

St. Paul's School
Class XII Pre-board Examination 2023-24
English Core Code 301

Name:

Class & Section:

Time allowed: 3 Hrs.

Max Marks: 80

General instructions:

- i. This question paper is divided into three sections: A, B, and C. All sections are compulsory.
- ii. There is no overall choice. However, an internal choice has been provided.
- iii. Separate instructions have been given with each section and questions wherever necessary.
- iv. Do not exceed the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

SECTION A: Reading skills (22 Marks)

1 Read the passage given below.

12

1. Elves have Scandinavian origin and are believed to be house gnomes that guarded homes against evil. Though they were believed to be kind hearted, they were quick tempered and turned nasty if rubbed the wrong way. In the mid 1800's, a few Scandinavian authors wrote about gnomes as Santa Claus helpers, and thus were created the Christmas elves.
2. Elves are believed to be children of trolls Gryla and Leppaludi and are efficient, clever and help Santa make toys for children for Christmas. While the exact number of elves is not known, their generally accepted number is 13, and they have as many as 70 names! The Scandinavian names of the 13 elves are Baggalatur, Bjalmans Barnid, Bjalminn Sjalfur, Bitahaengir, Frodusleikir, Laekjaraegir, Raudur, Redda, Sledda, Steingrimur, Syrjusleikir, Tifill and Tuttur. It is said that these elves light up torches and come down from their secret village in Lapland to play in a secret field on January 06, the last day of Christmas.
3. They have English names too. While Bushy Evergreen invented the magic toy-making machine, Shiny Upatree is Santa's oldest friend and co-founder of Lapland. You all better be careful of Alabaster Snowball as he is the administrator of the Naughty & Nice list. Guardian elf Pepper Minstix guards Santa's village and Wunorse Openslae designed and maintains Santa's sleigh. Sugarplum Mary is head of the Sweet treats and assistant to Santa Claus's wife, Mrs Claus.
4. An international traveler with names ranging from St. Nicholas, Father Christmas, Papa Noel and Kris Kringle, Santa Claus comes sliding down the chimney each Christmas to leave presents in hanging stockings for children, good and bad.
5. The closest real life parallel to Santa Claus is perhaps St. Nicholas, a saint who lived in the third century town of Patara, Turkey. According to

legend, on discovering that a neighbor was unable to arrange for his daughter's dowry, St. Nicholas dropped from their chimney, a bag of gold which fell into stockings hung out to dry, resulting in the custom of hanging stockings.

6. Enjoy narrating these tales at Christmas! Merry Christmas!

Courtesy HT

Based on your understanding of the passage, answer **only twelve marks** worth of the following questions.

- a. Answer the following questions within 20-30 words each. 2
- b. What led to the creation of elves? 2
- c. In what way is January 06 special to the elves? 1
- The total number of elves is:
- i. 70
 - ii. 30
 - iii. 13
 - iv. 12

OR

Answer the following in one word:

- d. At Christmas, stockings are synonymous with 1
- Santa Claus has a wife. 1
- i. True.
 - ii. False.

e. All elves work very hard. Match the following to exemplify the same: 1x6

1. Bushy Evergreen	1. administrator of the Naughty and Nice list.
2. Shiny Upatree	2. magic toy machine.
3. Alabaster Snowball	3. Santa's village.
4. Pepper Minstix guards	4. head of Santa's sweet treats.
5. Wunorse openslae	5. designed and maintains Santa's sleigh.
6. Sugarplum Mary	6. co-founder of Lapland.

- 2 **Read the following passage.** 1x10
1. Teenager's mathematics and reading skills are in an unprecedented decline across dozens of countries and Covid closures are only partly to blame, the OECD said recently, in its latest survey of global learning standards.
 2. The Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said it had seen some of the steepest drops in performance since 2000 when it began its usually triennial tests of 15-year-olds reading, maths and science skills.
 3. Nearly 700,000 youths took the 02 hour test last year in the OECD's 38 mostly developed country members and 44-non-members for the latest study, closely watched by policy makers as the largest international comparison of education performance.

4. Compared to when the tests were last conducted in 2018, reading performance fell by 10 points on an average in OCED countries, and by 15 points in mathematics, a loss equivalent to three-quarters of a year's worth of learning.
5. While more than half of the 81 countries surveyed saw declines, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway and Poland saw particularly sharp drops in mathematics scores, the OECD said.
6. On an average, across the OECD one out of four 15 -year-olds tested as a low performer in maths, reading and science, which means they could not use basic algorithms or interpret simple texts, the study found.
7. "Covid probably played some role but I would not overrate it", OECD director of education Andreas Schleicher told a news conference.
8. "There are underlying structural factors and they are much more likely to be permanent features of our education systems that policy makers should really take seriously".
9. Countries that provided extra teacher support during Covid school closures scored better and results were generally better in places where easy teacher access for special help was high.
10. Poorer results tended to be associated with higher rates of mobile phone use for leisure and where schools reported teacher shortages.
11. The OECD said the decline was not inevitable, pointing to Singapore, where students scored the highest in maths, reading and science, with results that suggested that they were, on an average, three to five years ahead of their OECD peers.
12. After Singapore, Macau, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan and S. Korea also outperformed in maths and science, where Estonia and Canada also scored well.
13. In reading, Ireland, Japan, S. Korea and Taiwan earned top marks, and was all the more notable in Ireland and Japan because their spending per student was no higher than the OECD average.

On the basis of your reading of the passage, answer **only ten marks worth** of the following questions.

- a. The OECD is
 - i. a national agency
 - ii. an international agency
- b. The OECD conducts tests
 - i. three times a year
 - ii. three months a year
 - iii. after every three semesters
 - iv. every three years
- c. The OECD is respected as it is
 - i. a test including large categories
 - ii. watched by the largest number of policy makers
 - iii. the largest international comparison of education

- performance
- iv. the largest comparable agency
- d. The results of the tests showed that reading performance fell by 10 points and 15 points in maths since 2018
- i. True.
- ii. False.
- e. Four countries which saw a particularly sharp drop in maths scores are ----
- f. The reason that one out of four 15-year-olds performed poorly in maths, reading and science was -----
- g. The scores were better in Covid times because _____
- h. Cite two reasons that are associated with poorer results.
- i. *Outperformed* means:
- i. A performance that was similar to that of others.
- ii. A performance that was better than that of others.
- j. The country, whose students scored the highest in maths, reading and science is
- i. Hong Kong
- ii. Iceland
- iii. Japan
- iv. Singapore
- k. *Notable* means
- i. that which is worthy of being noticed
- ii. that which should be noticed
- iii. that which is noticed
- iv. none of the above.
- l. The best title for the passage is
- i. Maths, science and reading skills, in an unprecedented decline in teens.
- ii. Global survey of global learning standards.
- iii. High school education exams.
- iv. Loss of learning.

Section B: Creative Writing Skills (18 Marks)

- 3 You are Nitin /Nikita, the President of the Sukh Niwas Resident Welfare Association (RWA) opp. Raj Vihar Jaipur 14. On the occasion of the National Girl Child Day, which is celebrated in India on 24 January, draft a notice for all residents to assemble in the central lawn of Sukh Niwas to felicitate all the girls of the colony. Invent all necessary details within 50 words only. 4

OR

As the Principal of Glorious Public School draft an invitation for an inter school patriotic song competition which would be held in your school to celebrate the occasion of India's Republic day which falls on 26 January. Invent all necessary details within 50 words.

- 4 You are the Liaison officer of a Delhi based NGO named *Neki ki diwar*. This NGO collects warm clothes for those people who cannot afford them. Contributions of donors are hung on these walls of kindness. Anyone who needs them can take them. Draft a notice to be put up in all shopping malls in Delhi NCR for people to contribute warm clothes on the 19 *Neki ki diwars* available, for the needy. Invent all necessary details within 50 words.

OR

You are Gyan/Gyani, the secretary of the social studies club of Sunshine Public School Chandigarh. On the occasion of National Voters day, which falls on 25 January, draft an invitation to invite the Chief Electoral Officer of India, Shri Avgatt Singh, to deliver a talk to the students of class XII on *Elections in India and the Indian voter*. Invent all necessary details within 50 words.

- 5 The crime graph is on the rise. As the director of the crime branch in Kathiawar Mr. Shubhendu Das, you opine that the ordinary citizens need to guard themselves and practice certain safety rules to protect themselves like: being alert about being followed, posting names and numbers of cabs to family on the mobile, being careful about choosing friends at parties, not allowing oneself to be intoxicated at get togethers, not venturing out alone after sunset, posting photos on social media, dressing appropriately, learning to say no, etc. You decide to write to the editor of a national newspaper about the same to create awareness and draw the public's attention on the occasion of National Safety day which is celebrated on 04 March, annually, in India. Draft the letter within 125 words.

OR

As Maniram Battliwala, 98 FFL apparts. near Farida tea gardens Jalpaiguri, respond to the following advertisement in a job application of 125 words.

Required, male/female office assistant between 25-30 years of age. The candidate should be a bona fide citizen of India, have a pleasing personality, be a graduate preferably in a foreign language, be proficient in MS office and willing to travel at short notice. Post application with complete CV within 10 working days to Sadhna Sharma Sheetal Enterprises 34 Vidyut road near Vishal PVR

- 6 With just a few weeks to go before the commencement of the class XII and X board exams, the Prime minister of India addressed the students of the aforesaid classes during the radio programme *Mann ki baat*. Write a report to be published in a local newsletter within 125 words about the content of the Prime minister's advice and concerns. Provide all necessary details.

OR

Former President Ram Nath Kovind in one of his addresses to the nation advised all citizens to respect nature in any crisis. He short listed key aspects about the same. Some are as follows:

- ✓ "Sanitation and cleanliness are the humblest of human virtues. It needed a Mahatma to show us that by attaching utmost priority to them".
- ✓ "The nation-wide Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is a great step in this awakening".
- ✓ "Our ancestors saw nature as our mother and asked us to respect it".
- ✓ "Abnormal weather and pandemics have given us reason to wonder whether we have lost our way or can we make a comeback"
- ✓ "Nature is reminding us to acknowledge our interdependency and quintessential equality".

Write an article on the basis of the aforesaid input provided, titled *Respect Nature*, within 150 words, to be published in a magazine titled *The planet around us* in order to motivate people to respect nature rather than misuse it.

**Section C: Literature Textbook and Supplementary Reading Text
(40 Marks)**

- 7 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for **ANY ONE** of the two **1x6**
given.
- 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
and breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth;
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er darkened ways
Made for our searching."
(A Thing of Beauty)
- i Keats defines beauty as
- A. transient.
 - B. eternal.
 - C. illusionary.
 - D. short-lived.
- ii 'Will keep a bower quiet for us' means all of the following EXCEPT
- A. create a peaceful, shady place.

- B. provide a shelter.
- C. will decrease noise pollution.
- D. nature's canopy.

iii Based on the extract, choose the correct option with reference to the two statements given below:

- 1. Beautiful things uplift the soul.
 - 2. Beauty is everchanging.
- A. 1 can be inferred from the extract but 2 cannot.
 - B. 2 can be inferred from the extract but 1 cannot.
 - C. both 1 and 2 can be inferred from the extract.
 - D. both 1 and 2 cannot be inferred from the extract.

iv The things that cause unhappiness are

- (1) lack of noble natures
- (2) old tunes
- (3) dull days
- (4) calm mind
- (5) a flowery band
- (6) strong relationships

Choose the most appropriate option:

- A. (1) and (2)
- B. (1) and (3)
- C. (4) and (5)
- D. (3) and (6)

v State an example of hyperbole from the given extract.

vi Choose the most appropriate option to complete the sentence.

According to John Keats, "a thing of beauty" is like a

- A. destroyer.
- B. hypocrite.
- C. nurturer.
- D. a perishable object.

OR

B. "No, in country money, the country scale of gain,
The requisite lift of spirit has never been found,
Or so the voice of the country seems to complain,
I can't help owning the great relief it would be
To put these people at one stroke out of their pain.
And then next day as I come back into the sane,
I wonder how I should like you to come to me
And offer to put me gently out of my pain."
(A Roadside Stand)

i The 'country money' contextually here refers to

- A. money kept aside for the rural development.
- B. wealth accumulated by the whole country.

- C. meager income earned by the countryside people.
D. riches collected by the ancestral farmers over time.
- ii Pick the option that mentions elements justifying the monetary aspect as the 'requisite lift of spirit'.
1. confidence
 2. ego
 3. self-esteem
 4. status
 5. fame
- A. 1, 2, 4
B. 2, 4, 5
C. 1, 3, 4
D. 1, 3, 5
- iii Choose the correct option with respect to the two statements given below.
Statement 1: The poet is agitated and depressed.
Statement 2: The poet realizes the futility of his thought about giving up.
- A. Statement 1 can be inferred but Statement 2 cannot be inferred.
 - B. Statement 1 cannot be inferred but Statement 2 can be inferred.
 - C. Statement 1 and Statement 2 can be inferred.
 - D. Statement 1 and Statement 2 cannot be inferred.
- iv Choose the option that correctly paraphrases the given lines from the above extract.
- "I can't help owning the great relief it would be
To put these people at one stroke out of their pain."**
- A. The poet wants to shift the impoverished people to a new place.
 - B. The poet feels that death is a better option for these people than living such a miserable life.
 - C. The poet wants to eliminate poverty from society.
 - D. The poet states that it is important that these people become rich.
- v Rewrite the phrase "come back into sane" in your own words.
- vi Complete the sentence given below.
The most likely effect of the use of enjambment in line 4 of the extract is _____.
- 8 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for **ANY ONE** of the two **1x4** given.
- A. "Have you ever been there? It's a wonderful town still, with big old frame houses, huge lawns, and tremendous trees whose branches meet overhead and roof the streets. And in 1894, summer evenings were twice as long, and people sat out on their lawns, the men smoking cigars and talking quietly, the women waving palm-leaf fans, with the fire-flies all around, in a peaceful world. To be back there with the First World War still twenty years off, and World War II over forty years in the future... I wanted two tickets for that."

(The Third Level)

- i Who does 'you' refer to?
- A. Charley's psychiatrist, Sam Weiner.
 - B. Charley's wife, Louisa.
 - C. The man sitting at the ticket counter.
 - D. Nobody in particular, it is a figure of speech.
- ii Choose the option that does **NOT** describe the society represented in the above extract.
- A. content, peace-loving
 - B. leisurely, wonderful
 - C. orthodox, anxious
 - D. comfortable, upper class
- iii Imagine that the city of Galesburg is hosting a series of conferences and workshops. In which of the following conferences or workshops are you least likely to find the description of Galesburg given in the above extract?
- A. Gorgeous Galesburg: Archiving a Tourist Paradise
 - B. Welcome to the home you deserve: Galesburg Realtors
 - C. Re-imagining a Warless Future: Technology for Peace
 - D. The Woman Question: The world of women at home
- iv "Tremendous trees whose branches meet overhead and roof the streets" is **NOT** an example of
- i. imagery
 - ii. metaphor
 - iii. alliteration
 - iv. hyperbole

OR

- B. "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. But sometimes she remembered such men as General Takima, who at home beat his wife cruelly, though no one mentioned it now that he had fought so victorious a battle in Manchuria. If a man like that could be so cruel to a woman in his power, would he not be cruel to one like this for instance?"

(The Enemy)

- i Complete the given sentence with a word which conveys Hana's feelings about the prisoner.
- Hana looked at the prisoner of war with _____.
- ii Choose an appropriate title for the extract.
- A. Victorious Women
 - B. Cruel behaviour towards the Prisoners of War

C. Sad reception of General Takima

D. Japan's loss of Manchuria

iii Rewrite the phrase "flickers of rumour" in your own words.

iv Identify any one contrast in the extract.

9 Read the given extracts and answer the questions for **ANY ONE** of the two 1x6 given.

A. "Then the poet spoke. He couldn't have addressed a more dazed and silent audience - no one knew what he was talking about and his accent defeated any attempt to understand what he was saying. The whole thing lasted about an hour; then the poet left and we all dispersed in utter bafflement - what are we doing? What is an English poet doing in a film studio which makes Tamil films for the simplest sort of people? People whose lives least afforded them the possibility of cultivating a taste for English poetry? The poet looked pretty baffled too, for he too must have felt the sheer incongruity of his talk about the thrills and travails of an English poet. His visit remained an unexplained mystery."

(Poets and Pancakes)

i Choose the appropriate option with reference to the extract.
The audience were dazed

A. because they were not accustomed to listening to poetry.

B. they had never before seen an Englishman.

C. they failed to comprehend what the poet was speaking.

D. they were already bored.

ii Refer to the extract and complete the sentence given below:

The English poet was _____ when he was addressing the dazed audience.

iii The English poet's visit is an unexplained mystery because _____.

iv Complete the analogy with a word from the extract:

noisy : silent :: assembled : _____

v Identify the poet in the extract.

vi Complete the sentence given below.

The above extract employs _____ style of writing.

OR

B. "Poor man! It was in honour of this last lesson that he had put on his fine Sunday clothes, and now I understood why the old men of the village were sitting there in the back of the room. It was because they were sorry, too, that they had not gone to school more. It was their way of thanking our master for his forty years of faithful service and of showing their respect for the country that was theirs no more."

(The Last Lesson)

i The description provided is of

A. a garden

B. an orchard

C. a school premises

- D. a shrubbery
- ii 'He' in the passage is:
- Franz
 - M. Hamel
 - Hauser
 - the Mayor
- iii The narrator thinks he is a "poor man" because he is
- empathetic.
 - sympathetic.
 - sympathetic to those who are impoverished.
 - a friend.
- iv The country is
- Prussia
 - France
 - Austria
 - Alsace and Lorraine
- v State a reason due to which the old men were sitting at the back of the room.
- vi An antonym of the word "dishonest" from the extract is _____.
- 10 Answer **ANY FIVE** of the following six questions in about 40-50 words **5x2**
- Based on your reading of Umberto Eco's interview with Mukund Padmanabhan, state any one strategy that an interviewer must adopt to make the interview engaging for the interviewee. (The Interview)
 - In what ways does Sophie's claim (of meeting Danny Casey), contribute to our understanding of the complexities of Sophie's character? (any one) (Going Places)
 - Why does Pablo Neruda leave the readers alone to count till twelve towards the end of the poem Keeping Quiet? State any one reason.
 - State a way in which the roadside stand described by Robert Frost is significant in the face of societal change. (A Roadside Stand)
 - Give a reason due to which Selma Lagerlof sets The Rattrap during Christmas.
 - State a reason due to which the bangle-makers cannot organise themselves into a cooperative. (Lost Spring)
- 11 Answer **ANY TWO** of the following three questions, in about 40-50 words. **2x2**
- State a way in which Bama's description of the "novelties and oddities" she experienced on her way back home contribute to the readers' understanding of Bama's childhood. (Memories of Childhood – We too are Human Beings)
 - "The upbringing of a ruler decided whether they will be just or impulsive." Based on your reading of The Tiger King justify the Tiger King's impulsive behavior as an administrator by providing a reason from the lesson. (The Tiger King)
 - Provide an instance to show that even though the servants in Sadao's house did not support his decision to harbor an American, they continued being dedicated to Sadao and his family. (The Enemy)

12 Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120 – 150 1x5 words.

A. Biseswar Singh is an acclaimed athlete who has recently announced giving up on sports because of successive defeats in international and national events. As his friend, write a letter to him, sharing advice to help him overcome this mental roadblock caused by the fear of losing after having read William Douglas' autobiography.

Develop your response, based on your understanding of Deep Water, along with the given ideas:

⇒ Identify the reason behind his mental roadblock

⇒ Explain that its common

⇒ Share William Douglas's experience – his resolve- his perseverance- his victory over fear

⇒ Offer advice

Begin this way –

Dear Biseswar

I hope you're feeling okay. Your announcement to drop out and not participate in the upcoming ...

OR

B. It has been more than a year since M.K. Gandhi's arrival in Champaran. Within this period, M.K. Gandhi successfully brought about several changes in the villages in Champaran.

As Rajkumar Shukla, write a letter to a friend in Patna stating two changes in your life brought by M.K. Gandhi's arrival.

Begin this way –

Dear Kautilya

I'm sorry for not being able to write back to you earlier. With Gandhi's arrival, every villager's life in Champaran has changed ...

13 Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120 – 150 1x5 words.

A. As Raj/Riya Saxena, write a speech in 120-150 words to be delivered during morning assembly on the topic - The Impact of Human Actions on Antarctica. Refer to The Journey to the End of the Earth and include any two impacts stated by Tishani Doshi in your speech.

OR

B. It has been four months since Derry returned home crying after his last meeting with Mr. Lamb he realized that Mr. Lamb had passed away. Since then, Derry seems to have changed a lot.

As Derry's mother, write a diary entry in 120-150 words stating any three positive changes that you have observed in Derry's behaviour after his brief meetings with Mr. Lamb.