

**PRE-BOARD EXAMINATION (2023-24)**  
**CLASS : XII**  
**SUBJECT : ENGLISH CORE (301)**

Time Allowed : 3 hours

Maximum Marks : 80

**General Instructions:**

1. The Question Paper contains THREE sections-READING, WRITING and LITERATURE.
2. Attempt questions based on specific instructions for each part.

**SECTION A: READING SKILLS (22 marks)**

**Reading Comprehension Through Unseen Passages**

Q1. Read the following passage carefully: (12)

Winning is a habit of real-life achievers, and so is positive thinking. You cannot be a winner in the true sense, be both successful and happy, lead a purposeful life, realize your goal and contribute to your society unless you are a positive thinker. And you cannot be a positive thinker unless you are a positive person who believes in basic goodness, are sensitive to your own needs and desires as well as the needs of other people around you. Positive thinking leads you to a healthy attitude to life that makes you independent, courageous and cooperative. These qualities are essential for a purposeful, meaningful and rewarding existence.

Positive thinking is very often thought to be the ability to focus on what is right and ignoring what is wrong or unpleasant, to be able to turn a blind eye to what is disagreeable and disturbing. But this is not Positive Thinking is all about. It does not tell us to close our eyes to reality and stay where we are, resign to fate and not strive for more or better, not to make an effort at the risk of failure. It does not tell us to run away from anything, however unpleasant or difficult it may be.

The edifice of positive thinking rests on the power of your inner self, your motivation and preparedness to change, your determination and hard work, your ability to learn and improve. It will depend on your ability to step out of your inertia and move ahead, your ability to handle failure and setbacks, your ability to learn from your mistakes and move ahead.

Positive thinking can make reaching your goal easier and more enjoyable. It gives you the strength to face adversities and failure with courage and bounce back a stronger and

more confident person. It is your best gift and the most powerful tool. It helps you to live your life to the fullest.

However simple positive thinking may sound and however easy it may appear to be, statistics show that only about five percent of people are able to think positive and become super achievers. These are the people who work harder and better than others and earn and control fifty percent of the world's resources.

So, to learn to look at everything in a positive way. You have to break free from your negative conditioning and move ahead. You can change the way you perceive, interpret and think. You know that you can change when you want to change and you will want to change only when you acknowledge that there is a mistake and you need to set it right. Change can be brought about but not without your active participation and your will.

(455 words) (Excerpt from 'Be Positive think Positive' by Mridula Agarwal)

Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

- i. Explain how positive thinking can impact an individual's ability to cope with stress. Provide specific examples or scenarios to support your explanation. (2)
- ii. In what ways can a positive mindset influence the relationships an individual forms with others? Provide at least two examples illustrating how positive thinking can enhance interpersonal interactions. (2)
- iii. According to the passage, what is the key factor for becoming a super achiever? (1)
  - a. Inherited talent
  - b. Positive thinking and hard work
  - c. Financial resources
  - d. Academic qualifications
- iv. What qualities does positive thinking cultivate, according to the passage?
  - a. creativity and leadership
  - ✓ b. Independence, courage, and cooperation
  - c. Honesty and complacency
  - d. spirituality and integrity

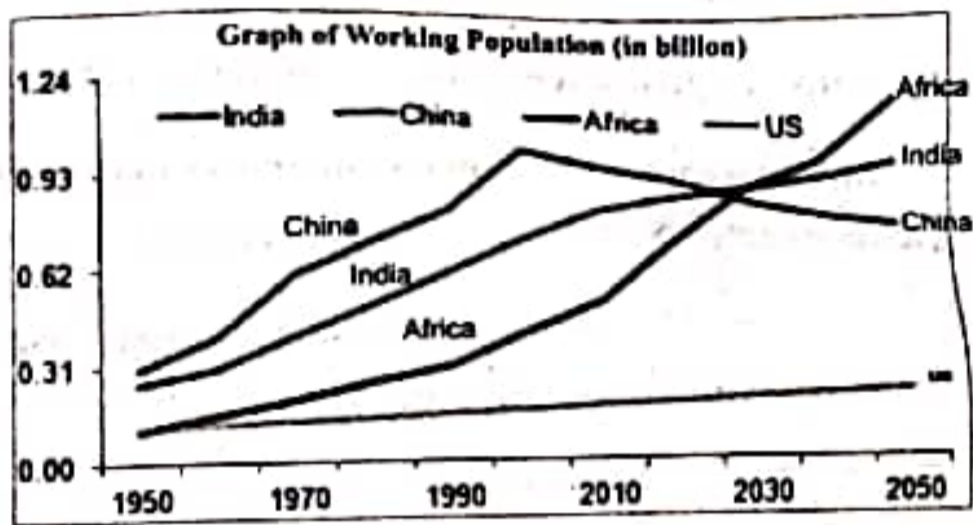
- v. How does the passage suggest that one can achieve positive thinking? (1)
- By ignoring one's mistakes and failures
  - Through active participation, will, and acknowledging mistakes
  - By blaming external factors for negative thinking
  - By relying on others to change one's mindset
- vi. What is the central idea of the passage? (1)
- Positive thinking leads to financial success.
  - Positive thinking requires shutting out negativity.
  - Positive thinking is essential for a purposeful and rewarding life.
  - Positive thinking guarantees a life without challenges.
- vii. Societal or cultural factors may impact an individual's ability to adopt positive thinking? Provide examples and explain your reasoning. (2)
- viii. Complete the Sentence: The passage emphasizes that positive thinking can make reaching your goal easier and more enjoyable, giving you the strength to face adversities and failures with \_\_\_\_\_ . (1)
- ix. What is a synonym for "adversities" as used in the passage (para 4)? (1)
- Challenges
  - Achievements
  - Comforts
  - Blessings

2. Read the following text. (10)

India possesses a demographic advantage with a median age of 28, contrasting with ageing populations in other countries. This young workforce, available for approximately five decades, is geographically diverse, with states like Bihar continuing to see a growth in the working-age cohort until 2051. However, challenges threaten this potential. The Economic Survey 2019 highlighted a gap between job availability and the increasing working-age population, while UNICEF 2019 reported that 47% of Indian youth lack essential skills for 2030's employment. Despite high primary school attendance, poor infrastructure, malnutrition, and lack of trained teachers lead to inadequate learning outcomes.

To address this, the focus must shift to quality education, ensuring universal access, relevant vocational training, and modernized curricula. Investments in teacher training and technology, including virtual classrooms and MOOCs, are crucial. Healthcare struggles due to a rural economic downturn, making quality care unaffordable. The Ayushman Bharat Yojana links demand to private tertiary care, diverting resources from upgrading public health systems. The solution lies in strengthening primary healthcare and integrating services up to district hospital levels.

Additionally, women's empowerment is vital. Job portals and equal pay can enhance their workforce participation. To fully capitalize on the youth bulge, India must invest in social infrastructure, ensuring good health, quality education, and decent employment. Implementing these policies effectively will transform the demographic dividend, a time-limited opportunity, into a boon for India's future.



Answer the following questions, based on the passage above.

- i. According to UNICEF 2019, what percentage of Indian youth lack the necessary skills for employment in 2030? (1)
  - A) 27%
  - B) 37%
  - C) 47%
  - D) 57%
- ii. What is the primary focus of the Ayushman Bharat Yojana in the context of healthcare mentioned in the passage?
  - A) Strengthening primary healthcare services
  - B) Providing free healthcare to all citizens
  - C) Upgrading private hospitals
  - D) Expanding health insurance coverage

- iii. How does the passage suggest addressing the issue of unaffordable healthcare in rural India? (2)
- iv. What measures can enhance women's workforce participation according to the passage? (2)
- v. Complete the Sentence: To harness its demographic dividend, India must invest in \_\_\_\_\_ to ensure that the youth are adequately skilled and employed. (1)
- vi. True/False: India's demographic dividend ensures automatic economic growth without the need for targeted social investments. (1)
- vii. According to the graph, the working population of two countries will be substantially increasing by 2050. These two countries are : (1)
- A) China and India
- B) Africa and India
- C) China and US
- D) US and Africa

OR

**(For Visually Impaired Students)**

- vii. What is the central idea of the passage?
- A) India's demographic dividend is a guaranteed economic boon.
- B) India's youth bulge presents opportunities but requires strategic investments in education, healthcare, and employment.
- C) India's healthcare system needs a comprehensive restructuring.
- D) India's women face significant barriers in the workforce.
- viii. Given below, there are two statements marked as Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Mark your answer as per the options provided below: (1)
- Assertion:** The passage implies that addressing the challenges in India's education and healthcare sectors is essential for maximizing the potential of the demographic dividend.
- Reasoning:** The passage discusses the need for quality education, accessible healthcare, and women's empowerment to fully utilize India's young workforce.

Select the correct option:

- A) Both the assertion and reasoning are true, and the reasoning is the correct explanation of the assertion.
- B) Both the assertion and reasoning are true, but the reasoning is not the correct explanation of the assertion.
- C) The assertion is true, but the reasoning is false.
- D) The assertion is false.

**SECTION B: CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (18 marks)**

Q.3 Attempt ANY ONE of two, in about 50 words. (4)

- A. You are Amit/Amita, the head of the Student Advisory Board, and your school is organizing a charity event to raise funds for a local old age home. Write a notice inviting students and teachers to participate in the event and provide details about the event's date, time, and venue.

OR

- B. As a secretary of Eco Club of your school RPVV Shalimar Bagh, prepare a notice to be put up on the notice board urging the members to participate in Environmental Awareness Rally on the occasion of World Environment Day.

Q.4 Attempt ANY ONE of two, in about 50 words. (4)

- A. Your institution, Greenfield High School, is hosting a Science and Innovation Expo to celebrate students' achievements in the field of science. Write an invitation to Dr. Jayant Narlikar, a renowned scientist, inviting him to be the chief guest at the event. Include event details such as date, time, and venue.

OR

- B. Your school, Riverside High, is arranging a cultural fest showcasing talents in music, dance, and arts. Write an invitation to parents and guardians, urging them to participate and encourage their children's artistic endeavours. Include event details such as date, time, venue, and highlight the significance of parental support in fostering creativity and self-expression.

Q.5 Attempt ANY ONE of two, in about 120-150 words. (5)

- A. You are Priya Verma, a recent graduate in graphic design from Bright Ideas Design University. After coming across the provided advertisement in the newspaper, express your interest in the position and write a letter to Robotics

attaching your resume and detailing your enthusiasm for the advertised job opportunity.

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OR

B. You are Ravi, a concerned citizen living in a suburban area of Mumbai. Lately, you have noticed a rise in air pollution due to the increasing number of vehicles on the road. Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper expressing your concerns about air pollution and suggesting measures that could be taken to address this issue.

Delhi

2.6 Attempt ANY ONE of two, in about 120-150 words. (5)

A. A study revealed that the lives of up to 59% of people who suffered from an injury could have been saved if the victims had been given some type of simple first aid. As a columnist for a health magazine, draft an article in about 120-150 words, on the importance of the basic lifesaving skills. Discuss the advantages of first aid knowledge and encourage people to acquire the needed training for it. Support your ideas with the cues given below:

### Headlines

- THE PLAGUE OF 'DOING NOTHING' IS ENDANGERING THOUSANDS OF LIVES
- SHOW THAT YOU CARE: STEP UP AND TAKE ACTION
- LEARN FIRST AID: PRESERVE LIFE, PREVENT DETERIORATION AND PROMOTE RECOVERY
- FIRST AID TRAINING: THE NEED OF THE HOUR
- SCHOOLS AND WORKPLACES MUST PROVIDE FIRST AID EDUCATION

OR

- B. Globally, the lack of basic first aid knowledge was found to be endangering many lives. A free one-day course to teach people basic first aid was organised by 'Lend a hand', an NGO in Calicut, Kerala as a part of the World First-Aid Day, 2022. You were asked to cover this event as the correspondent of a local daily. Write report covering this event in about 120-150 words. Support your ideas with outlines given below, to craft your newspaper report.

One-day Workshop: Programmes		
Talks by experienced trainers	Meaning of first-aid	Types of injuries
First-aid kit	Roles and responsibilities of first aiders	Assessing emergencies
Demonstrations and partner practice	Vote of thanks	Audience feedback

**SECTION C: LITERATURE TEXTBOOK AND SUPPLEMENTARY**  
**READING TEXT (40 marks)**

Q.7 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given. (6)

A. A thing of beauty is a joy forever

Its loveliness increases, it will never

Pass into nothingness; but will keep

A bower quiet for us, and a sleep

Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.

Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing

A flowery band to bind us to the earth,

Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth

i) Why does man wreath a flowery band every morning?

ii) What is the cause of despondence in human beings?

iii) A thing of beauty help in making us happy at it is a \_\_\_\_\_.

A) source of eternal joy

B) source of despondence

C) never ending responsibility

D) band to bind us with inhuman dearth



- iv) State whether the given statement is TRUE or FALSE, with reference to the extract:

The primary message of the extract is that despair is an inescapable part of life. (True/False)

- v) What might the phrase "A bower quiet for us, and a sleep / Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing" imply about the relationship between nature and human well-being?
- vi) Based on the extract, what could be inferred about the speaker's attitude towards the act of "wreathing a flowery band to bind us to the earth" every day?

OR

B. Driving from my parent's  
home to Cochin last Friday  
morning, I saw my mother,  
beside me,  
doze, open mouthed, her face  
ashen like that  
of a corpse and realised with  
pain  
that she was as old as she  
looked but soon  
put that thought away, and  
looked out at Young  
Trees sprinting, the merry children spilling  
out of their homes,

- i) In the given extract, the speaker's initial thought about the mother is that she:
- A) Looks young and lively.  
B) Appears tired and elderly.  
C) Is asleep with her mouth closed.  
D) Is as lively as the young trees outside.

ii) What is the predominant emotion expressed in the extract?

- A) Joy and excitement
- B) Sadness and realization
- C) Fear and unease
- D) Surprise and happiness

iii) Complete the Sentence appropriately

The theme of the extract is the speaker's realization that their mother is ageing which is accompanied by a sense of \_\_\_\_\_.

iv) In the line "Young Trees sprinting," what figure of speech is used to describe the trees?

- A) Simile
- B) Metaphor
- C) Personification
- D) Alliteration

v) State whether the given statement is TRUE or FALSE; with reference to the extract:

The speaker in the extract believes that their mother looks younger than her actual age.

vi) What is the significance of the speaker putting away the thought that their mother is as old as she looks?

Q.8 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given. (4)

She had the bottle and some cotton in her hand.

"But how shall I do it?" she asked.

"Simply saturate the cotton and hold it near his nostrils," Sadao replied without delaying for one moment the intricate detail of his work. "When he breathes badly move it away a little."

She crouched close to the sleeping face of the young American. It was a piteously thin face, she thought, and the lips were twisted. The man was suffering whether he knew it or not.

Watching him, she wondered if the stories they heard sometimes of the sufferings of

prisoners were true. They came like flickers of rumour, told by word of mouth and always contradicted. In the newspapers the reports were always that wherever the Japanese armies went the people received them gladly, with cries of joy at their liberation. (the Enemy)

- i) In the given extract, Hana experiences a bit of \_\_\_\_\_ for the young American.
- A) compassion
  - B) contempt
  - C) hope
  - D) rage
- ii) Which of these questions does Hana start reflecting on in the extract?
- A) Why did men like the young American choose to fight?
  - B) What should she and her husband do about the enemy?
  - C) Is the Japanese army actually emerging victorious or is it all fake news?
  - D) How different was the reality of prisoners from what she was led to believe?
- iii) What changes Hana's perception of the young American?
- A) reading stories about the 'enemy' as a prisoner of war
  - B) seeing the 'enemy' as an actual person in front of her
  - C) wondering if she herself is more American than Japanese
  - D) realising that the war against America is not an honourable one
- iv) How do Hana and Sadao react to the situation of the wounded man?
- A) Hana is confused about it but Sadao is confident about it.
  - B) Hana is suspicious about it but Sadao is accepting of it.
  - C) Hana is disturbed by it and Sadao is disappointed by it.
  - D) Hana is disgusted by it and Sadao is conflicted about it

OR

B. Everyone stood transfixed in stupefaction. They looked wildly at each other and blinked. "O wise prophets! It was I who spoke." This time there were no grounds for doubt. It was the infant born just ten days ago who had enunciated the words so clearly. The chief astrologer took off his spectacles and gazed intently at the baby. "All those who are born will one day have to die. We don't need your prediction to know that. There would be some sense in it if you could tell us the manner of that death" the royal infant uttered these words in his little squeaky voice.

- i) Who spoke the words in the passage?
  - A) The wise prophets
  - B) The people in the room
  - C) The infant born ten days ago
  - D) The chief astrologer
- ii) The passage raises the question of whether predicting death is meaningful without also predicting \_\_\_\_\_. (fill in the blank)
- iii) What writing style is employed when the passage describes the royal infant's words as "uttered these words in his little squeaky voice"?
- iv) What can be inferred about the expectations of the people in the room from their initial reaction of being "transfixed in stupefaction" and looking "wildly at each other and blinked"?

Q.9 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two, given. (6)

A. While I was wondering about it all, M. Hamel mounted his chair, and, in the same grave and gentle tone which he had used to me, said, "My children, this is the last lesson I shall give you. The order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new master comes tomorrow. This is your last French lesson. I want you to be very attentive."

What a thunderclap these words were to me!

Oh, the wretches; that was what they had put up at the town-hall!

i) Who are 'the wretches' Franz refers to in this extract?

- A) the French
- B) the Prussians
- C) the village people
- D) the school children

ii) Why does M. Hamel tell everyone to be 'very attentive'?

- A) He wants to quiz them on the last lesson later in the day
- B) He wants to inform them of his wish to retire as a teacher.
- C) He wants to tell them about the new language they will soon learn.
- D) He wants to teach them as much of their language as possible in that class.

iii) What does the order from Berlin signify?

- A) the blending of two different cultures.
- B) the imposition of one culture over another
- C) the peaceful coexistence of multiple cultures
- D) the universal recognition of one culture as superior

iv) What a thunderclap these words were to me!

This line from the extract depicts Franz's \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) confusion about the new language
- B) astonishment at a wasted opportunity
- C) disappointment in M. Hamel's teaching
- D) anger towards the people of the village

v) Select the option that uses 'mounted' as used in the extract.

- A) Salima mounted the bicycle and rode downhill.
- B) Peter mounted the platform to a rousing welcome.
- C) Satyajee bit his nails as the tension mounted in the game.
- D) Kimpi mounted a protest by refusing to talk to her sister all day.

vi) Complete the Sentence:

Franz's reaction to M. Hamel's announcement reflects... *that we are not going to learn to know about french lang.*

OR

B. My acquaintance with the barefoot ragpickers leads me to Seemapuri, a place on the periphery of Delhi yet miles away from it, metaphorically. Those who live here are squatters who came from Bangladesh back in 1971. Saheb's family is among

them. Seemapuri was then a wilderness. It still is, but it is no longer empty. Its structures of mud, with roofs of tin and tarpaulin, devoid of sewage, drainage or running water, live 10,000 ragpickers. They have lived here for more than thirty years without an identity, without permits but with ration cards that get their names on voters' lists and enable them to buy grain. Food is more important for survival than an identity. "If at the end of the day we can feed our families and go to bed without an aching stomach, we would rather live here than in the fields that gave us no grain," say a group of women in tattered saris when I ask them why they left their beautiful land of green fields and rivers.

(The lost Spring)

- i) What does the passage primarily describe?
  - A) The living conditions of squatters in Seemapuri
  - B) The history of Seemapuri as a wilderness
  - C) The abundance of grain in Seemapuri
  - D) Author's personal experiences with ragpickers
- ii) Why did the squatters in Seemapuri leave their homeland in Bangladesh in 1971?
  - A) To find better job opportunities
  - B) To escape famine and hunger
  - C) To gain an official identity
  - D) To enjoy the wilderness of Seemapuri
- iii) The passage highlights the harsh living conditions of squatters in Seemapuri and the importance of food for survival over an official identity, underscoring the theme that \_\_\_\_\_, (fill in the blank)
- iv) What figure of speech is used when the author says, "Seemapuri is a place on the periphery of Delhi yet miles away from it"?
  - A) Simile
  - B) Metaphor
  - C) Hyperbole
  - D) Personification

- v) What does the presence of ration cards signify for the squatters in Seemapuri, and how does it impact their lives?
- vi) Why do the squatters in Seemapuri prefer living in their current conditions over returning to their homeland with green fields and rivers, according to the passage?

Q.10 Answer ANY FIVE of the following six questions, in about 40-50 words. (5x2=10)

- i) What kind of reception did Gandhi receive at Motihari?
- ii) What is the reason for the huge success of the novel, 'The Name of the Rose'?
- iii) Why was Gemini studios a favourite haunt of the poets?
- iv) How does the choice of imagery contribute to the overall tone and mood of the poem "Keeping Quiet". Give one example to illustrate your point.
- v) Why did Sophie like her brother Geoff more than any other person?
- vi) What does 'massive weight of uncle's wedding band' mean in Aunt Jennifer's Tigers?

Q.11 Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions, in about 40-50 words. (2x2=4)

- i) Why do you think Charley withdrew nearly all the money he had from the bank to buy old-style currency?
- ii) The author has used 'blood' as a symbol in the story. Comment on its impact on the reader with reference to the story - The Enemy.
- iii) What significance does Antarctica hold for environmentalists and why?

Q.12 Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. (5)

- A. Imagine that the bully who threw Douglas into the pool, reads this chapter and realizes his mistake. As the bully, write a diary entry penning down your response to Douglas' perseverance and your own feelings of guilt and regret.

OR

- B. In what way does the story Rattrap reflect similar problems of people living in India who are uprooted and relocated due to industrialization?

Q.13 Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. (5)

- A. Zitkala sa and Bama have been invited on a talk show. They both share their experience of being from marginalised communities. They reflect on instances of oppression they faced and how those instances proved to be the source of strength

to fight against such oppression. You are asked to write a report on their conversation. Write the report.

OR

- B. Imagine that the encounter with Mr. Lamb marked a turning point in Derry's life. Many years later, Derry is invited to present a TED Talk on the challenges he faced and overcame. He thinks about the bitterness he carried earlier towards people and the world, and how his attitude changed. He decides to speak about the transformation in his relationship with himself, and understanding what kindness towards oneself might actually mean. He agrees to weave his speech on 'Not the face of a victim'. As Derry, create the speech draft for the TED Talk.