

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS
FOR
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST FOR CLASS X**

Rationale of the Test

The test is text independent i.e. it is not based on a set text or syllabus. As a Proficiency Test, it tests both skills and knowledge. There is a balance between key aspects of language – as, for instance, reading skills, involving language knowledge as well as ability to process meanings through inference, analysis, comparison and evaluation; knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to the extent that is required for general communicative tasks. Specific skills involved in writing are also important e.g. awareness of the structure of simple written texts, how they are organized, and the kinds of formats that are used - in letters, for instance.

Reading is given 30 marks as it is the basis for grammar & writing and because it is important in further studies which students have to undertake in their later academic work. One passage of reading is of narrative type, (it may be an extract from a story) and tests candidates' understanding of events, characters, descriptions and also the perception of meanings which are implicit in the details of the story. One passage is a non-fictional text containing information, argument, opinion, facts and ideas. Reading of this kind is focused on ability to arrive at the gist of an idea/argument, to correctly separate opinions from facts (which implies some ability to analyse), to be able to distinguish main ideas from subordinate ones, to understand the tone or viewpoint e.g. humorous, ironic, serious etc. The third passage is a short poem, around 20 lines. This is to test if candidates can understand language which is composed differently – it is not linear, has hidden meanings, unusual expressions and uses sound effects (e.g. rhyme), simile and metaphor which conveys meaning indirectly rather than directly.

Vocabulary is given 20 marks as:

1. Vocabulary is central in reading comprehension, where it is essential in meaning.
2. It is also tested separately in order to test range of knowledge of words.

It is to be kept in mind that the level of vocabulary is such that is commonly found in texts that are prescribed in the school readers at class 9 and 10.

Grammar + Writing (30 +20) The MCQ format does not allow testing of writing skills as writing is integrative of other skills and needs to be tested through production. However, it is felt that the awareness of the *components* of writing can be tested here - e.g. format of letters, paragraph organization, linkage between sentences etc. These are also part of language knowledge.

Cloze Test has been included as it is a test which is the most global and comprehensive test of language. It consists of a passage where the first sentence sets the context of the passage and subsequently there are blanks at regular intervals. Filling these blanks requires an overall understanding of meaning and of the language items that will fit into the particular context of the sentences. For example, when the use of articles is explained in isolation, a user cannot understand where a certain article needs to be used/omitted. It is only in context that a decision regarding the use of an article is made. Therefore a cloze test is the best way to know if a student can infer from the context whether that article is to be used or not. The same applies to other items like prepositions, conjunctions etc.

The format and break-up of parts of the test is as follows:

Maximum Marks: 100

Time: 2.30 Hours

The question paper contains 100 questions. All questions are compulsory.

The questions are divided into the following parts:

(Reading 3 passages)

A	Unseen Passage (Narrative type)	Q. 1-10
B	Unseen passage (Informative type)	Q. 11-20
C	Poem	Q. 21-30
D	Vocabulary	Q. 31-50
E	Grammar	Q. 51-65
F	Writing	Q. 66-85
G	Cloze	Q. 86-100

Each Multiple Choice Question has four options out of which only ONE option is correct. Each correct answer earns a credit of 1 mark.

A wrong answer carries a penalty of $-\frac{1}{4}$ mark.

An unanswered question earns no mark.

Instruction for writing on the answer sheet:

- ® Use on HB Pencil to fill the answer sheet. DO NOT USE A Pen.
- ® If you want to change an entry after filling a bubble, erase the filled bubble.

The following example illustrates the correct way of answering a Multiple Choice Question:

Example:

They've both worked here _____ over ten years.

- a. in
- b. for
- c. since

d. during

Answer: The answer to this question is (b). You have to mark it on the Answer sheet as shown:

a	b	c	d
☐	☒	☐	☐

DESCRIPTION OF LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY:

This is being given in order to define the levels of proficiency that correlate with the marks obtained in the test. It helps the candidate to see which areas need more attention for the development of higher levels of proficiency.

5. **Good User-** Has operational command of the language. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning, reflective of a certain degree of analytical and interpretative skills. Has a range of vocabulary and can understand complex structures. Is aware of the structure of organization and coherence in texts. This user will be able to score very well in all parts of the test, particularly in reading comprehension and cloze exercise. (80% and above)
4. **Competent User-** Has generally adequate command of the language despite some inaccuracies and misunderstandings. Understands some conventions in writing, and can interpret a text, knows the structures, but may not have a range. This user will be able to score fairly well, may score better in some parts of the test. Performance in the cloze exercise may make a difference – better performance in this part brings the candidate towards the higher end at this level. (60-79%)
3. **Modest User-** Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes in interpretation and in understanding structures and writing conventions. Should be able to handle basic communication reflected in some knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. This user will manage an average score in all parts of the test. (between 40-59%)
2. **Limited User-** Basic competence is limited. Has frequent problems in understanding non-factual information (this will show up in reading comprehension) and will not be able to exercise skills needing inference and interpretation. Is not able to use & understand complex language. This user will score low in reading as well as grammar and cloze (will not understand the overall coherence of the passage) and may not be able to answer questions pertaining to text organization. (20-39%)
1. **Extremely Limited User-** Can understand only isolated words. Has great difficulty in understanding structures, but may give some correct responses to questions of a simpler kind. May not attempt to answer many of the questions. Comprehension level is very low even for simple texts. (0-19%)

Sample questions

Reading Comprehension

This is a sample passage (200 words), shorter than the one which will appear in the test (which will be of 300-350 words), but of the same level of difficulty. In the sample, 5 MCQs are given. In the actual paper, there will be 10 MCQs on each passage (see above) .

Read the following passage and choose the correct answer for the questions:

In this world it is not only futile for the small to appeal to authority, it is dangerous as well. Fortunately, the tiny voice seldom reaches big ears or who knows what might happen? When Gafur returned home from the landlord's and quietly lay down, his face and eyes were swollen. The chief cause of so much suffering was Mahesh. When Gafur left home that morning, Mahesh broke loose from his tether, and entering the grounds of the landlord, had eaten up flowers and upset the corn drying in the sun. When finally they tried to catch him, he had hurt the landlord's youngest daughter and had escaped. This was not the first time this had happened, but Gafur was forgiven because he was poor. If he had come around, and as on other occasions, begged for the landlord's forgiveness, he would probably have been forgiven but instead he had claimed that he paid rent, and that he was nobody's slave. This was too much for Shibu babu, the landlord, to swallow. Gafur had borne the beatings and tortures without protest. At home, too, he lay in a corner without a word. His heart burnt within him like the sun outside. He kept no count of how time had passed.

Q. 1 In the passage, whose voice is described as 'tiny'?

- a. The voice of the big people
- b. The voice of the small people
- c. The wrong people
- d. The people who are strong

Q.2 Why were Gafur's eyes and face swollen?

- a. He had been beaten by the landlord.
- b. He was ill.
- c. He was lying down
- d. He had been hurt physically by Mahesh

Q.3 Why did Gafur not ask the landlord's forgiveness?

- a. He was poor.
- b. He didn't bother about the landlord.
- c. He was happy that the landlord's property had been damaged.
- d. He wanted to save his dignity

Q 5. 'To keep count of time' means:

- | | |
|----|------------------------------------|
| a. | To be able to count |
| b. | To be aware of the passage of time |
| c. | To be unconscious |
| d. | To look at a clock |

Vocabulary:

1. Choose the option closest in meaning to the word in bold:

Ancestor a. old b. forefather c. past d. dead

2. Choose the option opposite in meaning to the word in bold:

Exterior a. internal b. inferior c. superior d. interior

Grammar:

Choose the right option to fill in the blank:

1. What _____ you like to drink?
- a. will b. might c. would d. shall
2. There are other people in the park _____ ourselves.
- besides b. beside c. before d. around
3. He had a heart attack. The doctor was immediately _____.
- a. Sent off b. sent for c. sent in d. sent through

Writing

Q.1 The following sentences (A-E) can be put together to form a well-connected passage but are not in the correct order. Choose the option that gives the best order of the sentences.

- A. Then they went back into the cabin.
- B. His father walked into the large bedroom to the right of the kitchen.
- C. Michael went into the little room on the left.
- D. They stood in silence for a full five minutes.

E. Each hungered to embrace the other, to cry, to scream with excess of sorrow.

- a. DACBE b. DEACB c. CBDEA d. CBEDA

Q.2 Read the following and choose the right word to connect the sentences:

The weather office had predicted that it would rain ____1____. Their predictions are usually accurate. ____2____, it did not rain for several days. When ____3____ the rain did come, it was insufficient ____4____ the crops were damaged.

- | | | | | |
|----|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| 1. | a. frequently | b. much | c. soon | d. well |
| 2. | a. however | b. but | c. though | d. instead |
| 3. | a. definitely | b. in the end | c. at last | d. lastly |
| 4. | a. and | b. also | c. even | d. that |

Cloze

Cloze test is a test of grammar, sentence connection, vocabulary etc., within a context, and therefore tests the overall proficiency level. There is a passage with blanks at regular intervals and the correct choice has to be indicated. The test for class X will have one cloze test of 15 questions, worth 15 marks. The sample given below is a short passage with 5 questions.

My brother and I used to fight a great deal as children. We did _____ of things together, not always in complete _____. In fact, on one occasion, he actually _____ my arm. I suppose he really did me a _____, as I missed the school exams _____ that year.

- Q. 1 a. many b. some c. a lot d. a deal
- Q. 2 a. harmony b. friendship c. unison d. liking
- Q.3 a. damaged b. broke c. ripped d. tore
- Q.4 a. courtesy b. benefit c. favour d. privilege
- Q.5 a. for b. around c. at d. during