

CLASS – VIII
MID TERM EXAMINATION: 2025 - 2026
SUBJECT- ENGLISH
MARKING SCHEME: SET C1 & C2

Time Allowed- 2.5 Hours

Max. Marks – 60

General Instructions:

1. The paper is divided into three sections A, B and C. All questions are compulsory.
2. Separate instructions are given with each section and question, wherever necessary. Read these instructions very carefully and follow them.
3. Do not exceed the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

SECTION A – READING (18 Marks)

Q1. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow:

10

1. Aarav stood at the base of the mighty Sahyadri hills, his heart pounding with both excitement and fear. He was part of a student trekking group, and this was his first real hike. The mountain seemed to stretch endlessly into the sky, its peak hidden behind drifting clouds. While other students chattered cheerfully, Aarav remained quiet, staring at the narrow rocky path ahead.
2. As they began the climb, the sun warmed their backs and the forest echoed with birdsong. Aarav struggled at first—his legs ached, and he lagged behind. His water bottle slipped from his hand, rolling down the slope. Frustrated, he considered giving up. Just then, their instructor, a tall, calm man named Mr. Sen, walked beside him. “Every mountain looks impossible until you take the first few steps,” he said gently.
3. Encouraged, Aarav took a deep breath and continued. He stopped worrying about the summit and focused on each small step. With time, the path grew steeper, but his confidence rose too. He learned to observe nature—the chirping of the birds, the rustling of the leaves, and the scent of wildflowers.
4. After four hours, the group reached the top. Aarav stood at the summit, the valley spread out below like a green ocean. He had never felt so alive. The journey had taught him that courage isn’t the absence of fear—it’s moving forward despite it. That day, Aarav didn’t just climb a mountain; he discovered the strength within himself.

Q1.1. Based on your reading of the passage, answer the following questions:-

1x5=5

i. Where was Aarav standing at the beginning of the story?

- A. At the summit of a hill
- B. Inside a forest cabin

C. At the base of the Sahyadri hills

D. Near a river crossing

Answer: C) At the base of the Sahyadri hills

ii. What made Aarav feel like giving up during the climb?

A. He was afraid of animals

B. His legs ached and he dropped his water bottle

C. The weather turned bad

D. Other students teased him

Answer: B) His legs ached and he dropped his water bottle

iii. What advice did Mr. Sen give Aarav?

A. "Just wait for others to help."

B. "It's okay to quit if it's hard."

C. "Every mountain looks impossible until you take the first few steps."

D. "Ignore the pain and run faster."

Answer: C) Every mountain looks impossible until you take the first few steps

iv. What helped Aarav gain confidence during the trek?

A. Competing with others

B. Enjoying nature and focusing on small steps

C. Taking long breaks

D. Thinking about quitting

Answer: B) Enjoying nature and focusing on small steps

v. How did Aarav feel at the summit?

A. Tired and disappointed

B. Angry at himself for struggling

C. Alive and proud

D. Afraid to come down

Answer: C) Alive and proud

Q1.2 Answer the following questions briefly.

1x5=5

i. What motivated Aarav to continue climbing when he felt like giving up?

Answer: Mr. Sen, the instructor, encouraged him by saying, "Every mountain looks impossible until you take the first few steps," which gave Aarav the courage to keep going.

ii. Find the meaning of the word "summit" as used in the passage. (Para 4)

Answer: *Summit* means the highest point or top of a mountain.

iii. What lesson does the story teach about facing challenges?

Answer: The story teaches us that challenges may seem difficult at first, but if we take small steps and keep going, we can overcome them. Courage means moving forward even when we are afraid.

iv. How did Aarav's experience on the trek change him?

Answer: Aarav became more confident and discovered his inner strength. He learned to appreciate nature and realized he could do hard things if he didn't give up.

v. What would you have done if you were in Aarav's place when the water bottle slipped and you felt tired? Why?

Answer: I would have taken a short rest, reminded myself why I started the trek, and tried to stay positive—just like Aarav did. (Accept any justified answer)

Q2. Read the poem carefully and answer the questions that follow:

1x8=8

Poem: "The Clockmaker's Dream"

**In a quiet lane of an old, gray town,
Lived a man with locks of silver and brown.
He crafted clocks with gentle care,
Each ticking piece beyond compare.**

**His tools were old, his hands were wise,
With dreams that danced before his eyes.
He spoke to time like an old, dear friend,
And swore he'd chase it till the end.**

**He built a clock one silent night,
With hands that glowed in mystic light.
It ticked not minutes, hours, or years,
But hopes and wishes, laughs and tears.**

**At dawn, he placed it by his bed,
Then smiled in peace and softly said:
"This clock won't chime the hour I go,
But all the dreams I've come to know."**

**Now in that lane, folks still believe,
Time holds the dreams we all can weave.
The clockmaker's gift still softly rings—
A song of time, of dreams, of wings.**

Q2.1 On the basis of your reading of the poem, answer the questions by choosing the correct option:

1x4=4

i. What did the clockmaker build one silent night?

- a) A music box
- b) A magical clock

c) A sundial

d) A lantern

Ans: b) A magical clock

ii. What does the word "mystic" most likely mean in the line:

"With hands that glowed in mystic light" (stanza 3)

a. Bright and shiny

b. Magical or mysterious

c. Broken or unclear

d. Cold and colorless

Ans: b) Magical or mysterious

iii. What made the special clock unique?

a) It ran backward

b) It ticked with golden gears

c) It counted emotions, not time

d) It sang lullabies

Ans: c) It counted emotions, not time

iv. In the end, the townspeople believe:

a) The clockmaker was a magician

b) Dreams live on in time

c) The clocks were haunted

d) Time never ends

Ans: b) Dreams live on in time

Q2.2 Based on your understanding of the poem, answer the questions briefly. 1x4=4

i. What message does the poem convey about time and dreams?

Ans: The poem suggests that time is not just for measuring hours but also for holding dreams and emotions. It implies that our hopes and memories are timeless.

ii. How does the poet use imagery to create a magical mood?

Ans: The poet uses phrases like "glowed in mystic light", "dreams that danced", and "song of time, of dreams, of wings" to create a sense of wonder and magic, showing time as something living and dreamlike.

iii. What made the clockmaker's creations special?

Answer: His clocks were crafted with gentle care and were described as "beyond compare," showing his dedication and skill.

iv. In the line "And swore he'd chase it till the end," what does the word "swore" imply about the clockmaker's attitude toward time?

Answer: The word “**swore**” conveys a strong promise or vow. It shows the clockmaker’s deep commitment and almost sacred devotion to understanding or mastering time. This word choice suggests his pursuit was not casual—it was passionate and lifelong.

SECTION B – GRAMMAR & WRITING (22 Marks)

Grammar (10 Marks)

Q3.1 Fill in the correct question tags.

1×2 = 2

i. You’re coming to the picnic, _____?

Answer: aren’t you?

ii. She can’t swim, _____?

Answer: can she?

Q3.2 Change the voice and rewrite the given sentences.

1×2 = 2

i. They served dinner at 8 pm.

Answer: Dinner was served at 8 pm by them.

ii. The homework will be submitted by the students.

Answer: The students will submit the homework.

Q3.3 Fill in the blanks with the correct form of past tense:

1×2 = 2

i. He _____ (read) when the lights went out.

Answer: was reading

ii. I _____ (work) on the project for two hours before you came.

Answer: had been working

Q3.4 Choose the correct phrasal verb from the box to fill in the blanks:

1×2 = 2

took off took on came into came across came up
--

i. The plane _____ on time.

Answer: took off

ii. She _____ a rare coin in the attic.

Answer: came across

Q3.5 Read the mentioned steps of making Chinese Blossom Tea. Fill in the blanks given below with the right form of verb. 1/2x4=2

- Boil four cups of water in a kettle
- Add two tablespoon of tea leaves
- Boil for two minutes
- Rinse the teapot with boiling water
- Put a layer of rose, mogra or jasmine flowers in the teapot
- Pour tea in the teapot
- Let it stand for five minutes
- Serve before/after meal

Four cups of water a) _____ in a kettle. When the water has boiled, two tablespoon of tea leaves b) _____. Meanwhile the teapot c) _____ with boiling water. A layer of either rose, mogra or jasmine flowers is then d) _____ into the teapot and the tea is poured. It is allowed to stand for five minutes before it is served.

Answers

- a. are added**
- b. are added**
- c. is rinsed**
- d. put**

Q4.1. Attempt any one of the following questions in not more than 50 words. 5

SET C1

A. You are Riya / Rohan, the Head Girl/Boy of Lotus Valley School. Draft a notice informing students about an upcoming cleanliness drive on 5 September 2025.

Format – 1

Content – 2

Expression – 2

SET C2

A. You are Aryan / Aarushi, the Environment Club Secretary of your school. Draft a notice informing students about a Tree Plantation Drive to be held in the school grounds.

Format – 1

Content – 2

Expression – 2

Q4.2 Attempt any ONE of the following in 100-120 words:

7

SET C1

A. You are Aaliya/Aahan Sharma, a resident of Rose Garden Apartments, Pune. You are concerned about the increasing plastic waste in your locality, which is causing pollution and health hazards. Write a letter to the Editor of The Times of India, highlighting the issue and suggesting measures to solve the problem.

Format – 1

Content – 3

Expression – 3

SET C2

A. You are Aryan Malhotra, a concerned citizen living in Green View Colony, Delhi. You are disturbed by the frequent accidents and careless driving near school zones in your city. Write a letter to the Editor of a national newspaper, The Hindustan Times, highlighting the urgent need for stricter road safety rules in school areas.

Format – 1

Content – 3

Expression – 3

OR

SET C1

B. Write a story ending with the line – “And that day, I learned that true courage means standing up for what’s right, even when you’re afraid.”

Format – 1

Content – 3

Expression – 3

OR

B. Write a story that ends with the moral- “**Sometimes, the smallest act of kindness can change someone’s whole world.**”

Your story should describe an act of kindness—who it involved, what happened, and how it made a difference.

Format – 1

Content – 3

Expression – 3

SECTION C – LITERATURE (20 Marks)

Q5.1. Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow: 3x3= 9

**5.1. “But only a host of phantom listeners (1+1+1=3)
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveler’s call.”**

(The Listeners)

i. Who are the “phantom listeners” referred to in the passage?

- A. The people who lived in the village
- B. Ghostly or supernatural beings
- C. The Traveller’s companions
- D. Imaginary creatures of the Traveller

Answer: B. Ghostly or supernatural beings

ii. What does the phrase “voice from the world of men” imply?

- A. The Traveller is a ghost
- B. The house is filled with people
- C. The Traveller belongs to the living world, unlike the listeners
- D. The listeners are hiding from a dangerous man

Answer: C. The Traveller belongs to the living world, unlike the listeners

iii. Where are the “phantom listeners” standing in the poem?

Answer: They are standing in the quiet of the moonlight, on the dark stair that goes down to the empty hall

**5.2. “When the jet sprang into the sky, (1+1+1=3)
it was clear why the city
had developed the way it had,
seeing it scaled six inches to the mile.
There seemed an inevitability
about what on ground had looked haphazard,
unplanned and without style
when the jet sprang into the sky.”**

- i. What realization does the poet have when the jet "sprang into the sky"?
- A. The city is crowded and polluted
 - B. The city is more beautiful from above
 - C. The city's layout makes more sense from the air
 - D. Flying is a dangerous activity

Answer: C. The city's layout makes more sense from the air

- ii. What does "scaled six inches to the mile" refer to?
- A. The height of the jet
 - B. The altitude of the city
 - C. The city as seen on a map or from a high altitude
 - D. The size of the buildings

Answer: C. The city as seen on a map or from a high altitude

- iii. Why did the city look different when seen from the jet compared to when viewed from the ground?

Answer: The city looked different because from the jet, the city's layout looked planned and natural, unlike the unplanned and haphazard appearance it had from the ground.

**5.3. *For every hill I've had to climb, (1+1+1=3)
For every stone that bruised my feet,
For all the blood and sweat and grime,
For blinding storms and burning heat—***

(For Every Hill)

- i. What does the "hill" symbolically represent in the poem?**

- A. A mountain hike
- B. A literal journey
- C. Challenges and difficulties in life
- D. A race or competition

Answer: C. Challenges and difficulties in life

- ii. What mood is conveyed through the phrases "blood and sweat and grime" and "burning heat"?

- A. Comfort and joy
- B. Celebration and pride
- C. Struggle and hardship
- D. Peace and rest

Answer: C. Struggle and hardship

iii. How does the phrase “**bruised my feet**” help convey the tone of the poem?

Answer: The phrase “**bruised my feet**” uses physical pain to symbolize hardship. It helps create a tone of endurance and determination, showing that the speaker has faced real, painful obstacles but continued moving forward.

Q6. Answer ANY THREE of the following in 30–40 words: (2×3=6)

i. What does the title “Homecoming” signify in Tagore’s story? (*The Homecoming*)

Answer: The title “Homecoming” in Tagore’s story is deeply symbolic and ironic. It refers to the protagonist Phatik’s return to his village after being sent away to the city in hopes of a better life. However, instead of finding comfort and belonging, he experiences neglect, misunderstanding, and emotional isolation. His literal homecoming occurs only when he is gravely ill and brought back to his mother. Tragically, it is too late for reconciliation, and Phatik dies soon after. Thus, the title underscores the idea that his true “homecoming” is not to a physical place, but to peace through death and release from suffering.

ii. How did the thief’s experience with Anil change his life in the story, “*The Thief*” by Ruskin Bond?

Answer: Anil’s kindness and trust deeply impacted the thief, leading to a transformation in his character. Unlike others, Anil treated him with compassion, taught him to read and write, and never questioned his background. When the thief stole Anil’s money, he felt guilty and returned it, realizing the value of honesty and education. This experience awakened his conscience and desire for a better life. Anil’s silent forgiveness gave him a chance to change, making the thief rethink his path and choose honesty.

iii. What message does the poet convey in the poem “*Geography Lesson*”?

Answer: The poet conveys that human beings, despite their intelligence and technological advancements, fail to live in harmony. From the aerial view, the earth appears orderly, with natural features like rivers, valleys, and cities following logical patterns. However, when it comes to human behaviour—wars, division, and hatred—there is no sense or justification. The poet reflects on how humans have not learned to live peacefully despite understanding geography and science. Through this contrast, he emphasizes the need for unity, mutual respect, and understanding to create a world as orderly and beautiful as the one seen from above.

iv. How does Manju’s journey in “*Fight, Manju, Fight!*” reflect the importance of inner strength and perseverance in achieving success?

Answer: Manju’s journey reflects how inner strength and perseverance are key to overcoming challenges. Faced with her mother’s illness and doubts from her team, Manju remains focused and refuses to give up. Her determination allows her to rise above emotional and physical struggles. She channels her pain into motivation, proving her capability on the kabaddi field. Her story shows that true strength comes from within, and

that perseverance, even in difficult times, can lead to personal victory and the respect of others.

Q7. Answer the following in 80-100 words.

5

Phatik's experience in Calcutta was very different from what he had imagined. Based on the story "*The Homecoming*", explain how his expectations were shattered and what this tells us about the importance of love, care, and a sense of belonging in a child's life.

Answer: Phatik had expected a better life in Calcutta, imagining he would be cared for and respected. However, his hopes were shattered as he faced indifference and cold treatment, especially from his aunt, who found him troublesome. He felt isolated, unwanted, and emotionally neglected in the new environment. This harsh experience made him long for his mother and the village he once tried to escape. His emotional decline reflects how deeply children need love, care, and a sense of belonging to feel secure and thrive. Without affection and understanding, even a seemingly better life can feel like a punishment. Tagore's story emphasizes that emotional well-being is just as important as physical comfort, and a loving home is essential for a child's happiness.