



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

MIDTERM EXAMINATION (2026-2027)

ENGLISH (ANSWER KEY)

Class: VIII

Time: 3 hours

Date: 15 /09 /2026

Max. Marks: 80

General Instructions:

- ✓ All questions are compulsory.
- ✓ The question paper consists of four sections:
Section A – Reading - 20 Marks
Section B – Writing - 15 Marks
Section C – Grammar- 15 Marks
Section D - Literature – 30 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 12 printed pages.

	SECTION A-READING	20 Marks
Q. I	Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow: <i>The Power of Sympathy</i> Why do we feel a pang of sorrow when we see a stranger crying, or an urge to comfort a friend who has lost something dear to them? This natural response is called sympathy, and it has played a crucial role in human survival and social life for thousands of years. Sympathy is often confused with empathy, but the two are not quite the same. Empathy is the ability to feel <i>with</i> someone – to actually share in their emotional experience as if it were your own. Sympathy, on the other hand, is feeling <i>for</i> someone – recognising their pain or difficulty and responding with concern, without necessarily experiencing the emotion yourself. When you see a news report about a natural disaster in a distant country and feel sorrow for the victims, that is sympathy at work. Charles Darwin believed that sympathy evolved because it benefited early human communities. Groups whose members cared for the sick, shared food with the hungry, and comforted the grieving were more likely to survive and thrive than groups who did not. In this sense, sympathy is not simply a soft emotion but a practical tool that strengthened the bonds holding early societies together. Psychologists have identified several factors that influence how much sympathy a person feels. One is similarity – people tend to sympathise more easily with those they see as similar to themselves, whether in appearance, background, or circumstances. Another is proximity, both physical and emotional; a tragedy affecting someone close to us usually stirs more sympathy than one affecting a stranger far away. This explains why local news stories sometimes move us more	10 Marks

than reports of larger tragedies overseas – a phenomenon researchers call "psychic numbing," where the sheer scale of distant suffering can make it feel abstract rather than real.

Sympathy also has a darker side. Adam Smith, the eighteenth-century philosopher, warned that unchecked sympathy could lead to poor decisions if it caused people to act on impulse rather than reason. He argued that a balance between feeling and judgement is necessary. Similarly, modern charities have learned that sympathy alone does not guarantee effective help; donors sometimes give generously to emotionally compelling stories while ignoring causes that are equally worthy but less emotionally striking.

Despite its complications, sympathy remains one of the most valuable threads in the fabric of human relationships. It draws people together, inspires acts of kindness, and reminds us that we are, fundamentally, social creatures who depend on one another.

I. Read the passage and answer the following questions (1×12=12)

A. Multiple Choice Questions:

1. According to the passage, sympathy means:
a) Sharing someone's emotion as your own b) Feeling *for* someone without experiencing their emotion yourself c) Ignoring another person's pain d) Feeling nothing towards a stranger
2. Who warned that unchecked sympathy could lead to poor decisions?
a) Charles Darwin b) Adam Smith c) A modern charity worker d) A news reporter
3. What term is used for the phenomenon where large-scale distant suffering feels abstract rather than real?
a) Emotional distance b) Psychic numbing c) Sympathy fatigue d) Moral blindness
4. According to Darwin, sympathy evolved because it:
a) Made people weaker b) Benefited early human communities and aided survival c) Had no real purpose d) Only existed in modern societies

B. Short Answer Questions:

5. How is empathy different from sympathy, according to the passage?
6. Name two factors that psychologists say influence how much sympathy a person feels.

C. Analogy:

7. Darwin : Evolution of Sympathy :: Adam Smith : _____

D. Synonym:

	8. Find a word from the passage (Paragraph 1 or 6) that means the same as "essential" or "important": E. Antonym: 9. Find a word from the passage that means the opposite of "distant" or "far" (Paragraph 4): F. True or False: 10. According to the passage, people tend to sympathise more easily with those they see as similar to themselves. 11. Adam Smith believed sympathy should always be followed without the involvement of reason or judgement. G. Fill in the gap: 12. A tragedy affecting someone close to us usually stirs more sympathy than one affecting a stranger far away — a concept related to _____. ANSWER KEY 1. b) Feeling <i>for</i> someone without experiencing their emotion yourself 2. b) Adam Smith 3. b) Psychic numbing 4. b) Benefited early human communities and aided survival 5. Empathy means sharing in someone's emotion as if it were your own, while sympathy means recognising and feeling concern for someone's pain without necessarily experiencing the emotion yourself. 6. Similarity (to the sufferer) and proximity (physical or emotional closeness). 7. Balance Between Feeling and Judgement (accept: "Caution Against Unchecked Sympathy") 8. "Crucial" (Paragraph 1: "played a crucial role in human survival") 9. "Proximity" (Paragraph 4: opposite of distant/far, meaning nearness/closeness) 10. True 11. False 12. 'Proximity' (physical or emotional closeness)	
Q. II.	Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow: <i>The History of Graffiti</i> The first drawings on walls appeared in caves thousands of years ago. Later, the Ancient Romans and Greeks wrote their names and protest poems on buildings. Modern graffiti seems to have appeared in Philadelphia in the early 1960s, and by the late sixties it had reached New York. The new art form really took off in the 1970s, when people began writing their names, or 'tags', on buildings all	10 Marks

over the city. In the mid-seventies, it was sometimes hard to see out of a subway car window, because the trains were completely covered in spray paintings known as 'masterpieces'.

In the early days, the 'taggers' were part of street gangs who were concerned with marking their territory. They worked in groups called 'crews', and called what they did 'writing' – the term 'graffiti' was first used by *The New York Times* and the novelist Norman Mailer. Art galleries in New York began buying graffiti in the early seventies. But at the same time that it began to be regarded as an art form, John Lindsay, the then mayor of New York, declared the first war on graffiti. By the 1980s, it became much harder to write on subway trains without being caught, and instead many of the more established graffiti artists began using roofs of buildings or canvases.

The debate over whether graffiti is art or vandalism is still going on. Peter Vallone, a New York city councillor, thinks that graffiti done with permission can be art, but if it is on someone else's property, it becomes a crime. 'I have a message for the graffiti vandals out there,' he said recently. 'Your freedom of expression ends where my property begins.' On the other hand, Felix, a member of the Berlin-based group Reclaim Your City, says that artists are reclaiming cities for the public from advertisers, and that graffiti represents freedom and makes cities more vibrant.

For decades, graffiti has been a springboard to international fame for a few. Jean-Michel Basquiat began spraying on the street in the 1970s before becoming a respected artist in the '80s. The Frenchman Blek le Rat and the British artist Banksy have achieved international fame by producing complex works with stencils, often making political or humorous points. Works by Banksy have been sold for over £100,000. Graffiti is now sometimes big business.

A. Multiple Choice Questions (choose the correct option):

1. Modern graffiti is believed to have first appeared in:
a) New York b) Philadelphia c) Berlin d) Paris
2. The term 'graffiti' was first used by:
a) The taggers themselves b) Peter Vallone c) The New York Times and Norman Mailer d) Art gallery owners
3. Who declared the first "war on graffiti"?
a) Peter Vallone b) John Lindsay c) Jean-Michel Basquiat d) Banksy
4. Which artists are known for using stencils to make political or humorous points?
a) Basquiat and Vallone b) Blek le Rat and Banksy c) Felix and Lindsay d) Mailer and Lindsay

B. Short Answer Questions:

5. What were early graffiti groups called, and what did they call their activity (instead of "graffiti")?
6. According to Felix of Reclaim Your City, what does graffiti represent, and from whom are artists "reclaiming" cities?

	C. Analogy: 7. Taggers : Crews :: Soldiers : _____ D. Synonym: 8. Find a word from the passage (Paragraph 1 or 4) that means the same as "energetic" or "lively": E. Antonym: 9. Find a word from the passage that means the opposite of "unknown" or "amateur" (Paragraph 4): F. True or False: 10. Art galleries in New York began buying graffiti only after it stopped being illegal. 11. By the 1980s, it became harder to write graffiti on subway trains without getting caught. G. Fill in the gap: 12. In the mid-seventies, subway trains were sometimes hard to see out of because they were completely covered in spray paintings known as '_____': ANSWER KEY 1. b) Philadelphia 2. c) The New York Times and Norman Mailer 3. b) John Lindsay 4. b) Blek le Rat and Banksy 5. Early graffiti groups were called "crews," and they called their activity "writing." 6. Felix believes graffiti represents freedom and makes cities more vibrant; artists are reclaiming cities from advertisers. 7. Regiment/Army (i.e., a group soldiers belong to — accept "battalion" or similar) 8. "Vibrant" (Paragraph 1: "a vibrant urban art form") 9. "Established" (Paragraph 2: "established graffiti artists") — opposite of unknown/amateur 10. False (Galleries began buying graffiti in the early seventies, around the same time Lindsay declared war on it — it was already regarded as illegal by some) 11. True 12. 'Masterpieces'	
	SECTION B – WRITING	15 Marks

Q. III.	Your school recently organised a Sports Day, and your house team won the overall championship after years of losing. Write a diary entry describing the events of the day, your feelings, and what the victory meant to you and your team.	4marks
Q. IV.	You are Aryan/Anika, the Cultural Secretary of Sunrise Public School. Your school is organizing an Inter-House Painting Competition to promote creativity among students on the theme "Save the Environment." Draft a notice in not more than 50-80 words, informing students about the event, giving necessary details.	5marks
Q.V.	"Social media has done more harm than good to today's youth." Write an essay in about 150–200 words expressing your views for or against this statement. Support your answer with relevant examples and arguments.	6marks
	SECTION C - GRAMMAR	15 Marks
Q.VI.	A. Fill each blank with the modal verb that best fits the context. <i>The Job Interview</i> On Monday morning, Raj had an important job interview, so he decided he (1) _____ arrive thirty minutes early to make a good impression. His friend Priya advised him, "You (2) _____ dress professionally and bring extra copies of your resume." Raj replied, "When I was in college, I (3) _____ give presentations in front of hundreds of people without feeling nervous, so this interview shouldn't be a problem!" Still, he reminded himself that he (4) _____ not interrupt the interviewer, especially since candidates (5) _____ always listen carefully before answering. He also knew he (6) _____ be honest about his weaknesses if asked, since interviewers can usually tell when someone isn't being truthful. During the interview, the manager asked, "(7) _____ you be willing to relocate for this position?" Raj answered confidently. As he left the building, he thought, "If they liked my answers, they (8) _____ call me back for a second round." Word Bank: might, must, should, could, will, would, ought to Answer Key 1. would (intention/decision) 2. should (advice) 3. could (past ability) 4. must (obligation) 5. must (rule/obligation) 6. ought to (moral obligation/advice) 7. Would (polite/formal question) 8. will (prediction)	$\frac{1}{2} \times 8 = 4$

	A. Write the correct form of verbs from the options given to match the tense of the sentence. 1. Last week our teacher _____ (give) us a difficult spelling test. I hope we don't have another one this week. 2. Rashid _____ (learn) to drive a car when he was only fifteen years old.	$\frac{1}{2} \times 2 = 1$
Q.VII.	Change the Tense — Mixed Tenses Exercise 1. He was giving presentations in college. [Change to: Present Perfect] Answer: _____ 2. They will call him back for a second round. [Change to: Future Perfect] Answer: _____ 3. Raj waits in the lobby before his interview. [Change to: Past Continuous] Answer: _____ 4. He had practiced his answers before the interview. [Change to: Past Perfect Continuous] Answer: _____ Answer Key 1. He has given presentations in college. (<i>Present Perfect</i>) 2. They will have called him back for a second round. (<i>Future Perfect</i>) 3. Raj was waiting in the lobby before his interview. (<i>Past Continuous</i>) 4. He had been practicing his answers before the interview. (<i>Past Perfect Continuous</i>)	$\frac{1}{2} \times 4 = 2$

Q. VIII.	Read the letter below and fill in each blank with a suitable preposition. 12, Lake View Colony Chennai 5 September 2026 Dear Hari, I hope you are doing well. I am excited to share some wonderful news (1) _____ my recent trip to my grandparents' village. We travelled (2) _____ train and arrived (3) _____ the village early (4) _____ the morning. Their house is located (5) _____ a gentle hill, overlooking a beautiful river. Every evening, my cousins and I would stroll (6) _____ the fields, enjoying the cool breeze and playing games together. I already miss the peaceful and simple life of the village! With love, Shyam ANSWER KEY The suitable prepositions to complete the text are: 1. about (<i>or of</i>) 2. by 3. at (<i>or in</i>) 4. in 5. on 6. through (<i>or across / in</i>)	(½ x 8 = 4)
Q. IX	A. Fill in the correct form of the verb given in brackets to complete the story. <i>A Day at the Charity Fete</i> Every year, our school (1) (organise) a fair to raise funds for the local orphanage. This year, neither the teachers nor the Principal (2) (want) to disappoint the students, so extra stalls were added. My friends and I, along with our class teacher, (3) (decide) to set up a food stall. Each of the girls in my group (4) (bring) something different from home — samosas, cookies, and lemonade. None of the boys (5) (know) how to bake, so they helped with decorating the stall instead. By 10 a.m., a large crowd of visitors (6) (gather) near our stall. The aroma of hot samosas, along with the fresh lemonade, (7) (attract) everyone passing by. Ten rupees (8) (be) the price we charged for a plate of samosas, and it seemed reasonable to most people. ANSWER KEY 1. organizes (school – singular subject)	½ x 8 = 4

	2. wanted (neither...nor – verb agrees with the nearer subject, "the Principal" – singular) 3. decided (compound subject joined by "and" – plural, but note: "my friends and I" takes plural verb – <i>decided</i> is past tense, correct either way; if present tense were needed, it would be <i>decide</i>) 4. brought (each – singular subject, takes singular verb) 5. knew (none – can be singular or plural; here it refers to "the boys," so plural agreement — <i>knew</i> remains correct in past tense) 6. gathered (a large crowd – singular collective noun) 7. attracted (subject is "the aroma," singular; "along with the fresh lemonade" is a parenthetical phrase, doesn't affect the verb) 8. was (ten rupees – treated as a single sum of money, singular)	
	SECTION D (LITERATURE)	30 Marks
Q.X	Answer the following questions with reference to context.	8marks
	<i>1. In many significant ways, D Company's sacrifice and Major Somnath's Leadership saved Srinagar for India. The 4 KUMAON battalion was awarded the Battle Honor, Srinagar. Major Somnath laid down his life for the nation at the young age of 24. For this act of conspicuous bravery, Major Somnath Sharma was awarded the Param Vir Chakra (PVC). His citation reflects his heroism, patriotism, and courage. He was the first recipient of the PVC, awarded posthumously for gallantry and supreme sacrifice.</i> a. What battle honor was awarded to the 4 KUMAON battalion, and why? b. What does Major Somnath Sharma's citation reflect about him? c. Company's sacrifice and Major Somnath's leadership saved Srinagar for India. (True/False) d. Find a synonym for "bravery" as used in the paragraph. a. The 4 KUMAON battalion was awarded the Battle Honor "Srinagar" because D Company's sacrifice and Major Somnath Sharma's leadership helped save Srinagar for India. b. Major Somnath Sharma's citation reflects his heroism, patriotism, and courage. c. True d. Gallantry (or "heroism" / "courage") <i>2. Har Datt: I discovered that the camel's tail is short, Your Highness. King: Explain how you came to such a conclusion? Har Datt: I noticed small droplets of blood along the track, likely from mosquito bites. A camel with a long tail would have fended off these pests with ease. These small specks told me of an animal lacking such defence, hence the</i>	

	<i>short tail.</i> a. Fill in the blank with suitable word from the extract. Har Datt used his observation and the clues to reach his -----. b. What does Har Datt’s method of deduction tell us about his character? c. Select the option that applies to both the assertion (A) and the (R). Assertion(A): Har Datt concluded that the camel had a short tail. Reason (R) : There were small droplets of blood along the track, likely caused by mosquito bites that the camel could not fend off. A. A and R are both true and R is the correct explanation of A. B. A and R are both 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. d. What quality does Har Datt’s reasoning best demonstrate? (i) imagination (ii) observation and logic (iii) memory (iv) guesswork a. conclusion b. Har Datt's method of deduction shows that he is highly observant, analytical, logical, and pays close attention to minor details that others might overlook. c. A. A and R are both true and R is the correct explanation of A. d. (ii) observation and logic																					
Q.XI.	Match the word with the correct meaning	$\frac{1}{2} \times 4 = 2$																				
	<table><tr><td></td><td>WORD</td><td></td><td>MEANING</td></tr><tr><td>1.</td><td>insight</td><td>a.</td><td>undefeatable</td></tr><tr><td>2.</td><td>snickers</td><td>b.</td><td>a deep understanding</td></tr><tr><td>3.</td><td>adhered</td><td>c.</td><td>supress laughter</td></tr><tr><td>4.</td><td>insurmountable</td><td>d.</td><td>continued support</td></tr></table> Ans. 1- b , 2 – c, 3 - d , 4 -a		WORD		MEANING	1.	insight	a.	undefeatable	2.	snickers	b.	a deep understanding	3.	adhered	c.	supress laughter	4.	insurmountable	d.	continued support	
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Q.XII.	Choose the correct meaning for the given words. 1. Which sentence correctly uses the word "hold-up"? a) The hold-up in the garden bloomed beautifully this spring. b) The masked man carried out a hold-up at the local bank, threatening the staff with a gun. c) She enjoyed a quiet hold-up by the lake every evening. d) The teacher gave a hold-up on the history of ancient Rome. 2. Choose the correct usage of "draperies."	$\frac{1}{2} \times 2 = 1$																				

	a) She hung heavy velvet draperies over the tall windows. b) The draperies were served warm with a side of vegetables. c) He wrote his name on the draperies before submitting the assignment. d) The draperies increased sharply after the new policy was announced.	
Q.XII.	Answer the Any 6 questions in 30 -40 words.	1½ x 6=9
	1. What do the four words 'Nom Utes Sweden Hurts' stand for? The code (Nom, Utes, Sweden, Hurts) represented days (Monday to Thursday), hiding the fifth word (Fir for Friday), which led to the jewellery's location in a fir tree's jug. 2. What does the story "Wisdom Paves Away" teach us about the importance of observation and reasoning? The story "Wisdom Paves the Way" teaches us that careful observation and logical reasoning help us understand situations, solve problems, and arrive at the right conclusions. It shows that we should not make judgments hastily but should carefully examine the facts and use our intelligence. 3. The poem "A concrete example" portrays Mrs. Jones – based on her gardening style and her interaction with the speaker? Mrs. Jones is portrayed as a skilled and caring gardener who takes great pride in her garden. Her friendly and warm interaction with the speaker reveals her kind, cheerful and welcoming nature. 4. Why do you think Major Somnath's leadership was critical during the Battle of Badgam? Ans: Major Somnath's leadership was critical during the Battle of Badgam because he remained calm under pressure, inspired his men to fight bravely despite overwhelming odds, and made strategic decisions such as requesting air strikes. His presence and courage motivated his troops to hold their ground, buying valuable time for reinforcements to arrive and save Srinagar. 5. How does the poet describe the old woman's appearance and condition in the poem "Somebody's mother"? The woman was old and gray. She wore ragged clothes. Her feet were aged and slow. She was bent. 6. What was the reaction of the courtiers when Tenali Rama introduced "Special Paddy Seeds"? When Tenali Rama introduced 'special' paddy seeds, the courtiers mocked him and doubted his claim. 7. What was the main objective of Operation Flood? The main objective of Operation Flood was to increase milk production, provide a steady supply of milk to consumers, and improve the income and living standards of dairy farmers.	
Q. XIII.	Answer the Any 4 questions in 50-60 words. 1.What lesson does the merchant's behaviour teach us about making accusations without proper proof?	2½ x 4=10

	Answer: The merchant's behaviour teaches us that accusing someone without solid evidence is both wrong and harmful. He jumped to conclusions out of desperation and panic, which led to an unjust accusation against innocent men. His shame at the end shows that hasty judgements without proper thinking can damage others and ultimately reflect poorly on ourselves. We should always seek the truth before blaming others. 2. Why did Tim Nolan did not write the complete clue ? Ans. Tim Nolan omitted the fifth word to keep the coded message secret from the police if discovered. The secret code used rearranged weekday names without "day" (<i>Mon</i> - Nom, <i>Tues</i> - Utes). The fifth word (<i>Fri</i> - Fir) wasn't written on paper because it referred directly to the real-world hiding spot—a potted fir tree in his nursery. 3. What event does Dr. Kurien refer to when he mentions receiving the Padma Vibhushan? Ans. Dr. Kurien refers to the occasion when he was honored with the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award, in recognition of his significant contributions to the White Revolution and to the development of India's dairy industry. It symbolizes the national acknowledgment of his dedication to rural upliftment and cooperative development. . 4. How did the courage of D Company change the course of the battle? The courage and determination of D Company changed the course of the battle by holding their position at Badgam despite being heavily outnumbered. Their brave resistance delayed the enemy's advance and gave the Indian forces enough time to organise and strengthen their defence, ultimately preventing the enemy from capturing Srinagar. 5. Describe the role of Tenali Rama in the story. How did he solve the conflict with wit and wisdom? Ans. Tenali Rama plays the role of a wise mediator who peacefully resolves a royal quarrel between King Krishnadeva Raya and the Queen. Instead of directly confronting the King over his unfair behavior, Tenali uses a clever, indirect trick in court. Through a witty analogy, he gently makes the King realize his mistake. This subtle approach restored harmony between the royal couple without embarrassing the King.	
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