

**SECOND YEAR HIGHER SECONDARY EXAMINATION, MARCH 2026**

Part - I

Time : 2½ Hours

**ENGLISH**

Cool-off time : 15 Minutes

Maximum : 80 Scores

**General Instructions to Candidates :**

- There is a 'Cool-off time' of 15 minutes in addition to the writing time.
- Use the 'Cool-off time' to get familiar with questions and to plan your answers.
- Read questions carefully before answering.
- Write answers to the specific number of questions as instructed.

**(Score)****Q. No. 1 to 4 : Read the passage and answer the questions given below. (4)**

He walked up some dark streets, deserted except for small pockets of wary-looking kids wearing gang colours. Walking the streets had not relaxed him; neither had the fight flick. All it had done was to stir him up. He let himself quietly into his Aunt Lucy's apartment and went straight to bed.

1. From which lesson is the excerpt taken ? (1)
2. Who is the "he" referred to in this context ? (1)
3. How does the narrator describe the children's appearance ? (1)
4. Which word in the passage is a synonym for "film" ? (1)

**Q. No. 5 to 8 : Read the lines and answer the questions given below.**

(4)

Above us, a 'ship of the sky' roars northwards,  
drowning my brother's loud cries –  
the Chief Minister's off like an arrow to the Centre  
to clamour for more grains, now flying high  
above the cash crops, now growing tall like the trees,  
since no one here promotes the farming of rice.

Can we get some husk from the Centre, too,  
to make toys with it ? I don't know.

5. Identify the poet. (1)
6. What compelling reasons drive the Chief Minister to visit the Centre ? (1)
7. What is the "ship of the sky" ? (1)
8. Which word in the passage is synonymous with "shell" ? (1)

**Q. No. 9 to 12 : Answer any three of the following questions. Each carries 2 scores.**

9. Report the following conversation into reported speech : (2)  
Sudha Murty : Ratna, what do you talk with each person for the whole lunch hour ?  
Ratna : They share their troubles with me.
10. Homonyms are words that are pronounced and/or spelled the same, but have different meanings. Look at the word given in the box below. Now, write two sentences each in which this word has two different meanings. (2)

• Bat
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An example given for you.

• Bank

He is working in a bank.

The children were playing on the bank of the river.

11. Fill in the blanks with suitable idioms : (2)
- (a) The famous singer \_\_\_\_\_ gives autographs to her fans, so you'll be lucky if you get one.  
(once in a blue moon, pros and cons, the last straw)
- (b) In the debate about climate change, some people \_\_\_\_\_ and refuse to take a stance.  
(once in a blue moon, pros and cons, sit on the fence)
12. According to Wangari Maathai who are the primary caretakers in Africa and how did they become aware of environmental damage ? (2)

**Q. No. 13 to 19 : Answer any five of the following questions. Each carries 4 scores.**

13. The poem *Rice* by Chemmanur Chacko emphasizes the significance of agrarian culture and highlights the drawbacks of cash crop farming. In your opinion, which type of farming culture is better suited for the environment of Kerala ? Prepare a write-up on this topic. (4)
14. Prepare a blurb of the novel *Khasakkinte Ithihasam* [The Legends of Khasak] by O. V. Vijayan employing the following details. (4)

- Title : *Khasakkinte Ithihasam* [The Legends of Khasak]
- Author : O. V. Vijayan
- Genre : Magical Realism
- Broader classification : Novel
- Translation into English : O.V. Vijayan (1994)
- Theme : Protagonist Ravi's search for meanings in life-presentation of the rustic life in Khasak-search for identity.
- Major characters: Ravi, Allappicha Mollakka, Appukkili, Maimuna
- Publisher : Penguin Books.
- Year of Publication : 1994

15. Elaborate the idea conveyed in the following lines : (4)

God too must have stammered

when He created man.

That is why all the words of man

carry different meanings.

That is why everything he utters

from his prayers to his commands

stammers,

like poetry.

16. Imagine your class has decided to stage the one-act play *The Hour of Truth* at the school youth festival. Suppose you are the stage manager for the performance. Draft a befitting announcement for the performance. (4)

17. The following passage contains a few errors. Edit it. (4)

In the days that followed, I kept thinking about those kids and that moment. India was answering the search for purpose that I has felt ever since I was a child. I was being challenged to finds my identity; I wanted to be part of making things better about children. I knew then that this could be my country, and that whatever I did here could make more of a difference than in the manycured reality of my university life in the States.

18. In the anecdote *Horegallu*, Sudha Murty shares her childhood experiences. Do you have similar childhood memories in your life ? Prepare a short narrative about one of your childhood experiences. (4)

19. In the short story *Crime and Punishment*, the teacher slapped the boy on the cheek after he gave an incorrect answer. This action is believed to be a result of the teacher's anger, frustration and stress. Can you suggest some ways to manage anger, frustration and stress ? Write down four sentences suggesting ideas of stress management. (4)

**Q. No. 20 to 25 : Answer any five of the following questions. Each carries 6 scores.**

20. Imagine meeting the postal assistant at the animal dispensary where she currently works. What questions would you ask her ? Create an imaginary conversation that takes place between you and the postal assistant who is now working at the animal dispensary. (6)
21. Social entrepreneurship refers to the use of entrepreneurial principles to create and sustain social value. It involves identifying and addressing social problems, such as poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental issues, through innovative and sustainable solutions. Write a short essay about social entrepreneurship programmes initiated by Irfan Alam and Shaheen Mistri. (6)
22. Imagine you are a reporter of a national daily. You witnessed the Excise Inspector and his/her team catching a drug peddlers' (a drug peddler is a person who sells illegal or illicit drugs) group in your town. Draft a detailed news report about the incident. (6)
23. Paddy reclamation is the process of converting paddy land (fields used for growing rice) into other uses by filling or altering the land, often irreversibly. Imagine your village is famous for paddy cultivation. However, widespread paddy reclamation has recently occurred in your village. You would like to bring this issue to the village officer's attention. Draft a letter to the village officer outlining the issue. (6)
24. As part of the World Environment Day celebration at your school, the Environment Club has decided to host an inter-school seminar. Rajendra Singh, the Magsaysay Award winner of 2001 and known as the "Water Man of India," has graciously agreed to inaugurate the programme. As the editor of your school magazine, prepare six interview questions to ask him. Prepare the likely responses too. (6)
25. Nomita is a typical Indian wife who is marginalized by her husband, Ajith, while Ratna is a woman working as a senior clerk at a company in Mumbai. What aspects of women empowerment are highlighted through these characters ? Write a comparative study of these two characters, focusing on the element of women empowerment. (6)

**Q. No. 26 to 28 : Answer any two of the following questions. Each carries 8 scores.**

26. Your school's Oratory Club is conducting a speech competition on the topic "Women's Economic Empowerment: Pathways to Prosperity." Imagine you are one of the participants in this competition. Draft a speech that you would deliver on this occasion. (8)
27. Read the following advertisement and prepare a job application letter and resume. (8)

<b>WANTED</b>	
<b>Business Administrator</b>	
Post	: Business Administrator
Qualification	: MBA
Experience	: 5 Years Experience as Business Administrator
Technical Skills Required :	
• Financial Management & Accounting	
• Advanced Microsoft Office Proficiency	
• Business Intelligence and Data Analytics	
Salary	: ₹ 60,000 per month
Fluency in English is a must	
Apply to	
The Chairman, SammaaN Foundation, Mumbai, PB NO : 76	

28. Read the poem below and then compare it with the poem *Mending Wall* by Robert Frost. (8)

**As I Grew Older**

It was a long time ago.  
I have almost forgotten my dream.  
But it was there then,  
In front of me,  
Bright like a sun, –  
My dream.

And then the wall rose,  
Rose slowly,  
Slowly,  
Between me and my dream.

Rose slowly, slowly,  
Dimming,  
Hiding,  
The light of my dream.  
Rose until it touched the sky, —  
The wall.

Shadow.  
I am black.

I lie down in the shadow.  
No longer the light of my dream before me,  
Above me.  
Only the thick wall.  
Only the shadow.

My hands!  
My dark hands!  
Break through the wall!  
Find my dream!  
Help me to shatter this darkness,  
To smash this night,  
To break this shadow  
Into a thousand lights of sun,  
Into a thousand whirling dreams  
Of sun!

Langston Hughes