CBSE Class 10 English

Important Questions and Answers for Board Exams (2026–27)

English Language and Literature (Code 184) | Board Exams 2027

How to use this sheet. Try each question on your own first, then compare with the answer. Learn the idea and write it in your own words rather than memorising. Questions marked "Practice" are for revision and are **not** predicted or guaranteed board questions. Please confirm the latest paper pattern and syllabus on the official CBSE academic website (cbseacademic.nic.in).

Part 1: 24 Important Questions with Answers

Grammar and Writing

Q1. Change into reported speech: She said, "I am reading a novel."

Ans. She said that she was reading a novel. (The present continuous becomes past continuous, and "I" becomes "she.")

Q2. Spot and correct the error: "Each of the students have submitted their forms."

Ans. Error: *have*. Correction: *has*. "Each" is singular, so it takes a singular verb.

Q3. Fill in the blank with the correct form: "By the time we reached the station, the train ____ (leave)."

Ans. *had left.* Two past actions, and the earlier one needs the past perfect.

Q4. What must a formal letter (such as a letter to the editor) contain?

Ans. Sender's address, date, receiver's designation and address, subject line, salutation (Sir/Madam), a body in two or three short paragraphs (the problem, its effects, your suggestion), a complimentary close (Yours faithfully) and your name. Keep to the word limit and a polite, serious tone.

Q5. How do you write a good analytical paragraph from a table or points?

Ans. Open with one line on the topic, group the given points into two or three ideas, explain each in a sentence or two (don't just list them), and close with a balanced conclusion. Use linkers such as "however," "as a result" and "on the other hand."

Q6. How do you tackle "find the word in the passage that means..." questions?

Ans. Read the paragraph the question names, spot the word whose meaning fits the given definition, and copy it *exactly* as printed. The word must also match in part of speech (a noun for a noun, a verb for a verb).

Prose: First Flight

Q7. What does Lencho's letter tell us about his character? (A Letter to God)

Ans. Lencho is a hard-working farmer with unshakable faith. After a hailstorm destroys his crop, he doesn't blame anyone. He writes to God, certain that help will come. His simplicity and trust make him a memorable character.

Q8. Why is the ending of "A Letter to God" ironic?

Ans. The postmaster and his employees collect 70 pesos out of kindness. Lencho, who trusts God completely, is angry at receiving less than the 100 pesos he asked for and calls the post office workers "a bunch of crooks." The people who helped him are the ones he blames.

Q9. What does Mandela learn about courage? (Nelson Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom)

Ans. Mandela learns that courage isn't the absence of fear but the ability to rise above it. Watching fellow freedom fighters endure suffering, he realised that even the bravest feel afraid, yet they act anyway.

Q10. How, according to Mandela, did apartheid harm both the oppressed and the oppressor?

Ans. The oppressed lost their freedom and dignity, while the oppressor became a prisoner of hatred and narrow-mindedness. Mandela believed both needed to be liberated, which is why he wanted a society free of racism for everyone.

Q11. How did the young seagull finally learn to fly? (His First Flight)

Ans. He was frightened of the ledge and watched his brothers and sisters fly. His parents wouldn't feed him until he tried. When his mother held out a piece of fish, hunger pushed him to dive off the ledge. He found, to his surprise, that he could fly.

Q12. What mystery does the pilot face in "The Black Aeroplane"?

Ans. While flying through a storm, the pilot is guided by a black aeroplane with no lights. Later, the people at the control tower tell him there was no other plane in the sky. The story leaves us wondering about the mysterious guide.

Q13. Why does Anne Frank call her diary "Kitty"? (From the Diary of Anne Frank)

Ans. Anne has friends and admirers but no one to confide in. She feels that paper is more patient than people, so she treats the diary as a faithful friend. Naming it Kitty lets her speak freely, as she would to a close companion.

Q14. How is Mijbil's personality shown in the story? (Mijbil the Otter)

Ans. Mijbil is playful, curious and affectionate. He loves water and splashing in the bath, plays with a ball, and responds warmly to Maxwell's care. His behaviour shows that wild animals, too, respond to love and attention.

Q15. What qualities make Valli special? (Madam Rides the Bus)

Ans. Valli is curious, determined and independent. Though only a child, she saves money and makes the bus journey alone. She is also sensitive: the sight of a dead cow on the road affects her deeply and shows her a world beyond her village.

Q16. What lesson does Kisa Gotami learn? (The Sermon at Benares)

Ans. Grief-stricken at her child's death, she begs for medicine to revive him. The Buddha asks her for a mustard seed from a house where no one has died. She finds none and realises that death comes to everyone, and she is no longer alone in her sorrow.

Q17. Why is "The Proposal" a comedy?

Ans. Lomov arrives to propose to Natalya, but the two quarrel over the Oxen Meadows and then over whose dog is better. Lomov's nervous collapse and Chubukov's attempts to push the match add humour. The marriage is arranged only after endless squabbling.

Prose: Footprints without Feet

Q18. What does "The Thief's Story" show about trust and change?

Ans. Hari Singh, a petty thief, joins Anil as a servant, planning to rob him. Anil's trust, kindness and willingness to teach him to read stir Hari's conscience. The story suggests that trust can reach a person where punishment cannot.

Q19. Which qualities helped Ebright become a scientist? (The Making of a Scientist)

Ans. Curiosity, hard work and persistence. He began collecting butterflies as a boy, asked questions, and ran experiments. His mother's encouragement and mentors who guided him helped, but his own habit of asking "why?" drove his progress.

Q20. How did Matilda's desire for luxury ruin her life? (The Necklace)

Ans. Unhappy with her modest life, Matilda borrows a diamond necklace for a ball and loses it. The couple replaces it with a costly one and spend ten hard years repaying the debt. She later learns the original was only paste, worth very little.

Q21. How did education transform Bholi?

Ans. Bholi, once timid and a stammerer, gained confidence from her kind teacher. When her would-be groom demanded dowry, she refused to marry him and chose to teach and care for her parents. Education gave her a voice.

Q22. What mistake did the Martians make in "The Book That Saved the Earth"?

Ans. They found a book of nursery rhymes and read it as a serious account of Earth's life. They concluded that earthlings were silly, cows jumped over moons and cats played fiddles, so they called off the invasion.

Poetry

Q23. What do "fire" and "ice" stand for in Frost's poem?

Ans. Fire represents desire, and ice represents hatred. The poet says that either could destroy the world, though he feels that hatred, being cold and steady, would also do the job.

Q24. What does the boy learn in "The Ball Poem"?

Ans. He learns about loss. The poet doesn't offer to buy another ball because money can't replace what he cares about. By facing loss himself, the boy begins to understand responsibility and grow up.

Part 2: Previous Year Questions (CBSE Board 2025)

From the **CBSE Class 10 English (Language and Literature) paper held on 15 February 2025** (Series EFG6H, Set 3, Question Paper Code 2/6/3), as reproduced in a set-wise unofficial answer key. CBSE doesn't publish an official answer key for this subject, so the answers below are model responses. Other sets had different questions; check the wording against the official paper.

PYQ 1 **(Reading, 2025)**

A passage on creativity. "What important trends does a study tracking the decline in creative thinking ability in children reveal?" (about 40 words)

Ans. The study shows that creativity falls sharply with age. While 98% of children aged 3 to 5 think creatively, only 10% of those aged 13 to 15 do, and just 2% of 25-year-olds. Adulthood, in other words, wears down natural creativity.

PYQ 2 **(Grammar, 2025)**

Report the dialogue. Shopkeeper: "What book do you want?" Ramesh: "A reference book for Physics which I can use for my project work."

Ans. The shopkeeper asked Ramesh which book he wanted. Ramesh replied that he wanted a reference book for Physics which he could use for his project work.

PYQ 3 (Grammar, 2025)

Correct the error: "Health experts worldwide are concerning about the surge in health problems."

Ans. Error: *concerning*. Correction: *concerned*. We say "concerned about," a participle adjective describing the experts.

PYQ 4 (Writing, 2025)

Write a letter to the editor about plastic and garbage at Marine Lines, explaining how NGOs, individuals and government bodies can reduce environmental damage.

Ans. A good answer has the standard letter format, an opening that states your purpose, one paragraph on the problem and its effects, and one on what each group can do (NGOs: clean-up drives and awareness campaigns; individuals: carrying cloth bags and not littering; government: stricter rules and regular waste collection), and a polite close.

PYQ 5 (Writing, 2025)

Using a table of pros and cons, write an analytical paragraph (about 120 words) on the advantages and disadvantages of the internet.

Ans. Group the pros (connectivity, speed of communication, new ways of learning, data transfer) and the cons (data security, isolation, addiction, plagiarism). Present both sides in connected sentences and end with a view on balanced use.

PYQ 6 (Literature extract, 2025, Nelson Mandela)

"According to the author, what does true courage entail? How does this differ from a common misconception about courage?" (about 40 words)

Ans. True courage means overcoming fear and acting despite it. The common misconception is that a courageous person feels no fear at all. Mandela shows the opposite: the brave person feels fear but conquers it.

PYQ 7 (Literature extract, 2025, The Thief's Story)

"How does the prospect of being paid regularly affect the narrator's motivation and hope for the future?"

Ans. It lifts his spirits. The promise of regular pay gives Hari Singh a sense of security and a reason to stay and learn, which begins to turn his thoughts away from stealing.

PYQ 8 (Poetry extract, 2025, Amanda)

"What does the girl constantly yearn for? What do you infer about Amanda from the poem?"

Ans. Amanda yearns for freedom and to be left alone with her own imagination. We infer she is dreamy and sensitive, and she resents the constant orders and criticism from adults.

PYQ 9 (Short answer, 2025, Two Stories about Flying)

How does the young seagull show that motivation helps us overcome challenges? (40–50 words)

Ans. The seagull's fear and hunger collide. When food is offered, the desire to eat overcomes his fear, and he takes the leap. Once he succeeds, his confidence grows. The story shows that a strong need or goal can push us past our fears.

PYQ 10 (Short answer, 2025, The Proposal)

Comment on the significance of the title. Give two examples. (40–50 words)

Ans. The title points to the play's central event, Lomov's marriage proposal, and to the irony that it keeps getting derailed. Examples: Lomov arrives dressed formally to propose, and the proposal turns into a quarrel over the Oxen Meadows and then their dogs.

PYQ 11 (Long answer, 2025, Bholi)

In what ways does Sulekha's teacher epitomise the saying that a good teacher is the light that helps one cross dark paths? (100–120 words)

Ans. The teacher saw Sulekha's quiet potential when everyone else saw only a plain, stammering girl. She treated her kindly, taught her patiently to read and speak, and gave her self-respect. That confidence became Sulekha's strength: she later stood up to a greedy groom and refused the marriage. The teacher didn't merely teach lessons; she showed Bholi that she mattered, and that made all the difference.

Part 3: Competency-Based Questions

Competency-based questions ask you to *apply* what you've understood: infer, evaluate, compare and decide.

Case 1: Unseen passage (Practice)

Mira's school started a "No-Screen Hour" every evening. At first, students grumbled. Within a month, though, many were reading, sketching or just chatting with family. "I didn't realise how much time my phone was taking," said Mira. Teachers noticed that students seemed calmer in class.

(a) The central idea of the passage is that: (A) schools should ban phones (B) a small screen-free routine can bring positive change (C) students dislike new rules (D) teachers prefer quiet students

(b) Assertion: Students were initially unhappy with the rule. **Reason:** They found the activities boring. Choose the correct option: (A) both true, reason explains assertion; (B) both true, reason does not explain; (C) assertion true, reason false; (D) assertion false, reason true.

(c) Pick a word from the passage meaning "complained in a low voice."

(d) What inference can you draw about Mira's attitude by the end?

Answers: (a) B. (b) C. The passage says they grumbled but doesn't say the activities were boring. (c) *grumbled*. (d) She has become aware of her phone habits and values the change.

Case 2: Literature-based application (Practice)

A classmate says: "Lencho was foolish to expect help from God and then blame the postmen." Do you agree? Give two reasons from the text.

Ans. *Sample answer:* Partly. His faith, which led him to write to God, shows hope and innocence, not foolishness, and it's what he had left after losing his crops. But his accusation that the post office workers were "crooks" shows that he judges others too quickly. He can't imagine that human kindness might be the answer to his prayer, and that is the story's irony.

Case 3: Data-based writing (Practice)

Using the table below, write an analytical paragraph of about 100 words on "Why students should read beyond textbooks."

Benefits	Challenges
Better vocabulary, wider knowledge	Lack of time, mobile distractions
Improves writing and imagination	Limited access to books

Tip: Open with the idea, merge the benefits into one connected thought, deal with the challenges with a solution (a fixed daily reading slot, a school library), and close with a clear conclusion.

Part 4: Model Questions with Step-by-Step Answers (Practice)

These are **practice questions** written in board-exam style. They are not predicted or guaranteed board questions. Each is followed by its worked answer.

Model Q1. Report: Teacher: "Have you finished your homework?" Student: "I will submit it tomorrow."

Ans.

• Identify each sentence. The first is a question (yes/no), the second a statement.
• For the question, use "asked" and "if," and move to statement order.
• For the statement, use "replied" with "that," and shift "will" to "would" and "tomorrow" to "the next day."
Answer: The teacher asked the student if he had finished his homework. The student replied that he would submit it the next day.

Model Q2. Correct the error: "Neither of the answers are correct."

Ans.

• Find the subject: "Neither," which is singular.
• Match the verb: "are" must become "is."
Answer: Neither of the answers is correct.

Model Q3. Fill in the blank: "If I ____ (be) you, I would apologise."

Ans.

• "Would apologise" tells us it's an imaginary situation.
• In such sentences the "if" clause uses the simple past (and *were* for all subjects).
Answer: were.

Model Q4. Write a formal letter to your Principal requesting permission to start a school reading club (100–120 words).

Ans.

1. Sender's address and date at the top left.
2. Receiver: The Principal, with the school name.
3. Subject: Request for permission to start a reading club.
4. Salutation: Respected Sir/Madam.
5. Paragraph one: your purpose. Paragraph two: benefits and how you'll manage it (a weekly slot, books from the library).
6. Thank them and close with "Yours obediently," and your name.

Model Q5. Write an analytical paragraph (about 120 words) on "Social media: a boon or a bane?"

Ans.

1. Note two or three points on each side (connection, news and learning versus distraction, anxiety, privacy).
2. Open with a one-line statement.
3. Write one benefit paragraph and one risk paragraph in connected sentences.
4. Conclude with a balanced view: social media is a tool, and its value depends on how wisely we use it.
5. Count words; 120 means around 110 to 130.

Model Q6. Why is Kisa Gotami's search for a mustard seed important? (40–50 words)

Ans.

Short answer structure: Point, Evidence, Explanation.

Point: The search teaches her that death is universal. **Evidence:** She finds no house where no one has died. **Explanation:** Her personal grief becomes part of a shared human experience, which helps her accept it.

Model Q7. "The Necklace" teaches us about vanity and honesty. Discuss. (100–120 words)

Ans.

Long-answer outline.

Introduction: Matilda's vanity and discontent. **Middle:** She borrows and loses the necklace, hides the truth, and pays a heavy price. **Honesty:** If she had told Madame Forestier immediately, the ten years of hardship might have been avoided. **Conclusion:** Pride and untruth can cost far more than the object they were meant to protect.

Model Q8. What does the poem "Fire and Ice" tell us about human emotions? (40–50 words)

Ans.

Fire stands for desire and ice for hatred. Frost suggests that both emotions are powerful enough to destroy the world, so human feelings, if unchecked, are more dangerous than any natural disaster.

Exam FAQs

Paper at a glance: Section	What it tests	Marks
A. Reading	Unseen passages (comprehension, inference, vocabulary)	20
B. Writing and Grammar	Letter, analytical paragraph, grammar items	20
C. Literature	Extracts, short answers, long answers from the textbooks	40

1. How many marks does the English theory paper carry?

Ans. The theory paper is for 80 marks with a 3-hour duration, plus 20 marks of internal assessment. As reported for 2026–27, the sections are Reading (20), Writing and Grammar (20) and Literature (40). Do verify on the official CBSE site.

2. Are these questions going to come in the board exam?

Ans. No one can promise that. The important questions here cover frequently tested ideas, and the model questions are practice only. Use them to build understanding rather than to guess the paper.

3. How can I improve my score in the writing section?

Ans. Learn the formats thoroughly, plan before you write, stay within the word limit and proofread for spelling and grammar. Writing one letter and one paragraph every week makes a big difference.

4. Which previous year papers should I solve?

Ans. Start with the latest board papers and CBSE's sample papers for 2026–27 on the official site, and then go back a few years. Solve at least a few under timed conditions.

5. How should I revise the poems?

Ans. For each poem, note the theme, the poet's message, any figures of speech, and the tone. Then write a three-line summary in your own words. Extract-based questions are easier when you can say what the poem is about in a few lines.

Good luck. Stay steady, write clearly and trust your preparation.