
Question Paper 2011 – 2012
CBSE Class – 11 English (Core) (SA-II)

General Instructions:

- The question paper is divided into four sections:
 - Section A - Reading Comprehension - 20 marks
 - Section B - Writing - 20 marks
 - Section C - Grammar - 10 marks
 - Section D - Text Books - 30 marks
 - All questions are compulsory.
 - Marks are indicated against each question.
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SECTION: A (Reading)

1. Read the passage carefully and write the correct option in your answer-sheet:

Given the standing of some of its institutions of higher learning, the IITs and IIMs, India is a potential 'knowledge power'. Realising the potential, however, is not going to be easy. The impressive strides made by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan notwithstanding, universal access to quality school education-"a minimum necessary condition for any progress towards making India a knowledge society", as the 2006 report of the National Knowledge Commission puts-it remains a distant goal.

There is as yet no legislation at the national level to affirm the right to education, a fundamental right under the Constitution. The number of school buildings for elementary and secondary education falls far short of requirements and so does the number of qualified teachers. The pressure on government budgets, which forces governments to hire teachers on contract paying a pittance of a salary, is playing havoc with quality. While the incursion of the private sector in the field is providing some competition, mechanisms to enforce the required standards are lacking.

Not that there are no national standards or standards-enforcing agencies. We have the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to bring out text books in

various subjects for school education. The central government runs several model schools. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) conducts examinations for schools affiliated to it across the country. The states too have their school boards to conduct exams and enforce minimum standards. However, the standards vary widely. In their anxiety to show spectacular performance, some states are overly lenient in marking answer papers.

Questions arise even over the standards applied by CBSE. Going by the number of students securing 90 per cent or more in their higher secondary exam, it would appear India is on the brink of a knowledge revolution. The numbers are so large that the cut-off point for admission to top colleges is now above 90 per cent. However, admissions to IITs and medical colleges are not based on CBSE or state board exam results. Leading undergraduate colleges offering non-professional degree courses hold their own admission tests. Obviously, higher secondary school results are not taken to be a reliable index of the quality of a student's learning capability or potential.

It is not difficult to see why. In the CBSE class XII exam, the number of successful candidates securing more than 90 percent in economics this year turned out to be over 8,000 in the Delhi region alone; in English it was above 9,000. The numbers seem to be growing every year. If the country produces so many children who attain very high levels of performance even before graduation, we can expect India to produce Amartya Sens by the dozens.

While scoring high marks or even 100 out of 100 may not be out of a good student's reach in subjects like mathematics or physics, it is difficult to figure out the quality of the answers that fetch 90 percent marks in economics or English. The standards applied by higher secondary boards like CBSE seem to have been diluted to the point that leaves a big gap between what students learn at school and what they have to face on entering institutions of higher learning. Thriving teaching shops around the country promise to bridge that gap,

In an attempt to remedy the situation, NCERT had recently commissioned experts to rewrite textbooks on macro and microeconomics. Though not entirely free from blemishes, these new texts should go some way in helping beginners get acquainted with the basic concepts in the subject and their applications.

Not surprisingly, their introduction is facing roadblocks. Teachers do not like to be compelled to look at textbooks they are not familiar with. Those who revel in seeing students

score 90 percent are chary of ushering in something that may stop the rush of such scores. Lastly, even teaching shops see red as they fear loss of business if the higher secondary finalists can get their skills upgraded without buying their help,

One wonders if our Knowledge Commission is aware of these insidious impediments to India's knowledge ambitions.

(a) A distant goal is: **(1×6=6)**

(i) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

(ii) quality school education

(iii) National Knowledge Commission

(iv) knowledge society

(b) The main factor that has affected the quality of education:

(i) private sector

(ii) pittance of a salary

(iii) teachers on contract

(iv) some competition

(c) The two standard enforcing agencies are:

(i) IT and CBSE

(ii) CBSE and NCERT

(iii) IIT and EIM

(iv) IIT and NCERT

(d) Leading undergraduate colleges hold their own admission tests because:

(i) they are proud of their admission tests

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