

Model Question Paper 1
Half-Yearly Examination 2026-27
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Time Allowed: 3 Hours

Maximum Marks: 80

General Instructions:

1. This paper is divided into three sections: A (Reading), B (Writing and Grammar) and C (Literature).
2. All sections are compulsory.
3. Read the questions carefully before answering them.
4. Write neat, well-organised answers.

SECTION A: READING (20 Marks)

Passage 1 (Discursive/Unseen) — 10 Marks

For a long time, many students believed that science was something to be learned only from a textbook, memorised the night before a test, and then forgotten soon after. Science fairs are quietly changing this idea, giving students a chance to ask their own questions, build their own models, and discover that science can be exciting rather than just another subject to pass.

Consider Riya, a student of Class 8, who wanted to know why the water from her school garden's tap sometimes looked muddy after heavy rain. Instead of simply asking her teacher for the answer, she decided to build a small working model of a water filter for the school science fair, using sand, gravel, charcoal and an old plastic bottle. Her model did not work perfectly on the first try, and she had to change the arrangement of the layers twice before the water finally came out clear. Riya later said that this struggle taught her far more about filtration than any single chapter in her science book ever had.

Stories like Riya's are common at science fairs, where the real value lies less in prizes and more in the process itself. Students learn to observe a problem carefully, form a guess about its cause, test their idea, and improve their work when it does not succeed the first time. Along the way, they also learn to work in teams, manage limited time and materials, and explain their ideas clearly to visitors who stop by their stall — skills that are just as valuable as the science itself.

Organising a good science fair does take effort. Teachers usually give students several weeks to plan their projects, encourage the use of simple, low-cost or recycled materials instead of expensive kits, and pair younger students with slightly older 'mentor' students who can guide them. Some schools have also started inviting local engineers or college students to walk around during the fair, answering questions and suggesting small improvements to the young exhibitors' projects.

What makes science fairs truly worthwhile is the shift they bring about in how students see science itself. A subject that once seemed distant and full of difficult formulas suddenly becomes something a student can touch, build and even get wrong before getting right — and that hands-on curiosity, once sparked, rarely fades away.

1. According to the passage, what change are science fairs quietly bringing about? [1]

- (a) The idea that science can be exciting and hands-on, rather than only textbook learning
- (b) Science fairs are being cancelled in most schools
- (c) Students no longer need to study science at all
- (d) Science fairs replace all classroom teaching

Answer: (a) — The idea that science can be exciting and hands-on, rather than only textbook learning.

2. What made Riya curious enough to start her water filter project? [1]

- (a) She wanted to win a prize
- (b) She noticed that the water from her school garden's tap sometimes looked muddy after rain
- (c) Her teacher forced her to do a project
- (d) She read about filtration in a newspaper

Answer: (b) — She noticed that the water from her school garden's tap sometimes looked muddy after rain.

3. According to the passage, what did Riya say taught her more about filtration than her textbook chapter? [1]
- (a) Watching a video on filtration
 - (b) The struggle of building and improving her model until it worked
 - (c) Reading extra library books
 - (d) Asking her friends for the answer

Answer: (b) — The struggle of building and improving her model until it worked.

4. The word 'exhibitors' in paragraph 4 refers to: [1]
- (a) Judges who award prizes
 - (b) Visitors who walk around the fair
 - (c) Students who display their projects at the fair
 - (d) Teachers who organise the fair

Answer: (c) — Students who display their projects at the fair.

5. According to the passage, what skills, besides science itself, do students learn while preparing for a science fair? [2]

Answer: They learn to observe problems carefully, test and improve their ideas, work in teams, manage time and materials, and explain their ideas clearly to visitors who stop by their stall.

6. In your own words, explain what the writer means by saying that hands-on curiosity, 'once sparked, rarely fades away' (last paragraph). [2]

Answer: The writer means that once students genuinely experience the excitement of building, testing and understanding something practically through activities like science fairs, their real interest in learning tends to stay with them afterwards, rather than being only a temporary, one-time feeling.

7. Find a word from paragraph 2 that means the same as 'unable to do something properly, leading to annoyance'. [2]

Answer: 'Frustrating', though the exact word in the passage describing the water filter's early failures is implied by 'did not work perfectly on the first try' — accept the closest matching word students identify with reasoning; the clearly intended answer word is 'struggle' (paragraph 2, describing the difficulty Riya faced).

Passage 2 (Case-based/Factual) — 10 Marks

Every year in November, Silver Hills Public School holds its Annual Sports Day, a day the students look forward to as much as their winter holidays. Three years ago, the school's Sports Committee noticed something they wanted to change: while boys signed up eagerly for track and field events, very few girls came forward to compete, often saying they felt shy or feared losing in front of the whole school.

To address this, the school introduced a few simple changes. It added new events such as a shuttle relay and a skipping competition, which many girls said felt less intimidating than a straight sprint race. It also started a 'practice week' before the big day, where a physical education teacher helped interested students, regardless of skill level, practise together after school hours.

The Sports Committee kept a record of the number of girl students who took part in at least one event each year:

Year	Girl Participants
Year 1 (before changes)	22
Year 2 (changes introduced)	48
Year 3 (this year)	70

Teachers have noticed that the rise in participation has brought other benefits too — more students now stay back voluntarily for after-school games, and the school's under-14 girls' relay team, formed from Sports Day practice groups, recently won a medal at the district-level meet. A few parents did initially worry that practice sessions would affect study time, but the school addressed this by keeping practice week strictly limited to forty-five minutes after school, and results this year showed no drop in the class average marks.

8. Why did the Sports Committee decide to introduce changes to Sports Day three years ago? [1]
- (a) To reduce the number of events
 - (b) Because very few girls were coming forward to compete
 - (c) To shorten the school day

(d) To cancel Sports Day altogether

Answer: (b) — Because very few girls were coming forward to compete.

9. Which of these was NOT mentioned as one of the changes introduced? [1]

(a) A shuttle relay event

(b) A skipping competition

(c) A 'practice week' after school

(d) A cash prize of Rs 2000 for every participant

Answer: (d) — A cash prize of Rs 2000 for every participant — not mentioned in the passage.

10. By how many did the number of girl participants increase from Year 1 to Year 3? [1]

(a) 26

(b) 48

(c) 70

(d) 22

Answer: (b) — $70 - 22 = 48$.

11. What can be inferred about the pattern of increase in girl participants across the three years? [1]

(a) It grew by a large, fairly similar number in both periods (26, then 22), showing steady and sustained growth rather than a one-time rise

(b) It decreased in Year 3

(c) It grew only between Year 2 and Year 3

(d) It remained exactly the same each year

Answer: (a) — The increase was 26 (Year 1-2) and 22 (Year 2-3) — a fairly similar, sustained rise rather than a single jump.

12. State two benefits noticed by the school as a result of increased participation, other than the rise in numbers itself. [2]

Answer: More students began staying back voluntarily for after-school games, and the school's under-14 girls' relay team (formed from Sports Day practice groups) won a medal at the district-level meet.

13. Explain the concern some parents raised, and how the school addressed it. [2]

Answer: Some parents worried that practice sessions would affect students' study time; the school addressed this by limiting practice week strictly to forty-five minutes after school, after which results showed no drop in the class average marks.

14. Based on the passage, suggest one more step the school could take to encourage even more student participation in Sports Day. [2]

Answer: Any reasonable suggestion, e.g. introducing a fun team event for beginners, giving every participant (not just winners) a certificate, or holding an inter-house cheering competition to build enthusiasm.

SECTION B: WRITING AND GRAMMAR (20 Marks)

Grammar (10 Marks)

Q15-Q18: Fill in each blank with the most appropriate option from those given.

15. All students ____ (must/might/need) wear their ID cards inside the school campus; it is a school rule. [1]

Answer: must

16. She ____ (is playing/plays/played) badminton every evening after school. [1]

Answer: plays

17. By the time the bell rang, we ____ (had finished/finish/will finish) our test. [1]

Answer: had finished

18. There is ____ (a/an/the) old clock tower near ____ (a/an/the) market in our town. [1]

Answer: an; the

Q19-Q21: The following passage has one error in each numbered line. Write the incorrect word and the correction, as shown.

19. Each of the students have submitted their project on time. [1]

Incorrect: "have" → **Correction:** "has"

20. She don't like to play outdoor games in winter. [1]

Incorrect: "don't" → Correction: "doesn't"

21. This is the most easiest chapter in the whole book. [1]

Incorrect: "most easiest" → Correction: "easiest"

Q22-Q24: Rearrange the given words/phrases into meaningful sentences.

22. the / gardener / birds / fed / every evening [1]

Answer: The gardener fed the birds every evening.

23. must / all / follow / students / the school rules [1]

Answer: All students must follow the school rules.

24. had / already / started / the class / by the time / we / entered / the room [1]

Answer: The class had already started by the time we entered the room.

Writing (10 Marks)

25. You are Aryan/Ananya, residing at 12, Palm Street, Nagpur. You have noticed that many people leave the tap running near the public park's drinking water point, wasting a large amount of water every day. Write a letter to the Editor of a local newspaper, in about 80-100 words, drawing attention to this problem and suggesting ways to prevent the wastage of water. [5]

Marking Guidance: Format (address, date, subject, salutation, complimentary close) — 1 mark; Content (clear description of the problem with specific, real-life detail) — 2 marks; Expression (grammar, coherence, appropriate tone) — 2 marks.

26. Study the following data on the number of saplings planted by the Eco Club of a school over four years, and write an analytical paragraph in 80-100 words: Year 1 - 15 saplings; Year 2 - 30 saplings; Year 3 - 42 saplings; Year 4 - 60 saplings. Your paragraph should describe the trend shown by the data, suggest a possible reason for it, and mention one likely benefit of this trend continuing. [5]

Marking Guidance: Format/topic sentence — 1 mark; Interpretation of data/trend (steady increase over four years) — 2 marks; Reasoning and benefit, with coherent expression — 2 marks.

SECTION C: LITERATURE (40 Marks)

Reference to Context (10 Marks)

Q27-29. Poorvi — Unit 1: 'The Wit that Won Hearts' [5 Marks]

In this episode, a courtier who is jealous of Tenali Rama's popularity in King Krishnadevaraya's court sets him a tricky challenge in front of the whole court, expecting him to fail and be embarrassed. Tenali Rama listens calmly, then gives a quick, clever answer that not only meets the challenge but also turns it back on the courtier, leaving the king delighted and the whole court amused.

27. In this episode, who sets a tricky challenge for Tenali Rama in the royal court? [1]

- (a) The King himself, to test his loyalty
- (b) A courtier jealous of Tenali Rama's popularity
- (c) A visiting foreign scholar
- (d) Tenali Rama's own family member

Answer: (b) — A courtier jealous of Tenali Rama's popularity.

28. What does the courtier expect will happen when he challenges Tenali Rama in front of the court? [2]

Answer: He expects Tenali Rama to fail the challenge and be embarrassed in front of the king and the whole court, which would lower Tenali Rama's standing and raise the courtier's own importance.

29. Explain how Tenali Rama's response to the challenge turns the situation back on the courtier who set it. [2]

Answer: Instead of struggling with the challenge, Tenali Rama answers it cleverly and, in doing so, exposes the courtier's own foolishness or ill will in trying to trap him; this reversal delights the king and the court, so the very trick meant to embarrass Tenali Rama ends up embarrassing the courtier instead.

Q30-32. Poorvi — Unit 2: 'A Tale of Valour: Major Somnath Sharma and the Battle of Badgam' [5 Marks]

This part of the account describes Major Somnath Sharma and his company defending Srinagar airport at the Battle of Badgam in November 1947. Heavily outnumbered by raiders advancing on the airfield, Major Sharma continues to direct his men's fire calmly, sending word to headquarters that although the enemy is dangerously close and his troops are outnumbered, he will not withdraw and will fight on to the last.

30. What were Major Somnath Sharma and his company defending during the Battle of Badgam? [1]

- (a) A railway station
- (b) Srinagar airport
- (c) A river bridge
- (d) A grain warehouse

Answer: (b) — Srinagar airport.

31. According to this account, what message did Major Somnath Sharma send to headquarters, and what did it show about his state of mind? [2]

Answer: He reported that the enemy was very close and that his troops were heavily outnumbered and under heavy fire, yet declared that he would not withdraw and would fight to the last; this shows his calm courage and firm resolve even while fully aware of the danger he faced.

32. Why were Major Somnath Sharma and his men at a serious disadvantage during this battle? [2]

Answer: They were heavily outnumbered by the raiders advancing on the airfield and were under heavy enemy fire, yet had to hold their position so that the airport would not fall into enemy hands.

Short Answer Type Questions (18 Marks)

Poorvi — Unit 1: Wit and Wisdom [9 Marks]

Q33-Q35: Answer each of the following in 30-40 words. (3 marks each)

33. In 'A Concrete Example', what quality does the story suggest a person needs in order to see real results while working in a garden? [3]

Answer: The story suggests that patience and steady, hands-on effort are needed, since a garden does not show results immediately — a person must keep working carefully and wait for the effect of their effort to become visible over time.

34. Based on its title, 'Wisdom Paves the Way', what do you think helps the characters move closer to solving the mystery in this story? [3]

Answer: The title suggests that careful thinking, patience and the wise use of reasoning — rather than luck or force — gradually lead the characters toward a solution, showing that wisdom, applied step by step, clears the way to the answer.

35. Apart from being funny, what deeper purpose do you think Tenali Rama's witty remarks serve in the royal court, based on 'The Wit that Won Hearts'? [3]

Answer: His witty remarks are not merely for entertainment; they often expose foolishness, correct unfair behaviour, or resolve tricky situations without confrontation, showing that his humour carries a deeper wisdom that protects fairness and good sense in the court.

Poorvi — Unit 2: Values and Dispositions [6 Marks]

Q36-Q37: Answer each of the following in 30-40 words. (3 marks each)

36. What was Dr Verghese Kurien's main achievement, as suggested by the account 'Verghese Kurien — I Too Had A Dream'? [3]

Answer: Dr Verghese Kurien built the Amul dairy cooperative movement in Anand, Gujarat, empowering small farmers to own and run their own dairy cooperative; his work, often called the White Revolution, helped transform India into one of the largest milk-producing countries in the world.

37. In the poem 'Somebody's Mother', what do the children do that shows kindness towards the elderly woman? [3]

Answer: The children stop what they are doing and carefully help the elderly woman cross the busy street safely, treating her with the same care and respect they would want shown to their own mother.

Poorvi — Unit 3: Mystery and Magic [3 Marks]

Q38: Answer the following in 30-40 words. (3 marks)

38. In 'The Case of the Fifth Word', what kind of thinking does the main character most likely use to move closer to solving the mystery, and why is this approach effective? [3]

Answer: The main character most likely uses careful, logical thinking — noticing small clues, questioning assumptions, and connecting details step by step rather than guessing; this approach is effective because mysteries are usually solved by patiently piecing together minor details that others overlook, rather than by jumping to quick conclusions.

Long Answer Type Questions (12 Marks)

Q39. Poorvi — Unit 3: Mystery and Magic ('The Magic Brush of Dreams') [6 Marks]

Based on the title 'The Magic Brush of Dreams' and the theme of Unit 3, 'Mystery and Magic', write in about 80-100 words what you think happens when the main character discovers that objects drawn by the brush come to life, and what lesson this teaches about using a special gift wisely.

Answer: Based on the title, the story is likely about a character who discovers a magical paintbrush that brings whatever is drawn to life. At first this discovery probably feels wonderful and exciting, letting the character create things they could never otherwise have. However, such power usually also comes with responsibility, and the character likely learns that a special gift must be used carefully and unselfishly, perhaps to help others or solve a real problem, rather than only for personal gain. The story's lesson is probably that imagination and creative power are most valuable when used wisely and with good intention, not for selfish or careless wishes.

OR

Based on the theme of Unit 1, 'Wit and Wisdom', and the story 'The Wit that Won Hearts', write in about 80-100 words what qualities Tenali Rama displays when he handles the tricky challenge in the royal court, and why such qualities are valuable in everyday life.

Answer: In this episode, Tenali Rama displays quick thinking, calmness under pressure and a good sense of humour, using clever words rather than anger to turn a tricky challenge to his advantage. Instead of feeling threatened by the courtier's trick, he stays composed and responds in a way that reveals the true situation, protecting his own dignity while entertaining the king and the court. Such qualities are valuable in everyday life because people often face awkward or unfair situations, and responding with wit and calm confidence rather than aggression usually resolves conflicts more effectively, earns greater respect, and avoids the lasting harm that angry reactions can cause.

Q40. Poorvi — Unit 3: Mystery and Magic ('Spectacular Wonders') [6 Marks]

Based on the title 'Spectacular Wonders' and the theme of Unit 3, 'Mystery and Magic', write in about 80-100 words why you think natural wonders or phenomena often fill people with a sense of curiosity and awe, giving one example of a natural wonder you find fascinating.

Answer: Natural wonders or phenomena, such as a piece titled 'Spectacular Wonders' might explore, often fill people with curiosity and awe because they are far larger, older or more mysterious than anything humans can create, reminding us how small we are compared to the forces of nature. Their scale, beauty or strangeness makes people want to understand how they were formed and why they behave as they do. For example, the Northern Lights, with their shifting curtains of colour across the night sky, fascinate me because they show that nature can be strikingly beautiful in ways that are still not fully expected, encouraging people to keep observing, questioning and learning about the world around them.

OR

Based on the historical account 'A Tale of Valour: Major Somnath Sharma and the Battle of Badgam', write in about 80-100 words what this account teaches about courage and sacrifice, and why Major Somnath Sharma is remembered as a national hero.

Answer: This account teaches that true courage means continuing to do one's duty and protect others even when facing near-certain danger, rather than retreating out of fear. Major Somnath Sharma, though heavily outnumbered at the Battle of Badgam, chose to hold his position and keep fighting so that Srinagar airport would not fall to the raiders, ultimately sacrificing his life for this cause. He is remembered as a national hero because his selfless courage helped protect a vital position at a critical moment for the country, and his bravery was later recognised with the Param Vir Chakra, India's highest military honour, awarded to him posthumously as its first-ever recipient.