



UNIT TEST (2026-2027)

ENGLISH CORE (Ans. Key)

Class: XII

Time: 1 hour

Date: 14 / 05 /2026

M.M: 30

General Instructions:

- ✓ All questions are compulsory.
- ✓ The question paper consists of three sections:
Section A - Reading - 10 Marks
Section B - Writing - 4 Marks
Section C - Literature – 16 Marks
- ✓ Attempt one section at a stretch and then move to the next section and number your questions correctly.
- ✓ While attempting MCQs, write the correct option number along with the answer.
- ✓ Use of correcting fluid (whitener) is prohibited.
- ✓ This paper consists of 4 printed pages.

	SECTION A-READING	10 Marks
Q. I	Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow:	
1	The Centre is methodical. The recently tabled press and registration of periodicals bill, 2023 appeared to many to be a methodical step in destroying freedoms. The government, however, declared that the bill would simplify the process of registration presented in the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, which the new law will replace. It will aid transparency and ease of business and help small and medium publishers. But these uplifting goals have not prevented the government from opening up multiple centres of power that can decide the fate of journals.	
2	The alarm expressed by the Editors Guild of India over the bill's 'draconian provisions' indicates how the bill threatens press freedom. The EGI has written about its areas of worry to the prime minister and highly-placed leaders and suggested that the bill be sent to a parliamentary select committee for discussion. 'Registration', not 'regulation', is what a free press requires.	
3	The 1867 law empowered only the district magistrate to suspend or cancel the certificate of registration for a publication. The new law gives this power not only to the press registrar but also to other 'specific authorities', suggesting that law enforcement agencies, too, could butt in. The EGI fears the possibilities of arbitrariness and intrusiveness because any of these authorities can enter publishing premises to question people and seize documents. The bill seems to have built-in guarantees of compliance. Anyone accused of terrorist activity and of actions detrimental to the security of the State would be barred from publishing.	
4	The ceaseless use of laws against terror and sedition is a constant threat to journalists, who are occasionally jailed. But criticism of the government was so far being suppressed by arresting individuals; the new law would ensure silence even before a line is published. Since the Centre will evolve guidelines for news publication, it could mean a full-blown shift from news to fairy-tale. Lightning	

	the penal provisions of the 1867 Act is intriguing too.	
5	An improper declaration of publishers and printers before the district magistrate will not matter. And the law will tread lightly when there is publication without registration, making it punishable if publishing continues for six months after warning. Who are the intended beneficiaries? A free press is one of the most precious freedoms the country enjoys. This is now at grave risk.	
	Based on your understanding of the passage, answer the questions given below.	10 Marks
i	Select the option that best captures the central theme of the passage. a. The evolution of press and registration laws in India b. The challenges to press freedom posed by new legislation c. The benefits of the Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, 2023 d. The role of the Editors Guild of India in shaping press regulations	1 Mark
ii	What is the primary goal of the Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, 2023, according to the government? a. To enhance transparency in press operations b. To simplify the process of press registration c. To promote ease of business for publishers d. To aid small and medium publishers financially	1 Mark
iii	Share evidence from the passage that supports the concern expressed by the Editors Guild of India (EGI) about the new bill. Answer: The passage mentions that the EGI has expressed alarm over the bill's 'draconian provisions' and suggested that it be sent to a parliamentary select committee for discussion.	2 Marks
iv	Complete the sentence appropriately with a characteristic or its description. Based on the information in the passage, the Editors Guild of India is portrayed as ____ Ans: vigilant, protective of press freedom, and willing to engage with authorities to safeguard the rights of journalists.	1 Mark
v	What aspect of the new law raises concerns about potential abuse of power? a. The empowerment of district magistrates b. The inclusion of 'specific authorities' c. The provision for simplifying registration	1 Mark

	d. The focus on ease of business for publishers	
vi	Explain, in about 40 words, the potential implications of the new law on press freedom, as highlighted in the passage. The new law, by granting additional power to various authorities to suspend registrations and seize documents, may lead to arbitrary actions against the press. It could enable pre-publication censorship, hindering open criticism of the government.	2 Marks
vii	The word “<i>intriguing</i>” in paragraph 4 of the passage most nearly suggests: a. Boring b. Unimportant c. Confusingly interesting d. Predictable	1 Mark
viii	State TRUE or FALSE. The new law is designed to lighten the penal provisions of the 1867 Act, making it easier for publishers to operate without strict oversight. Answer: FALSE. The passage suggests that the new law may actually increase potential risks and barriers for publishers, including the possibility of arbitrary actions and pre-publication censorship.	1 Mark
	SECTION B - WRITING	4 Marks
Q. II.	Attempt any ONE from (a) and (b) given below:	
a	Bali High Public School has recently created Cure Green, a dedicated area for local medicinal herbs and shrubs, adjacent to the flower garden, on campus. As Rachel Tiwari, Captain of the Eco-Club, draft a notice for the school notice board, informing students of classes XI-XII, about a guided walk-through Cure Green, post assembly, on Friday, 10 July, 20xx. Invite care-giver applications, for Cure Green. Format – 1 Content -2 Organisation of ideas -1 Accuracy 1 Box, NOTICE (centre), name of issuing authority- organisation/ agency (centre), date of issue (aligned left), Authorisation name, designation & signature (bottom left) NOTE: full credit if all aspects are included. Partial credit (½ mark) if one-two aspects are missing. No credit if more than two aspects are missing.	4 Marks
	OR	
b	You are the Secretary of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, Sector D-3 Society, Lucknow. Draft a notice for the Society notice board, informing residents about the change of personnel, Head Security, Gate 2 and share necessary details. Also, include the news of installation of the much awaited security camera, on the Eastern periphery of the Society.	
	SECTION C- LITERATURE	16 Marks
Q. III.	Read the given extract to attempt the questions with reference to the context.	
	“.. but after the airport’s security check, standing a few yards	

	away, I looked again at her, wan, pale as a late winter's moon and felt that old familiar ache, my childhood's fear, but all I said was, see you soon, Amma, all I did was smile and smile and smile.....”	
i.	What is the speaker's emotional state when looking at her mother? a. Confused and disoriented b. Nostalgic and longing c. Empathetic and understanding d. Fearful and apprehensive	1 Mark
ii	What does the use of the word "but" at the beginning of the line, ‘but all I said...’, suggest? The use of the word “but” in the line “but all I said...” suggests a contrast between the speaker’s deep inner emotions and her outward behaviour. Although the poet feels fear, pain, and anxiety about her ageing mother, she does not express these emotions openly. Instead, she controls herself and says cheerful words, hiding her sorrow behind a smile.	1 Mark
iii.	State whether the given statement is TRUE or FALSE. The poetic device used in the line, ‘pale as a winter’s moon’ is the same as the one used in the line, ‘the winter wind wistfully wailed at night’. FALSE In “pale as a winter’s moon”, the poetic device used is a simile because of the comparison using “as.” In “the winter wind wistfully wailed at night”, the poetic device used is alliteration due to the repetition of the ‘w’ sound.	1 Mark
iv	Complete the sentence appropriately. The repetition of the word, ‘smile’ suggests that _____. The repetition of the word ‘smile’ suggests that the poet is trying to hide her pain and reassure both herself and her mother despite her inner fear and sadness.	1 Mark
Q. IV.	Read the given extract to attempt the questions with reference to the context.	
	<i>He said I was unhappy. That made my wife kind of mad, but he explained that he meant the modern world is full of insecurity, fear, war, worry and all the rest of it, and that I just want to escape. Well, who doesn't? Everybody I know wants to escape, but they don't wander down into any third level at Grand Central Station. But that's the reason, he said, and my friends all agreed. Everything points to it. they claimed. My stamp collecting, for example; that's a 'temporary refuge from reality.' Well, maybe, but my grandfather didn't need any refuge from reality; things were pretty nice and peaceful in his days, from all I hear, and he started my collection. (The Third Level)</i>	

i	Select the option that signifies the condition of people of the ‘modern world’ mentioned in the extract. (1) unsure (2) lazy (3) offensive (4) anxious (5) afraid a. (1) and (3) b. (2) and (5) c. (2), (3) and (4) d. (1), (4) and (5)	1 Mark
ii	Why didn’t Charley’s grandfather need refuge from reality? Charley’s grandfather did not need any refuge from reality because, according to the narrator, his time was peaceful and secure. Life in his era was free from the insecurity, fear, war, and constant worry that characterize the modern world. Since reality itself was calm and stable, there was no need for him to escape into fantasies or alternate worlds.	1 Mark
iii	Sam’s explanation to the reaction of Charley’s wife was _____ in nature a. critical b. aggressive c. clarifying d. accusatory	1 Mark
Q. V.	Answer any TWO of the following in about 40-50 words each:	2x2=4 Marks
i.	Identify an instance of hope or resilience in ‘Lost Spring’ and analyse how it reflects one of the story's themes. An instance of hope and resilience is seen in Saheb-e-Alam, who continues to work as a ragpicker despite harsh living conditions. Even though his life is filled with poverty and lost childhood, he still tries to adapt and survive, and later works in a tea stall, showing his acceptance of reality with quiet endurance. This reflects the theme of childhood lost to poverty but survival through resilience, highlighting how deprivation does not completely extinguish hope.	
ii.	How does the story use the third level as a metaphor? In <i>The Third Level</i>, the “third level” at Grand Central Station is a symbolic escape from harsh modern reality. It represents Charley’s subconscious desire to retreat into a simpler, calmer past. The existence of this imagined level blurs the boundary between reality and fantasy, symbolising how people create mental escapes to cope with anxiety, insecurity, and stress in modern life.	
iii.	What does the contrasting imagery of the church clock and the Prussian trumpets represent, in ‘The Last Lesson’? The contrasting imagery of the church clock and Prussian trumpets represents the shift from peaceful French life to German domination. The church clock symbolises time, memory, and the fading identity of the French people, while the Prussian trumpets represent military control, aggression, and the arrival of	

	oppression. Together, they highlight the emotional impact of losing one's language and freedom, reinforcing the theme of patriotism and cultural loss.	
Q. VI.	Answer any ONE of the following in bout 120-150 words.	5 Marks
i	Discuss how the poet blends personal experience with universal themes in “<i>My Mother at Sixty-Six</i>”. In “My Mother at Sixty-Six”, the poet Kamala Das blends her deeply personal experience with universal human emotions, making the poem both intimate and widely relatable. The poem arises from a specific moment—the poet travelling with her ageing mother to the airport and noticing her frailty, “wan, pale as a late winter’s moon.” This personal observation triggers her childhood fear of losing her mother, revealing her private emotional world. However, this individual experience extends into a universal theme of ageing and separation. Everyone, at some point in life, confronts the reality of their parents growing old and the inevitable fear of loss. The poet’s silent pain, her forced smile, and her attempt to mask sorrow reflect how people commonly hide deep emotions to avoid distressing loved ones. The poem thus connects the personal (a daughter’s moment of parting) with the universal (human anxiety about mortality, ageing, and separation). Through simple imagery and restrained emotion, Kamala Das captures a shared human truth: love is inseparable from the fear of loss.	
ii	Everybody during the ‘last lesson’ is filled with regret. Comment. In “The Last Lesson”, almost everyone experiences deep regret when they realize it is the final French class. Franz regrets not learning his lessons seriously and wasting time, suddenly understanding the value of education and his mother tongue. The villagers regret their indifference toward French, which they had taken for granted for years. Even M. Hamel feels regret for not being strict enough with his students and for postponing teaching important lessons. This shared regret highlights a powerful theme: people often realize the true value of something—language, education, or freedom—only when it is about to be taken away. The “last lesson” thus becomes a moment of awakening, filled with remorse, realization, and emotional attachment to their lost linguistic and cultural identity.	