

CSM : 25

GENERAL ENGLISH

Time Allowed : 3 hours

Maximum Marks : 250

QUESTION PAPER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

(Please read each of the following instruction carefully before attempting questions)

All questions are to be attempted.

The number of marks carried by a question is indicated against it.

Answer must be written in **ENGLISH** only.

Word limit in questions, wherever specified, should be adhered to.

1. Write short essays on **any two** of the given topics in about 600 words each. (2×50=100)
 - (a) Drugs and their menace in society
 - (b) The status of health care in Mizoram
 - (c) A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step
 - (d) Youth and moral values in our changing society
 - (e) Cybersecurity in the age of Digital India
2. Read the passage carefully and answer the questions given below:

Unemployment has long been one of the most pressing issues in India, but in recent years, a more nuanced problem has come to the forefront — skill mismatch. While millions of Indians are actively seeking jobs, industries often struggle to find workers with the right skills. This paradox highlights a deep disconnect between the education system, vocational training programs, and the actual demands of the job market.

India is home to one of the largest youth populations in the world, with more than 65% of its citizens under the age of 35. This demographic advantage, often referred to as the ‘demographic dividend,’ holds enormous potential. However, if not harnessed through proper education, training, and employment opportunities, it risks becoming a demographic disaster. The real issue lies not just in unemployment, but in ‘educated unemployment’ — where even degree holders remain jobless due to irrelevant or outdated skills.

According to multiple reports, including those by NITI Aayog and the India Skills Report, employers across sectors such as manufacturing, IT, healthcare, and construction frequently cite a shortage of employable talent. Graduates often lack practical exposure, problem-solving ability, communication skills, and technical expertise — competencies that are vital in today’s dynamic job environment. This mismatch stems largely from a theoretical, exam-driven education system that prioritizes rote learning over real-world application.

Furthermore, while India produces over a million engineering graduates annually, a large percentage of them remain underemployed or unemployed. On the other hand, sectors such as renewable energy, AI, cybersecurity, healthcare, and data science are facing talent shortages due to lack of trained professionals. The problem is exacerbated in rural and semi-urban areas, where access to quality training and digital infrastructure is still limited.

Government initiatives like Skill India, PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana), and National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) have attempted to bridge this gap. However, the outcomes have been mixed due to poor implementation, lack of industry collaboration, and low awareness among youth. There is a pressing need to align these schemes more closely with market demand, involve private sector players in curriculum development, and promote vocational education and lifelong learning as viable alternatives to traditional degrees.

Additionally, reskilling and upskilling the existing workforce is crucial in a time of rapid technological advancement. The rise of automation and artificial intelligence threatens to make many jobs obsolete while creating demand for new roles that require entirely different skill sets.

In conclusion, tackling unemployment in India requires a shift in focus from merely creating more jobs to creating the right kind of jobs and equipping people with the right kind of skills. Bridging the gap between education and employability is not just an economic necessity, but a social imperative. Only by addressing the root causes of skill mismatch can India fully capitalize on its demographic advantage and ensure inclusive, sustainable growth.

Answer the following questions;

- (a) What is the ‘paradox’ mentioned in the context of unemployment and skill mismatch in India? (2)
 - (b) Define the term “educated unemployment” as explained in the passage. (2)
 - (c) Why is India’s demographic dividend considered both a strength and a potential risk? (2)
 - (d) List at least two reasons why many Indian graduates are considered unemployable despite having degrees. (2)
 - (e) Which sectors are facing talent shortages despite the high number of job seekers in India? Name any three. (2)
 - (f) How does the current education system contribute to the problem of skill mismatch? (2)
 - (g) What are the main limitations of government initiatives like Skill India and PMKVY as discussed in the passage? (2)
 - (h) According to the passage, how does automation affect the employment landscape in India? (2)
 - (i) Why is “reskilling” and “upskilling” described as essential in the present scenario? (2)
 - (j) What does the passage suggest as a shift in focus needed to address unemployment effectively in India? (2)
3. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

Peer pressure is a phenomenon wherein we tend to get influenced by the lifestyle and the way of thinking of our peers. Peer pressure can prove beneficial but it is most often observed to have negative effects.

The thought, behaviour and taste in fashion, music, television and other walks of life of the masses are often seen to have a deep impact on society. We tend to get influenced by the lifestyle of our peer group. The changing way of life of our peers often force us to change our ways of looking at life and leading it. It is a human tendency to do what the crowd does. Few have the courage to resist the peer pressure and be their own selves.

Peer pressure is bound to affect most of us both positively and negatively. The distinction between positive and negative peer pressure lies in a thoughtful analysis of the views of the masses. Following your peers blindly leaves a negative impact on your life while an analytical approach of looking at peer behaviour can help you act positively.

Peer pressure is not always bad. It can help you analyse yourself and contemplate on your ways of life. Some of the practices that the masses follow may actually teach you the way of living. You may be able to change yourself for the better. Looking at what others do, can help you bring about a positive change in your way of thinking. If you can pick selectively, peer pressure can actually result in a positive change in your way of life.

Teens are in that phase of life when you are exposed to the world outside. These are the years when you spend most of your time with your friends. Teens is the phase of beginning to become independent in life, the years of forming your ideals and principles, the years that shape your personality and the years that introduce you to your own self. As adolescents, you often spend most of your daily time with friends and owing to this, you tend to imitate your friends. The people around you are bound to influence you.

Parents and teachers need to be careful while dealing with teenagers, as they are most susceptible to succumbing to peer pressure during these years of their life. Teenage individuals need to be taught to distinguish between the good and the bad, the right and the wrong and should be taught to be thoughtful in life.

A strong support from family, an ability to differentiate between positive and negative and the skill to choose friends from among the peers- this pronged strategy is the best way to keep away from negative peer pressure.

Questions:

- (a) What is the central idea of the given passage? (4)
- (b) “Stay true to yourself. An original is worth more than a copy.” How does this quote by Suzy Kassem resonate in the passage provided? (4)
- (c) Why do we often try to go with the flow, according to the author? (3)
- (d) What are the multi-dimensional approach that can ensure a positive gain from peer pressure? (3)
- (e) How does the changing way of life of our peers affect us? (2)
- (f) What are the typical traits seen in teenagers? (2)
- (g) With what approach can we obtain the positive benefits of peer pressure? (1)
 - (i) Direct approach (ii) Open-minded approach
 - (iii) Observation approach (iv) Demonstrative approach
- (h) Choose the option that correctly states the meaning of ‘exposed’ as used in the passage. (1)
 - A. Susceptible B. Concealed C. Vulnerable D. Shielded E. Sheltered
 - F. Protected
 - (a) D and E (b) A and C
 - (c) E and F (d) B and D

4. Write a precis of the following passage providing a suitable title. (30)

Time management is the art of effectively utilizing one’s time to achieve goals in an organized, productive, and stress-free manner. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and an overwhelming flow of information, managing time efficiently has become more crucial than ever. Whether you’re a student, a professional, or a homemaker, time is the one resource that, once lost, can never be regained.

Many people struggle with time not because they have too little of it, but because they fail to prioritize and plan. The tendency to procrastinate or multitask often leads to reduced focus and subpar results. Poor time management results in missed deadlines, increased stress, and ultimately, burnout. Conversely, effective time management promotes a sense of control, reduces anxiety, and enhances productivity.

Key components of time management include setting clear goals, breaking them into manageable tasks, and assigning realistic deadlines. The use of tools like planners, digital calendars, or productivity apps can significantly aid in structuring one's day. Equally important is the ability to say 'no' to unnecessary commitments that do not align with one's objectives.

Moreover, time management is not merely about doing more in less time but about doing what truly matters. It involves conscious choices and consistent discipline. Allocating time for rest and recreation is also vital, as it rejuvenates the mind and sustains long-term efficiency.

In the professional world, time management is often the difference between success and mediocrity. Those who master it tend to be more organized, reliable, and capable of handling pressure. Similarly, students who plan their study schedules effectively perform better academically and enjoy a healthier work-life balance.

Ultimately, time management is a life skill that transcends professions and age groups. It cultivates self-discipline, enhances decision-making, and allows individuals to make the most of their potential. In a world where distractions are plentiful and demands are constant, managing time wisely is not just an option—it is a necessity.

5. You are XXX, a resident of an urban neighbourhood facing serious issues due to uncollected garbage, blocked drains, and poor sanitation. Write a formal letter to the Aizawl Municipal Corporation, drawing attention to these issues and requesting prompt action. Suggest practical solutions to improve cleanliness and public hygiene in your locality named as ABC street. **(20)**
6. Make sentences with each word to show their differences in meaning: **(5×2=10)**
- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| (a) Ardent : Arduous | (b) Extant : Extent |
| (c) Loathe : Loth | (d) Complaisant : Complacent |
| (e) Prescribe : Proscribe | |
7. Make sentences with the following idioms and phrases- **(5×2=10)**
- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| (a) In black and white | (b) A cog in a machine |
| (c) A wild goose chase | (d) Keep a stiff upper lip |
| (e) Ace up his sleeve | |
8. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of verbs: **(5×2=10)**
- (a) No sooner _____ (he/arrive) than the meeting _____ (start).
- (b) If she _____ (be)appointed as the manager, she _____ (implement) significant changes by now.
- (c) Hardly _____ (I/finish)the report when the boss _____ (call) me for an urgent meeting.
- (d) If they _____ (not/invite)him, he probably _____ (not/come) to the event.
- (e) The government _____ (announce)the new policy by the time the press conference _____ (begin).

9. Fill in the blanks with appropriate prepositions. (5×2=10)

- (a) Despite being warned repeatedly, he insisted _____ pursuing the risky investment strategy.
- (b) His views are at odds _____ the general consensus of the scientific community.
- (c) The project was delayed due to several unforeseen factors, not least _____ which was the political unrest in the region.
- (d) They have apprised the authorities concerned _____ the failure of the plan.
- (e) The teacher congratulated her students _____ their excellent performance.

10. Rewrite the following questions as directed: (10×2=20)

- (a) I approached everybody for the job. (*Turn into negative*)
- (b) He is not able to come. I am not sorry. (*Transform into a simple sentence*)
- (c) The poor are to be pitied. (*Change the voice*)
- (d) Mawia wondered why Hriata had spoken so rudely to his colleagues. (*Turn into Direct speech*)
- (e) What though we have lost all? (*Turn into Affirmative sentence*)
- (f) A play is going to be watched by us tonight. (*Change to voice*)
- (g) It is a bright and sunny day. (*Change to an exclamatory sentence*)
- (h) He said, "Do you live in this area?" (*Change the narration*)
- (i) Raising his glass, he proposed a toast. (*Change to compound sentence*)
- (j) Sawmi is the tallest girl in the class. (*Change to comparative degree*)
