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INDIAN SCHOOL SALALAH
FIRST TERM EXAMINATION – SEPTEMBER 2026



ENGLISH (301)

Class: XII

DATE: 10/09/2026

Time :3Hours

Maximum 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. Adhere to the prescribed word limit while answering the questions

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (22 Marks)

1. Read the following passages.

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- 1) Travel, they say, broadens the mind, but who exactly are ‘they’? These mysterious sages seem to know a thing or two about the transformative power of packing a suitcase and jetting off to distant lands. As Mark Twain wisely put it, “Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness.” Indeed, leaving behind your familiar surroundings and completely involving yourself in a new culture is like enrolling in a crash course in the School of Life.
- 2) Take, for instance, the confusing world of foreign languages. You might think you know how to navigate a city because you can book a hotel and call a taxi, but try finding your way through a maze of winding streets in an old European town. Suddenly, “Where is the train station?” seems sadly not enough. It’s a humbling experience, much like realizing that ‘piazza’ is Italian for ‘square’ and not a type of pizza. But therein lies the beauty: each navigational blunder is a lesson, each wrong turn a new entry in your personal map of life.

- 3) Then there are the historical landmarks. Visiting the Colosseum isn't just a chance to take an Instagram-worthy selfie; it's a real-life history lesson that textbooks can only dream of. As you stand in the shadow of this ancient arena, you might find yourself daydreaming about gladiators and emperors, only to be jolted back to reality by a selfie stick to the face. Travel has a way of making history real, even if it sometimes includes the odd bruise.
- 4) Moreover, travel teaches resilience and adaptability. Missed flights, lost luggage, and questionable hotel rooms can turn even the most meticulously planned vacation into a comedy of errors. Yet, these are the moments that foster growth and creativity. Who knew you could fashion a comb out of a hotel toothbrush and a bit of resourcefulness.
- 5) Travel is a passport to a world of knowledge, where every stamp tells a story and every journey is a chapter in the grand, unfinished novel of your life. So, next time you find yourself lost in a foreign city, remember: you're not just a tourist; you're a student of the world, and the curriculum is as vast as your curiosity.

Answer the following questions, based on the above passage:

- i. According to Mark Twain, how does travel influence people? 1
- ii. How does the author use the metaphor of 'crash course in the School of Life' to interpret the value of travel? 1
- iii. The comparison of 'navigational blunder' to a 'lesson', in the context of travel, primarily highlights: 1
 - A. the inevitability of getting lost while travelling.
 - B. the educational value of travel experiences.
 - C. the frustration of not knowing a foreign language.
 - D. the importance of planning every detail of a trip.
- iv. Provide one textual evidence with reference to paragraph (4) to prove that travel promotes creativity. 1
- v. The significance of historical landmarks in the context of travel, according to the passage, is _____. 1
- vi. Give two instances of the author's resilience and adaptability during his travels. 2
- vii. Complete the analogy with one word from paragraph (4) 1

fragility : weakness : : ____ : strength

A. Adaptability . B) ingenuity C)resilience D)creativity
- viii. How does the following statement define a traveller? (paragraph (5)) 1

‘You’re not just a tourist; you’re a student of the world, and the curriculum is as vast as your curiosity.’

ix. Reflect on the author’s perspective on travel as an educational journey. How does this viewpoint of the author challenge conventional forms of education? 2

x. Complete the sentence suitably: 1

The author refers to travel as a passport to the world of knowledge because _____.

2. Read the following passage carefully 10

- 1) A recent study conducted across two age groups—students aged 10–12 and 13–16—explored their preferences for ballpoint and micro-tip pens for various writing activities such as note-taking, examinations, and personal writing. The study aimed to understand trends in writing habits and the factors influencing pen selection among students.
- 2) The results revealed distinct patterns based on age groups and writing purposes. Among students aged 10–12, 65% preferred ballpoint pens for note-taking, citing ease of use and affordability as key factors. However, 35% opted for micro-tip pens, valuing their precision and smooth writing. For examinations, ballpoint pens were the overwhelming choice, with 78% favouring them for their speed and reliability, while 22% stuck with micro-tip pens, appreciating their fine control.
- 3) In the 13–16 age group, preferences shifted slightly. For note-taking, 60% favoured microtip pens, highlighting their ability to produce neat, legible notes, while 40% continued to use ballpoint pens. During examinations, however, 70% still relied on ballpoint pens, indicating their consistency under time constraints. When it came to personal writing, such as journalling or creative tasks, 58% in this group chose micro-tip pens, appreciating the aesthetic appeal of finer lines, while 42% stuck with ballpoint pens for their convenience.
- 4) These findings point to the importance of understanding age-specific preferences and task requirements, enabling manufacturers to innovate products. Manufacturers could further explore incorporating hybrid features, such as pens offering the speed of ballpoint pens with the precision of micro-tip pens, to cater to a wider range of student preferences.

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above:

- a) Why did the study most likely focus on the two specific age groups of 10–12 and 13–16? (Paragraph 1) This is so because these age groups _____ 1

- A. represent the largest population of growing students.
 - B. are when students develop and refine their writing habits.
 - C. were the easiest to survey across various schools.
 - D. have a natural preference for ballpoint pens.
- b) Identify the phrase in paragraph 1 that conveys the writer's reference to the patterns or preferences observed in how students use pens for various writing tasks 1
- c) Complete the following by selecting the correct option from those given in the brackets. (Paragraph 2) 1
- Geetha, aged 11, wishes to complete her practical file neatly, ensuring her work is legible and appealing. She is most likely to choose a micro-tip pen for this task because the _____ (speed / precision) offered by this type of pen helps produce tidy work.
- d) Complete the following with the correct option. When the writer says 'distinct patterns' in the line 'The results revealed distinct patterns based on age groups and writing purposes,' of paragraph 3, s/he means that _____ 1
- A. students in both age groups use pens in the same way for all the listed purposes
 - B. the preferences for pens varied according to the students' age and the type of writing task.
 - C. only micro-tip pens were popular across all writing tasks in the 13-16 age group
 - D. students of all age groups preferred ballpoint pens for completing creative writing tasks
- e) Elaborate how hybrid features in pens would lead to a commercially viable product. 2
- f) Fill in the blank with ONE suitable word. (Paragraph 4) 1
- Understanding age-specific preferences helps manufacturers design products that cater to the unique needs of different age groups, ensuring their products are both _____ as well as appealing.
- g) Complete the following appropriately 1
- The one likely reason why more than 40% of students still chose ballpoint pens for creative tasks, even though micro-tip pens are better suited for such activities is _____.

- h) How do examination conditions influence students' choice of writing instruments?

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SECTION B CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (18 marks)

3. Attempt any ONE of the two in about 50 words 1x4=4

a) You are the sports captain of Greenleaf Public School, Vayunagar. Write a notice informing the students about a summer camp being organized by the school for training in Swimming and Tennis. Provide all necessary details. Do not forget to put your notice in a box.

OR

b) Your school is organizing a two-day National Integration Camp at Zenith International School, Khushipur. There will be art, music, song and dance competitions. As Cultural In-charge, draft a notice giving details and inviting participation from students of classes IX – XII. Do not forget to draw the border lines/box.

4. Attempt any ONE of the two in about 50 words 1x4=4

a) You have been invited to your friend's birthday party. Since you are going to Jaipur on a school trip, respond to the invitation expressing your regret.

OR

b) You are David/Disha, the Secretary of the English Literary and Cultural Society of St. Joseph's Academy, Agra. You have to organize an Inter-zonal extempore competition at the +2 level. You wish to invite Dr. Hansa Bhogle, an eminent educationist, to preside over the function to be held on 15 October at 9:30 a.m. at Govt. Model Sr. Sec. School, Agra. Draft an invitation in about 50 words requesting her to come and grace the occasion.

5. Attempt any ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in 120 – 150 words. 1x5=5

a) Child labour remains a pressing issue in India, despite numerous legal frameworks and initiatives to combat it. As a concerned citizen, write a letter to the editor of a national daily highlighting the socio-economic, cultural, and political factors that contribute to this issue. Explore the roles of both government and society in eradicating this problem. You may use some of the given cues along with your own ideas to draft the letter. You are Julia/John of 14, Old Street, New Town.

- Economic conditions and inadequate access to education

- Exploitation by industries
- Cultural norms and traditions
- Impact on child development : physical, emotional and psychological Solutions: at the level of government and society

OR

- b) You are Ashna/Anshul Chauhan of Block B/II, Geet Apartments, Suryapur. Write a job application along with your bio-data, in response to the following advertisement that you came across in a newspaper.

ARCADE ARCHITECTS Requires • Creative and detail-oriented Junior Architect to assist in designing residential and commercial buildings • Candidate must have a Bachelor's degree in Architecture • 1 – 3 years relevant experience • Proficiency in CAD software • Experience in project design, drafting and site supervision • A passion for innovative design and sustainable architecture is a must Apply within 15 days to : hr_manager@buildwell.com
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6. Attempt any ONE of the two, (a) or (b), in 120 – 150 words. 1x5=5

- a) Deepak/Deepa has been involved as a student volunteer in the 'Adult Literacy Drive' and has been working in the slums for the last six months. He/ She has to write an article in about 120-150 words on the 'Need for a Literate Nation'.

OR

- b) You recently attended a seminar on "Tiger Reserve: Economic and Environmental Win - Win" at India International Centre, New Delhi. Write a report on the same in about 120-150 words for your school magazine. You are Rohan Pandey, Secretary, Cultural Club, Doon School, Dehradun.

SECTION C (40 marks)

Literature

7. Read the following extracts and answer the questions for any ONE of the given two,
(a) or (b)

1x6=6

- a) Fishermen in the cold sea
would not harm whales
and the man gathering salt
would look at his hurt hands.
Those who prepare green wars,
wars with gas, wars with fire,
victory with no survivors
would put on clean clothes
and walk about with their
brothers
in the shade, doing nothing.

(Keeping Quiet)

- i. Choose the correct option from those given below to complete the following sentence: 1
The image of the fishermen here represents:
A. the entire human population.
B. people of the fishing community.
C. the big corporations that pollute the seas.
D. the indiscriminate exploitation of resources by human beings.
- ii. What will be the outcome when fishermen stop harming whales? 1
- iii. What do the 'hurt hands' of the man gathering salt symbolize? 1
A. Salt gathering is a very hazardous activity.
B. Workers of the salt-mining industry are exploited by their masters.
C. Exploitation of nature will eventually harm humans too.
D. Humans are unconscious of their actions
- iv. Complete the following sentence suitably: 1
According to the poet, fishermen will not harm whales only when _____.
- v. Select the correct option from those given in the brackets, to fill in the blank. 1
The excerpt tells us that humans need _____ (introspection/discussion) to understand the consequences of their actions.

- vi. The poetic device used in 'hurt hands' is the same as the one used in which of the following options? 1

- A. The tree groaned under the weight of its fruit.
- B. The red apples looked beautiful in the blue bowl.
- C. He pledged to climb mountains to reach his goal.
- D. The building collapsed like a house of cards.

OR

- b) When Aunt is dead, her terrified hands will lie

Still ringed with ordeals she was mastered by.

The tigers in the panel that she made

Will go on prancing, proud and unafraid

(Aunt Jennifer's Tigers)

- i. What does the phrase 'terrified hands' suggest about Aunt's life? 1
- ii. Complete the following suitably 1
The tigers' proud and playful movements reflect _____.
iii. Examine briefly how the tigers in the panel contrast with Aunt's life experiences. 1
- iv. Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in the brackets. 1
The phrase 'still ringed' refers to both the literal _____ (shape of the embroidery panel / wedding band on her finger) and the figurative 'ring' of constraints and ordeals imposed by her marriage.
- v. If a student were to interpret the word 'prancing' in a real-world context, which of the following would it best represent? 1
 - A. An employee working under the pressure of deadlines.
 - B. A soldier standing firm and ready for battle at the frontier.
 - C. A child playing freely in a park, unburdened by responsibilities.
 - D. A bird trapped in a cage, longing to be free and fly high.
- vi. What does the poet imply about the art in the line 'The tigers in the panel that she made will go on prancing'? 1
 - A. Art is a timeless expression that outlives its creator, continuing to embody their spirit and desires.
 - B. The tigers symbolise Aunt Jennifer's fleeting empowerment, which will fade over time.

- C. The panel is a temporary escape for Aunt Jennifer, offering solace only during her lifetime.
- D. The permanence of the tigers in the panel contrasts with the transient nature of Aunt Jennifer's struggles.

8. Read the following extracts and answer the questions for any ONE of the given two, (a) or (b) 1x4=4

a) MR LAMB: I'm not fond of curtains. Shutting things out, shutting things in. I like the light and the darkness, and the windows open, to hear the wind.

DERRY: Yes. I like that. When it's raining, I like to hear it on the roof.

MR LAMB: So you're not lost, are you? Not altogether? You do hear things. You listen.

(On The Face Of It)

- i. What facets of Mr. Lamb's nature are brought out in the above lines? 1
1. Openness
 2. Appreciative
 3. Reclusive
 4. Hostility
 5. Positivity
 6. Shyness
 7. Cautious

Choose the correct option:

- A. 1, 2, 5
- B. 2, 4, 7
- C. 3, 5, 6
- D. 1, 3, 7

- ii. "So you're not lost, are you?" What Mr. Lamb is saying to Derry in this line is that: 1
- A. he has followed his mother's instructions carefully.
 - B. he has the ability to hear the sounds around him.
 - C. he has the ability to reflect on and appreciate nature.
 - D. he has come to the right place.

- iii. Choose the correct option to complete the following statement. 1
- Derry's feelings in this extract move from:
- (A) bitterness → reluctance → friendliness

(B) shyness → reluctance → disappointment

(C) curiosity → nostalgia → disappointment

(D) curiosity → openness → eloquence

- iv. When he says, “I like the light and the darkness”, the message that Mr. Lamb is conveying to Derry is _____ 1

OR

- b. My three hundred dollars bought less than two hundred in old-style bills, but I didn't care; eggs were thirteen cents a dozen in 1894. But I've never again found the corridor that leads to the third level at Grand Central Station, although I've tried often enough. Louisa was pretty worried when I told her all this, and didn't want me to look for the third level any more, and after a while I stopped; I went back to my stamps. But now we're both looking, every weekend...

(The Third Level)

- i. What does Charley's indifference to the cost of old-style bills and his focus on the price of eggs in 1894 suggest about his view of the past? 1
- ii. Complete the sentence suitably: 1
Charley has been unsuccessful in finding the corridor to the third level despite ____.
- iii. Where is the irony in Louisa's reaction to Charley's search for the third level in this extract? 1
- iv. Complete the following with a correct option based on the context in the extract. 1
The phrase 'I went back to my stamps' suggests ____.
- A) finding comfort in a hobby that is familiar
B) choosing a new hobby to forget earlier pursuits
C) attempting to engage together in a new hobby
D) approaching a familiar hobby with enthusiasm

9. Read the following extracts and answer the questions for any ONE of the given two, (a) or (b) 1x6=6

- a. While every other member of the Department wore a kind of uniform — khadi dhoti with a slightly oversized and clumsily tailored white khadi shirt — the legal adviser wore pants and a tie and sometimes a coat that looked like a coat of mail. Often he looked alone and helpless — a man of cold logic in a crowd of dreamers — a neutral man in an assembly of Gandhiites and khadiites. Like so many of those who were close to The Boss, he was allowed to produce a film and though a lot of raw stock and pancake were used on it, not much came of the film. Then one day The Boss closed

down the Story Department and this was perhaps the only instance in all human history where a lawyer lost his job because the poets were asked to go home.

(Poets and Pancakes)

- i. The legal adviser stood out among the others of the Story Department because of his _____ (Western/Indian) attire. 1
- ii. Other members of the Story Department wore 'a kind of uniform' because: 1
 - (A) they were influenced by Gandhi's ideals.
 - (B) they also participated in the freedom movement.
 - (C) it was comfortable attire for the summer months.
 - (D) the Studio bosses insisted on it.
- iii. Which of the following statements is not true about the legal adviser? 1
 - (A) He had an interest in film-making.
 - (B) He was a down-to-earth and practical person.
 - (C) He was on friendly terms with everyone at Gemini Studios.
 - (D) He did not have a herd mentality.
- iv. Why were the members of the Story Department called 'a crowd of dreamers'? 1
- v. Choose the correct option to complete the following sentence. 1

The lawyer lost his job because _____.

 - (A) The Boss was unhappy that the film he had produced had not done well.
 - (B) The Story Department, of which he was a part, was discontinued.
- vi. The word 'pancake' has been used in the extract in the same context, as which of the following sentences: 1
 - (A) She flipped the pancake perfectly, golden brown and ready to eat.
 - (B) After the storm, the tent was pancaked under the weight of the fallen tree.
 - (C) She applied a thick layer of pancake makeup for the stage performance.
 - (D) The cyclist pancaked onto the pavement after losing his balance.

OR

- b. She said this in such a friendly manner that the rattrap peddler must have felt confidence in her. 'It would never have occurred to me that you would bother with me yourself, miss,' he said. 'I will come at once.' He accepted the fur coat, which the valet handed him with a deep bow, threw it over his rags, and followed the young lady out to the carriage, without granting the astonished blacksmiths so much as a glance. But while he was riding up to the manor house he had evil forebodings. "Why the devil did I take

that fellow's money?" he thought. "Now I am sitting in the trap and will never get out of it."

(The Rattrap)

- i. Which of the following best reflect the 'friendly manner' Edla exhibits toward the rattrap peddler as referred to in the extract? 1
1. Pay a compliment
 2. Show kindness
 3. Provide financial support
 4. Be respectful
 5. Speak in an excited tone
- Select the most suitable option.
- A. 1 and 5
 - B. 2 and 4
 - C. 1, 2 and 3
 - D. 3, 4 and 5
- ii. Fill in the blank with a correct option from those given in the brackets, based on the information in the extract. 1
- The peddler threw the fur coat over his rags and followed Edla out to the carriage, _____ (enthusiastically / silently / reluctantly).
- iii. How did the peddler feel toward Edla after accepting the fur coat and making his statement? 1
- A. He decided to humour her gesture.
 - B. He felt obligated to trust her kindness.
 - C. He remained unsure about her true intentions.
 - D. He recognised and appreciated her compassion.
- iv. What might have been the most likely reason the blacksmiths were astonished when the peddler accepted the coat and left with Edla? 1
- v. Justify that guilt was the primary cause of the peddler's sense of evil foreboding, based on the information in the extract? 1
- vi. Complete the following suitably. 1
- When the peddler says, "...I will never get out," his statement stems from his guilt over stealing 'that fellow's' money and his fear that _____

10. Answer any FIVE of the following six questions in 40 – 50 words each:

5x2=10

- i. Who did M. Hamel blame for the neglect of learning on the part of boys like Franz? (The Last Lesson)
- ii. What contrast do you notice between the colours of the bangles and the atmosphere of the place where these bangles are made? (Lost Spring)
- iii. Discuss any two symbols from the poem 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers'.
- iv. How does the experience at Warm Lake contrast with the earlier incident at the YMCA pool, and what does this contrast suggest about the narrator's growth? (Deep Water)
- v. Based on what Keats' suggests in 'A Thing of Beauty,' how can recognising the lasting value of beauty help someone in the real world cope with challenges or difficulties?
- vi. What was Kamala Das' fear as a child? Why does it surface when she is going to airport? (My Mother at Sixty-Six)

11. Answer any TWO of the following three questions in 40 – 50 words each: 2x2=4

- i. How does the author satirise the upbringing and education of crown princes of Indian states? (The Tiger King)
- ii. How can participating in educational programmes like 'Students on Ice', which take students to places like Antarctica, help raise awareness about the impact of geological changes and environmental issues? (Journey to the End of the Earth)
- iii. What was the dilemma that Dr. Sadao faced? (The Enemy)

12. Answer any ONE of the following two questions in 120 – 150 words: 1x5=5

- a. In the poems 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' by Adrienne Rich and 'A Thing of Beauty' by John Keats, how do the themes of beauty and art function as mechanisms for coping with pain and suffering? Discuss how each poet uses imagery and symbolism to convey the power of art and beauty in transcending life's hardships.

OR

- b. In the stories 'The Rattrap' by Selma Lagerlöf and 'Indigo' by Louis Fischer, both the rattrap peddler and Rajkumar Shukla face significant struggles. Compare and contrast their approaches to handling these challenges. How do their differing circumstances and decisions reflect their character and the broader social context?

13. Answer any ONE of the following two questions in 120 – 150 words: 1x5=5

- a. 'Flattery is eating into roots of our society and polity.' The Tiger King or the Maharaja pursue the same. Discuss with reference to the lesson The Tiger King.

OR

- b. Discuss the qualities of Mr. Lamb which made him overlook the deformity of Derry. (On The Face of It)
