

ENGLISH CORE -Code No. 301
MARKING SCHEME
CLASS-XII-(2025-26)

General Instructions: -

1. The Marking Scheme carries only suggested value points for the answers. These are in the nature of Guidelines only and do not constitute the complete answer. The students can have their own expression and if the expression is correct, then due marks should be awarded accordingly.
2. If a student has attempted an extra question, answer of the question deserving more marks should be retained and the other answer scored out with a note "Extra Question".
3. If more than one option is mentioned in the answer of multiple choice questions, then no marks to be awarded.

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (22 marks)		
1. Answer the following questions, based on the passage above. (Literary Passage)		12
I	'...the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all...'	1
II	...that the sea is a wild, untamed, and menacing force / contribute to the ominous atmosphere of the scene / amplifying the sense of danger that Pip feels	1
III	D) Pip's knowledge of the surrounding area [a) speaks of a scene in a place that feels cold, oppressive, and dangerous, which heightens Pip's sense of fear and helplessness. b) creates a feeling of menace due to the man's appearance, reinforcing Pip's fear and powerlessness in the situation. c) shows his terror and helplessness. d) is the Key because it refers to qualities that would imply Pip is capable and confident, which contradicts the idea of vulnerability.]	1
IV	B) threat [caution would be advice; prediction would involve stating what will happen in the future and an announcement would be a formal declaration. The Key is b) 'threat' as it directly communicates a potential consequence of harm or punishment.]	1
V	(Any one) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being soaked in water and smothered in mud, which are physical conditions that typically cause discomfort) ▪ Limping, which indicates possible injury or physical strain, contributing to discomfort. ▪ Shivering and teeth chattering, which suggests cold or nervousness, both of which are associated with discomfort. 	1
VI	C) Answer the question [The phrase is not specifically asking for increased volume or referring to a physical action like opening the mouth. The phrase is urging Pip to give a verbal response.]	1

VII	It suggests that the man was extremely hungry.	1
VIII	It suggests that he is trying to gather information about Pip's family. When he asks about Pip's mother and looks over his shoulder, it shows he is possibly evaluating his surroundings or considering where Pip's family might be, perhaps to assess if anyone is around to stop him and contemplating the best way to proceed without interference.	2
IX	It increases the tension by emphasising the power dynamic between them. Pip is physically tilted backward, which makes him feel small and defenseless. This action not only makes Pip vulnerable but also intensifies the fear he feels. The man's control over Pip's position enhances the sense of intimidation, creating a more fearful and uneasy atmosphere in the scene.	2
X	A) Pip's encounter with a frightening man who demands information [a) directly addresses the core of the scene, where the man's aggressive behavior and questioning of Pip create tension and fear. b), though relevant to the setting, is more of a background detail than the main focus. c) could have been possible, but it is more of an internal reaction of Pip rather than the central idea of the extract. d), doesn't capture the primary conflict of the scene and the family context is just briefly mentioned.]	1
2.	Answer the following questions, based on given passage.	10
I	B) To explore patterns in career aspirations and the factors influencing them	1
II	Representative	1
III	Start-ups/Family Business	1
For the Visually Impaired Candidates		
	...capturing diverse perspectives from individuals of varying genders, socio-economic statuses, educational backgrounds, and career stages.	1
IV	C) Service professions have a higher percentage of respondents marking them as 'Highly Preferred' compared to corporate jobs.	1
For the Visually Impaired Candidates		
	A) They allow individuals to independently make decisions and innovate.	1
V	A corporate job is better suited for Riya because it provides financial stability through a steady salary and offers structured career paths with clear opportunities for growth. Start-ups, on the other hand, often involve higher risks, irregular income, and less defined progression, which may not align with her preference for stability and predictability. (Response requires reason for corporate job -1 m + reason why start-up / family business is unsuitable- 1 m)	2
VI	D) Difficulty in finding experienced professionals to guide career paths	1
VII	Further studies on emerging industries would provide insights into new and evolving career opportunities, helping youth align their aspirations with market demands. Research on technological advancements could highlight tools like virtual training platforms, AI-driven career guidance, and remote work technologies, making career resources more accessible. (Response requires explanation for emerging industries -1 m + technological advancements - 1 m)	2

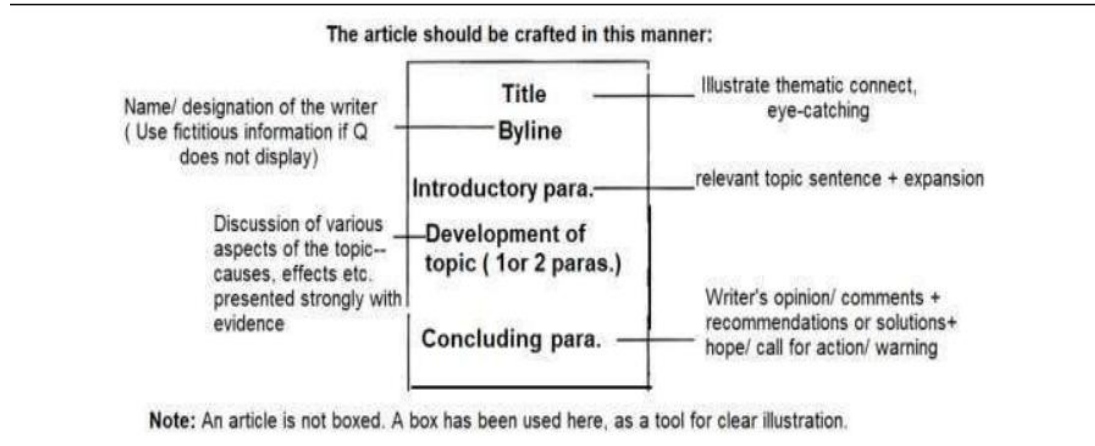
VIII	b) The impact of gender on career preferences	1
SECTION B-CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS (18 marks)		
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Format :1 <p>Box, name of issuing authority- organisation/ agency (top centre), NOTICE (centre), date of issue (aligned left) Authorisation name, designation & signature (bottom left)</p> <p>NOTE-full credit if all aspects included. Partial credit (½ mark) if one-two aspects are missing. No credit if more than two aspects are missing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content: 2 ▪ Accuracy of Spelling and Grammar: 1 	4
4.	<p>Format – 1 Content -2 Accuracy of spelling and grammar -1</p> <p>A-(Letter type formal / third person) B-(Letter type formal, first/ third person)</p>	4
5.	<p>A. Letter to the Editor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Format: 1 (Note -use of ‘Yours truly’ at close) ▪ Organisation of Ideas: 1 ▪ Content: 2 As per cues + ideas ▪ Accuracy of Spelling and Grammar :1 <p>B. Job Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Format: 1 ▪ Organisation of Ideas: 1 ▪ Content: 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Covering Letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to the advertisement • Conveying suitability for the position (as advertised) • Submission of application → Bio data as separate enclosure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile of self • Educational Qualifications (include advertised requirements) • Work experience/s (if relevant) • References • Any other relevant information ▪ Accuracy of Spelling and Grammar :1 	5
6.	Format: 1 Organisation of Ideas: 1 Content: 2 Accuracy of Spelling and Grammar :1	

Article Writing

Format

- Title & By line

Organisation & Content:



Report Writing

Format

- Headline & By line
- Reporting place and date

Paragraphing organisation (Introductory paragraph + one or two Body paragraphs including event details + Concluding paragraph inclusive of witness accounts)

Organisation & Content:

The report should answer these questions			
<p>WHO? name of event, sponsor/ organiser special guests, if any</p>	<p>WHERE & WHEN? date, time, place - town/ city + venue</p>	<p>WHAT & HOW? events/ programme details</p>	<p>WHAT DID THOSE PRESENT THINK? observations/ comments</p>

SECTION C-LITERATURE (40 marks)

7	Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B)	6
A		
I	(Any two) she is frail, aged, in a declining physical condition, vulnerable, weakening health, lacks vitality	1
II	sudden	1

III	It introduces a contrast of vitality, joy and exuberance against the sombre and reflective mood created by the imagery of the mother's frailty.	1
IV	(Any one) certainty of mortality / inevitability of death / transient nature of life	1
V	C) Overwhelmed by a sense of anguish	1
VI	B) The poet makes exclusive use of melancholic imagery in the given lines. [a) True: The 'ashen face' compared to a 'corpse' suggests the speaker's fear of mortality and loss. b) False: While melancholic imagery ('ashen face' etc.) is present, the poet also uses vibrant imagery ('young trees sprinting' and 'merry children spilling') to create a contrast. Thus, melancholic imagery is not used exclusively. c) True: The internal conflict of hiding her sadness resonates deeply with human relationships. d) True: Universal themes such as aging, mortality, and the passage of time make the extract relatable to readers.]	1
OR		
B		
I	The phrase suggests that Aunt's life has been filled with struggles shaped by fear, anxiety, and oppression / The phrase signifies her emotional and psychological state, shaped by years of fear and oppression	1
II	...the enduring power of Aunt Jennifer's creative spirit, even after her death	1
III	The tigers in the panel are bold, fearless, and free, symbolising strength, courage, and confidence. In contrast, Aunt's life is marked by fear, struggle, and oppression, which prevents her from living with the same power and freedom that her tigers represent.	1
IV	wedding band on her finger	1
V	C) A child playing freely in a park, unburdened by responsibilities.	1
VI	B) Art is a timeless expression that outlives its creator, continuing to embody their spirit and desires. [a) is correct because the poet prevails upon the enduring nature of art in this line, as the tigers, symbolising fearlessness and freedom, will persist even after Aunt Jennifer's death. This highlights how art immortalises the creator's emotions, aspirations, and essence, transcending the limitations and constraints of their mortal life. Option b) - d) incorrectly focus on the transience of art or misinterpret the tigers' symbolism.]	1
8.	Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B)	4
A.		
I	Charley's indifference to the cost of old-style bills and his focus on the cheap price of eggs in 1894 shows that he values the simplicity and affordability of the past, where things were less expensive and more relaxed.	1
II	frequent efforts at locating it	1

III	The irony lies in the fact that Louisa initially worries and urges Charley to stop searching for the third level, but later, both of them end up looking for it together every weekend. [Her initial worry about Charley's obsession with the third level contrasts with her eventual participation in the same quest, which creates an ironic shift in her behaviour]	1
IV	a) finding comfort in a hobby that is familiar	1
B		
I	Mr. Lamb means that Derry's appearance is not his whole identity. He sees beyond the scarred face to the person within and wants Derry to understand that he is more than what people see on the surface.	1
II	Correct option: c) "Maybe he really sees more than just my face." The pause suggests Derry is processing Mr. Lamb's words, possibly reconsidering his belief that no one sees beyond his disfigurement.	1
III	Mr. Lamb's response suggests that he sees Derry's face as only one aspect of who he is.	1
IV	The exchange reveals that Derry feels deeply misunderstood and defined by his appearance, while Mr. Lamb tries to connect with him on a human level by challenging Derry's belief that no one can see beyond his scar.	1
9.	Read the following extracts and solve ANY ONE of the given two, (A) or (B)	6
A		
I	B) 2 and 4 [b) is correct because Edla's entire demeanor toward the rattrap peddler is built on kindness (2) and she does not look down on him despite his being a vagabond, treating him with respect (4). Her tone is formal not casual / excited (5) , doesn't offer money(3) and there is no evidence of any compliment paid (1) hence a) , c) and d) are incorrect.]	1
II	silently	1
III	D) He recognised and appreciated her compassion. (This shows genuine appreciation and trust, not just politeness or obligation. His willingness to go with her and accept the fur coat without resistance indicates that he feels seen and valued—something he likely hasn't experienced in a long time.) (a) implies insincerity, which isn't supported by the extract ; (b) The extract doesn't suggest obligation; his response feels voluntary. (c) There is no sign of doubt or suspicion in his words or actions at that moment.	1
IV	Because the peddler, a poor vagabond in rags, was treated with respect and generosity by Edla, which was an unusual gesture of kindness for someone of his status.	1
V	Because his thoughts explicitly reveal regret and anxiety about stealing the 'fellow's' money / show that his guilt over the theft is weighing heavily on him This self-awareness and fear of being caught clearly stem from his guilt, making it the primary driver of his forebodings.	1
VI	...Edla's kindness and the situation at the manor house might lead to his exposure as a thief	1

B		
I	arrival of the night	1
II	<p>A) 1, 3 and 5</p> <p>[Option a) is correct because (1) aligns with the tone of resignation and wistfulness in the mother's sigh. (3) is a direct reflection of their financial hardships. The mother's sigh likely conveys her acceptance of the reality that money has always been scarce for their family. (5) mother's awareness of the impracticality of Sophie's grand dreams given their circumstances. (2) doesn't fit as the context does not indicate the mother perceives Derek's remark as 'troubling Sophie.' (4) suggests irritation or fatigue but mother's sigh in this context appears more reflective of their financial struggles and her resignation]</p>	1
III	<p>A) appearance vs. reality</p> <p>[The delicate bow on Sophie's mother's apron symbolises grace and beauty, whereas her crooked back represents the harsh realities of her life, such as physical toil and hardship.]</p>	1
IV	Sophie felt a tightening in her throat.	1
V	<p>The writer emphasises the oppressive and suffocating environment of Sophie's household. The heavy breathing of her father is not just a physical sound but a metaphorical representation of the overwhelming weight of fatigue, labour, and monotony that dominates their lives.</p> <p>[The word 'cluttered' conveys a sense of overcrowding and disorder, suggesting that even intangible elements like exhaustion and hardship fill and overwhelm the small, confined space of their home.]</p>	1
VI	The setting of the room, which is cluttered and steamy from the stove, creates a sense of discomfort and hardship. This contributes to the mood of weariness and tension in the family's daily life, which Sophie is acutely aware of.	1
10.	Answer ANY FIVE of the following six questions in 40 50 words each: 1 -Content 1- Expression ½ -1 deducted from overall, for Accuracy	5 x 2 = 10
I	The narrator's feelings towards the French language shift from indifference to deep appreciation and respect when it is no longer allowed to be taught. Also, French, in the story, symbolises the loss of freedom and the imposition of foreign control over the region. Therefore, the narrator's sense of loss and regret reflects the emotional impact of this change.	2
II	Individuals can learn that fear can be overcome through perseverance, determination, and gradual exposure to the source of fear. Douglas's experience teaches that facing challenges step by step, with proper guidance and practice, allows one to conquer even the most deep-seated fears, leading to personal growth and freedom.	2

III	<p>Keats portrays beauty as something that ‘will never pass into nothingness,’ implying that, unlike fleeting material comforts, beauty offers lasting emotional and psychological support. In the real world, during times of hardship, turning to the enduring beauty of nature, art, or meaningful experiences can provide a sense of peace and restoration</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Just as Keats speaks of beauty creating a ‘bower quiet’ and offering ‘sweet dreams,’ recognising beauty in our surroundings or lives can act as a refuge from stress, offering perspective and a sense of tranquility.</p> <p>This connection with beauty can help shift focus from negativity and provide hope, strength, and a reminder that there is always something uplifting to turn to, even in the toughest times.</p>	2
IV	<p>The reference signifies a pause in exploitative and destructive human activities. It reflects the poet's call for introspection and awareness of the harm humans cause to nature and themselves. By pausing, the fishermen and the salt gatherer are shown as reconnecting with their humanity and reflecting on their actions.</p>	2
V	<p>Kipling’s refusal highlights the invasion of privacy that often accompanies public life. The refusal shows that the value of an individual’s work or thoughts should not be reduced to a commercial or public spectacle.</p> <p>Kipling’s stance emphasises the discomfort and control that is often stripped away during the process of an interview.</p>	2
VI	<p>The narrator in Lost Spring adds depth and empathy, offering critical insights into Saheb and Mukesh’s struggles within systemic poverty. Unlike a plain narrative, the narrator reflects on social inequalities and privileges, making readers more emotionally engaged. Her observations contextualise the boys' lives within broader social issues, urging reflection and creating a more impactful critique of injustice.</p>	2
11.	<p>Answer ANY TWO of the following three questions in 40 50 words each. 1 -Content 1- Expression ½ -1 deducted from overall, for Accuracy</p>	2 x 2 =4
I	<p>Programmes like ‘Students on Ice’ provide hands-on experiences, allowing students to witness environmental changes firsthand. This immersive learning fosters a deeper understanding of geological shifts and the importance of addressing climate change, encouraging informed action and advocacy for the planet’s future. It also inspires a sense of responsibility in young people to actively contribute to sustainability and environmental conservation.</p>	2
II	<p>The comparison to a puppet suggests that she is being manipulated by external forces, unable to act according to her own will. This metaphor point towards her feelings of being dehumanised and treated like an object rather than a person with free will. It also reflects the broader theme of cultural displacement, as she is forced into an environment where her Native American identity is undermined, and she must comply with the rigid rules of the boarding school.</p>	2
III	<p>This remark reflects Derry’s frustration with the way people console others by comparing struggles. He feels such comparisons dismiss his pain, highlighting his sensitivity and resentment toward invalidating his personal experiences. It shows his</p>	2

	desire to be understood for his individual challenges rather than being generalised or pitied.	
12.	Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. Content 2 Expression 2 Accuracy 1	

A.

While ‘Indigo’ delves into the economic and systemic oppression of sharecroppers by British landlords, ‘The Roadside Stand’ highlights the plight of rural people exploited by urban elites and a neglectful system. Both works emphasise the imbalance of power and the struggles of those at the bottom of the societal hierarchy.

In ‘Indigo’, the exploitation of Champaran’s peasants is evident in the oppressive sharecropping system, where British landlords forced them to grow indigo on a portion of their land and unfairly profited from it. Similarly, ‘The Roadside Stand’ portrays a countryside inhabitant selling their goods by the roadside, hoping for a fair chance at economic survival. Their disappointment reflects the false promises of development, as urban buyers and authorities fail to address their needs, leaving them trapped in poverty.

Both texts reveal a shared truth—exploitation persists when power dynamics remain unchecked, and progress often bypasses those who need it most. While Gandhi’s efforts in ‘Indigo’ offer a path of hope through resistance, Frost’s poem serves as a poignant reminder of the ongoing neglect faced by rural communities. Together, they highlight the importance of empathy, equity, and advocacy in combating exploitation.

B.

In both ‘Poets and Pancakes’ and ‘Going Places’, the characters of the office boy and Sophie share common traits of ambition and dreams that surpass their immediate realities.

The office boy, like Sophie, dreams of achieving something greater—he aspires to be a star actor, director, or writer, but is stuck in a subordinate role in the make-up department. Similarly, Sophie dreams of running a boutique or becoming an actress, yet is constrained by financial limitations and family’s expectations. Both characters, despite their seemingly humble positions, hold onto lofty dreams that offer them an escape from their current circumstances.

However, while Sophie is often dismissive of the practicality of her ambitions, focusing instead on grand ideals, the office boy seems more realistic in his understanding of the obstacles he faces, despite his unfulfilled aspirations.

Both characters represent dreams and ambitions constrained by their environments. While their pursuits are met with limitations, they reflect the universal desire to transcend one’s current situation and achieve something greater.

13.	Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 120-150 words. Content 2 Expression 2 Accuracy 1	1 x 5 =5
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A.

Sadao’s character arc in ‘The Enemy’ is central to the moral dilemma of the story. Initially, Sadao is deeply loyal to his country and driven by a sense of patriotism, yet he is a doctor sworn to

preserve life. When the American prisoner washes ashore, Sadao's internal conflict emerges—should he help an enemy soldier, risking his own safety, or adhere to his nationalistic duty. As the story progresses, Sadao's arc moves from hesitation and reluctant duty to genuine compassion for the soldier. He goes beyond his initial patriotic impulses, deciding to save the life of the wounded man, showing his internal growth and moral courage. His arc symbolises the triumph of humanity over nationalism, as he eventually values the life of an individual over political allegiances.

In contrast, Hana's transformation is subtler. While she starts with fear and repulsion, her compassion grows, but she does not undergo the same profound transformation as Sadao. Her evolution is more passive, as she supports her husband's decision rather than leading it. Thus, Sadao's arc is more central to the story's moral conflict.

B.

The satirical tone is central to the narrative, as Kalki uses humour and irony to critique the Maharaja's blind obsession with fulfilling a prophecy. Through exaggerated events, such as the Maharaja's declaration to kill 100 tigers or the astrologer's dramatic predictions, the narrative highlights the absurdity of human arrogance and misplaced priorities.

The detached third-person omniscient narrator adds to this effect, providing sardonic commentary on the Maharaja's actions, which invites readers to critically evaluate his decisions rather than empathise with him.

The use of foreshadowing and dramatic irony keeps the reader engaged. The prophecy of the 100th tiger causing the Maharaja's death looms over the narrative, creating anticipation and humour as the Maharaja ironically believes he can outwit fate.

The ultimate twist, where a wooden tiger indirectly causes his death, adds a layer of poignant irony. Additionally, Kalki critiques human folly and power through the dialogues, hyperbole, and absurdities of the plot, leaving readers entertained yet reflective.