CBSE EXAMINATION PAPER-2026

ENGLISH

(Solved)

Time allowed : 3 hours | Maximum Marks : 80

General Instructions :

Read the following instructions carefully and follow them :

i. This question paper contains **34 questions.** All questions are **compulsory.**

ii. This question paper is divided into **7 sections.**

iii. **Section A** – questions number **1 to 4** are case based questions

iv. **Section B** – questions number **5 to 6** are unseen passage

v. **Section C** – questions number **7 to 18** are grammar short

vi. **Section D** – questions number **19 to 26** are short answer

vii. **Section E** – questions number **27 to 28** are letter

viii. **Section F** – questions number **29 to 30** are paragraph

ix. **Section G** – questions number **31 to 34** are long answer

x. There is no overall choice given in the question paper. However, an internal choice has been provided in few questions.

xi. Use of calculator is NOT allowed.

Section A

Question 1.

Out of the experience of an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too long, must be born a society of which all humanity will be proud. We, who were outlaws not so long ago, have today been given the rare privilege to be host to the nations of the world on our own soil. We thank all of our distinguished

international guests for having come to take possession with the people of our country of what is, after all, a common victory for justice, for peace, for human dignity.

(Nelson Mandela : Long Walk to Freedom)

(1) Complete the sentence appropriately: Mandela thanked all the distinguished international guests because _____.

[1 Marks]

(2)

Which of the following options justifies the statement made by Mandela, “We, who were outlaws ...” ?

(A) The international leaders who came to attend the ceremony

(B) Due to Apartheid, many countries broke diplomatic relations with South Africa

(C) The Commonwealth countries and their people

(D) The people who fought in the Anglo-Boer War

[1 Marks]

(3) In the above lines, Mandela mentions ‘extraordinary human disaster’. What is the significance of this phrase in his speech?

[2 Marks]

(4)

The tone of Mandela in the above excerpt is:

1. unifying 2. determined 3. aggressive 4. pessimistic 5. hopeless

Select the correct option :

(A) 1, 2 and 4

(B) 2 and 4

(C) 1 and 2

(D) 4 and 5

[1 Marks]

Question 2.

Though to distinguish beasts of prey

A novice might nonplus,

The Crocodile you always may

Tell from the Hyena thus:

Hyenas come with merry smiles;

But if they weep they’re Crocodiles.

The true Chameleon is small,

A lizard sort of thing;

He hasn’t any ears at all,

And not a single wing.

If there is nothing on the tree,

’Tis the chameleon you see.

(How to Tell Wild Animals)

(1) Mention any two characteristics of a chameleon on the basis of the given extract.

[2 Marks]

(2)

How does the poet describe the crocodile's tears? Choose the correct option:

(A) genuine and heartfelt

(B) joyful and sincere

(C) false and deceptive

(D) cold and indifferent

[1 Marks]

(3)

Fill in the blank with the correct option from those given in the brackets :

The tone of the poet in the above lines is _____ (playful and humorous/serious and confused).

[1 Marks]

(4) What confusion will a newcomer face while distinguishing between a hyena and a crocodile, as described humorously by the poet?

[1 Marks]

Question 3.

Did you finish your homework, Amanda?

Did you tidy your room, Amanda?

I thought I told you to clean your shoes, Amanda!

(I am an orphan, roaming the street.

I pattern soft dust with my hushed, bare feet.

The silence is golden, the freedom is sweet.)

(Amanda!)

(1)

Complete the sentence appropriately:

Amanda wants to be an orphan because _____.

[1 Marks]

(2) What does the image of Amanda “roaming barefoot in the dusty street” signify?

[2 Marks]

(3)

Amanda’s tone while imagining herself as an orphan is:

(A) excited

(B) fearful

(C) angry

(D) peaceful

[1 Marks]

(4) What does the speaker do on the dust?

[1 Marks]

Question 4.

“Richard was competitive,” Mr. Weiherer continued, “but not in a bad sense.” He explained, “Richard wasn’t interested in winning for winning’s sake or winning to get a prize. Rather, he was winning because he wanted to do the best job he could. For the right reasons, he wants to be the best.” And that is one of the ingredients in the making of a scientist. Start with a first-rate mind, add curiosity, and mix in the will to win for the right reasons. Ebright has these qualities.

(The Making of a Scientist)

(1) In light of the excerpt, what can we infer about Richard from Mr. Weiherer’s statement, “Richard was competitive, but not in a bad sense” ?

[1 Marks]

(2) Mention the ‘ingredients’ which are necessarily required in the making of a scientist.

[2 Marks]

(3)

Fill in the blank with the correct word from the brackets :

Mr. Weiherer suggests that Richard was _____. (lethargic/persistent)

[1 Marks]

(4)

As per the above excerpt, what is not true about Ebright ?

Select the correct option.

(A) strongly curious

(B) bright minded

(C) competitive spirit

(D) irrational

[1 Marks]

Section B

Question 5.

Read the following passage carefully :

(1) In the fast-evolving landscape of the present age, digital saturation and algorithmically curated lives, the phenomenon of FOMO — the Fear of Missing Out — has progressed from a fleeting psychological discomfort into a pervasive cultural condition. Initially, the term was coined to describe the anxiety provoked by the perception that others are participating in rewarding experiences from which one is absent. FOMO now pervades virtually in every dimension of contemporary existence, fuelled largely by the continuous updates of edited content on social media platforms. Significantly, it is the anxiety that others are experiencing something more fulfilling, exciting, or meaningful.

(2) The roots of FOMO lie in the interplay between the evolutionary instincts of an individual and modern technology. It may be traced as a fundamental human trait — the innate desire to belong. Man — being a social creature naturally, always tries to seek inclusion and belonging as a means of survival. Albeit, nowadays social media has escalated this instinct by bothering individuals with real-time updates of others' lives — carefully edited vacations, career milestones or even temporal joys framed as extraordinary. Each notification becomes a reminder of what we are not doing, a mirror reflecting our perceived inadequacies.

(3) FOMO is not solely a personal affliction; it is a cultural artifact also, shaped by the values of a society that equates busyness with worth and novelty with happiness. Moreover, consumerism fuels this fire with brands exploiting FOMO through limited time offers, exclusive events, and influencer-driven trends that promise belonging or status. The rise of the 'experience economy', where memories and moments are commodified, intensifies the pressure to participate in everything from music festivals to viral food craze.

(4) Furthermore, FOMO has created profound shifts in behaviour also. Due to this, the decision-making process has become increasingly worrisome, with people hesitating to commit to plans for fear of a better alternative emerging later. It often leads to impulsive choices, such as overspending on unnecessary products, overcommitting to events or making hasty life decisions to avoid feeling excluded. People, due to FOMO, struggle to focus on their priorities because they are distracted by what others are doing. Even highlighted reels of professional journeys shared online by others breed discontent and cause anxiety and dissatisfaction, where no experience feels complete.

(5) The gloomy side of FOMO manifests in lowered self-esteem, impaired concentration and in severe cases, depression. Ironically, the more one tries to engage with multiple activities to 'keep up', the greater it leads to emotional exhaustion. The illusion of missing out on something 'better' elsewhere robs individuals of their ability to engage themselves fully in their present experiences.

(6) To overcome the Fear of Missing Out we require intentional strategies. To avoid constant comparison, specific timings for checking the apps and social media should be set. One can also

engage oneself in mindful breathing or meditation to stay grounded to the present. By prioritizing self-awareness and authentic experiences, one can take the edge off FOMO's grip and cultivate a richer, more satisfying life without chasing external validation. Finally, we need to recognize that carefully selected online portrayals, which are essentially selective, generate emotional resilience.

Answer the following questions, based on the above passage :

(1)

What is the primary psychological trigger behind FOMO in the context of social media usage?

(A) physical fatigue

(B) fear of rejection from loved ones

(C) need of privacy to keep oneself safe

(D) fear of being left out of rewarding experiences

[1 Marks]

(2)

Complete the following with the correct option from the two given below: FOMO has entered every dimension of a person's existence because _____.

(A) more exciting events are taking place nowadays

(B) of constant edits and updates on the social media platforms

Paragraph (1)

[1 Marks]

(3)

How does FOMO affect an individual's decision-making ability?

Paragraph (4)

[2 Marks]

(4)

What is the impact of the ‘experience economy’ on individuals?

Paragraph (3)

[1 Marks]

(5)

Support the writer’s viewpoint that FOMO leads to emotional consequences.

Paragraph (4)

[1 Marks]

(6)

State whether the following statement is True or False: People need to make an effort to come out of their FOMO state of mind .

Paragraph (6)

[1 Marks]

(7)

List two effective ways to deal with Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).Paragraph (6)

[2 Marks]

(8)

In the phrase ‘generate emotional resilience’, the word ‘resilience’ refers to the ability to

(A) support and create more social content.

(B) withstand emotional anxiety of FOMO.

(C) accelerate the notifications on social media.

(D) give in to digital social pressure. Paragraph (6)

[1 Marks]

Question 6.

Read the following passage carefully :

(1) The craze for cosmetics has escalated globally, driven by evolving beauty standards and social media influence. The cosmetics industry thrives on innovation, offering various products catering to various skin types and preferences. In India, the cosmetics industry has witnessed a remarkable growth over the past decade, driven by rising ‘disposable incomes’, increased urbanization, and changing lifestyles. In contemporary times, people are more aware about their personal grooming.

(2) In the year 2024, the Indian cosmetics market generated revenue of approximately ₹ 1,34,000 crore and is projected to reach around ₹ 2,40,000 crore by 2028. This robust performance is driven as a result of strong e-commerce and growing demand for organic and premium product offerings due to increasing awareness of personal grooming, skin care routines among consumers, especially teenagers and young adults, who are the dominant demographic in cosmetics purchase, as they seek trendy and innovative solutions.

(3) The cosmetics industry is broadly divided into various segments such as skin care, hair care, colour cosmetics, fragrances, and personal hygiene products. Skincare leads the segments, accounting for nearly 35% of the market, followed by hair care at 25%. Colour cosmetics — including make-up products have seen significant growth, especially post-pandemic, due to the rise of e-commerce and social media. E-commerce platforms have played a crucial role in expanding access to cosmetics especially in Tier II and Tier III cities. In fact, online sales contribute to around 25% of total cosmetics sales in India.

(4) Over and above that, men’s grooming has emerged as a significant segment, valued at around ₹ 25,000 crore in the year 2024 with increasing demand for beard care, skin care and fragrances customized to men. This growth is fuelled by social media influencers, coupled with the increase of gender-neutral cosmetic formulations. This shows an aspirational pursuit of personal refinement, where appearance augments confidence, dismantling archaic stereotypes associated with male cosmetics consumption.

(5) Though the cosmetics industry plays a vital role in the Indian economy, it faces several challenges including managing intense competition, complying with regulations, ensuring product quality, and addressing ethical sourcing concerns. In addition, the industry struggles with copied products, adapting to changing consumer preferences and navigating the complexities of the supply chain.

Answer the following questions, based on the above passage :

(1) What does the phrase 'thrives on innovation' tell us about the cosmetic industry? (A) The industry is slow-growing. (B) The industry is growing and evolving by the day. (C) The industry is becoming popular in rural areas. (D) The industry is gradually becoming more expensive.

[1 Marks]

(2) Complete the sentence with a reason: The global demand for beauty products has intensified because of _____.

[1 Marks]

(3) Select the option that is true for the Assertion and Reason given below. Assertion: The Indian cosmetics market generated a profit of approximately ₹1,34,000 crore in 2024. Reason: It became possible due to strong e-commerce and growing demand for organic and premium product offerings. (A) Both the Assertion and the Reason are true, and the Reason is the correct explanation of the Assertion. (B) Both the Assertion and the Reason are true, but the Reason is not the correct explanation of the Assertion. (C) The Assertion is true, but the Reason is false. (D) The Assertion is false, but the Reason is true.

[1 Marks]

(4) Given that teenagers and young adults form the primary group for cosmetics purchases, what are the key factors that shape their buying decisions?

[1 Marks]

(5) How has the rise of e-commerce platforms impacted the revenue of the Indian cosmetics industry? Explain in 30–40 words.

[1 Marks]

(6) Based on your understanding of Paragraph (3), fill in the blank with the suitable option: The skincare segment currently dominates the Indian cosmetics industry. Currently its share is _____ (20%, 25%, 35%) approximately.

[1 Marks]

(7) Complete the sentence suitably: That men's grooming has increased the demand for gender-neutral cosmetic formulations symbolizes _____.

[1 Marks]

(8) Identify the word that indicates that the cosmetics industry is anticipated to grow.

[1 Marks]

(9) Mention any two major challenges faced by the cosmetics industry at present.

[2 Marks]

Section C

Question 7.

Fill in the blank by using the correct form of the word in the brackets:

The group _____ (walk) for hours through forests and hills in Mexico before it reached the barbed wire fence, marking the boundary of the forest.

[1 Marks]

Question 8.

Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option given in the brackets:

_____ (Several/Both/All) people attended the convention because the entry was open to all at a very nominal fee.

[1 Marks]

Question 9.

Read the given sentence from a story, identify the error and supply the correction:

The farmer told his sons that he had hidden a treasure in the fields but he had forget the actual place. Use the given format for your response. Error Correction

[1 Marks]

Error	*Correction*

Question 10.

Report the dialogue between two friends by completing the sentence:

Harry: Good morning Bobby, how do you do?

Bobby: Quite well, thank you; but these are hard times. Harry wished Bobby good morning and enquired about his well-being. Bobby thanked him and said that he was quite well, but remarked _____.

[1 Marks]

Question 11.

Select the option that identifies the error and supplies the correction for the line given below:

I don't know what it is. It feel like an incredibly lucky day for me.

[1 Marks]

Option No.	*Error*	*Correction*
(A)	don't	doesn't
(B)	is	have
(C)	feel	feels
(D)	lucky	luckily

Question 12.

Select the correct option to complete the reporting of the dialogue:

Sahil said to Shekhar, "Which are your books?"

(A) Sahil asked Shekhar which his books were.

(B) Sahil asked Shekhar which books are yours.

(C) Sahil asked Shekhar which has been his books.

(D) Sahil asked Shekhar which are his books.

[1 Marks]

Question 13.

Complete the given sentence with the correct form of the verb by selecting the correct option:

A case _____ against the unidentified truck driver for causing damage to the street poles due to negligence and rash driving.

(A) was registered

(B) is register

(C) have been registered

(D) may registered

[1 Marks]

Question 14.

Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option from the brackets:

Anita _____ (ought to/would/have to) likely complete the project on time as her team is collaborating effectively.

[1 Marks]

Question 15.

Identify the error and supply the correction for the following note in a hair salon's instruction manual:

All tools and frequently touched surfaces must be disinfect after each client's treatment.

Use the given format for your response.

[1 Marks]

Error	*Correction*

Question 16.

Suhani and Sneha decided to purchase books to focus on 'Reading Skills' in their summer vacations. Report the question asked by Suhani to Sneha.

Which books are we going to purchase today from the Book Fest?

Suhani asked Sneha _____.

[1 Marks]

Question 17.

Replace the underlined word used in the sentence with the best option given below:

Since Sheenam study diligently for months, she will clear the competitive exam.

(A) studying

(B) was studied

(C) has been studying

(D) have been studied

[1 Marks]

Question 18.

Identify the error and supply the correction for the following sentence:

True tradition is not in celebrations, but in the culture we carries forward.

Use the given format for your response.

[1 Marks]

Error	*Correction*

Section D

Question 19. In the poem ‘Fire and Ice’, how does the intense human emotion symbolised by fire lead to the destruction of the world?

[3 Marks]

Question 20.

Mention the details that Anne provides about her family in her diary. (From the Diary of Anne Frank)

[3 Marks]

Question 21.

Bread plays a pivotal role in Goan culture and tradition. Support the statement with evidences from the text. (Glimpses of India : A Baker from Goa)

[3 Marks]

Question 22.

What happened when Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom? (Mijbil the Otter)

[3 Marks]

Question 23.

Despite her young age, how does Valli manage to gather subtle details about the bus journey? (Madam Rides the Bus)

[3 Marks]

Question 24.

Why does Hari Singh find it pleasant to work for Anil, though he was a thief? (The Thief's Story)

[3 Marks]

Question 25.

How does Matilda face 'the horrible life of necessity'? (The Necklace)

[3 Marks]

Question 26.

The teacher built up Bholi's confidence on her first day at school. Discuss. (Bholi)

[3 Marks]

Section E

Question 27.

You are Sanjana/Sanjit of Avenue Apartments, XYZ Colony, Sakshamgarh. Recently, you read in the newspaper about adulteration in food and dairy products consumed daily. Write a letter to the editor of a national daily expressing your views on food adulteration. Highlight the health risks of eating such foods and suggest measures to tackle the issue.

[5 Marks]

Question 28.

Going for a walk in your residential colony offers a convenient way to integrate physical activity into your daily routine. Write a letter to the Director, Municipal Board, requesting maintenance of the colony parks, installation of lighting poles, and repair of walking tracks to facilitate walkers and create a safe community space. You are Rita/Raghav Mishra, President RWA, Senatown.

[5 Marks]

Section F

Question 29.

Read the given details of the school activities that help children in their personality development.

- student councils, clubs
- activities in the Morning Assembly
- celebration of important days
- organization of various competitions
- sports and academic activities

Analyse the details and write an analytical paragraph about the impact of school activities on students. Focus on factors like fosters leadership, responsibility, communication skills, discipline, daily motivation, and team building.

[5 Marks]

Question 30.

Read the following details about fashion trends.

In today's world, fashion is not just about clothes, it is driven by images and impressions. Fashion trends provide a powerful reflection of society's evolution, and creativity. Write an analytical paragraph about how the factors mentioned below have shaped the fashion trends in recent years with key causes, effects and future implications.

- creative expression
- social media influence
- celebrity endorsements

● blend of traditional and modern styles

● commercialization of festivals

● customized fashion choices

● rising e-commerce

[5 Marks]

Section G

Question 31. How do Lencho in ‘A Letter to God’ and Kisa Gotami in ‘The Sermon at Benares’ respond to their experiences of suffering and loss? How did they overcome their respective losses?

[6 Marks]

Question 32. How does the contrast between the pilot’s fear in ‘The Black Aeroplane’ and Custard’s initial cowardice in ‘The Tale of Custard the Dragon’ highlight that courage can be found in the most unexpected characters when circumstances demand it? Discuss with reference to the two.

[6 Marks]

Question 33. Compare and contrast Tricki’s condition before and after his stay at the surgery. How does this contrast help in understanding the role of proper care, discipline and environment in ensuring Tricki’s well-being? (A Triumph of Surgery)

[6 Marks]

Question 34.

How does Think-Tank’s arrogance and ignorance contribute to the theme of wit over power in ‘The Book that Saved the Earth’ ?

[6 Marks]
