

General Instructions:

1. This question paper has 11 questions. All questions are compulsory.
 2. This paper is divided into three sections:
Section A – Reading Skills, Section B – Writing Skills and Grammar, Section C – Language through Literature.
 3. Attempt questions as per the specific instructions for each part.
 4. Marks are indicated against each question in square brackets.
-

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (20 Marks)

1. Read the following passage. [10]

Rethinking the School Tiffin: A Shift Toward Mindful Eating

1. For decades, the school tiffin box has been treated mainly as a logistical problem — something to be packed quickly each morning, often repeating the same two or three convenient options throughout the week. In recent years, however, a growing number of parents, schools and nutritionists have begun to see the tiffin box differently: not merely as a container of food, but as one of the earliest tools through which children learn about mindful eating.
2. Mindful eating, at its simplest, means paying attention to what and how much one eats, rather than eating on autopilot while distracted by screens or rushed conversations. Applied to the school tiffin, this idea encourages parents to think beyond convenience alone, favouring a mix of fresh, home-cooked items over heavily processed, packaged snacks that are quick to pack but offer little nutritional value.
3. Several schools have begun supporting this shift through simple, low-cost initiatives. Some have introduced 'no-processed-snack' days, where packaged chips and sugary drinks are gently discouraged in favour of fruits, sprouts or homemade snacks. Others have started short classroom sessions where students learn to read basic nutrition labels, helping them understand, even at a young age, the difference between genuinely nourishing food and cleverly marketed alternatives.
4. Interestingly, many of these changes have found unexpected support from students themselves. Once children understand why a particular food choice matters, whether it is better concentration during afternoon classes or fewer stomach aches, many begin to take a more active interest in what goes into their own tiffin box, sometimes even requesting specific home-cooked items instead of the usual packaged snack.
5. This is not to suggest that occasional treats or packaged snacks have no place in a child's diet; rigid restriction often backfires, leading children to crave the very foods they are denied. Instead, the more sustainable approach appears to be one of balance and gradual habit-building, where nutritious options form the base of most days, while occasional treats remain just that: occasional.
6. As schools continue to experiment with small changes around food, from redesigned canteen menus to short awareness sessions, the humble tiffin box may well become one of the most effective, everyday tools for teaching children lifelong habits around health, without a single formal lesson ever being taught in a classroom.

Created for academic usage / 400 words

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

- I. Why has the school tiffin box begun to be seen differently by parents and schools in recent years? (Paragraph 1) [1]
- II. According to paragraph 2, mindful eating primarily involves: [1]
 - A. eating quickly to save time before class
 - B. paying close attention to what and how much one eats
 - C. avoiding food altogether during school hours
 - D. eating only packaged, ready-made snacks
- III. Complete the following: Homemade, fresh tiffin items are generally considered more _____ (nutritious / convenient) than heavily processed snacks. (Paragraph 2) [1]
- IV. Select the option that is True regarding classroom sessions on nutrition labels, as per paragraph 3. [1]

- A. They are compulsory subjects assessed in examinations.
- B. They help students distinguish nourishing food from cleverly marketed alternatives.
- C. They completely replace the need for a tiffin box.
- D. They are conducted only for teachers.

V. Complete the analogy: rigid restriction : cravings :: gradual habit-building : _____ (Paragraph 5) [1]

- (a). sustainable balance
- (b). sudden rebellion

VI. Why do some students begin requesting home-cooked items over packaged snacks, according to paragraph 4? [2]

VII. What are the main ideas of paragraph 3 and paragraph 5? [1]

- i). Rigid restriction of treats always works best for children.
- ii). Schools have introduced small, low-cost initiatives to encourage better food choices.
- iii). A balanced approach with occasional treats is more sustainable than strict restriction.
- iv). Nutrition labels are too complicated for young students to understand.
- v). Packaged snacks should be banned from schools entirely.

Select the correct option.

- A. ii, iii
- B. i, iv
- C. v, ii
- D. iii, i

VIII. Why does the writer believe complete restriction of treats often 'backfires'? (Paragraph 5) [2]

2. Read the following passage. [10]

Survey: Preferred Revision Method Before Exams

1. A survey of 400 students preparing for their annual examinations examined their preferred methods of revision, comparing responses from Class 9 and Class 10 students. Participants were asked to choose between 'note-making and re-reading' and 'practising sample papers', along with their main reason for the choice.
2. Among Class 9 students, 55% preferred note-making and re-reading their textbooks, citing familiarity and comfort with the method, while 45% preferred practising sample papers, valuing the exposure to exam-style questions. Among Class 10 students, the preference shifted noticeably: 71% favoured practising sample papers, citing better time management and familiarity with the actual exam pattern, while only 29% continued to rely primarily on note-making and re-reading.
3. When asked about the biggest challenge faced during revision, 48% of Class 9 students cited difficulty staying focused for long periods, while 33% pointed to an overwhelming amount of material to cover. Among Class 10 students, 52% cited time pressure closer to the board exam as their biggest challenge, while 27% mentioned anxiety about unfamiliar question formats.
4. The survey suggests that as students move closer to board examinations, there is a clear shift toward practice-based revision methods, likely driven by increased awareness of exam patterns and the practical benefits of timed practice over passive reading.

Created for academic usage / 210 words

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

I. Why did the survey likely compare Class 9 and Class 10 students specifically? (Paragraph 1) This is so because these groups _____. [1]

- A. are both preparing for board examinations at the same level.
- B. represent students at different stages of exam familiarity and pressure.
- C. were the only classes willing to participate in the survey.
- D. always prefer the exact same revision method.

II. Identify the phrase in paragraph 1 that refers to the two revision approaches being compared. [1]

III. Complete the following: Simran, a Class 10 student who feels most confident after solving timed practice questions, most likely values _____ (familiarity / exam-style exposure) in her revision method. (Paragraph 2) [1]

IV. What does the writer mean by 'familiarity and comfort' while describing Class 9 students' preference in paragraph 2? [1]

V. Complete the following with the correct option. When the writer states there is a 'clear shift toward practice-based revision methods' in paragraph 4, s/he means that _____. [1]

- A. all students eventually stop reading their textbooks altogether.
- B. as board exams approach, more students prefer practising questions over passive reading.
- C. Class 9 students are unaware that board exams exist.
- D. practice-based methods are only useful for younger students.

VI. Complete the following appropriately. One likely reason why some Class 10 students still rely partly on note-making, despite the overall shift, is _____. (Paragraph 2) [1]

VII. How are 'time pressure' and 'anxiety about unfamiliar question formats' connected as challenges faced by Class 10 students? (Paragraph 3) [1]

VIII. Elaborate how teachers could use these survey findings to better support students preparing for board exams. (Paragraph 4) [2]

IX. Fill in the blank with ONE suitable word. (Paragraph 4) The shift toward practice-based revision appears to be driven by growing awareness of exam patterns and the benefits of timed _____. [1]

SECTION B: WRITING SKILLS AND GRAMMAR (20 Marks)

GRAMMAR (10 Marks)

3. Complete any ten of the following twelve tasks, as directed. [10x1=10]

I. Fill in the blank using the correct form of the word given in brackets, from a school circular: Parents are _____ (request) to submit the consent forms by Monday.

II. Identify the error and write the correction, from a debate script: 'Every one of the participants have prepared their arguments well.'

III. Fill in the blank with the correct form of the verb given in brackets: By next month, the annual sports meet _____ (conclude) successfully, according to the committee's plan.

IV. Read the statement: She said to me, 'I have already submitted my assignment.' Report it correctly: She told me that _____.

V. Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option to complete a notice about a school trip: Students must assemble _____ the main gate by 7 a.m. sharp.

- A. in
- B. at
- C. on
- D. by

VI. Report the following: 'Please do not run in the corridors,' the teacher said to the students. The teacher requested the students _____.

VII. Complete the given opinion by filling the blank with the correct option: The documentary on wildlife conservation left the audience _____ concerned about habitat loss.

- A. having felt
- B. feeling
- C. felt
- D. feels

VIII. The following sentence has an error. Identify the error and its correction: 'Each of the students were given a certificate of participation.'

- A. Each → All
- B. were → was
- C. given → giving
- D. certificate → certificates

IX. Report the following question: He said to her, 'Did you enjoy the school trip?'

X. Fill in the blank with the correct option from brackets: Given his consistent scores this term, he _____ (must / might) top the class this year.

XI. Fill in the blank to complete a sentence from a class monitor's notice: _____ student must carry their identity card during the examination.

- A. All
- B. Every
- C. Few
- D. Several

XII. Choose the correct option to fill the blank: There isn't _____ time left before the bell rings for the next period.

- A. much
- B. many
- C. few
- D. a few

WRITING SKILLS (10 Marks)

NOTE: All details presented in the writing questions are imaginary and created for assessment purposes only.

4A. You are Ishaan / Isha, Secretary of the Sports Club in your school. You feel that the school should start a new badminton club given the growing interest among students. Write a letter to the Principal, in about 120 words, requesting permission and basic equipment support to start the club. [5]

OR

4B. You are Ritika / Rehan, a resident of Lakeview Apartments. You have noticed that loudspeakers from a nearby banquet hall play loud music late into the night on weekends, disturbing residents. Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper, in about 120 words, highlighting the problem of noise pollution in residential areas and suggesting possible solutions. [5]

5A. Study the pie chart below, showing how 120 surveyed students spend their free time after school. [5]

Sports: 25% | Screen time (TV/mobile/gaming): 40% | Hobbies (art, music, reading): 20% | Household chores/family time: 15%

Analyse the data in a paragraph, commenting on what this distribution suggests about students' after-school habits and what changes, if any, might be beneficial. (100-120 words)

OR

5B. Two students, Naina and Aryan, are preparing for a group project on renewable energy. [5]

Naina: Prefers to divide the work early, sets clear individual deadlines, checks in with the group twice a week, and keeps a written record of progress.

Aryan: Prefers to wait until closer to the deadline to divide work, relies on verbal reminders, and does most of his research in the final few days.

Analyse the two approaches in a paragraph and comment on which is likely to result in a more successful group project, giving reasons. (100-120 words)

SECTION C: LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE (40 Marks)

Note: All extracts in this section are original compositions created for practice purposes and are not taken from any prescribed textbook.

6. Read the given extract and answer ANY ONE of the two options. [5]

A. Prose

"The old cobbler had mended shoes on the same corner for forty-one years, though the street around him had changed almost beyond recognition. Bright signboards now hung where small tea stalls once stood, and most passers-by walked quickly past his low wooden stool without a second glance. Yet every evening, without fail, at least one customer would sit down beside him, not always because their shoes needed mending, but because they wanted, if only for ten minutes, to hear him talk about the town as it used to be."

I. What does the description of the changing street suggest about the cobbler's surroundings? [1]

II. Select the option that best explains why customers continue to visit the cobbler. [1]

- a). They value the shoes he mends more than any other cobbler in town.
- b). They are drawn to his stories and connection to the town's past, not just his work.

III. What can be inferred about the cobbler's role in the community beyond mending shoes? [1]

IV. What does the phrase 'if only for ten minutes' suggest about how customers view their time with the cobbler? [2]

OR

B. Drama

TEACHER: (*looking at the cracked globe on her desk*) This old globe has travelled through more classrooms than I can count. Half the countries on it don't even exist anymore.

STUDENT: Then why do you still use it, Ma'am? We have digital maps now, much more accurate ones.

TEACHER: (*smiling*) Perhaps. But this globe was here when I was your age, sitting exactly where you are now, wondering about the same distant places. Some things are worth keeping, even when they are no longer perfectly accurate.

STUDENT: (*softly*) I suppose I understand that better than I thought I did.

I. What does the Teacher's opening remark about the globe reveal about her attitude toward it? [1]

II. Select the option that best explains the Student's initial argument. [1]

- a). The student values accuracy and modern tools over sentimental value.
- b). The student dislikes the subject of geography altogether.

III. What change do we notice in the Student's attitude by the end of the extract? [1]

IV. What does the Teacher's closing line suggest about the value of holding on to certain things despite their flaws? [2]

7. Read the given extract and answer ANY ONE of the two options. [5]

A. Poetry

"The kite does not resent the string / that holds it steady in the sky; / it climbs because the tension brings / the very lift that lets it fly."

I. What quality of the kite is highlighted in the first two lines? [1]

II. Select the option that best conveys the meaning of 'the tension brings the very lift that lets it fly'. [1]

- a). Restriction or structure can sometimes enable freedom rather than prevent it.
- b). The kite would fly higher without any string at all.

III. What does the word 'steady' suggest about the string's role? [1]

IV. What does the poem suggest, more broadly, about the relationship between limits and freedom? [2]

OR

B. Poetry

"Every autumn the old tree lets go / of leaves it spent all summer growing; / not in sorrow, but because it knows / spring depends on this letting go."

I. What does the tree 'letting go' of its leaves symbolise in this stanza? [1]

II. Select the option that best explains why the tree lets go 'not in sorrow'. [1]

- a). The tree understands that release is necessary for future renewal.
- b). The tree feels no connection to its leaves at all.

III. What season is associated with renewal in this stanza? [1]

IV. What broader idea about change or loss does the poem convey through the image of the tree? [2]

8. Answer ANY FOUR of the following five questions, in about 40-50 words each, from FIRST FLIGHT. [4x3=12]

I. How does the young seagull's initial fear and eventual success in flying, in 'Two Stories About Flying', reflect a broader idea about overcoming self-doubt? [3]

II. What does the poem 'A Tiger in the Zoo' suggest about the contrast between freedom in the wild and captivity? [3]

III. How does the chapter 'Glimpses of India' use descriptions of food and culture to celebrate regional diversity? [3]

IV. What message about tolerance and coexistence is conveyed through 'The Sermon at Benares'? [3]

V. How does the poem 'How to Tell Wild Animals' use humour to teach the reader about identifying different animals? [3]

9. Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions, in about 40-50 words each, from FOOTPRINTS WITHOUT FEET. [2x3=6]

I. How does the story 'The Midnight Visitor' use deception as a tool for justice rather than harm? [3]

II. What does Horace Danby's decision in 'A Question of Trust' reveal about the unpredictability of human choices? [3]

III. How does 'The Making of a Scientist' illustrate the role of curiosity and persistence in shaping Richard Ebright's future? [3]

10. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 100-120 words, from FIRST FLIGHT. [6]

A.. Discuss how empathy or compassion shapes the actions of any one character from the prose chapters studied in 'First Flight'.

OR

B.. Examine how any two poems studied in First Flight explore the relationship between humans and the natural world.

11. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 100-120 words, from FOOTPRINTS WITHOUT FEET. [6]

A.. Critically discuss how cleverness or wit is used to achieve justice in any two stories from 'Footprints without Feet'.

OR

B.. Discuss the theme of scientific curiosity or persistence as explored in any one story from 'Footprints without Feet'.

General Instructions: The value points below are suggested guidelines only and do not constitute the sole acceptable answer. Award marks for any correct alternative expression or reasoning.

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (20 Marks)

Q1. Rethinking the School Tiffin (10 Marks)

- I. Because it is now viewed as one of the earliest tools through which children can learn mindful eating, rather than merely a logistical packing problem. [1]
- II. B. paying close attention to what and how much one eats [1]
- III. nutritious [1]
- IV. B. They help students distinguish nourishing food from cleverly marketed alternatives. [1]
- V. (a) sustainable balance [1]
- VI. Once children understand the practical benefits, such as better concentration in class or fewer stomach aches, they take a more active interest in their own food choices and begin requesting healthier, home-cooked options themselves. [2]
- VII. A. ii, iii [Paragraph 3 describes schools' low-cost initiatives (ii); paragraph 5 highlights the value of balance over strict restriction (iii)] [1]
- VIII. Because rigid restriction often makes children crave the very foods they are denied, leading to the opposite of the intended effect, whereas balance and gradual habit-building are more likely to create lasting, healthy patterns. [2]

Q2. Survey: Preferred Revision Method Before Exams (10 Marks)

- I. B. represent students at different stages of exam familiarity and pressure. [Class 9 and Class 10 students face different levels of proximity to board exams, making their revision preferences worth comparing.] [1]
- II. 'note-making and re-reading' and 'practising sample papers' [1]
- III. exam-style exposure [1]
- IV. By 'familiarity and comfort', the writer means that Class 9 students feel more at ease with a method they already know well, even if it may not be the most exam-effective approach. [1]
- V. B. as board exams approach, more students prefer practising questions over passive reading. [1]
- VI. They may still find note-making genuinely helpful for building initial understanding of difficult topics, even while recognising the value of practice papers closer to the exam. [1]
- VII. Both challenges are linked to the pressure of the approaching board exam: time pressure builds as the exam nears, while unfamiliarity with question formats adds to student anxiety during this already stressful period. [1]
- VIII. Teachers could introduce timed sample paper practice earlier in the syllabus, rather than only close to the exam, helping students build familiarity with the format gradually and reduce last-minute time pressure and anxiety. [2]
- IX. practice [1]

SECTION B: WRITING SKILLS AND GRAMMAR (20 Marks)

Q3. Grammar (10 Marks) - any ten of twelve, 1 mark each

- I. requested [1]
- II. Error: have | Correction: has [1]
- III. will have concluded [1]
- IV. ...she had already submitted her assignment. [1]
- V. B. at [1]
- VI. ...not to run in the corridors. [1]
- VII. B. feeling [1]

VIII. B. were → was [1]

IX. He asked her if she had enjoyed the school trip. [1]

X. might [1]

XI. B. Every [1]

XII. A. much [1]

Q4-Q5. Writing Skills (10 Marks)

Marking break-up for each: Format - 1, Content - 2, Organisation of ideas - 1, Accuracy - 1 (Total 5 marks each)

Q4A (Letter to Principal): Should mention growing student interest in badminton, request permission to start the club, and ask for basic equipment or space support, in a clear formal letter format.

Q4B (Letter to the editor): Should describe the problem of loud music from the banquet hall disturbing residents late at night, stress its impact on daily life, and suggest solutions such as enforcing noise timing regulations.

Q5A (Analytical paragraph on pie chart): Should note that screen time (40%) takes up the largest share of free time, comment that this may come at the cost of physical activity and hobbies, and suggest a more balanced routine would likely support both health and personal development.

Q5B (Analytical paragraph comparing approaches): Should note that Naina's early division of work, clear deadlines and regular check-ins are likely to lead to a smoother, more successful project, while Aryan's last-minute approach risks incomplete research and rushed work closer to the deadline.

SECTION C: LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE (40 Marks)

Q6. Reference to Context (5 Marks) - answer for the option attempted

Option A (The old cobbler, prose extract)

I. It suggests the street has modernised rapidly, with new signboards replacing old tea stalls, leaving the cobbler somewhat out of place in his changed surroundings. [1]

II. b) They are drawn to his stories and connection to the town's past, not just his work. [1]

III. He serves as an informal keeper of the town's memory and history, offering a sense of connection to the past that customers value beyond his practical skill. [1]

IV. It suggests customers value even a brief, small amount of time with the cobbler, showing that his stories and company matter to them regardless of the short duration. [2]

OR Option B (The old globe, drama extract)

I. It reveals a sense of nostalgia and personal attachment, as she reflects on how long the globe has been part of the classroom. [1]

II. a) The student values accuracy and modern tools over sentimental value. [1]

III. The student moves from questioning the globe's usefulness to quietly appreciating why it is still kept, showing a shift toward understanding sentimental value. [1]

IV. It suggests that some things are worth preserving for their sentimental or historical value, even if they are no longer perfectly useful or accurate. [2]

Q7. Reference to Context - Poetry (5 Marks) - answer for the option attempted

Option A (The kite)

I. Its acceptance of the string's control, without resentment, as part of what allows it to fly. [1]

II. a) Restriction or structure can sometimes enable freedom rather than prevent it. [1]

III. It suggests the string provides consistent, reliable support that keeps the kite balanced in flight. [1]

IV. The poem suggests that limits or structure, rather than being purely restrictive, can sometimes be what makes genuine freedom or achievement possible. [2]

OR Option B (The old tree)

I. It symbolises necessary release or letting go as part of a natural cycle of renewal. [1]

II. a) The tree understands that release is necessary for future renewal. [1]

III. Spring. [1]

IV. The poem suggests that loss or change, though it may seem difficult, is often a necessary part of growth and renewal rather than something purely negative. [2]

Q8. First Flight - any four of five, 3 marks each (12 Marks)

I. The seagull's initial fear of flying, followed by his eventual success once he stops overthinking and trusts his instincts, reflects the broader idea that self-doubt can be overcome through action rather than continued hesitation. [3]

II. The poem highlights the contrast between the tiger's confined, restless existence in the zoo and the freedom and power it would naturally have in the wild, suggesting that captivity diminishes even the most powerful creatures. [3]

III. The chapter uses vivid descriptions of regional food, festivals and traditions across India to celebrate the country's rich cultural and geographical diversity. [3]

IV. The sermon conveys that suffering and loss are universal human experiences, encouraging tolerance, compassion and shared understanding rather than isolation in personal grief. [3]

V. The poem uses playful, exaggerated descriptions of animals to humorously teach readers how to identify and distinguish between different wild animals. [3]

Q9. Footprints without Feet - any two of three, 3 marks each (6 Marks)

I. The story shows deception being used cleverly by Ausable to protect Fowler and outwit Max, showing that misdirection can serve justice rather than cause harm when used with wit and good intention. [3]

II. Horace Danby's decision reveals that even a seemingly straightforward, habitual choice can be unpredictable when unexpected circumstances, such as Elizabeth's presence, force him to reconsider his actions. [3]

III. The story shows how Richard Ebright's persistent curiosity, from collecting butterflies as a child to serious scientific research, illustrates how sustained interest and effort shape a person's future achievements. [3]

Q10. First Flight - Long Answer (6 Marks) - answer for the option attempted

Option A: A strong response should identify a character who shows empathy or compassion toward another, describe the specific action or decision involved, and reflect on how this shapes the outcome of the story or the character's relationships.

OR Option B: A strong response should discuss two chosen poems and how each portrays the human relationship with nature, whether through admiration, exploitation or coexistence, comparing their central images and tone.

Q11. Footprints without Feet - Long Answer (6 Marks) - answer for the option attempted

Option A: A strong response should identify two stories where cleverness or wit helps achieve a fair or just outcome, explain the specific strategy used in each, and reflect on how intelligence is shown to be as powerful as force.

OR Option B: A strong response should discuss one story where scientific curiosity or persistence drives a character's success, tracing the character's journey and the qualities that sustain their effort over time.