inspiring educational opportunities which will help them foster a new understanding and respect for our planet. As one of the students of this programme, prepare a speech draft for a Press conference, on the kinds of educational opportunities and how they are helping you contribute to fostering a new understanding.

You may begin this way –

Greetings, one and all.

I stand before you today not just as a student but as a proud participant of the 'Students on Ice' programme, an expedition that has been a transformative journey toward a profound understanding and respect for our planet.

End the draft this way – Thank you

ii. The king in the story 'The Tiger King' was driven by the single purpose of staying alive based on the prophecy that the hundredth tiger would kill him. He hunted tigers out of fear. Imagine that you are living in the King's times, and he has killed seventy tigers at this point. As someone who cares about animal welfare, write a letter to the king convincing him to stop hunting tigers.

You may begin this way:

My sincerest greetings to his majesty, I am Rajan, a subject of your kingdom, and I am writing to you today because...