CBSE Class 10 English (Language and Literature)

Practice Paper 2026-27 (Set 1)

Subject: English Language and Literature | **Subject Code:** 184 | **Class:** X
Time Allowed: 3 Hours | **Maximum Marks:** 80

Prepared by Sunbeam World School for practice. This is an original practice paper written on the CBSE Class X question paper design for 2026-27. It is not a CBSE board paper and not a CBSE sample question paper. Official past board papers are published on cbse.gov.in and the official sample question paper is on cbseacademic.nic.in.

General Instructions

1. This paper is divided into **three Sections: A, B and C**. All questions are compulsory.
2. Attempt questions based on the specific instructions for each part.
3. Answers should be brief and to the point, and must respect the word limits given.
4. Adhere to the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.
5. Separate instructions are given with each section and question wherever necessary.
6. Use of a dictionary is **not** permitted.

Blueprint: Section-Wise Distribution

Section	Area	Marks
A	Reading Skills	20
B	Writing Skills with Grammar	20
C	Language through Literature	40
	Total	**80**

Prescribed books: First Flight and Footprints Without Feet. Assessment of Listening and Speaking Skills is conducted separately within the 20 internal marks.

SECTION A: READING SKILLS

20 marks

1. Read the following text carefully. (10 marks)

(1) Sleep is often treated as time taken away from the day, something to be shortened when work piles up. Research over the last two decades has steadily undermined that view. Far from being an idle state, sleep is when the brain does some of its most important work, clearing waste products that build up during waking hours and consolidating what has been learned.

(2) Studies of school students have found that those who regularly sleep fewer than seven hours perform measurably worse on tasks requiring sustained attention, even when they report feeling alert. The gap between how tired a person feels and how impaired they actually are is one of the most consistent findings in the field. A student revising past midnight may believe the extra hour is productive, while the same hour of sleep would have done more for recall the following morning.

(3) The timing of sleep matters as much as its length. Adolescents experience a natural shift in their body clock that makes falling asleep before eleven at night genuinely difficult, which collides awkwardly with school timings in most countries. Some schools that have delayed their start by an hour report improved attendance and better results, though the change is difficult to arrange and remains uncommon.

(4) Screens complicate matters further. Light in the blue part of the spectrum, which phones and laptops emit in quantity, suppresses the hormone that signals to the body that it is time to sleep. The effect is modest for a few minutes of use and substantial across an hour of scrolling in a dark room. Most sleep researchers suggest a simple rule rather than an elaborate one: keep the last hour before bed free of screens.

Answer the following questions based on the passage above.

(i) Complete the following with a suitable reason. The writer says sleep is not an idle state because _. ***(1)***
(ii) State whether the following is true or false. Students who sleep fewer than seven hours are always aware that their performance has dropped. (1)
(iii) Based on paragraph 2, explain in about 40 words why a student revising past midnight may be mistaken about the value of that hour. (2)
(iv) Select the option that best describes the writer's attitude towards delayed school start times. (1)
(a) strongly opposed (b) cautiously positive (c) completely neutral (d) dismissive
(v) Which word in paragraph 4 means the same as "to hold back or reduce"? (1)
(vi) The writer mentions that the effect of screens is "modest for a few minutes" and "substantial across an hour". State what this contrast suggests about how screen use should be managed. (2)
(vii) Complete the sentence appropriately. One reason adolescents struggle with early school timings is that _. **(1)**
(viii) Based on the passage, state one reason why sleep researchers prefer a simple rule to an elaborate one. **(1)**

2. Read the following text carefully. (10 marks)

(1) The table below shows the responses of 500 Class 10 students in a city school survey on how they spend the hour before bedtime.

Activity in the last hour before bed	Number of students	Percentage
Using a phone or tablet	215	43%
Studying or revising	120	24%
Watching television	75	15%
Reading a book	50	10%
Talking with family	40	8%

(2) The same students were asked how many hours they slept on a typical school night. Just under one third reported six hours or fewer. Of the students in that group, three out of four said they used a phone in the hour before bed. Among students who reported eight hours or more, phone use in the final hour fell to roughly one in four.

(3) Students were also asked whether they believed their sleep affected their schoolwork. A large majority said yes, and most of those said they intended to change their habits. When the survey was repeated three months later, the proportion using a phone before bed had fallen by only four percentage points.

Answer the following questions based on the text above.

(i) State the activity reported by the largest number of students. **(1)**
(ii) Calculate how many more students used a phone than read a book before bed. **(1)**
(iii) Based on paragraph 2, state the relationship the survey found between phone use and hours of sleep. **(2)**
(iv) Select the option that correctly completes the sentence. The findings in paragraph 3 suggest that ____. **(1)**
(a) students were unaware of the problem
(b) knowing about a problem does not easily change behaviour
(c) the survey was inaccurate
(d) students slept more after three months
(v) What percentage of students spent the last hour reading a book or talking with family? **(1)**
(vi) Explain in about 40 words what the follow-up survey revealed, and why it might be considered discouraging. **(2)**
(vii) Infer one possible reason why television use was lower than phone use. **(1)**
(viii) State one limitation of this survey as evidence. **(1)**

SECTION B: WRITING SKILLS WITH GRAMMAR

20 marks

Grammar (10 marks)

3. Complete any ten of the following twelve tasks as directed. (10 × 1 = 10)

(i) Fill in the blank with the correct option. By the time the bell rang, the students ____ their papers.
(a) submit (b) had submitted (c) are submitting (d) will submit

(ii) Report the dialogue below by completing the sentence.
Teacher: Have you finished the assignment?
Rahul: I finished it last night.
The teacher asked Rahul whether he had finished the assignment, and Rahul replied that ____.

(iii) Fill in the blank with the correct form of the verb. Neither the captain nor the players ____ satisfied with the decision.
(a) was (b) were (c) is (d) has been

(iv) Identify the error in the given line and supply the correction.
The committee have decided to postpone the meeting until Friday.

(v) Select the correct option to complete the sentence. She asked me ____ I would be attending the function.
(a) that (b) if (c) what (d) which

(vi) Fill in the blank with the correct preposition. The library is open ____ nine in the morning to five in the evening.

(vii) Complete the sentence by filling in the blank with the correct option. If he ____ harder, he would have cleared the test.
(a) works (b) worked (c) had worked (d) has worked

(viii) Transform the following into the passive voice.
The principal distributed the prizes.

(ix) Identify the error in the given sentence and supply the correction.
She is one of the most brightest students in the class.

(x) Fill in the blank with the correct determiner. There is ____ milk left in the jug, so we need not buy more.
(a) a few (b) few (c) a little (d) little

(xi) Report the following question.
"*Where did you keep the keys?*" *my mother asked me.*

(xii) Select the correct option. The train ____ before we reached the station.
(a) leaves (b) has left (c) had left (d) is leaving

Writing (10 marks)

4. You are Arun or Aruna Mehta of 14, Lake Road, Varanasi. Write a letter in about 120 words to the Editor of a national daily, drawing

attention to the lack of safe pedestrian crossings near schools in your area and suggesting two measures the municipal authority could take. **(5)**

OR

You are the Head Boy or Head Girl of Sunbeam World School. Write a letter in about 120 words to the Principal, requesting permission to organise an inter-house debate competition, giving the purpose, the proposed dates and the support required.

5. Write an analytical paragraph in about 120 words on the data given below, which shows how 100 Class 10 students in a school travel to school each day. **(5)**

Mode of travel	Number of students
School bus	42
Walking	25
Bicycle	18
Private car	11
Public bus	4

OR

Write an analytical paragraph in about 120 words on the following topic. *Homework should be replaced by project work in Class 10.* Present both sides and give your own view.

SECTION C: LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE

40 marks

6. Answer the questions for any one of (A) or (B). Refer to your prescribed text. (5)

(A) *A Tiger in the Zoo*. In the opening stanza the poet shows the tiger pacing the short length of his cage, moving silently on soft pads while his anger stays contained within him.
(i) Name the poet. **(1)**
(ii) State what the poet suggests about the tiger's state of mind in this stanza. **(1)**
(iii) Explain the contrast the poet builds between the tiger's silent movement and his inner anger. **(2)**
(iv) Select the word that best describes the tiger's movement here: restless, joyful, frightened or playful. **(1)**

(B) *A Letter to God*. Lencho writes a second letter after receiving the money, and complains about what has happened to the rest of it.
(i) State how much money Lencho had asked for and how much he received. **(1)**
(ii) State whom Lencho blamed for the shortfall. **(1)**
(iii) Explain what this reaction reveals about the nature of Lencho's faith. **(2)**
(iv) State one word that describes the postmaster's motive in sending the money. **(1)**

7. Answer the questions for any one of (A) or (B). Refer to your prescribed text. (5)

(A) *The Midnight Visitor*. Ausable responds to the intruder's threat without raising his voice, and instead begins talking about a balcony outside the window.
(i) Identify the intruder and state what he had come for. **(1)**
(ii) State what Ausable's calm manner suggests about his intention. **(1)**
(iii) Explain how the invented balcony leads to the outcome of the story. **(2)**
(iv) State one quality of Ausable revealed in this episode. **(1)**

(B) *The Thief's Story*. After stealing the money, Hari Singh reaches the station but does not board the train.
(i) State what Hari Singh decides to do instead. **(1)**
(ii) Explain why he changes his mind, giving two reasons. **(2)**
(iii) State what Anil's response the next morning tells the reader about him. **(1)**
(iv) State one word describing Hari Singh's feeling at the station. **(1)**

8. Answer any four of the following six questions in about 40 words each. (4 × 3 = 12)

(i) Why does the poet in *Dust of Snow* say that the crow and the hemlock tree changed his mood?
(ii) How did Lencho's attitude towards the post office officials differ from their attitude towards him in *A Letter to God*?
(iii) What does Nelson Mandela mean by "the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed"?
(iv) Why was Anne Frank unhappy about writing a diary at first, and what made her continue?
(v) How did Bholi's life change after she started going to school?
(vi) What qualities of a good teacher does Anne Frank's description of Mr Keesing bring out?

9. Answer any two of the following three questions in about 40 words each. (2 × 3 = 6)

(i) What impression do you form of Hari Singh in *The Thief's Story*?
(ii) Why did Griffin become a homeless wanderer in *Footprints Without Feet*?
(iii) How did Ausable outwit Max in *The Midnight Visitor*?

10. Answer any one of the following two questions in about 100 to 120 words. (6)

(i) Courage is often shown in small decisions rather than in dramatic acts. Discuss this with reference to any one character you have studied this year, explaining what the character chose and what it cost them.

OR

(ii) Several texts in your course show a young person misunderstood by adults around them. Describe one such character, explain the misunderstanding, and state what finally changed.

11. Answer any one of the following two questions in about 100 to 120 words. (6)

(i) Imagine you are the narrator of one of the stories you have studied, writing a diary entry on the evening of the story's most important event. Write that entry.

OR

(ii) A poem you have studied this year uses a small natural image to carry a large idea. Name the poem, identify the image, and explain how the poet builds meaning from it.

MARKING SCHEME

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Marks are shown in brackets. Accept any other correct and well-supported answer. For questions requiring a written response, award marks for content, expression and adherence to the word limit.

SECTION A: READING (20)

1. (i) Because during sleep the brain clears waste products built up during waking hours and consolidates what has been learned **(1)**
(ii) **False (1)**
(iii) The passage states that the gap between how tired someone feels and how impaired they actually are is large and consistent. A student may therefore feel alert and believe the extra hour of revision is productive, when the same hour spent asleep would have improved recall more **(2)**
(iv) **(b) cautiously positive (1)**
(v) **suppresses (1)**
(vi) It suggests that brief screen use need not be avoided, and that the sensible target is the length of use rather than any use at all, which is why limiting the final hour is the recommended approach **(2)**
(vii) Adolescents experience a natural shift in their body clock that makes falling asleep before eleven at night genuinely difficult **(1)**
(viii) Because a simple rule is easier to follow consistently, and the researchers want advice that people will actually keep to **(1)**

2. (i) **Using a phone or tablet (1)**
(ii) 215 − 50 = **165 students (1)**
(iii) Students who slept six hours or fewer were far more likely to use a phone before bed, three out of four, while among those sleeping eight hours or more only about one in four did so, indicating an inverse relationship between phone use and sleep length **(2)**
(iv) **(b) knowing about a problem does not easily change behaviour (1)**
(v) 10% + 8% = **18% (1)**
(vi) Three months later, phone use before bed had fallen by only four percentage points, even though most students had said they believed sleep affected their schoolwork and intended to change. The gap between intention and action is what makes the result discouraging **(2)**
(vii) Any reasonable inference, 1 mark: a phone is personal and can be used in bed, while a television is usually in a shared room and must be switched off when others sleep **(1)**
(viii) Any reasonable limitation, 1 mark: the data is self-reported and may be inaccurate; it covers one city school only, so it may not represent students elsewhere; it shows association rather than cause **(1)**

SECTION B: WRITING SKILLS WITH GRAMMAR (20)

3. Any ten, 1 mark each **(10)**
(i) **(b) had submitted**
(ii) **he had finished it the previous night**
(iii) **(b) were**
(iv) Error **have**, Correction **has**
(v) **(b) if**
(vi) **from**
(vii) **(c) had worked**
(viii) **The prizes were distributed by the principal.**
(ix) Error **most brightest**, Correction **brightest**
(x) **(c) a little**
(xi) **My mother asked me where I had kept the keys.**
(xii) **(c) had left**

4. Letter to the Editor or to the Principal **(5)**
Format, including sender's address, date, receiver's address, subject line, salutation, body and closing **(1)**
Content, covering the issue and two suggested measures, or the purpose, dates and support required **(2)**
Expression, fluency, accuracy and appropriate register **(2)**
Deduct marks for exceeding or falling well short of the word limit, and for an informal register in a formal letter.

5. Analytical paragraph **(5)**
Format, a single continuous paragraph with no headings or bullet points **(1)**
Content, an opening statement of what the data shows, comparison of the largest and smallest categories, one inference, and a closing observation **(2)**
Expression, coherence, accuracy and word limit **(2)**
For the data question, a correct reading is that the school bus carries the largest group at 42, that walking and cycling together account for 43, and that private cars and public buses together account for only 15.

SECTION C: LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE (40)

6. Any one **(5)**
(A) (i) **Leslie Norris (1)**
(ii) Anger that is contained and silent rather than expressed, because the cage gives the tiger no outlet **(1)**
(iii) The tiger moves softly and almost noiselessly, yet the fury beneath that movement is undiminished, so the poet sets outward calm against inward rage and makes the confinement feel worse **(2)**
(iv) **restless (1)**

(B) (i) He asked for one hundred pesos and received seventy **(1)**
(ii) The post office employees **(1)**
(iii) His faith in God remains complete and unshaken, so rather than doubt the answer he assumes human dishonesty, which shows a trust so absolute that it cannot imagine God failing him **(2)**
(iv) Any one of **charitable**, **kind**, **generous**, **compassionate** **(1)**

7. Any one **(5)**
(A) (i) **Max**, who had come for the report on new missiles **(1)**
(ii) That he intends to outwit Max rather than confront him, and is buying time **(1)**
(iii) Ausable describes a balcony that does not exist and claims it has been used before, so when the waiter knocks and Ausable calls it the police, Max believes the only escape is the balcony and jumps to his death **(2)**
(iv) Any one of **presence of mind**, **calmness**, **quick thinking**, **shrewdness** **(1)**
(B) (i) He decides to go back to Anil's room and return the money **(1)**
(ii) Any two, 1 mark each: the rain soaked the notes and the night was cold and uninviting; he realised that Anil was teaching him to read and write, and that this would be worth far more than the stolen money; he valued being trusted and did not want to lose Anil's regard **(2)**
(iii) Anil had realised the money was taken, as the note he handed over was still damp, yet he said nothing and continued the lesson, which shows understanding and a willingness to give Hari Singh a second chance **(1)**
(iv) Any one of **uncertain**, **torn**, **hesitant**, **ashamed** **(1)**

8. Any four, 3 marks each **(12)**
Award 1 mark for a correct and relevant point, and 2 marks for explanation and expression within the word limit. Indicative value points:
(i) The crow shaking down dust of snow from the hemlock changed the poet's mood from regret to a sense of renewal, showing that a small natural event can shift a state of mind **(3)**
(ii) Lencho had complete faith in the officials and in God, while the officials pitied him and acted out of charity, so his trust and their response did not match **(3)**
(iii) Mandela means that a man who takes away another's freedom is himself imprisoned by hatred and prejudice, so oppressor and oppressed both lose their humanity **(3)**
(iv) She felt that no one would be interested in the thoughts of a thirteen year old girl, but continued because she had no real friend to confide in and needed to express herself **(3)**
(v) School gave Bholi confidence and speech, and she grew from a neglected child into a young woman able to refuse an unjust marriage and choose her own path **(3)**
(vi) Mr Keesing was strict but fair, had a sense of humour, was willing to be persuaded by a good argument, and treated Anne's wit with generosity **(3)**

9. Any two, 3 marks each **(6)**
Award 1 mark for the point and 2 marks for explanation and expression. Indicative value points:
(i) Hari Singh is a clever and practised thief who is nevertheless capable of shame and change, and his decision to return the money shows he values being trusted and taught more than the money itself **(3)**
(ii) Griffin had made himself invisible but could not reverse it, so he had no home, no money and no means of living openly, and his lawlessness made every place unsafe for him **(3)**
(iii) Ausable invented a non-existent balcony and the story of a knock at the door, so that Max, believing the police had arrived, jumped from the window to his death **(3)**

10. Any one **(6)**
Content, a clearly identified character with a specific decision described and its cost explained **(3)**
Organisation, a clear opening, development and close **(1.5)**
Expression, accuracy, vocabulary and word limit **(1.5)**

11. Any one **(6)**
Content, appropriate to the form asked for, whether a diary entry in the narrator's voice or an explanation of the poem's central image **(3)**
Organisation and appropriateness of form, including diary conventions where relevant **(1.5)**
Expression, accuracy, vocabulary and word limit **(1.5)**

End of marking scheme.