

UDAYA PUBLIC SCHOOL, AYODHYA
FIRST TERM EXAMINATION 2025-26
CLASS- XII | SUBJECT: ENGLISH CORE (301)

M.M.-80

Time Allowed: 3 hours

General Instructions:

- This paper contains three sections: A, B and C.
- Attempt all questions based on specific instructions for each part.
- Adhere to the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

SECTION – A (READING SKILLS) 22 MARKS

(12 marks)

1. Read the passage given below:

- i. Having a sense of humour might mean having the ability to entertain other people by making them laugh, but it can also mean having a quick wit that is frequently employed to criticize other people with snide comments. Some might define the sense of humour as the ability to see humour in everyday life or as appreciating the cleverness of puns and other word play, and may think it entirely possible to possess a good sense of humour without ever having those around them become aware of it.
- ii. In any case, a sense of humour is a socially valued trait that almost all of us would prefer to have more, rather than less, of – akin to the way that we think about intelligence or good looks. A person with an undeveloped sense of humour lacks a social skill that puts him or her at a severe disadvantage in the hurly-burly of everyday social life.
- iii. Freud thought of humour as an outlet for forbidden impulses, and philosophers ranging from Aristotle to Descartes believed that we are amused by something when it makes us feel superior to other people.
- iv. Evolutionary psychologists believe that humour along with other creative abilities, such as art and music, evolved as an honest signal of intelligence and genetic quality. The value of such a skill in defusing tense, aggressive situation and managing alliances and friendships should not underestimated either.
- v. Schmoozing with a bunch of new people at a cocktail party is an opportunity to engage in light-hearted banter, and other people are grateful when someone is skillful enough to turn a stiff and awkward situation into fun. Cracking jokes, making witty remarks, and engaging in tongue-in-cheek observations about the social world can be like fishing for other minds that connect naturally with one's own. In other words, humour can be a device for connecting people who are operating on the same wavelength.
- vi. Observing the performance of other people in such situations tips you off as to who you might like to get to know better – and who might be best left behind, wallowing in indignation and blank stares. In short, a sense of humour is the Swiss Army Knife of social skills. Perhaps it is indeed a single instrument, but it contains an arsenal of tool – each exquisitely designed for a unique social purpose.

Answer the following questions, based on the given passage above:

- a. How does the author prove in paragraph 1 that sense of humour is a double edged sword?

- b. Cite evidences from the passage to prove that sense of humour is a valuable tool to make someone's life better. 2
- c. Complete the following sentence suitably with reference to paragraph iii.
One significant advantage of humour is that it helps one _____. 1
- d. Provide ONE textual evidence with reference to paragraph v, how a good sense of humour can be a great ice breaker. 1
- e. Select the correct option from those given in brackets to fill in the blank:
According to evolutionary psychologists, people with a sense of humour can _____
(trigger/lighten) tense situation. 1
- f. Choose the correct option:
".....humour can be a device for connecting people who are operating on the same wavelength."
By the phrase 'same wavelength' the author refers to
A. People of age group.
B. People who belong to same line of profession.
C. People having similar interests and attitudes.
D. People who are working in the same organization. 1
- g. Complete the analogy with one word from paragraph vi :
Advantage : benefit : _____ : anger 1
- h. In the line perhaps 'it is indeed a single instrument, but it contains an arsenal of tools.....' What does the phrase 'arsenal of tools' refer to? 2
- i. Provide ONE textual evidence from the text which states lack of sense of humour may prove to be a handicap in one's life. 1
- j. An undeveloped sense of humour shows lack of a social skill that puts him or her at a disadvantage. 1
- Choose the correct option A and B which affirms the idea conveyed in the above extract.
A. Sense of humour elevates the status of a person in the social circle.
B. People with sense of humour are not taken seriously in the society.

2. Read the passage given below:

(1) A recent survey conducted by an independent research firm sought to measure levels of happiness among youth aged 16–24 years in seven countries. The findings revealed some intriguing insights into what makes youth happiest, as well as which factors influence their overall well-being. In India, an overwhelming majority of the youth reported feeling satisfied with their lives, with 87% rating their well-being positively. Financial stability was identified as the primary source of happiness for 66%, followed by family support (89%), having a purpose in life (50%), and work or studies (40%). Unfortunately, 65% reported feeling stress related to academic performance or workload, while 25% reported feeling lonely. These figures point to a need for increased mental health support.

(2) These surveys also revealed that family support is an important source of contentment for young people across countries. In Europe, 59% of respondents said that their families were a major source of happiness; in France this figure was 67%, and 63% in Germany. In North America, 64% rated family as an important factor for well-being in Canada, while 61% did so in the United States. Similarly, 89% of

survey respondents in India named family support as a major contributor to their overall contentment level.

(3) It is clear that stress has a significant impact on the happiness of today's youth. The findings suggest that young people need better resources to manage their mental health and well-being. This may include access to counselling services, mindfulness activities and support groups to help them cope with challenging circumstances. It is also important to provide financial support so as to reduce some of the economic pressures.

(4) In India, 65% of youth surveyed reported feeling anxious about their academic performance or workload, while 25% felt lonely. These figures are especially significant given how important family support is for young people's overall contentment.

Questions:

(i) What are the two findings that the survey mentioned in paragraph 1 reveals?

Answer in about 40 words.

[2 marks]

(ii) "It is also important to provide financial support so as to reduce some of the economic pressures."

Give one reason based on the passage to support this statement.

[2 marks]

(iii) Elaborate giving data, how stress has a significant impact on the happiness of today's youth. [1 mark]

(iv) Which of the following factors, with reference to the given passage, does **not** play a substantial role in the well-being of Indian youth? [1 mark]

- (A) Family support and strong ties
- (B) Social connection and technology
- (C) Books and literature
- (D) Economic stability

(v) State whether **True or False**, with reference to the given passage:

It is not necessary to provide financial support to the youth as only academic performance plays an upper hand in deciding the stress level.

[1 mark]

(vi) What are the top choices which are of maximum value to today's youth? [1 mark]

- I. Collectivism
- II. Social media
- III. Individualistic society
- IV. Family ties

Options:

- (A) I and II
- (B) II and III
- (C) I and IV
- (D) II and IV

(vii) The mental health of today's youth can be managed by resources like _____ and _____. [1 mark]

(viii) Write the following sources that provide happiness to today's youth in **descending order**: [1 mark]

- (a) purposefulness
- (b) financial status
- (c) family support
- (d) stress

SECTION – B (CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS) 10 Marks

(Note: All details presented in the questions are imaginary and created for assessment purposes.)

3. Attempt ANY ONE of the following in about 50 words:

(a) Write a notice as the President of the Science Club, informing students about the newly constructed Science Park.

OR

(b) The RWA of Ganga Society, Pushp Nagar has planned to start free yoga classes for its residents. You are Sharmila Mehrotra, the President of RWA. Draft a notice informing residents about the proposal, timing, venue and other details.

4. Attempt ANY ONE of the following in about 120-150 words:

(a) You are Pratiksha/Prakhar, 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, Daily News 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 ideas.

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

OR

(b) The RWA of your colony organized a garbage disposal scheme at a nominal payment. Residents were requested to separate the garbage before placing it for pickup. However, the residents continue to remain indifferent. As a concerned resident, write a letter to the editor of your neighbourhood newsletter sharing your concern. You may use the given cues along with your ideas to compose the letter. You are Namita/Naman.

- garbage disposal a civic responsibility
- ensure cleanliness in surroundings
- segregate garbage
- make community compost pits
- spread awareness of green practices
- educate residents about the importance of separating recyclables, biodegradable waste and non-recyclables.

SECTION – C (LITERATURE) 48 Marks

5. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow:

(1x6=6)

*If we were not single-minded
about keeping our lives moving,
and for once could do nothing,
perhaps a huge silence
might interrupt this sadness
of never understanding ourselves with death.*

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.

- i. Complete the following suitably.

The poet uses the expression 'single minded' to refer to _____.

- ii. Why does the poet refer to silence as a welcoming interruption?

- iii. Read the Assertion and the Reason below, with reference to the given extract.

Assertion: The poet personifies Earth as a teacher.

Reason : We learn from the Earth that pausing doesn't mean the end.

Choose the correct option regarding their relationship.

- a. Both the Assertion and Reason are true, and the Reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion.
- b. Both the Assertion and Reason are true, but the Reason is not the correct explanation of the Assertion.
- c. The Assertion is true, but the Reason is false.
- d. The Assertion is false, but the Reason is true.
- iv. Complete the following suitably.
- By the expression "keeping our lives moving" the poet refers to _____.
- v. Choose the correct option:
- The intention of the poet in the above extract is
- a. To make us aware of the importance of Earth.
- b. To criticize our single mindedness.
- c. To highlight the reason for our sadness.
- d. To highlight the importance of sustaining peace and silence.
- vi. What is the significance of the last line of the extract 'you keep quiet and I will go'?

6. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow:

(1x6=6)

*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 ...*

- i. What was the poet's childhood fear?
- ii. What do the poet's parting words, "See you soon, Amma," signify?
- iii. What does the comparison of the mother to a "late winter's moon" most likely suggest?
- a. Her serene and calm demeanor
- b. The brightness of her spirit
- c. Her physical and emotional vitality
- d. Her aging, frailty, and lifeless appearance
- iv. The poet's outward reaction contrasts with her inner feelings, showing a conflict between _____ and _____.

Read the Assertion and the Reason below, with reference to the given extract.

Assertion (A): The poet compares her mother's face to a "late winter's moon" to highlight her beauty and serenity.

Reason (R): The "late winter's moon" symbolizes aging, dullness, and the fading vitality of the mother.

Choose the correct option regarding their relationship.

- 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. A is true, but R is false.

vi. Which poetic device is used in the line "as a late winter's moon" and what effect does it create?

- a. **Metaphor** – to directly equate the mother's face with the moon, showing her timeless beauty
- b. **Simile** – to compare the mother's pale face to the faint, lifeless appearance of the moon in late winter
- c. **Personification** – to give human qualities to the moon as a symbol of the mother
- d. **Alliteration** – to emphasize the repetition of the 'w' sound for musical quality

7. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow:

(1x6=6)

My last French lesson! Why, I hardly knew how to write! I should never learn any more! I must stop there, then! Oh, how sorry I was for not learning my lessons, for seeking birds' eggs, or going sliding on the Saar! My books, that had seemed such a nuisance a while ago, so heavy to carry, my grammar, and my history of the saints, were old friends now that I couldn't give up. And M. Hamel, too; the idea that he was going away, that I should never see him again, made me forget all about his ruler and how cranky he was. Poor man! It was in honour of this last lesson that he had put on his fine Sunday clothes, and now I understood why the old men of the village were sitting there in the back of the room. It was because they were sorry, too, that they had not gone to school more. It was their way of thanking our master for his forty years of faithful service and of showing their respect for the country that was theirs no more.

i. Choose the correct option:

What is the tone of the speaker in the expression 'I hardly knew how to write how sorry I was for not learning my lessons'?

- a. Confused
- b. Regretful
- c. Surprised
- d. Happy

ii. Choose the correct option:

The speaker refers to 'seeking birds' egg' and 'sliding on the Saar' as

- a. part of his routine
- b. his daily routine
- c. source of distraction from learning
- d. fun time with friends

iii. What is reflected through the shift in the speaker's perception of his books through his expression of calling them his 'old friends' rather than considering them as 'nuisance'?

- iv. Select the correct option from those given in brackets to fill in the blank:
 "It was because they were sorry too..."
 They were sorry for _____ (not following the government order/not learning their language)
- v. What is inferred from the expression 'the country that was theirs no more'?
- vi. What does M. Hamel's ruler reflect about his image?

8. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow:

(1x6=6)

I turned toward the ticket windows knowing that here on the third level at Grand Central I could buy tickets that would take Louisa and me anywhere in the United States we wanted to go. In the year 1894. And I wanted two tickets to Galesburg, Illinois. 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 evenings were twice as long, and people sat 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 twenty years off, and World War II over forty years in the future... I wanted two tickets for that.

- i. The narrator's yearning for Galesburg in 1894 reflects a profound sense of _____, rooted in his desire to flee the complexities and traumas of the present world.
- Cynicism
 - Nostalgia
 - Rebellion
 - Ambition
- ii. What is the most accurate meaning of "idealized" as used to describe the narrator's view of Galesburg in 1894?
- Based on firsthand knowledge of the town's exact history
 - Perceived as perfect or better than reality
 - Imagined to be more urbanized and advanced
 - Considered a dangerous or unfamiliar location
- iii. Analyze how the narrator's imagined version of Galesburg functions as both a literal and metaphorical refuge. What does this reveal about his psychological state and his perception of time?
- iv. Which of the following best captures the **tone** of the narrator's description of Galesburg?
- Detached and clinical
 - Anxious and uncertain
 - Warm and wistful
 - Cold and disapproving
- v. Choose the correct option to complete the analogy.
 Galesburg in 1894 : Emotional Security :: The World Wars : _____?
- Rational order
 - Historical inevitability
 - Psychological chaos
 - Political growth
- vi. What does the narrator's description of "summer evenings...twice as long" and people "waving palm-leaf fans" most likely imply?

(5x2=10)

9. Answer the following questions in about 40-50 words.

- 'What I want should not be confused'. What clarification does Pablo Neruda give to his readers?
- How did Franz plan to turn the commotion in the classroom to his favour?
- How is Mukesh's attitude of life different from that of life different from that of his family and friends?
- 'See you soon, Amma'. How are these words contrary to the speaker's emotions?
- "Garbage to them is gold." Analyze this metaphor from the story 'Lost Spring'. How does it reflect the socio-economic irony of the children's lives in Seemapuri?

(2x2=4)

10. Answer the following questions in about 40-50 words.

- "The modern world is full of insecurity, fear, war, worry — and all the rest of it." Analyze how this statement by the narrator serves as a foundation for the theme of **escapism** in *The Third Level*. How does Jack Finney use the idea of time travel, the third level, and the narrator's interactions to explore the human need to escape reality?
- 'My three hundred dollars bought less than two hundred in old style bills, but I didn't care.' What prompted Charley to compromise on less value of money?

(1x5=5)

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

- In "The Last Lesson," the imposition of the German language symbolizes the loss of cultural identity. Analyze how M. Hamel's final lesson serves as an act of resistance against cultural domination. Discuss the role of language in preserving identity and the impact of its loss on the community.
- "Survival is the first step, but hope is the beginning of change." Based on your reading of "Lost Spring," examine how Saheb and Mukesh represent two different responses to poverty. What does this suggest about the power of hope and the human spirit?

(1x5=5)

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

- Both Charley in "The Third Level" and the speaker in "Keeping Quiet" are searching for peace amidst chaos—one through imagined time travel, the other through mindful silence. How do these two texts explore the theme of escape from modern anxieties? Evaluate how their approaches differ and what they reveal about human nature.
- In "The Third Level" by Jack Finney, the protagonist Charley believes he has found a third level at Grand Central Station, which turns out to be a gateway to the year 1894. How does this story explore the theme of escapism and the human tendency to seek refuge in the past during times of stress? Use textual evidence and personal insight to support your response.