



The Savvy Humanities

SIMPLIFYING MINDS, SHAPING THINKERS

CLASS 11 · CBSE 2026-27 SYLLABUS

Complete subject

English Core

Reading, Grammar, Writing, Hornbill and Snapshots (301)

182

pages of notes

20

chapters, three sections

135

exam questions solved

80 / 80

theory marks covered

What's inside

- Section A: unseen passages, notes, summary
- Section B: grammar and four writing formats
- Section C: all 15 texts, Hornbill and Snapshots
- Twenty mind maps, one for every chapter
- Summaries, characters, themes and devices
- Every format set out, with what earns marks
- One combined glossary — 129 key terms
- One question bank — 135 model answers

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Handwritten-style, for revision

Every page inside is handwritten-style with highlighting, boxes and a mind map — built to be read the night before, not skimmed.



Contents

The whole CBSE Class 11 English Core course (subject code 301) for the **80-mark** paper of 2026-27: reading, grammar and writing, and every prescribed lesson and poem of *Hornbill* and *Snapshots* — twenty chapters, in the order of CBSE's paper.

Ch.	Title	Marks or kind	Page
Section A — Reading Skills (26 marks)			
1	Reading Comprehension through Unseen Passages	18	6
2	Note Making and Summarization	8	14
Section B — Grammar and Creative Writing Skills (23 marks)			
3	Grammar	7	23
4	Short Writing Tasks: Classified Advertisements and Poster	6	33
5	Long Writing Tasks: Speech and Debate	10	41
Section C — Literature Text Book and Supplementary Reading Text (31 marks)			
Hornbill — 18 marks			
6	The Portrait of a Lady	Prose	49
7	A Photograph	Poem	54
8	We're Not Afraid to Die... if We Can All Be Together	Prose	58
9	Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues	Prose	63
10	The Laburnum Top	Poem	69
11	The Voice of the Rain	Poem	74
12	Childhood	Poem	78
13	The Adventure	Prose	82
14	Silk Road	Prose	88
15	Father to Son	Poem	93
Snapshots — 13 marks			
16	The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse	Prose	97
17	The Address	Prose	102
18	Mother's Day	Play	107
19	Birth	Prose	112
20	The Tale of Melon City	Poem	117
My Class 11 English Core tracker — all twenty chapters on one page			2
Combined glossary — 129 key terms, tagged by chapter			122
Question bank — 135 solved questions, grouped by chapter			127



SECTION A · READING SKILLS — 18 MARKS OF 80

Chapter 1

Reading Comprehension through Unseen Passages

What the paper wants from this chapter

Section A opens with two unseen passages worth 18 of the paper's 80 marks: a factual, descriptive or literary passage for 10 and a case-based factual passage with data for 8. All the questions are multiple-choice or objective-type. Prepare a method of reading, the ten kinds of question and the reading of tables and charts. Two full practice passages are solved in the question bank at the back of this book.

Not in this chapter. No passage from a past paper, a textbook or a newspaper is reprinted: both practice passages were written for these notes, and the figures in them are illustrations, not real statistics. Both are factual; a literary passage is described but not practised. Note-making and summarising, the rest of Section A, have a chapter of their own.

Chapter at a Glance — Mind Map

The paper

- two unseen passages
- 10 + 8 marks
- 600–750 words together
- objective questions only

Kinds of question

- evidence and reason
- inference and vocabulary
- tone and main idea
- data questions

Tables and charts

- title, units, total
- highest and lowest
- percentage change
- trend

A method

- questions first
- skim, then read closely
- answer from named paragraph
- check

Vocabulary in context

- definition clue
- contrast clue
- example clue
- word parts

Mistakes

- outside knowledge
- two options written
- whole sentences copied
- "NOT" overlooked



Where This Chapter Sits

Section A of the paper, Reading Skills, carries 26 of the 80 marks, and 18 of them come from two passages you have never seen before. Nothing has to be memorised: every answer is printed in front of you, and the marks go to the student who reads with a method. This chapter gives that method, the kinds of question CBSE asks, and the way to read the figures that come with the second passage.

Marks

Passage 1 (factual, descriptive or literary): 10 marks. Passage 2 (case-based factual, with data): 8 marks. Together 18 of 80. The questions are multiple-choice and objective-type, normally of one mark each.

Exam tip

Keep the two passages to about 40 minutes of the three hours: roughly 22 for the first and 18 for the second. For one mark, write the option, the word or one line. Extra sentences earn nothing and cost time.

1. What the Paper Sets

Point	Passage 1	Passage 2
Kind	Factual, descriptive or literary	Case-based factual, with verbal or visual inputs such as statistical data and charts
Marks	10	8
Skills tested	Comprehension, interpretation, analysis, inference, vocabulary	Comprehension, interpretation, analysis, inference, evaluation
Questions	Multiple-choice and objective-type	Multiple-choice and objective-type

The two passages together are 600 to 750 words long. Expect the first to be the longer, since it carries more marks.

The kinds of passage

Kind	What it does	Read it for
Factual	Gives information: how something works, what was found	Facts, causes, steps, figures
Descriptive	Builds a picture of a place, a person or an event	The details, and the impression they leave
Literary	Comes from a story, an essay or a memoir	Feelings, character, what is suggested
Case-based	Reports a study or a survey, with its figures	What the figures show and what the writer concludes

**Unseen passage**

A passage that is not from the textbook, set to test how well you understand something you are reading for the first time.

The forms a question takes

The paragraphs are numbered, and a question usually names the paragraph it is set on. A one-mark question takes one of four forms.

Form	What you write
Multiple-choice, four options	The letter and the words of one option
A sentence to complete	The words that finish it, fitting its grammar
A blank, with words in brackets	The one word you choose
A question for a one-line answer	One short sentence, in your own words where you can

2. A Method for Reading

- 1. Read the questions first.** Underline the key words and note the paragraph each one names. Leave the options alone for now: three in every four are wrong.
- 2. Skim the passage.** Read the first and last sentence of every paragraph. You now know the subject and where each idea sits.
- 3. Read closely with a pencil.** Underline names, figures, dates and linking words such as "but", "because" and "therefore". Beside each paragraph, write its topic in two or three words.
- 4. Answer from the paragraph the question names.** Go back to it every time and find the words that prove your answer. If you cannot point to them, think again.
- 5. Check.** Every part is attempted and carries its right number; each multiple-choice answer has one option only; every completed sentence reads as correct English.

Before you look at the options

Answer a multiple-choice question in your head first. Then pick the option nearest to your answer, and find a reason to strike out each of the other three.

If the passage is literary

Look for	Ask yourself
The speaker	Who is telling this, and about whom?
Feeling	Which words show what a person feels? Is the feeling stated, or shown by an action?
Figurative language	What does a comparison stand for? Take its meaning, not its literal sense



Look for	Ask yourself
Change	How does the mood, or a person's attitude, shift between the first paragraph and the last?

3. The Kinds of Question and How to Answer Each

Kind of question	What it tests	How to find the answer	Mistake to avoid
Evidence in a named paragraph	Finding a stated fact	Pick the phrase or figure in that paragraph that proves the point	Taking evidence from another paragraph
Complete the sentence with a reason	Cause and effect	Look near the idea for "because", "since", "so" or "as"; write the cause	Repeating the first half of the sentence
What a word or sentence does	The job of a detail	Ask why the writer put it there: to define, to give an example, to contrast or to prove	An option that is true but is not that detail's job
Inference	What is suggested, not stated	Join two facts of the passage; the answer must follow from them	Bringing in your own knowledge or opinion
Vocabulary in context	A word's meaning as used here	Put each option in the word's place; the sentence must keep its sense	Giving the word's commonest meaning without reading the sentence
Tone or purpose	The writer's attitude and aim	Notice the kind of words used: plain facts, or praise, blame and appeal	Judging from a single sentence
Main idea	The point of the whole passage	Add up the topics of the paragraphs; choose the option that covers them all	An option that fits one paragraph only
Which is NOT discussed	Careful scanning	Find each option in the passage; the one you cannot find is the answer	Overlooking "NOT" and marking the first option that is discussed
Fill in from the words in brackets	The exact word for an idea	Try each word in the blank against what the passage says	A word that sounds right but reverses the passage
Comparing figures	Reading data accurately	Write the two figures side by side, then subtract or work out the percentage	Giving the change in number when the percentage change is asked for

Words for tone

Tone	The writer
Informative, explanatory	gives facts and explains them without taking sides
Persuasive	wants the reader to agree or to act



Tone	The writer
Critical	finds fault
Appreciative	praises
Concerned	is worried about a problem
Nostalgic	looks back fondly on the past

A worked example

(1) Lightning and thunder are produced at the same instant, yet we see the flash first. Light travels at about three lakh kilometres a second, so it reaches us almost at once. Sound is sluggish by comparison: in air it covers only about one kilometre in three seconds. The delay is useful. Count the seconds between the flash and the rumble and divide by three; the result is roughly the distance of the storm in kilometres. A shrinking count means that the storm is approaching.

Question	Answer	Why
(i) Evidence. Which fact explains why the flash reaches us "almost at once"?	Light travels at about three lakh kilometres a second.	A fact is asked for, so the figure is given, without comment.
(ii) Complete the sentence. We hear thunder after we see the flash because _____.	sound travels far more slowly than light.	The words finish the sentence and state the cause.
(iii) Vocabulary. "Sluggish" most nearly means (a) loud (b) weak (c) slow (d) uneven.	(c) slow	"By comparison" sets sound against fast light, and "only" one kilometre in three seconds confirms it.
(iv) Inference. A flash and its thunder arrive together. What does this tell you?	The lightning has struck very close by.	The passage ties the delay to the distance: no delay, no distance.

4. Vocabulary in Context

The question asks what a word means in this passage, not in a dictionary. "Fine" can mean good, thin, or money paid as a punishment; only the sentence tells you which. Four clues help.

Clue	How it works	Example
Definition clue	The sentence explains the word itself, often after "that is", "or", a comma or a dash	"Clay is porous, that is, full of tiny holes." Porous: having tiny holes
Contrast clue	"But", "unlike", "although" or "however" sets the word against its opposite	"Unlike her garrulous brother, Meera hardly spoke." Garrulous: talkative
Example clue	"Such as", "for example" or "like" brings in examples of the word	"Nocturnal animals, such as owls and bats, hunt after dark." Nocturnal: active at night