



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR
ASSESSMENT 2 - (2025-26)
SUBJECT – ENGLISH
ANSWER KEY

Class: XI

Maximum Marks: 80

Date: 25 /11/2025

Time allowed: 3 Hours

General Instructions:

- (i) *This paper is divided into three sections:*

<i>Section A- Reading</i>	<i>26 marks</i>
<i>Section B- Grammar & Writing</i>	<i>23 marks</i>
<i>Section C- Literature</i>	<i>31 marks</i>
- (ii) *All questions are compulsory.*
- (iii) *Separate instructions are given with each section and question, wherever necessary. Read these instructions very carefully and follow them.*
- (iv) *Avoid using correction fluid.*

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (26 marks)

1. Read the following passage carefully.

1. In a rapidly changing world, the value of empathy has become more significant than ever before. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. It goes beyond sympathy, which merely acknowledges another person's pain; empathy allows one to experience and respond with compassion. In schools, workplaces, and communities, empathy acts as the foundation for cooperation, tolerance, and mutual respect.

2. Psychologists believe that empathy can be both innate and learned. Infants display the earliest signs of empathy when they cry in response to another baby's distress. However, as individuals grow, their surroundings, family behaviour, and education play vital roles in shaping this quality. Children who are encouraged to express emotions and listen to others tend to develop stronger empathetic skills. In contrast, environments that suppress emotions or prioritize competition over compassion may weaken a person's ability to empathize.

3. In the professional world, empathy has become an essential leadership skill. Studies show that leaders who exhibit empathy tend to inspire greater loyalty and productivity among team members. They listen actively, make fair decisions, and create inclusive environments where people feel valued. Such workplaces experience lower stress levels and higher job satisfaction. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations that prioritized emotional support and flexible policies saw higher employee morale compared to those focused solely on performance metrics.

4. Empathy also plays a major role in reducing social conflicts. When people take time to understand differing perspectives, misunderstandings are minimized. This is particularly crucial in multicultural societies, where respect for diversity ensures harmony. Social media, however, has made empathy both easier and harder to practice. While it connects people globally, it can

also encourage judgment and detachment due to lack of face-to-face interaction. Therefore, the challenge today is to balance digital communication with genuine emotional connection.

5. Cultivating empathy requires conscious effort. Reading literature, volunteering, and engaging in dialogue with people from diverse backgrounds are effective ways to enhance it. Empathy, if nurtured collectively, has the power to create a kinder, more understanding world — a world that values not just intelligence or success, but humanity itself.

6. Furthermore, empathy contributes to mental well-being by reducing stress, anxiety, and feelings of isolation. People who practice empathy regularly report greater emotional stability and stronger social bonds. Schools and workplaces that emphasize emotional education and peer support programs notice improved relationships and a more positive environment. In addition, exposure to real-life stories, cultural narratives, and shared experiences encourages individuals to reflect on their own behaviour and become more compassionate toward others. Experts suggest that integrating mindfulness exercises and reflective journaling into daily routines can further enhance empathetic skills.

On the basis of your understanding of the above passage, answer the questions given below: (1× 10 = 10 marks)

- i. According to the passage, empathy differs from sympathy because it —
 - a) only recognizes another's feelings
 - b) allows one to share another's feelings
 - c) ignores emotions
 - d) is purely instinctive→ **Answer:** b) allows one to share another's feelings
- ii. Which of the following is *not* a way to cultivate empathy?
 - a) Volunteering for social causes
 - b) Ignoring others' emotions
 - c) Reading literature
 - d) Interacting with diverse people→ **Answer:** b) Ignoring others' emotions
- iii. Psychologists believe that empathy can be both _____ and learned.
→ **Answer:** innate
- iv. What impact did empathetic leadership have during the pandemic?
 - a) Lowered employee morale
 - b) Increased absenteeism
 - c) Boosted morale and satisfaction
 - d) Created stress→ **Answer:** c) Boosted morale and satisfaction
- v. Organizations that showed empathy during the pandemic had better employee morale. (Write True/False)
→ **Answer:** True
- vi. The central idea of the passage is —
 - a) Empathy should be replaced by intelligence
 - b) Empathy is essential for harmonious living
 - c) Technology promotes empathy

- d) Empathy cannot be learned
 → **Answer:** b) Empathy is essential for harmonious living
- vii. **Assertion (A):** Empathy helps in building cooperation and tolerance.
Reason (R): It enables individuals to understand and respect others' emotions.
 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 true but R is false.
 d) A is false but R is true.
 → **Answer:** a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- viii. Find a word in the last paragraph that means “the state of being emotionally steady or balanced”. (1 mark)
 → **Answer:** Stability
- ix. According to the passage, what role does empathy play in workplaces?
(Answer in one sentence):
 Empathy helps leaders build loyalty, fairness, and inclusion, leading to higher job satisfaction and lower stress among employees.

2. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow: -

1. In recent years, online learning has transformed the way education is delivered and received. With advancements in technology, students can now attend classes, submit assignments, and even appear for exams virtually. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this trend, making digital platforms like Google Classroom, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams a regular part of academic life.

2. Online learning offers flexibility and accessibility, allowing students from different geographical areas to attend the same class. It eliminates the need for travel and provides opportunities for self-paced study. Moreover, recorded lectures and interactive quizzes have made the learning process more engaging and efficient. However, despite these advantages, online learning is not without its drawbacks. Many students report distractions at home, reduced peer interaction, and increased screen fatigue. Teachers, too, face challenges in maintaining classroom discipline and assessing student understanding effectively.

3. A survey conducted among 500 students from various schools and colleges revealed the following results:

Aspect of Online Learning	Positive Response (%)	Negative Response (%)
Flexibility in study schedule	85%	15%
Ease of understanding through videos	70%	30%
Interaction with teachers	40%	60%
Motivation to study regularly	45%	55%
Technical issues (internet/device)	35%	65%

4. The survey shows that while students appreciate the convenience of online classes, many struggles with maintaining motivation and consistent engagement. Educational institutions are

now adopting a hybrid model, combining online and offline teaching to achieve balance. Experts believe that the future of education will depend on how effectively schools can blend technology with traditional classroom values.

5. In addition, students' overall performance and satisfaction are influenced by their home environment and digital resources. The survey also revealed that 50% of students had a quiet study space at home, while 50% faced noise or other distractions. Similarly, only 60% of students reported having access to reliable devices and high-speed internet, while the remaining 40% faced connectivity challenges. These factors play a significant role in determining how well students can participate in online learning and complete their assignments on time. Schools are now providing additional support, such as lending devices and offering counselling sessions, to ensure all students can benefit equally from digital education.

On the basis of your understanding of the passage, answer the questions given below:

(1x 8 = 8 marks)

i. Which factor has made online learning more common in recent years?

- (a) New textbooks
 - (b) The pandemic
 - (c) Decrease in school fees
 - (d) Ban on classroom teaching
- (1 mark)

Answer: (b) The pandemic

ii. Name any two online platforms mentioned in the passage.

Answer: Google Classroom, Zoom, Microsoft Teams (any two)

iii. Most students found it easier to interact with teachers during online classes. (True/False)

Answer: False

iv. Fill in the blank: According to the survey, _____% of students faced technical issues during online learning.

Answer: According to the survey, **65%** of students faced technical issues during online learning.

v. List two major advantages of online learning mentioned in the passage.

Answer: 1. Flexibility and accessibility (flexible study schedule)

2. No need for travel / self-paced study / recorded lectures and interactive quizzes (any two)

vi. Find a word in the last paragraph that means "help or assistance provided to improve a situation". (1 mark)

Answer: *support*

- vii. What teaching approach are schools now adopting to balance online and offline learning?
- (a) Digital-only classes
 - (b) Hybrid learning model
 - (c) Weekend lectures
 - (d) Recorded lessons only
- (1 mark)

Answer: (b) Hybrid learning model

- viii. According to the passage, which factor contributes most to students' struggle in online learning?
- (a) Lack of study materials
 - (b) Long commutes
 - (c) Reduced motivation and peer interaction
 - (d) Limited use of technology
- (1 mark)

Answer: (c) Reduced motivation and peer interaction

3. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow: (8 marks)

1. In today's fast-paced world, maintaining mental health has become as important as physical fitness. Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act in daily life. A healthy mind enables better decision-making, stronger relationships, and increased productivity. Unfortunately, many people ignore their mental health until they face stress, anxiety, or burnout.

2. Several factors influence mental health, including lifestyle, environment, family relationships, and genetics. Lack of sleep, poor diet, and constant exposure to digital screens often increase stress levels. Experts suggest that maintaining a routine, exercising regularly, and taking breaks from social media can greatly improve mental balance. Mindfulness practices such as meditation, journaling, and deep breathing are also proven to reduce anxiety and enhance focus.

3. Workplaces today are increasingly promoting mental health awareness. Many companies now organize wellness sessions and provide counselling support to employees. Schools too are introducing mindfulness programs to help students manage academic pressure. Open conversations about mental health help reduce stigma and encourage people to seek help when needed.

4. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with normal life stresses, can work productively, and contributes to the community. Thus, mental health is not just the absence of illness but the presence of emotional resilience and inner stability. Nurturing mental well-being is essential for living a balanced, meaningful, and fulfilling life.

(a) On the basis of your reading of the above passage, make notes on it, using headings and subheadings. Use recognizable abbreviations (wherever necessary-minimum four) and a suitable format. Also supply an appropriate title to it. **(5 marks)**

(b) Write a summary of the passage in about 50 words. **(3 marks)**

Answer: 3

(a) NOTE MAKING Distribution of Marks Title:

1 mark Abbreviations / Symbols (with /without key) – any four:

1 mark Content (minimum 4 headings and sub-headings, with proper indentation and notes): 2marks If a student has attempted only summary or only notes, due credit should be given. 1 mark allotted for the title be given if a student has written the title. Content must be divided into heading and sub headings. Any title, main points and sub points may be accepted if they are indicative of the candidate’s understanding of the given passage, and the notes include the main points, with suitable and recognizable abbreviations. Complete sentences not to be accepted as notes. (In such cases ½ –1 mark may be deducted from marks awarded to content) Numbering of points may be indicated in different ways, as long as a consistent pattern is followed.

SECTION B –GRAMMAR AND CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS- (23 Marks).

4. Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate option: Attempt any THREE. (3 marks)

Aryan, a talented young artist, (a) _____ (force/forced/was forced/to force) to stop painting temporarily when his eyesight (b) _____ (fail/failing/failed/had failed) due to an accident last year. This (c) _____ (happen/happened/was happening/had happened) when he (d) _____ (go/went/had gone/will go) to a summer art camp in Jaipur.

Answer key:

- (a) was forced
- (b) failed
- (c) happened
- (d) had gone

5. Do as directed. Attempt any FOUR. **(4 marks)**

(i) Meena said to her brother, “Will you help me complete this project?” (Change into reported speech)

Answer: Meena asked her brother if he would help her complete that project.

(ii) Arjun said to the teacher, “I have finished my homework.” (Change into reported speech)

Answer: Arjun told the teacher that he had finished his homework.

(iii) Identify whether the underlined part is a Phrase or a Clause.
She went to the market because she needed vegetables.

Answer: Clause – it has a subject (*she*) and a verb (*needed*).

(iv) government / announced / new / to / reduce / pollution / measures / several/the (Rearrange the jumbled words into a meaningful sentence)

Answer: The government announced several new measures to reduce pollution.

(v) Identify whether the underlined part is a Phrase or a Clause.
Walking in the rain, he forgot his umbrella.

Answer: Phrase – it has a verb (*walking*) but no subject performing the action independently.

6. Attempt ANY ONE of the two in about 50 words: (4 marks)

Advertisements

A. FOR SALE

OR

B. TO LET

Format: 1 mark

Content :2 marks

Expression: grammatical accuracy, spellings: 1 mark

7. Attempt ANY ONE of the two in about 50 words: (4 marks)

Poster Writing

Title -1 mark

Content: 3 marks

name of issuing authority

reasons- remedial measures (if relevant)

Date, Time, Venue (if relevant) Any other relevant information

8. Attempt ANY ONE of the two in about 120-150 words: (8 marks)

Speech Writing

Format :1 mark

- topic introduction, addressing the audience

Content: 3 marks

– use hints, addressing the issue, current situation, reasons in favour or against, possible suggestions

Expression :1 mark

Grammatical accuracy, appropriate words and spelling [1½]
Coherence and relevance of ideas and style [1½]

9. Attempt ANY ONE of the two in about 120-150 words: (8 marks)

Debate Writing

Format :1 mark

- topic introduction, addressing the audience, mention for /against the motion

Content: 3 marks

– use hints, addressing the issue, current situation, reasons in favour or against, possible suggestions

Expression :1 mark

Grammatical accuracy, appropriate words and spelling [1½]

Coherence and relevance of ideas and style [1½]

SECTION C – LITERATURE (31 MARKS)

10. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two given: (3 x 1 = 3 marks)

A. “And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,
Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:
I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain,
Eternal I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea.”

i. Complete the sentence.

The rain is called the “Poem of Earth” because _____.

Answer: The rain is called the “Poem of the Earth” because it gives life, beauty and renewal to the planet.

ii. What does the phrase “Eternal I rise” signify?

Answer: The phrase “Eternal I rise” signifies the continuous and cyclic nature of rain — it evaporates, rises from land and sea, and returns again as rainfall, symbolizing renewal and immortality.

iii. Answer True or False.

The poem conveys that nature and humanity are interconnected.

Answer: True

OR

B. “Then with eerie, delicate whistle-chirrup whisperings,
She launches away, towards the infinite
And the laburnum subsides to empty.”

i. Answer True or False.

After the bird flies away, the laburnum tree remains lively and full of movement.

Answer: False

ii. Explain the phrase “towards the infinite” as used in the extract.

Answer: The phrase “towards the infinite” suggests the limitless freedom of the goldfinch as it flies high into the open sky, symbolizing liberation and the end of its brief visit.

iii. The expression “eerie, delicate whistle-chirrup whisperings” is an example of

- (a) Onomatopoeia
- (b) Simile
- (c) Metaphor
- (d) Synecdoche

Answer: (a) Onomatopoeia — the words imitate the actual sounds made by the bird, enhancing the auditory imagery of the scene.

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

(3 x 1 = 3 marks)

A. “When I reached the deck, I saw the damage — the starboard side was bashed open, water was pouring in. The hand pumps had been blocked with debris and the electric pump short-circuited. The entire boat was filled with water, and we were sinking fast.”

i. What was the immediate problem faced by the narrator and his crew?

Answer: The immediate problem was that the starboard side of the boat had been severely damaged, causing heavy flooding as water rushed in.

ii. The word “*starboard*” refers to which side of the ship?

- (a) left side
- (b) right side
- (c) front side
- (d) rear side

Answer: (ii) **Right side** — The term *starboard* refers to the right-hand side of a ship when facing forward.

iii. What do these lines reveal about the situation at sea?

- (a) It was calm and under control
- (b) The crew had given up hope
- (c) It was a critical and life-threatening emergency
- (d) They were near the shore

Answer: © **It was a critical and life-threatening emergency**

OR

B. *“She was like the winter landscape in the mountains, an expanse of pure white serenity breathing peace and contentment.”*

(a) Who is being described in the above lines?

Answer: *The author’s grandmother* is being described in these lines.

(b) Identify the figure of speech used in this description.

Answer: **Simile**

(c) What does ‘*pure white serenity*’ refer to in the context?

Answer: It refers to the grandmother’s calm, peaceful, and pure nature, symbolized by her white hair and clothes, reflecting her saintly and serene personality.

12. Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two given: (4 x 1 = 4 marks)

A. *“No doubt about it at all. Who’s the better for being spoilt; grown man, lad or girl? Nobody. You think it does them good when you run after them all the time, take their orders as if you were the servant in the house, stay at home every night while they go out enjoying themselves? Never in all your life. It’s the ruin of them as well as you. Husbands, sons, daughters should be taking notice of wives and mothers, not giving them orders and treating them like dirt. And don’t tell me you don’t know what I mean, for I know more than you’ve told me.”*

i. Answer True or False.

The tone of the speaker reinforces the message of non-assertiveness, indifference mixed with vengeance.

Answer: False

ii. How do the children of Mrs. Pearson treat her?

Answer: The children of Mrs. Pearson take her for granted and treat her selfishly, giving her orders and expecting her to serve them without appreciation, while they go out enjoying themselves.

iii. Complete the sentence.

The extract captures the play’s theme of _____.

Answer: The extract captures the play’s theme of self-respect, gender equality, and the need for mutual appreciation in families.

iv. Assertion (A): Mrs. Fitzgerald believes that Mrs. Pearson’s family members treat her poorly because she allows them to.

Reason (R): She feels that by being too submissive and running after them, Mrs. Pearson has encouraged their disrespectful behaviour.

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 true, but R is false.
- d) A is false, but R is true.

Answer: (i) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

OR

B. *“And one day I noticed I was curious about all the possessions that must still be at that address. I wanted to see them, touch, remember. After my first visit in vain to Mrs. Dorling’s house I decided to try a second time. Now a girl of about fifteen opened the door to me. I asked her if her mother was at home. ‘No’ she said, ‘my mother’s doing an errand. ‘No matter,’ I said, ‘I’ll wait for her.’”*

i. Assertion (A): The narrator felt an emotional connection with the possessions that once belonged to her family.

Reason (R): These possessions reminded her of her lost home and her life before the war.

- 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 true, but R is false.
- d) A is false, but R is true.

Answer: i. (a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

ii. Why did the narrator feel curious to visit Mrs. Dorling’s house? What memories did the address hold for her?

Answer: ii. The narrator was eager to revisit Mrs. Dorling’s house because the possessions there reminded her of her past life and family before the war. They symbolized her lost home and identity.

iii. Choose the correct meaning of **“vain”** as used in the extract:

- a) Successful or fruitful
- b) Without success or result
- c) Done with pride or self-love
- d) Done quickly or carelessly

Answer: iii. (ii) Without success or result

iv. The narrator wanted to see and touch her family’s belongings to relive her _____ and feel a sense of _____.

Answer: iv. past; belonging or connection

13. Answer ANY TWO of the following four questions in about 40-50 words:

(3 x 2 = 6 marks)

a. How did the relationship between the author and his grandmother change when they moved to the city?

Answer a.: In the village, the grandmother and the author were inseparable—she accompanied him to school and was involved in his daily life. In the city, he went to an English school by bus, studied subjects she didn't understand, and they spent less time together, creating an emotional distance between them.

b. What is the central idea of the poem *Childhood*?

Answer: b. The poem explores the moment when the poet feels he lost his childhood. It highlights the loss of innocence and the growth of rational thinking, as he realizes that heaven and hell are not real places and that adults are often hypocritical. It marks the transition from innocence to maturity.

c. What discovery about Tutankhamun surprised the archaeologists in *Discovering Tut*?

Answer: c. Modern CT scans and investigations showed that Tutankhamun was not a robust, powerful ruler as once imagined, but a young, frail boy with several health issues, possibly suffering from genetic problems. This challenged earlier beliefs and surprised archaeologists studying his life and death.

d. Explain how the photograph acts as a bridge between the poet's present and the past.

Answer: d. The photograph captures the poet's mother as a young girl, smiling with her cousins on the beach. Though the mother is now dead, the photograph preserves that happy moment. It allows the poet to reconnect with her past and remember her, linking her present grief with those joyful memories.

14. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions in about 40-50 words:

(3 x 1 = 3 marks)

a. What made the narrator feel uncomfortable during her visit to Mrs. Dorling's house?

Answer: a. The narrator felt uncomfortable during her visit to Mrs. Dorling's house because she noticed her mother's belongings being used casually and without respect. The sight of familiar objects in strange surroundings made her feel uneasy and out of place, reminding her of the loss and pain caused by the war.

b. What is the central theme of the play *Mother's Day*?

Answer: b. The central theme of *Mother's Day* is the **exploitation and neglect of housewives**. Mrs Pearson is taken for granted by her family, who treat her like a servant. Through a humorous role-reversal, the play shows that mothers deserve **respect, appreciation and equal status**, not just endless duty and sacrifice.

15. Answer ANY ONE out of two questions in about 120-150 words. (1x 6 = 6 marks)

a. How did Prof. Gaitonde come back to the world he knew?

Answer: a. Professor Gaitonde experienced an alternate reality in which the outcome of the Battle of Panipat was different and Indian history had taken another course. After being pushed off the stage during his lecture in Bombay, he suddenly found himself back on the familiar Hornby Road, with the usual traffic and surroundings. Later, Rajendra Deshpande explained that when the professor met with the truck accident, he had probably slipped into another world along a different “catastrophe path”, as suggested by the theory of quantum physics. When he regained consciousness after the blow on the stage, he switched back to his original world. The fact that he had two hundred and ninety–ninth lecture cards, but no memory of delivering them, and that the history books in the library now matched what he had always known, confirmed that he had returned to the world he originally belonged to.

b. The poem “Childhood” is a reflection on the loss of innocence and the process of growing up. Discuss.

Answer: b. In the poem *Childhood*, the poet reflects on the exact moment when he feels he lost his childhood. He realises that childhood ends when one starts thinking logically and questioning accepted beliefs. The poet understands that heaven and hell cannot be found in geography, so they may not exist as he was taught. He also becomes aware of the hypocrisy of adults, who preach love and goodness but do not always practise them. This awareness marks a shift from innocence to experience. The poet further recognises his own individuality, that he is different from others and responsible for his own thoughts and actions. All these realisations together symbolise the process of growing up. The poem is thus a thoughtful meditation on how childhood slowly slips away, replaced by rationality, self-awareness and sometimes disillusionment.

16. Answer ANY ONE out of two questions: -

(1x 6 = 6 marks)

a. How does *The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse* highlight the values of honesty and integrity?

Answer: a. *The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse* highlights honesty and integrity through the characters of Mourad and Aram, who belong to the Garoghlanian family, known for its strict code of honesty. Although Mourad “borrows” the white horse without permission, he never intends to sell or harm it. When John Byro recognises the horse but trusts their family’s reputation for honesty, the boys feel guilty. This trust and the weight of their family’s honour make them realise that even secret wrongdoing is against true integrity. Finally, they return the horse quietly, proving that their conscience and family values are stronger than temptation. The story shows that real honour lies not just in how others see us, but in correcting our mistakes.

b. What message does the play *Mother’s Day* convey about family relationships?

Answer: b. *Mother’s Day* conveys a strong message about the need for respect and equality in family relationships, especially towards mothers. Mrs Pearson is overworked and taken for granted by her husband and children, who treat her like a servant. Through the role reversal with Mrs Fitzgerald, she begins to assert herself and refuses to be ordered around. Her firm

behaviour forces the family to realise how selfish and inconsiderate they have been. By the end, they agree to share responsibilities and treat her with kindness and respect. The play reminds us that love in a family must be expressed through appreciation, support and cooperation, not by exploiting the person who cares the most.

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