

ANSWER KEY



INDIAN SCHOOL AL-WADI-AL-KABIR

Mid Term Examination (2026-27)

Subject: English

Class: IX

Time: 3 Hours

Date: 13-09-26

Max. Marks: 80

General Instructions:

Read the following instructions carefully and follow them.

i. This question paper has 14 questions.

ii. This question paper contains three sections:

Section A: Reading Skills

Section B: Writing and Grammar

Section C: Literature

SECTION A: READING SKILLS (20 marks)

Q. 1.	Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.	10 marks
	THE QUIET POWER OF BOREDOM 1) Ask most people how they feel about being bored, and the answer is rarely positive. Boredom is often treated as a problem to be solved immediately — a phone is unlocked, a video begins to play, a snack is fetched — anything to fill the empty minutes. Yet a growing body of psychological research suggests that this reflex to eliminate every idle moment may come at a real cost, particularly to creativity and independent thought. 2) Boredom arises when the mind is under-stimulated: there is nothing urgent to attend to, and no clear task to complete. In this unstructured state, attention is free to wander rather than being pinned to a screen or a specific problem. Researchers who have studied this 'wandering mind' find that it does not switch off; instead, it begins to generate its own material — memories, half-formed ideas, imagined conversations — a process sometimes described as mental incubation. Just as dough left undisturbed continues to rise, ideas left to develop without direct supervision often mature into something more original than they would under constant, deliberate effort. 3) This is not merely a comforting theory. In one frequently cited study, adults who were given a dull, repetitive task before a creative exercise produced more original ideas than those who went directly into the creative task without any period of boredom beforehand. The dull task appeared to loosen the mind's usual patterns, making it more receptive to unusual associations. Constant novelty and stimulation, by contrast, keep the brain occupied with processing new information and leave little room for it to make these quieter, internal connections. 4) Children, in particular, seem to benefit from unstructured time. When a child complains of having 'nothing to do', the discomfort experienced is not necessarily	

	harmful; it can be the very condition under which imaginative play, invented games and self-directed exploration take root. A packed schedule of organised activities, however enriching each one may be individually, leaves little space for this kind of independent discovery. Adults, too, report their best ideas arriving not at their desks but during unremarkable, low-attention activities such as showering, walking, or waiting in a queue — moments that closely resemble boredom. 5) None of this is an argument for idleness as an end in itself, nor does it suggest that every dull moment is secretly productive. Genuine boredom must be distinguished from restlessness caused by anxiety or distraction, which does not offer the same benefits. The distinction lies in whether the mind is calm enough to wander freely rather than being pulled in several directions by competing worries. 6) What this research does suggest is that the instinct to immediately relieve boredom, however natural, may quietly work against the very creativity that constant stimulation is hoped to provide. Protecting small pockets of unfilled time, rather than treating it as time wasted, may be one of the simplest ways to allow original thought the space it needs to form.	
1.	Which statement best expresses the central idea of the passage? A. Boredom should always be eliminated as quickly as possible. B. Periods of unstimulated, wandering attention can support creativity and original thought. C. Repetitive tasks are more enjoyable than creative ones. D. Children require constant organised activity to develop their imagination. Answer: Option B	1
2.	The passage distinguishes genuine boredom from restlessness caused by anxiety or distraction. Explain TWO reasons, based on the passage, why this distinction matters for creativity. Answer: Genuine boredom allows the mind to wander calmly and form its own unusual, original connections (mental incubation); restlessness caused by anxiety or distraction pulls attention in several directions at once, so the mind cannot settle into this calm, wandering state and does not gain the same creative benefit.	2
3.	The term 'mental incubation' as used in the passage refers to — The process of generating memories, half-formed ideas, and imagined conversations described as mental incubation	1
4.	Why does the writer refer to the study in which a dull task was given before a creative exercise? A. To prove that dull tasks are always more valuable than creative ones B. To provide evidence that a period of boredom can increase original thinking in a subsequent task C. To show that repetitive tasks harm creative performance D. To argue that creative exercises should never follow dull tasks	1

	Answer: Option B	
5.	In the passage, the word 'receptive' most nearly means — A. resistant B. open and responsive C. forgetful D. easily distracted Answer: Option B	1
6.	<u>Processing continuous new information affects</u> the mind in its productivity and internal connections.	1
7.	What does the comparison between unstructured time for children and a packed schedule of organised activities chiefly reveal? A. Organised activities are always harmful to children. B. Too little unstructured time may limit opportunities for imaginative, self-directed discovery. C. Children cannot benefit from any organised activity. D. Boredom is only useful for adults, not children. Answer: Option B	1
8.	Which title best suits the writer's argument? A. Why Boredom Deserves a Second Look B. The Dangers of Repetitive Tasks C. How to Avoid Boredom Completely D. The Case for Constant Stimulation Answer: Option A	1
9.	COMPETENCY-BASED: Meera has a free hour before dinner. She is deciding between scrolling through short videos on her phone and lying on her bed, staring at the ceiling with no particular thought in mind. Based on the passage, which activity is more likely to support original thinking afterward, and why? A. Scrolling through videos, because it keeps the brain constantly stimulated B. Lying still with an unoccupied mind, because it allows attention to wander freely, similar to boredom C. Neither activity, because only organised tasks support creativity D. Both equally, because any activity before dinner has the same effect Answer: Option B	1
Q. 2.	Read the following case-based passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.	(10 marks)
	SCREEN TIME AND SLEEP: WHAT THE NUMBERS SHOW	

	1. A recent survey conducted across several schools asked 600 students between the ages of 13 and 17 to record their average daily screen time and their average nightly sleep over two weeks. The results, summarised in the table below, reveal a pattern that many parents and teachers have long suspected but rarely seen presented so clearly. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Average Daily Screen Time</th><th>Average Nightly Sleep</th><th>% of Students in this Group</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Less than 2 hours</td><td>8.6 hours</td><td>16%</td></tr> <tr> <td>2 – 4 hours</td><td>7.9 hours</td><td>38%</td></tr> <tr> <td>4 – 6 hours</td><td>6.8 hours</td><td>32%</td></tr> <tr> <td>More than 6 hours</td><td>5.9 hours</td><td>15%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> 2. As screen time increased across the four groups, average sleep duration declined steadily, from 8.6 hours among the lightest users to just 5.9 hours among the heaviest. Only 15% of students surveyed used screens for less than two hours a day, while an equal proportion spent more than six hours daily in front of a screen. 3. The researchers were careful to note that the survey shows a correlation, not a proven cause, between screen use and reduced sleep; other factors, such as homework load, anxiety, or irregular bedtimes, may also play a role. However, the consistency of the pattern across such a large sample led the researchers to recommend that schools include basic guidance on healthy screen habits as part of wellness programmes, alongside — rather than instead of — encouraging balanced routines for study, rest, and recreation.	Average Daily Screen Time	Average Nightly Sleep	% of Students in this Group	Less than 2 hours	8.6 hours	16%	2 – 4 hours	7.9 hours	38%	4 – 6 hours	6.8 hours	32%	More than 6 hours	5.9 hours	15%	
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1.	Which statement best expresses the central idea of the passage? A. Screen time has no relationship with sleep duration. B. As daily screen time increased across the surveyed groups, average sleep duration tended to decrease. C. All students who use screens for more than six hours sleep well. D. Homework load is the only factor affecting students' sleep. Answer: Option B	1															
2.	According to the table, what percentage of students meet the average sleep requirement? Answer: 16%	1															
3.	The word 'correlation' as used in the passage most nearly means — A. a proven cause-and-effect relationship B. a pattern of association between two factors, without proof that one causes the other C. a random coincidence with no pattern D. an experiment conducted in a laboratory Answer: Option B	1															

4.	Give TWO reasons, based on the passage, why the researchers avoided claiming that screen time directly causes reduced sleep. Answer: <u>homework load, anxiety, or irregular bedtimes</u>	2
5.	The researchers recommend that schools offer guidance on healthy screen habits.	1
6.	Why does the writer mention 'other factors, such as homework load, anxiety, or irregular bedtimes' in the passage? A. To argue that screen time has no effect on sleep at all B. To acknowledge that the observed pattern may have multiple contributing causes, not screen time alone C. To prove that homework is more harmful than screen time D. To suggest that the survey results should be ignored Answer: Option B	1
7.	Based on the table, _____ group of students recorded the least average sleep. 'More than 6 hours' / Last group of students	1
8.	COMPETENCY-BASED: Rahul spends about 5 hours on his phone every day and often feels tired in school. Based on the table in the passage, which group does Rahul's screen time most closely match, and what average sleep duration does this group report? Answer: '4–6 hours' group 6.8 hours.	1
9.	Which title best suits this passage? A. Why Screens Should Be Banned in Schools B. Screen Time and Sleep: A Pattern Worth Noticing C. The Benefits of Unlimited Screen Time D. How to Improve Homework Habits Answer: Option B	1
SECTION B: WRITING AND GRAMMAR (30 marks)		
GRAMMAR (10)		
Q.3	The following passage has one error in each line. Write the incorrect word and its correction against each line. ($\frac{1}{2} \times 8 = 4$) Example: Last week, our school organise a trip to the science exhibition. organise → organised a) Each students was given an information booklet at the entrance. b) students → student b) The guide have explained the working of the robotic arm. c) have → has c) A few visitors asked questions about solar energy in the seminar that had held last week. had- was	(1x4=4)

	d) Students may complete the worksheet before leaving the hall. (obligation) d. may → must	
Q.4.	Fill in the blanks by choosing the correct option to make each sentence grammatically and contextually complete.	3
1.	By the time the judges arrive, the students _____ the working model for the exhibition. A. will complete B. will have completed C. has completed D. had completed Answer: Option B	
2.	_____ of the exhibits attracted more visitors than the organisers had expected. A. A few B. Few C. A little D. The few Answer: Option A	1
3.	All participants _____ submit their project reports before the last date, as late entries will not be accepted. A. might B. must C. would D. could Answer: Option B	1
Q.5	Rearrange the words/phrases to form meaningful sentences.	3
1.	before / begins / must / the experiment / students / safety goggles / wear Answer: Students must wear safety goggles before the experiment begins. Before the experiment begins, Students must wear safety goggles.	1
2.	the region / over / has / significantly / interest / in / renewable technology / grown / recent years / across Answer: Interest in renewable technology has grown significantly across the region over recent years. Possibility 2: Interest in renewable technology has grown significantly over recent years across the region.	1
3.	Does not / always / a / confident / guess / correct / guarantee / answer/a Answer: A confident guess does not always guarantee a correct answer.	1

	WRITING (20 MARKS)	
Q.6	You are the Cultural Secretary of your school. The Student Council is organising an inter-house 'Heritage Quiz Competition' to encourage students to learn about India's history and culture. Draft a notice in not more than 50 words inviting participation. Include eligibility, registration deadline, format of the quiz and whom to contact. Format- 1 Box-NOTICE- Heading- date- designation (2 mistakes – ½ marks lost) Content- 2 What, where, when, who, whom to contact – 50 words approx.	3
Q.7	As the Secretary of the Eco Club, write a formal email in 120-150 words to the Manager of a local recycling plant requesting a guided tour for 35 Grade XI students. Ask about available dates, safety protocols to be followed, the maximum group size permitted, and any registration formalities required. Format- 2 From-to-date-subject-salutation-complimentary closure. Content- 3 Word limit, language, presentation	5
Q.8	You recently visited a science and technology museum with your family. Write a factual description in 120-150 words of the museum, describing its location, key exhibits, facilities available, and its significance for students. You are Aarav/Aaravi. Format- 1 1 para- word limit Content- 4 Topic sentence- types of sentence- conjunctions- closure- relevance You are Aarav/Aaravi- no deduction	5
Q.9	You are Riya/Rohan, a student of Class XI and a resident of Green Park, Lucknow. You are concerned about the declining habit of reading among students, who increasingly prefer short-form digital content and entertainment to books and other forms of sustained reading. Write a letter to the Editor of a leading newspaper in 120–150 words, highlighting the causes and consequences of this trend and suggesting practical measures to revive the habit of reading among students. Format- 2.5 From-date-to-subject-salutation-complimentary closing Content- 4.5 Intro-body- causes and consequences of the trend- conclusion (solution/measures)	7

	SECTION C: LITERATURE (30 MARKS)	
Q.10	Read the given extracts and answer the questions. Attempt ANY ONE of the two extracts.	5
A.	<i>“When I came back to my village, I saw my grandmother in tears. I was surprised, for I had never seen her cry even in the most difficult situations...She nodded and did not reply. I did not understand and forgot about it.”</i>	
1.	The narrator's surprise at seeing her grandmother in tears chiefly suggests — A. that the grandmother cried often over small matters B. that the grandmother was usually emotionally strong and composed C. that the narrator did not care about her grandmother's feelings D. that the grandmother was pretending to be upset Answer: Option B	1
2.	Why does the narrator say she 'did not understand and forgot about it' after her grandmother nodded but did not reply? Answer: As a twelve-year-old, the narrator could not yet grasp the depth of her grandmother's distress, so without a clear explanation she simply let the matter go and returned to her usual routine. (any relevant answer)	1
3.	Which inference about the grandmother's usual nature is best supported by this moment? A. She was normally a cheerful and even-tempered person who rarely showed sorrow openly. B. She frequently complained about her hardships. C. She was indifferent to her family's feelings. D. She had never faced any difficulty in her life. Answer: Option A	1
4.	Explain the reason behind the grandmother's tears.	2
B.	<i>“When Sentila wearily let the misshapen lump fall flat on the ground, Onula went to her and said, ‘Don't worry, little one, I shall teach you how to make a perfect pot.’”</i>	5
1.	The word 'wearily' most nearly conveys that Sentila was — A. excited and confident B. tired and discouraged C. angry and impatient D. careless and indifferent Answer: Option B	1
2.	How does Onula's response mark a turning point for Sentila?	1

	Answer: Unlike her mother, who left her to struggle alone, Onula offers gentle encouragement and hands-on guidance exactly when Sentila is ready to give up, giving her the confidence to try again.	
3.	Which inference about mentorship is best supported by this extract? A. A good mentor removes all possibility of failure. B. A supportive, patient approach can help a discouraged learner regain confidence. C. Mentorship is unnecessary once a learner attempts a task alone. D. A mentor's presence guarantees a flawless result every time. Answer: Option B	1
4.	Explain how Onula's method of guiding Sentila differs from Arenla's earlier method of teaching her. Answer: Arenla silently completed the work herself whenever Sentila struggled, leaving her nothing to learn from; Onula instead reassures Sentila, demonstrates the skill, and encourages her to try again herself, building her confidence and ability.	2
Q.11	Read the given extracts and answer the questions. Attempt ANY ONE of the two extracts.	5
A.	<i>"The mighty Himavant is ours— there's no equal anywhere on earth. The generous Ganga is ours— which other river can match her grace?"</i>	1
1.	The repeated structure 'is ours' across the lines chiefly creates an effect of — A. a private complaint about the land B. a collective, rhythmic sense of pride and ownership C. confusion about who the land belongs to D. a warning to future generations Answer: Option B	1
2.	Why does the poet use rhetorical questions such as 'which other river can match her grace?' in these lines? Answer: The rhetorical questions invite the reader to agree that nothing can equal India's natural features, reinforcing the poet's claim of the land's unmatched greatness without needing a direct answer.	1
3.	Which inference about the poet's tone is best supported by these lines? A. Bitter and critical B. Reverential and celebratory C. Indifferent and detached D. Anxious and uncertain	1

	Answer: Option B	
4.	Which poetic device did the poet use to build a sense of national pride in this extract. Why? Answer: “ours” – repetition/ Hyperbole To emphasise the pride that the nation carries/ the poet feels about the nation.	2
B.	<i>“I cannot remember my mother / only sometimes in the midst of my play / a tune seems to hover over my playthings, / the tune of some song that she used to hum while rocking my cradle.”</i>	5
1.	The line 'I cannot remember my mother' chiefly conveys — A. the speaker's anger towards his mother B. the speaker's longing, despite having no clear memory of her C. the speaker's complete indifference to his mother D. the speaker's confusion about who his mother was Answer: Option B	1
2.	Why does the memory of the mother surface specifically 'in the midst of... play', rather than at another time? Answer: Play is an unguarded, carefree moment when the mind is relaxed, allowing a faint, involuntary trace of memory, like a half-remembered tune, to surface naturally without being consciously summoned. (any relevant ans)	1
3.	Which sense is primarily evoked in this extract? A. Visual B. Auditory C. Olfactory D. Tactition Answer: Option B	1
4.	Explain how the poet suggests that memory can be triggered involuntarily, even without a clear visual image of the person remembered. Answer: The speaker has no visual memory of his mother, yet a half-heard tune from his childhood surfaces unbidden during play, showing that sound and feeling can preserve a person's presence even when sight and conscious memory cannot.	2
Q.12	Answer any FIVE of the following questions in about 40-50 words each.	5X2=10
1.	The grandmother in How I Taught My Grandmother to Read sets herself a strict deadline to learn to read. What does this decision reveal about her character? Answer: It reveals her strong determination, discipline and self-respect: rather than accepting her lack of education as permanent, she takes charge of her own learning at sixty-two, proving that willpower can overcome years of disadvantage.	2

2.	In The Pot Maker, Sentila is unable to learn pottery from her mother for a whole year but learns quickly under Onula's guidance. What does this contrast suggest about different approaches to teaching? Answer: It suggests that silent demonstration without encouragement can leave a nervous learner unable to progress, while a patient, reassuring approach that builds confidence allows the same learner to grasp a skill far more quickly.	2
3.	The pankha, once made only for personal use, has now become a commercial product in Winds of Change. Explain how this shift reflects both an opportunity and a challenge for the craft. Answer: Commercialisation gives artisans a sustainable livelihood and wider recognition for their skill, but it also risks diluting traditional designs and techniques as production increases to meet market demand rather than cultural purpose.	2
4.	Bharat Our Land repeatedly uses the refrain 'she's peerless, let's praise her!' What effect does this repetition create? Answer: The repeated refrain builds a rhythmic, chant-like quality that reinforces the poem's central claim of India's unmatched greatness, turning individual admiration into a shared, collective expression of national pride.	2
5.	In Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations, the poet writes, 'The voice of their vocation is the voice of their identity.' Explain what this line suggests about the dignity of work. Answer: The line suggests that a person's work is not separate from who they are; every vocation, however humble, expresses the worker's individuality and deserves the same respect and recognition as any other.	2
6.	In Canvas of Soil, the poet compares a garden plot to a canvas. How does this extended metaphor change the way we see gardening? Answer: By comparing soil to a palette and seeds to brushstrokes, the poet reframes gardening as a creative, artistic act rather than routine labour, suggesting that a gardener, like a painter, shapes something beautiful with skill and imagination.	2
Q.13	Answer any ONE of the following questions in about 120-150 words.	5
A.	“The grandmother's decision to learn to read in How I Taught My Grandmother to Read changes not just her own life but her relationship with her granddaughter.” Evaluate this statement with reference to the text. Answer: Key points: the grandmother moves from dependence to independence, gaining the ability to read novels on her own; the roles of teacher and student reverse the usual family hierarchy, as the young narrator becomes her grandmother's teacher; this builds mutual respect and a deeper bond between the two; the narrator herself is inspired, going on to become a teacher; overall, the grandmother's personal growth reshapes the family's dynamic of learning and authority.	5

B.	"Discuss how Sentila's mastery of pottery serves as a symbolic passing of the torch, proving that her artistic destiny could not be halted by her mother's tragic passing. Tragically, the mother's death and the daughter's artistic awakening happen at the exact same crossroads. While Sentila laments that she did not want her victory to happen at the cost of a broken relationship, her mother's passing removes the final barrier of friction. The story's concluding declaration—"A new pot maker was born"—solidifies this transition. Arenla's demise ironically seals the very fate she fought against, leaving Sentila as the sole, proud bearer of their community's cultural heritage. Ultimately, the narrative demonstrates that when a calling is deeply rooted in ancestral destiny, it will always find a way to break through and survive.	5
Q.14	Answer any ONE of the following questions in about 120-150 words.	5
A.	Both poems- ' Bharat our Land' and 'Gifts of Grace: Honouring our Vocations' are deeply celebratory. How do poets use intense, passionate language to evoke a sense of deep pride and emotional connection toward "Bharat"? Both “Bharat Our Land” and “Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations” celebrate India with strong and passionate language. In <i>Bharat Our Land</i>, the poet proudly describes the country's natural beauty, calling the Himalayas mighty and the Ganga generous. The repeated words “is ours” and the refrain “she's peerless, let's praise her!” create a powerful feeling of collective pride and belonging. The rhetorical questions further suggest that Bharat's greatness is unmatched. In <i>Gifts of Grace</i>, pride in the nation is expressed through respect for its people and their different vocations. The line “The voice of their vocation is the voice of their identity” gives dignity and importance to every kind of work. Thus, both poets use emotional, celebratory language to connect Bharat's greatness with its land, people, skills and shared identity, inspiring admiration and national pride.	5
B.	The story presents education as more than the ability to read and write. How does literacy change the grandmother's sense of self-worth and independence in the chapter 'How I taught my Grandmother to read'? In “How I Taught My Grandmother to Read,” literacy greatly changes the grandmother's sense of self-worth and independence. At the age of sixty-two, she refuses to accept illiteracy as a permanent limitation and decides firmly to learn to read. Her determination shows her discipline, courage and self-respect. Earlier, she depended on others to read stories and written material to her, which made her feel helpless when no one was available. After learning to read, she becomes independent and can enjoy books on her own. Her achievement gives her confidence and restores her dignity. The learning process also changes her relationship with her granddaughter, who becomes her teacher. The grandmother respectfully acknowledges the value of education despite the reversal of their usual roles. Thus, literacy gives her not merely the ability to read, but also freedom, confidence, dignity and a stronger sense of personal identity.	5