Future Topper

Half-Yearly Examination Practice Paper 1

Class IX English

Time allowed: 3 hours Maximum marks: 80

Syllabus covered: Kaveri (NCERT), Units 1 to 4: How I Taught My Grandmother to Read / Bharat Our Land; The Pot Maker / Gifts of Grace; Winds of Change / Canvas of Soil; Vitamin-M / I Cannot Remember My Mother. Check your school's half-yearly list before you start.

General instructions

1. This paper has three sections: A (Reading, 20 marks), B (Grammar and Writing, 30 marks) and C (Literature, 30 marks). All questions are compulsory.
2. Internal choice is given in some questions. Attempt only one of the choices.
3. Keep to the word limits given for the writing and literature answers.

Section A: Reading

20 marks

1. **12**

Read the passage given below.

1. Long before taps and pipelines, people in the dry western parts of India had to find ways to store the rain that fell in just a few weeks of the year. One of their cleverest answers was the stepwell, called a *vav* in Gujarat and a *baori* or *baoli* in Rajasthan and further north. A stepwell is a deep well with flights of steps leading down to the water, so that people could reach it even when the level dropped far below the ground in summer.

2. Stepwells were much more than water tanks. Because they went deep into the earth, the air at the bottom stayed cool even on the hottest afternoons. Travellers rested there, women gathered to talk while they filled their pots, and festivals and prayers were held on the steps. Many stepwells were decorated with carved pillars, arches and statues, which turned a daily chore into a visit to a beautiful place.

3. Some of these structures are famous today. Rani ki Vav in Patan, Gujarat, was built in the eleventh century and is remembered as the work of Queen Udayamati in memory of her husband. Its walls carry hundreds of carved figures, and it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014. Chand Baori in Abhaneri, Rajasthan, is known for its geometric pattern of about 3,500 narrow steps arranged on three sides, going down thirteen levels.

4. With piped water and borewells, many stepwells were forgotten. Some filled up with rubbish and silt; others were simply locked away. A borewell gives water at the press of a switch, but it draws on water stored deep underground, and in many places that store is falling year after year.

5. In recent years, citizens' groups and local governments in several cities have begun cleaning old stepwells. Once the rubbish and silt are removed, the wells start collecting rainwater again and help to refill the ground beneath them. The old builders understood something we are relearning: water is best saved where it falls.

Answer the following questions based on the passage.

I. Why did people in western India need stepwells? (1)
(a) Rivers there were too polluted to use. (b) Rain fell only for a short part of the year.
(c) Kings ordered every village to build one. (d) Wells were cheaper than tanks.

II. Which of these was **not** a use of stepwells mentioned in paragraph 2? (1)
(a) a cool resting place (b) a meeting place (c) a place for prayers (d) a place to grow crops

III. Complete the sentence with a phrase from paragraph 2: The carvings on many stepwells turned _____ into a visit to a beautiful place. (1)

IV. Complete the table using information from paragraph 3. (2)

Stepwell	Where it is	One special feature
Rani ki Vav	(i) _____	carved figures; World Heritage Site
Chand Baori	Abhaneri, Rajasthan	(ii) _____

V. State whether the statement is true or false, and give one line from the passage to support your answer. (1)
A borewell is a lasting solution to water shortage.

VI. What happens to a stepwell once it is cleaned? (1)

VII. Why does the writer say that stepwells were "much more than water tanks"? Give two reasons. (2)

VIII. Explain what the writer means by "water is best saved where it falls". (2)

IX. Find a word from paragraph 4 that means "fine sand and mud carried by water". (1)

2. **8**

Read the passage given below.

1. A school in Lucknow wanted to know how its Class IX students read outside lessons. The library club asked 200 students to fill in a short form, and the results surprised the teachers. Most students said they enjoyed reading, but far fewer said they had finished a whole book in the last month.

What students said	Number of students (out of 200)
I enjoy reading in my free time	142
I finished at least one book last month	64
I read mostly on a phone or tablet	88
I read mostly printed books or magazines	70
I do not read anything outside lessons	42

2. When the club members talked to their classmates, the reasons became clearer. Many said they started books but gave up after a few pages because of messages and videos. Others said the library had few books they found interesting. The club now runs a "Twenty-Minute Club" where students read a book of their choice for twenty minutes before the first bell, with phones kept away. Students also suggest titles for the library to buy.

Answer the following questions based on the passage.

I. What did the survey mainly try to find out? (1)
(a) which subjects students liked (b) how students read outside lessons
(c) how many books the library had (d) how much time students spent on phones

II. Read the statements and choose the correct option. (1)
Assertion (A): Many students who enjoy reading do not finish books.
Reason (R): Messages and videos distract them after a few pages.
(a) Both A and R are true, and R explains A. (b) Both A and R are true, but R does not explain A.
(c) A is true, but R is false. (d) A is false, but R is true.

III. Complete the sentence: In the Twenty-Minute Club, students read before the first bell and _____ (1)

IV. Which statement is **not** supported by the table? (1)
(a) More students read on screens than on paper. (b) Fewer than a third finished a book last month.
(c) Most students do not enjoy reading. (d) Some students read nothing outside lessons.

V. Using the table, explain why the results "surprised the teachers". (2)

VI. True or false? Give a reason from the passage: *Students have no say in which books the library buys.* (1)

VII. Which of these best states the central idea of the passage? (1)
(a) Phones should be banned in schools. (b) Enjoying reading and finishing books are not the same, and schools can help close the gap.
(c) Printed books are better than e-books. (d) School libraries are no longer needed.

Section B: Grammar and Writing

30 marks

3. Fill in the blanks by choosing the correct options. **4**

My grandfather (i) _____ in the same small town for fifty years. Every morning he (ii) _____ for a walk before sunrise. Last week, he told me that he (iii) _____ never seen the town so crowded. "We (iv) _____ plant more trees," he said.

(i) (a) lives (b) has lived (c) is living (d) live

(ii) (a) goes (b) going (c) gone (d) is go

(iii) (a) has (b) have (c) had (d) having

(iv) (a) must (b) may to (c) ought (d) needs

4. Rearrange the words and phrases to form meaningful sentences. **3**

(i) the potter / shaped / with great skill / the wet clay

(ii) is celebrated / across India / the craft of / in different forms / pankha-making

(iii) her grandmother / learnt / before Dassara / to read / the novel

5. Change the following into reported speech. **3**

(i) Ravi said to his mother, "Grandpa will be fine at home with me."

(ii) The teacher asked the students, "Have you finished your project?"

(iii) Avva said to her granddaughter, "Teach me the Kannada alphabet."

6. Write a notice in not more than 50 words. **4**

(A) You are Neha/Nikhil, secretary of the Heritage Club of Sunrise Public School, Agra. Write a notice inviting students to a one-day workshop on traditional hand fans (pankhas) run by local artisans.

OR

(B) You are Aman/Aanya, head of the Reading Club of Green Valley School, Pune. Write a notice about a "Bring a Book, Take a Book" exchange to be held in the school library.

7. Write a letter in 120 to 150 words. **5**

(A) You are Kavita/Karan of 14, Lake Road, Udaipur. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper about the poor condition of the old stepwells and lakes in your city, and suggest how citizens can help revive them.

OR

(B) You are Ritika/Rohit of 22, Civil Lines, Jaipur. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper urging people to buy from local craftspeople, such as potters and weavers, during festivals.

8. Write an article for your school magazine in 120 to 150 words. **5**

(A) "Learning Has No Age Limit"

OR

(B) "Living with Grandparents: What We Learn from Each Other"

9. Write a story in 150 to 180 words. **6**

(A) Complete the story that begins: *The power went off just as I sat down to finish my project, and the deadline was the next morning …*

OR

(B) Write a story about a young person who secretly follows an elderly relative to keep them safe, and finds out something surprising.

Section C: Literature

30 marks

10. Answer **any one** of the following. **5**

(A) *"For learning there is no age bar."*

(i) Who says these words, and to whom? (1)

(ii) What had the listener just said that led to this reply? (1)

(iii) What deadline did the speaker set for herself? (1)

(iv) Which quality of the speaker does this line show most clearly? (1)

(a) pride (b) determination (c) anger (d) fear

(v) What surprised the listener on Saraswati Puja day? (1)

OR

(B) *"A new pot maker was born."*

(i) Who is the new pot maker? (1)

(ii) Who realises this, and where? (1)

(iii) What did she see that convinced her? (1)

(iv) Why did Arenla first not want her daughter to make pots? Give one reason. (1)

(v) Choose the word closest in meaning to "profound" as used near the end of the story:

(a) shallow (b) deep (c) sudden (d) noisy (1)

11. Answer **any one** of the following. **5**

(A) *"...each fan reflects the cultural core of the region that crafts it."*

(i) Name the chapter. (1)

(ii) Name one kind of hand fan from Rajasthan and the material or work it uses. (1)

(iii) What are the sola fans of Bengal made from? (1)

(iv) Why are pankhas at risk of losing their place today? (1)

(v) Suggest one way, from the chapter, to keep the craft alive. (1)

OR

(B) *"My daughter needs some Vitamin-M, I think—for her memory."*

(i) Who says this, and about whom? (1)

(ii) What had the daughter forgotten? (1)

(iii) Who first spoke of "Vitamin-M" in the story, and in what sense? (1)

(iv) What does this line show about the speaker? (1)

(v) What gift did Ravi receive, and why was it a sly joke? (1)

12. Answer **any one** of the following. **5**

(A) Read the stanza and answer the questions.

I cannot remember my mother
but when in the early autumn morning
the smell of the shiuli flowers floats in the air
the scent of the morning service in the temple
comes to me as the scent of my mother.

(i) Name the poet. (1)
(ii) Which sense helps the speaker feel close to his mother in this stanza? (1)
(iii) What does the line "I cannot remember my mother" tell us about the speaker's childhood? (1)
(iv) Name one other thing in the poem that reminds him of her. (1)
(v) What is the mood of the stanza? (a) joyful (b) angry (c) tender and longing (d) fearful (1)

OR

(B) *"Each plot, a canvas wide, / Where art and life coincide."*
(i) Name the poem. (1)
(ii) What is the "canvas" in these lines? (1)
(iii) Who are the "artists" in the poem? (1)
(iv) Name the figure of speech in "Each plot, a canvas wide". (1)
(v) What does "art and life coincide" mean here? (1)

13. Answer **any five** of the following in 40 to 50 words each. **10**

(i) Why did the narrator's grandmother cry when the narrator returned from the wedding?
(ii) How did the village council react to Arenla's refusal to teach Sentila pot making?
(iii) How did Onula help Sentila become a better potter?
(iv) Why did Ravi's mother bring Grandpa to live in the city?
(v) Describe two funny moments while Ravi was following Grandpa.
(vi) How did pankhas change from objects of daily use to items of commerce?
(vii) What pride does the speaker of "Gifts of Grace" take in the different vocations of Bharat?

14. Answer **any one** of the following in 120 to 150 words. **5**

(A) "We are well-off, but what use is money when I cannot be independent?" Discuss how the story *How I Taught My Grandmother to Read* shows that education gives a person independence and dignity.

OR

(B) In *Vitamin-M*, the adults worry that Grandpa's memory is failing, but by the end the reader is not so sure. How does the story question the way we sometimes treat elderly people?

***** End of question paper *****

Solutions

Answers show what an examiner looks for. Accept any answer that is correct and expressed in the student's own words.

Section A

1. I. (b) II. (d) III. a daily chore
IV. (i) Patan, Gujarat (ii) about 3,500 narrow steps in a geometric pattern, going down thirteen levels
V. False. "...it draws on water stored deep underground, and in many places that store is falling year after year."
VI. It starts collecting rainwater again and helps to refill the ground beneath it.
VII. They were also social and cultural places: the cool air at the bottom gave travellers a place to rest, and people met there, held festivals and prayed. Their carvings made them beautiful buildings, not just storage.
VIII. Rain should be collected and allowed to sink into the ground at the same place, as stepwells did, instead of letting it run off and then pumping water from deep underground.
IX. silt

2. I. (b) II. (a) III. phones are kept away
IV. (c), since 142 of 200 students say they enjoy reading.
V. 142 students said they enjoy reading, but only 64 had finished a book in the last month. The teachers did not expect such a big gap between liking reading and actually finishing books.
VI. False. The passage says students also suggest titles for the library to buy.
VII. (b)

Section B

3. (i) (b) has lived (ii) (a) goes (iii) (c) had (iv) (a) must

4. (i) The potter shaped the wet clay with great skill.
(ii) The craft of pankha-making is celebrated across India in different forms.
(iii) Her grandmother learnt to read the novel before Dassara.

5. (i) Ravi told his mother that Grandpa would be fine at home with him.
(ii) The teacher asked the students if (whether) they had finished their project.
(iii) Avva asked her granddaughter to teach her the Kannada alphabet.

6. **Format (1):** school name, NOTICE, date, heading, name and designation of writer. **Content (3):** what, when, where, who may join, how to register.

Model answer (A):

SUNRISE PUBLIC SCHOOL, AGRA
NOTICE

10 August

Workshop on Traditional Hand Fans

The Heritage Club is holding a one-day workshop on making traditional pankhas on Saturday, 23 August, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Art Room. Local artisans will teach. Students of Classes VI to IX may give their names to the undersigned by 18 August. Materials will be provided.

Neha
Secretary, Heritage Club

7. Format (1): sender's address, date, editor's address, subject, salutation, closing. **Content (4):** the problem, its causes and effects, suggestions, an appeal.
Points for (A): stepwells and lakes choked with rubbish and silt; foul smell and mosquitoes; loss of heritage and of a natural way to store rainwater; suggestions: cleaning drives by residents' groups, stopping dumping, fines, rainwater channels to refill them, school heritage walks; appeal to the municipal body and citizens.
Points for (B): festivals are a key earning season for artisans; mass-made goods are cheaper but crafts carry skill and tradition; buying local keeps families in the craft and passes skills on, as in *The Pot Maker*; suggestions: craft fairs, buying clay lamps and handloom gifts, sharing artisans' details online; appeal to readers.

8. Format (1): title and writer's name. **Content (4):** a clear introduction, two or three developed points with examples, a conclusion.
Points for (A): the grandmother in Sudha Murty's story learnt to read at 62; adults learning new skills such as using phones, banking apps or languages; learning keeps the mind active and gives confidence and independence; schools and families can help; "it is never too late" as the conclusion.
Points for (B): grandparents bring stories, values, recipes and patience; young people help with technology, outings and company; both sides learn respect and humour, as in *Vitamin-M*; possible friction and how to handle it with patience; conclusion on the value of the bond.

9. Content (3): a clear plot that follows from the opening or prompt, with a problem and a resolution.
Expression (3): logical order, vivid detail, correct grammar, a suitable title.
For (B), a good answer may echo *Vitamin-M*: the follower ends up in comic trouble, and the elder turns out to be far more capable than expected.

Section C

10. (A) (i) The grandmother (Krishtakka, "Avva") says them to her twelve-year-old granddaughter, the narrator.
(ii) The narrator had laughed at her and teased her about learning the alphabet at sixty-two, with grey hair, wrinkled hands and spectacles.
(iii) Saraswati Puja day during Dassara, by which time she wanted to read a novel on her own.
(iv) (b) determination
(v) The grandmother touched her feet, saying she was honouring her teacher, not her granddaughter.
(B) (i) Sentila. (ii) Onula, an expert potter, realises it in the work shed. (iii) Two neat rows of new pots stood side by side, and she could not tell one batch from the other. (iv) Pot making was hard, tiring work that earned very little, while weaving paid more and could be done indoors (any one). (v) (b) deep

11. (A) (i) *Winds of Change*. (ii) The appliqué hand fan (pieces of fabric sewn onto cloth with ornamental needlework), or the zardozi fan (gold threadwork), or the brass temple fan (any one). (iii) The milky-white spongy centre of sola, a kind of water grass. (iv) Technology and new kinds of fans have taken over their use. (v) Celebrating pankhas, holding pankha-making workshops at handicraft exhibitions, or giving artisans a commercial platform (any one).
(B) (i) Grandpa says it about his daughter, Ravi's mother (Vidya). (ii) Her father's birthday, which she had even marked on the calendar. (iii) Ravi's mother, at the start, wishing someone would invent a memory vitamin for old people. (iv) He is sharp, witty and enjoys turning the joke on those who doubt him. (v) A book of detective stories. Grandpa hinted that he knew Ravi had been trailing him and had been fooled.

12. **(A)** (i) Rabindranath Tagore. (ii) Smell. (iii) His mother died when he was very young, too young to remember her face. (iv) The tune of a song she hummed while rocking his cradle, or her gaze, which he feels spread across the sky (any one). (v) (c)
(B) (i) *Canvas of Soil*. (ii) The plot of earth in the garden. (iii) The gardeners, who "paint" with seeds and flowers. (iv) Metaphor. (v) Gardening joins the beauty of art with the living work of growing plants; the garden is both a painting and a place of life.

13. Any five, about 40 to 50 words each:
(i) While the narrator was away, the new issue of *Karmaveera* arrived. Avva wanted to read the next part of *Kashi Yatre* but could not. She felt helpless and dependent, and too embarrassed to ask anyone else, so she was in tears.
(ii) The council called Mesoba to explain. They reminded him that skills like pot making carry the people's tradition, do not belong to any one person, and must be passed on to anyone who wants to learn. Arenla was to be told it was her duty.
(iii) She noticed Sentila was too tense, reassured her, made a perfect pot in front of her, and pointed out that the mouth of her pot was wrong. She advised her to watch her mother closely when shaping the mouth.
(iv) Grandpa had slipped in his garden and lain outside all night with nobody to help. He had also taken a double dose of medicine and got lost once, so she felt he was not safe living alone.
(v) A child offered Ravi a better hiding place and its mother threatened him with an umbrella; the loud vendors scolded him for hiding behind their tree; he was chased out of a ladies' salon (any two).
(vi) They were once used at home, in temples and in royal courts, and were carried along trade routes as exotic goods. Today they are mainly decorative, and making them has become a commercial craft that gives artisans a livelihood.
(vii) The speaker hears all of Bharat "celebrating" its work. Carpenters, electricians, boatmen, shoemakers and cooks each take pride in their craft. Every vocation has its own voice, and that voice is the worker's identity, so all work deserves honour.

14. **(A)** Key points: Avva could not read the next episode of *Kashi Yatre* and felt dependent and helpless; wealth did not help her; she decided to learn and set Saraswati Puja as her deadline; she worked harder than anyone, reading, writing and reciting; she succeeded and could read any novel; she said she was now independent; she honoured her granddaughter as a teacher, showing the dignity of learning and of teachers; the message that learning has no age bar.
(B) Key points: Ravi's mother speaks loudly to Grandpa as if he were a child and makes decisions for him; Grandpa feels like a "prisoner"; yet he remembers famous chess games, goes about the city alone, buys his own treats, gives his cap to a stranger, and gets home safely before Ravi; he remembers his own birthday when his daughter forgets; the detective book shows he spotted Ravi following him; the story asks us to respect the elderly's independence and judgement and not to assume old age means helplessness, while still caring for their safety.