

Roll No.

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Code No. **103**

Candidates must write the Code on the title - page of the answer-book.

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## ENGLISH CORE

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**General Instructions :**

*Read the following instructions very carefully and strictly follow them.*

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*Time allowed : 3 hours*

*Maximum marks : 80*

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**Note:**

- (i) *Please check that this question paper contains 15 printed pages.*
- (ii) *Code number given on the right hand side of the question paper should be written on the title-page of the answer-book by the candidate.*
- (iii) *Please check that this question paper contains 13 questions.*
- (iv) *Please write down the Serial Number of the question in the answer-book before attempting it.*
- (v) *15 minutes time has been allotted to read this question paper. The question paper will be distributed at 10.15 a.m. From 10.15 a.m. to 10.30 a.m., the students will read the question paper only and will not write any answer on the answer-book during this period.*
- (vi) *This question paper comprises three sections - Section - A, Section - B and Section - C. All questions are compulsory.*

*Section A - Reading Skills - 22 marks*

*Section B - Creative Writing Skills - 18 marks*

*Section C - Literature - 40 marks*

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- (vii) *There is no overall choice in the question paper. However, internal choice has been provided in **Section - B** and **Section - C**. You have to attempt only one of the choices in such questions.*
- (viii) *In addition to this, separate instructions are given with each section and question wherever necessary.*
- (ix) *Answers should be in brief and to the point. The prescribed word limit should be adhered to, as far as possible, while answering the questions.*

**SECTION - A ( READING SKILLS)****22 MARKS****1.** Read the passage given below :**12**

- I.** In the modern age of connectivity, silence has become one of the rarest human experiences. The world hums constantly - notifications, traffic, conversations and invisible streams of data surrounding us like oxygen. Yet psychologists argue that silence is not merely the absence of sound; it is a mental state that nurtures reflection, innovation and emotional recalibration. Paradoxically, the more connected we become digitally, the more disconnected we risk becoming internally.
- II.** A series of neuroscientific studies conducted over past decade reveal that prolonged exposure to constant noise-whether auditory or informational - triggers the brains stress circuits, subtly elevating cortisol levels. This continuous mental “buzz” dulls creativity and diminishes the brains ability to engage in deep, undistracted thought. In contrast, even brief moments of intentional silence can enhance cognitive clarity and improve memory consolidations much like the pause between musical notes gives melody its meaning.
- III.** Ironically, the pursuit of silence has now become a consumer commodity. Luxury retreats advertise “Digital detox” weekends at exorbitant prices, offering people what nature once granted freely. But Genuine silence, the kind that provokes inner dialogue and self awareness, cannot be purchased; it must be chosen. The true challenge lies not in escaping the world’s noise, but in resisting the compulsion to fill every gap with it.
- IV.** The silence that once signified isolation is now a symbol of mental sophistication. To be silent today is to reclaim agency over attention - to assert that one’s mind is not a market place for every stimulus. As philosopher Blaise Pascal once remarked “All of humanity’s problem stem from man’s ability in a room alone”. In that sense, silence may be the last form of rebellion left in an age addicted to expression. (400 word)

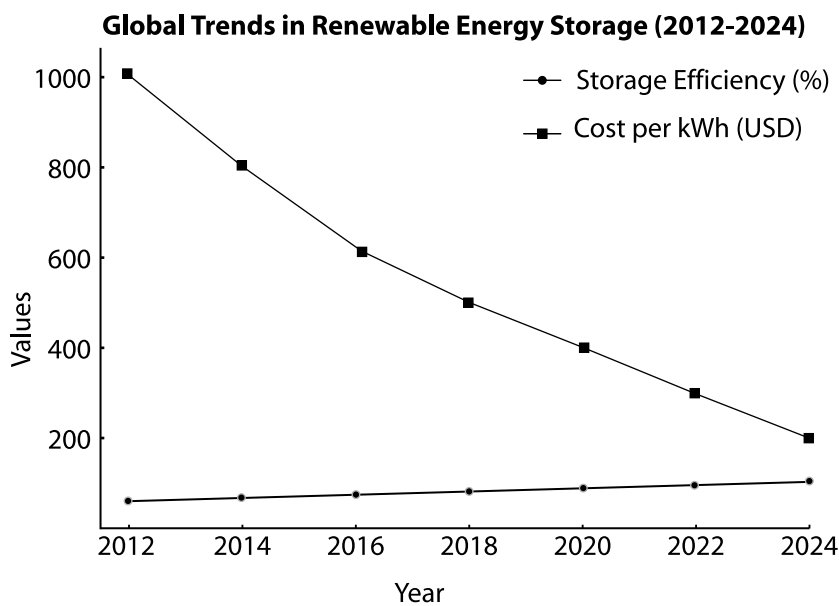
Based on your understanding of the passage, answer the following questions :

- (i) According to the author, what paradox characterizes the modern digital age ? (Para I) **1**
- (a) Silence increases loneliness while technology reduces it.
- (b) Connectivity enhances internal balance.
- (c) As humans become more connected externally, they grow more disconnected internally.
- (d) Noise has become essential for concentration.

- (ii) What is the primary purpose of neuroscientific studies mentioned in the passage ? (Para II) **1**
- (a) To suggest that silence improves social skills.
- (b) To demonstrate that noise stimulates creative ideas.
- (c) To provide scientific evidence for the psychological value of silence.
- (d) To argue that silence reduces communication efficiency.
- (iii) What does the author imply by stating that “silence has become a consumer commodity” ? (Para III) **1**
- (a) People have stopped valuing silence.
- (b) Silence is now being marketed and sold as a luxury experience.
- (c) Modern society rejects the idea of inner calm.
- (d) Silence can easily be purchased anywhere.
- (iv) Which of the following best captures the author’s attitude towards silence ? (Para II) **1**
- (a) Reverent and analytical
- (b) Skeptical and ironic
- (c) Detached and objective
- (d) Hostile and dismissive
- (v) What distinction does the author draw between purchased silence and chosen silence ? (Para III) **2**
- (vi) In about 40-50 words, analyse how the passage connects silence with autonomy and self-awareness. **2**
- (vii) **Assertion (A)** : The author views silence as an act of rebellion in the modern world. **1**
- Reason (R)** : Choosing silence demonstrates control over one’s attention and rejection of overstimulation (Para IV)
- (a) Both **(A)** and **(R)** are true and **(R)** is the correct explanation of **(A)**.
- (b) Both **(A)** and **(R)** are true, but **(R)** is not the correct explanation of **(A)**.
- (c) **(A)** is true, but **(R)** is false.
- (d) **(A)** is false, but **(R)** is true.
- (viii) Fill in the blank appropriately. **1**
- Taking short, purposeful pauses in silence can sharpen thinking and help strengthen \_\_\_\_\_.
- (ix) Evaluate the relevance of Pascal’s remark that silence is the last form of rebellion ? Justify with reference to the passage. (Para IV) **2**

2. Read the passage given below :

- I. One of the greatest challenges in expanding renewable energy lies not in generating power, but in storing it efficiently. Solar and wind energy, though abundant are intermittent - they depend on sunlight and wind conditions that fluctuate. To ensure a constant energy supply effective storage systems such as lithiumion batteries pumped hydro storage, an emerging hydrogen fuel cells are essential.
  
- II. Over the last decade advances in battery technology have dramatically improved energy storage capacity and efficiency. According to the Global Renewable Energy Data centre, the average storage efficiency of new systems has risen steadily, while cost per kilowatt-hour (kWh) has declined. The graph below represents the changing relationship between energy storage efficiency [%] and cost (USD per kWh) between 2012-2024.
  
- III. Experts predict that as storage becomes more affordable and efficient, renewable energy could replace over 70% of fossil fuel-based electricity generation by 2050. However, this progress depends on sustainable mining for battery materials, recycling mechanisms and equitable access to technology across nations. The transition to renewable energy storage is not merely technological - it is a social, economic and environmental transformation shaping the future of global energy security.



For Visually Challenged students  
Global Trends in Renewable Energy storage (2012-2024)

Year	Storage Efficiency %	Cost per kWh (USD)
2012	50	1000
2014	52	810
2016	54	600
2018	56	500
2020	58	400
2022	60	300
2024	62	200

Based on your understanding of the passage, answer the questions given below.

- (i) What overall trend can be observed between efficiency and cost from 2012-2024 ? (Graph based) (Para II) 1
- (a) Both efficiency and cost increase  
 (b) Efficiency increases while cost decreases  
 (c) Both decrease simultaneously  
 (d) There is no clear trend
- (ii) In which year did the cost per kWh (USD) came below 800 ? (graph based) 1
- (a) 2014      (b) 2012      (c) 2018      (d) 2020
- (iii) **Assertion (A)** : Improved energy storage is essential for wider use of renewable energy. (Para II) 1
- Reason (R)** : Renewable energy generation depends on natural cycles cannot provide continuous supply without storage.
- Choose the **correct** option :
- (a) Both **(A)** and **(R)** are true and **(R)** correctly explains **(A)**.  
 (b) Both **(A)** and **(R)** are true, but **(R)** does not explain **(A)**.  
 (c) **(A)** is true, but **(R)** is false.  
 (d) **(A)** is false, but **(R)** is true.
- (iv) Explain in about 40 words how the decreasing cost of energy storage can impact nations. (Para III) 2
- (v) Which of the following is a major concern even with technological progress in energy storage ? (Para I) 1
- (a) Decline in solar panel efficiency  
 (b) Unequal access and sustainability of resources  
 (c) Decrease in energy demand  
 (d) Growth of fossil fuel markets
- (vi) What environmental and social benefits are linked with the adoption of renewable energy storage systems ? Answer in about 40 words. (Para III) 2
- (vii) Using the information from the passage and graph, infer how the trend in energy storage efficiency could influence global climate goals in the next two decades. 1
- (viii) Based on the given data, why should policymakers prioritize research in recycling and resource management alongside efficiency improvement ? (Para II) 1

**SECTION - B (CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS)****18 MARKS**

3. Attempt ANY ONE from A and B given below in about 50 words.

**1x4=4**

A. You are the president of the environment club of R.N. Public School. Write a notice, in not more than 50 words, for your school notice board inviting students to participate in a virtual conference with international schools as part of a UNESCO project on "Mobilizing Science Knowledge and Policy For Sustainable Development". Include details about technical requirements, language proficiency, selection criteria and benefits of participation.

**OR**

B. You are the secretary of Alora Enclave Residential Society. Write a notice in about 50 words for your community notice board to inform the house owners in your society about relaying of the main sewage pipe running through the colony. Mention the temporary restrictions and duration of the maintenance work.

4. Attempt ANY ONE from A and B given below in about 50 words.

**1x4=4**

A. You are Ravi/Rashi, Cultural Secretary of Pine Public School, Dehradun. Your school is organising a special ceremony to honour Paralympic medal winners from your city. Draft an invitation for parents and students, including all necessary details about the event.

**OR**

B. Your mother has received an invitation from her sister, for her niece's wedding. While she would love to attend the ceremony, she is unable to join late night dance party due to her recent surgery. Draft a reply as Ananya accepting the ceremony invitation but politely declining the party invitation.

5. Attempt ANY ONE from A and B given below in about 120-150 words.

**1x5=5**

A. You are Ayush/ Ayushi of 15 River View Apartments, Udaipur. You saw an advertisement in the Indian Times for the post of Sales-Executive in a multinational company. Write an application for the job including the bio-data in about 120-150 words.

**OR**

B. Write a letter to the Editor of a national newspaper as Shubham/Shubhangi highlighting the rapid decline in safe and green parks in Urban areas for children. Analyze its environmental and social impacts, and propose innovative urban green infrastructure and security strategies in about 120-150 words.

6. Attempt ANY ONE from A and B given below in about 120-150 words. 1x5=5

A. Rapid and unplanned urban expansion is devouring semi-urban agricultural land and critical green spaces, leading to increased heat Island effects and loss of bio-diversity. Write an article in about 120 - 150 words for a national daily titled 'The Vanishing Green' :

**OR**

B. You are Arav/Aradhya, the head boy/girl of your school. Your school recently organised a three day 'Future Skills Conclave' that brought together experts, industry leaders and the students, to discuss career paths in emerging technologies like A.I and green energy. The conclave included interactive workshops, a panel discussion on ethical tech, and a session on frugal innovation. Write a report for school news letter highlighting the conclave's main objectives, key take aways for students, and the overall success of the event.

**SECTION - C (LITERATURE)**

**40 MARKS**

7. Read the given extracts and attempt the questions with reference to context. Attempt ANY ONE of the two extracts given. 6x1=6

A. Aunt Jenifer's fingers fluttering through her wool

Find even the ivory needle hard to pull

The massive weight of uncle's wedding band

Sits heavily upon Aunt Jenifer's hand

When Aunt is dead, her terrified hands will lie

Still ringed with ordeals she was mastered by,

The Tigers in the panel that she made

Will go-on prancing proud and unafraid

(-Poem 'Aunt Jenifer's Tigers (Flamingo))

(i) Sits heavily upon Aunt Jenifer's hand. 1

What does the above expression imply here ?

- (a) Aunt Jenifer is happy in her marriage
- (b) Aunt Jenifer is fond of tigers in the panel
- (c) Aunt Jenifer's marriage is a burden on her
- (d) Aunt Jenifer wants to revolt

- (ii) Which literary device is used in the expression 'sits heavily upon Aunt Jenifer's hand' ? 1
- (a) Personification  
 (b) Simile  
 (c) Metaphor  
 (d) Oxymoron
- (iii) Complete the following sentence with reference to the extract. 1  
 The tigers in the panel symbolize \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) State whether the statement given below is true or false : 1  
 "Find even the ivory needle hard to pull"  
 The above expression suggests that Aunt Jenifer is very weak and tired
- (v) What sits heavily upon Aunt's hand ? 1
- (vi) The use of the words 'fluttering fingers' in the extract suggests that the fingers of aunt Jenifer are trembling. 1  
 This creates an image of \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

**B.** Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing  
 A flowery band to bind us to earth,  
 Spite of despondance, of the inhuman dearth  
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
 Of all the unhealthy and o'er darkened ways  
 Made for our searching : yes, in spite of all,  
 Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
 From our dark spirits. (- Thing of Beauty) (Flamingo)

- (i) Pick the quote that matches best with 'some shape of beauty moves away the pall from our dark spirits.' 1
- (a) "Beauty is not caused, it is"  
 (b) "Beauty awakens the soul to act"  
 (c) "A thing of beauty is joy for sometime"  
 (d) "Every moment of light and dark is a miracle"

- (ii) Pick the option that refers to 'a flowery band to bind us to the earth'. **1**
- (i) A connection between nature and humanity
  - (ii) An appreciation of simple joys of life
  - (iii) A metaphor for hope and continuity
  - (iv) A way to be humble in times of despair
  - (v) A reminder of life fleeting beauty
- (a) (i), (ii) & (iii)
- (b) (ii), (iv) & (v)
- (c) (i), (iii) & (iv)
- (d) (ii), (iii) & (v)
- (iii) Which statements are true as per the extract ? **1**
- (a) Nature provides comfort even in difficult times.
  - (b) Absence of noble values is the reason for human despondency.
  - (c) Beauty offers temporary way out from grief.
  - (d) The flowery band is the symbol of the happiness we find in nature.
- (iv) The term 'pall' in the extract symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_. **1**
- (a) dark human emotions
  - (b) the opportunities of life
  - (c) the inevitable end of life
  - (d) the weight of human struggles
- (v) Explain the contrast between despondence and hope as presented in the text. **1**
- (vi) Explain how the phrase 'flowery band' has been used as a metaphor. **1**

8. Attempt ANY ONE of the two extracts given.

1x4=4

A. Read the extract and answer the question below.

I did not open my mouth to answer. Then the steps were quickened and the voices became excited. The sounds came nearer and nearer. Women and girls entered the room. I held my breath and watched them open closet doors and peep behind large trunks. Someone threw up the curtains, and the room was filled with sudden light. What caused them to stoop and look under the bed I do not know. I remember being dragged out, though I resisted by kicking and scratching wildly. In spite of myself, I was carried downstairs and tied fast in a chair. (Memories of childhood) (Vistas)

(i) Select the appropriate options.

'... sounds came nearer and nearer'

1

- (a) describes the increase in volume
- (b) adds to suspense and anxiety of readers
- (c) reflects the thoughts of the author
- (d) is a factual narrative

(ii) Complete the following sentence :

'In spite of my self 'suggests that the speaker was \_\_\_\_\_.

1

(iii) What do you infer from the first line of the extract ?

1

- (a) It was her first day at school
- (b) She did not want to get caught
- (c) She was unprepared for the lesson
- (d) She preferred to be alone by herself

(iv) State whether the statement given below is true or false.

1

The speaker hoodwinked the people looking for her.

OR

**B.** The Maharaja and the dewan held deliberations over this issue. As a result, a telegram was dispatched forthwith to a famous British company of jewellers in Calcutta. 'Send samples of expensive diamond rings of different designs'. Some fifty rings arrived. The Maharaja sent the whole lot to the British officer's good lady. The King and the minister expected the Duraisani to choose one or two rings and send the rest back. Within no time at all the Duraisani sent her reply : 'Thank you very much for your gifts'. In two days a bill for three lakhs of rupees came from the British jewellers. The Maharaja was happy that though he had lost three lakhs of rupees, he had managed to retain his kingdom. (-The Tiger King) (Vistas)

- I.** What do you think were the priorities of Maharaja as per the extract ? **1**
- II.** Explain the significance of the line, 'Thank you very much for your gifts'. **1**
- III.** Choose the correct combination of themes reflected in the extract : **1**
- (i) Sacrificing wealth for power.
- (ii) The frugal life styles of royalty
- (iii) Clever manipulation of political relationships
- (iv) The futility of materialism
- (a) (i) and (ii)                      (b) (ii) and (iii)
- (c) (i), (ii) and (iii)              (d) (i), (iii) and (iv)
- IV.** What tone does the author use to describe the Maharaja's resolution of the issue ? Support your answer with evidence from the extract. **1**

**9.** Attempt ANY ONE of the two extracts (A or B) given. **1x6=6**

**A.** All at once the church-clock struck twelve. Then the Angelus. At the same moment the trumpets of the Prussians, returning from drill sounded under our windows. M. Hamel stood up, very pale in his chair. I never saw him look so tall. "My friends," said he, "I-I-" but something choked him. He could not go on. Then he turned to the blackboard, took a piece of a chalk, and, bearing on with all his might, he wrote as large as he could - "Vive La France!" Then he stopped and leaned his head against the wall, and, without a word, he made a gesture to us with his hand - "School is dismissed-you may go." (-The Last Lesson) (Flamingo)

- (i) How do you think was the relationship between M. Hamel and his students and his country based on the above extract ? **1**
- (ii) How might the sound of the Prussian trumpets relate to the historical period of the Franco-Prussian war, and why is it significant in this extract ? **1**

- (iii) Match the following statements to their correct explanation out of options given below (a, b, c). 1
- (1) M. Hamel stands up, very pale
  - (2) He writes "Vive La France" on the blackboard
  - (3) M. Hamel gestures with his hand to dismiss the students
    - (a) His pride and defiance for his country
    - (b) His shock and emotional reaction to a situation
    - (c) His overwhelming sadness and the end of the lesson.
- (iv) Why do you think M. Hamel was not able to finish his statement "I-I" ? 1
- (a) He is unsure of how to express his feelings.
  - (b) He is feeling betrayed by the government.
  - (c) He is too tired to continue speaking.
  - (d) He is overcome with emotion about the end of an era.
- (v) What is the symbolism of the Prussian trumpets, the Angelus and Church-clock striking twelve in the context of the story ? 1
- (vi) What might M. Hamel's final action - dismissing the school - imply about his thoughts of education and the situation ? 1
- (a) He believes education is no longer important.
  - (b) He feels powerless in the face of the situation.
  - (c) He is relieved that the lesson is over.
  - (d) He is afraid of the Prussians and wants to avoid conflict.

OR

- B. It expectantly awaited her arrival. She saw herself riding there behind Geoff. He wore now, shining black leathers and she a yellow dress with a kind of cape that flew out behind. There was the sound of applause as the world rose to greet them. (-Going Places) (Flamingo)
- (i) What idea do you get about Sophie's desires and self perception based on her imagination? 1
- (ii) Select the correct option from those given in brackets to fill in the blank. The Vivid details in Sophie's day dream, such as the "Yellow dress with a kind of cape," highlight her \_\_\_\_\_. (practical/fanciful) nature. 1
- (iii) Complete the following suitably : 1  
The contrast between Geoff's imagined "black leathers" and "Sophie's yellow dress" symbolises \_\_\_\_\_.
- (iv) Sophie imagined that world would applaud for her. What does this reveal about Sophie's expectation of the world? 1
- (v) Sophie's day dream of riding behind Geoff suggests she sees him as : 1  
(a) A hindrance  
(b) A protector  
(c) A competitor  
(d) An equal
- (vi) The image of the world rising to greet them implies Sophie expects her future to be : 1  
(a) Challenging  
(b) Disappointing  
(c) Triumphant  
(d) Ordinary

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

- (i) Why does the author describe the lives of Saheb and Mukesh as a "Perpetual state of poverty" ?
- (ii) "I shouted with joy, and Gilbert peak returned the echo. I had conquered my fear of water". How did the author conquer his fear of water ?
- (iii) "Freedom from fear is more important than legal Justice for the poor", Why did Gandhiji feel that taking the Champaran case to law court was useless ?
- (iv) Describe Subbu's role and contribution to the success of Gemini Studios.
- (v) Give textual evidence of the use of contrast and irony in the poem "Roadside stand".
- (vi) Comment on the poet Kamala Das's use of imagery and emotion in poem 'My Mother at Sixty Six' to convey her fear of losing her mother.

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

- (i) Explore how the story "The Enemy" balances the moral dilemmas faced by Dr. Sadao ?
- (ii) Reflect on Tishani Doshi's personal and Scientific take away from her expedition to Antarctica.
- (iii) Bama's brother advises her not to reveal their community's identity to others at school. What does this advice reveal about the deep-rooted social structure of society, and how does it shape Bama's understanding ?

12. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions in about 120 - 150 words. (Flamingo) 1x5=5

A. Write a comparative analysis focusing on how the poems "Keeping Quiet and 'My Mother at Sixty-Six' illuminate the different facets of human introspection and the significance of quiet selection in understanding one self.

OR

B. The stories of 'Lost Spring' and 'the Rattrap' delve into the themes of poverty and human nature but approach them from different perspective. Compare and contrast the portrayal of socio-economic struggles, human compassion and potential for change in these two stories. How do the narratives highlight the underlying dignity and resilience of individuals despite of their circumstances ?

13. Answer ANY ONE of the following two questions in about 120 - 150 words. (Vistas) 1x5=5

A. Both "The Third level' and 'The Tiger King' explore the theme of escapism still quiet different in context. Compare and contrast how escapism manifests in the two stories and analyse what it reveals about human nature and the characters motivation.

OR

B. Derry! Oh no, because if I don't go back there, ? I'll never go anywhere in their world again. Derry later realizes that the decision taken at that moment helped him to come out of shell. As Derry, write a diary entry expressing your happiness and thanking god for the right decision taken.

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