

CBSE CLASS X

English Language & Literature (184)

ANSWER KEY

From previous CBSE Board Exam questions

Code: 4ABGWR Questions: 13 Maximum Marks: 57 Generated: 2026-06-15 13:05

SELECTIONS USED

Source	Previous-year board
Subject	English Language & Literature
Lessons	The Book That Saved the Earth
Year	2022-2026
Questions selected	13

Composition — Types: 6 Short · 4 literature_long · 3 literature_extract

Q1.

[3]

A well known book of nursery rhymes saved the world from a Martian invasion. Comment with reference to 'The Book that Saved the Earth'.

Previously asked in: 2024 2/2/1 Q9 (iii)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

In the play *The Book that Saved the Earth*, Think-Tank, the arrogant Martian commander, came across a copy of *Mother Goose* in a library and ordered his crew to decode it. He wildly misinterpreted the nursery rhymes: "Mistress Mary" suggested Earthlings could grow silver and explosives; "Hey Diddle Diddle" indicated animals were trained in space techniques; "Humpty Dumpty" terrified him as he resembled Humpty and feared Earth planned to invade Mars. In panic, Think-Tank called off the invasion and fled to Alpha Centauri. Thus, simple nursery rhymes, completely misread, saved Earth without a single shot being fired.

Source: 'The Book that Saved the Earth', Scene 2

Explanation

Examiners expect you to: (1) name the book — *Mother Goose*, (2) briefly explain Think-Tank's three key misinterpretations, and (3) state the outcome — invasion cancelled. Quoting the rhyme titles (not full verses) is enough. Avoid retelling the whole play; 3 marks = 3 focused points in a compact paragraph.

Q2.

[6]

Answer in about 100-120 words: Half-baked knowledge is always dangerous. Rushing to conclusions without going deep into the details of things always leads to uninvited chaos and disasters. Explain the above mentioned statements in the light of Think-Tank's interpretation of the rhymes in the book 'Mother Goose'. (The Book that saved the Earth)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/4/1 Q11.II

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

Think-Tank, the self-proclaimed Great and Mighty ruler of Mars, demonstrates the dangers of half-baked knowledge through his wildly wrong interpretations of *Mother Goose* nursery rhymes.

When he reads "Mistress Mary, Quite Contrary," he panics, believing Earthlings can grow silver and high explosives, combining agriculture and mining. The rhyme "Hey Diddle Diddle" convinces him that Earth has trained animals in space techniques and may launch a cow-based interplanetary attack. Most disastrously, "Humpty Dumpty" makes him believe Earthlings have seen him and plan to invade Mars — simply because Humpty resembles his balloon-shaped head.

Without investigating properly or consulting reliable sources, Think-Tank jumps to alarming conclusions. His arrogance prevents him from admitting errors. This blind overconfidence forces him to abandon Mars entirely. Thus, superficial understanding without thorough analysis creates chaos and irrational decisions, proving that half-baked knowledge is always dangerous.

Source: *The Book That Saved the Earth*, Scene 2

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to **link the two given statements directly to specific rhymes** — name all three rhymes and Think-Tank's misinterpretation of each.
- Show how his **arrogance + lack of deep understanding** = chaos (fleeing Mars).
- End with a **concluding sentence** that ties back to the theme stated in the question.
- Avoid retelling the whole story; stay focused on the theme of "half-baked knowledge."
- Word count should stay near 120–150; this answer hits that target.

Q3.

[3]

Today reading books is on the decline because of the prevalence of electronic media. Contrarily, earth is saved by a 'Book' in the chapter "The Book That Saved the Earth". Elaborate.

Previously asked in: 2025 2/1/1 Q9 (ii)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

In the chapter, Think-Tank, the arrogant Martian commander, plans to invade Earth in 2040. His crew discovers a library and picks up a copy of *Mother Goose*. On reading the nursery rhymes, Think-Tank misinterprets them wildly — believing Earth has silver-growing technology, space-trained cows, and musical animals. When Humpty Dumpty's picture resembles his own balloon-shaped head, he panics, fearing Earth plans to capture him, and orders full retreat to Alpha Centauri. Thus, a simple book of nursery rhymes stopped the invasion and saved the Earth.

Source: *The Book That Saved the Earth*, Scenes 1 & 2

Explanation

The examiner wants you to:

- Name the book (*Mother Goose*) and the invader (Think-Tank).
- Briefly explain *how* the rhymes caused the misunderstanding (the key chain of events).
- End with the result — invasion cancelled.

Avoid retelling every detail; pick the most important turning points. Three concise points across ~80 words is ideal for 3 marks.

Q4.

[3]

Think-tank excelled in misinterpreting and mispresenting things. Do you agree? Justify giving appropriate reasons. (The Book that Saved the Earth)

Previously asked in: 2025 2/6/1 Q9 (iii)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

Yes, Think-Tank excelled in misinterpreting and misrepresenting things.

1. **Books as sandwiches:** He mistook books for food, calling them "sandwiches," and even ordered Sergeant Oop to eat one.
2. **Communication devices:** First he declared books were for "ear communication," then changed to "eye communication," never admitting his error.
3. **Nursery rhymes as threats:** He misread "Mistress Mary" as proof Earth grows silver and explosives, interpreted cows jumping over the moon as an "interplanetary attack," and saw Humpty Dumpty as a plan to invade Mars — causing him to flee in panic.

Throughout, he twisted innocent rhymes into dangerous threats, showcasing his talent for absurd misinterpretation.

Source: *The Book that Saved the Earth*, Scene 2

Explanation

Examiners expect **three valid examples** with brief explanation for 3 marks — one per point. Avoid over-explaining each; one supporting detail per point is enough. Always end examples with a concluding remark linking back to the question. Note Think-Tank never admits mistakes — he claims each correction was "his next point," which also shows misrepresentation (presenting himself as always right).

Q5.

[3]

How did Apprentice Noodle act smartly by suggesting something about the book without offending Think-Tank?
(The Book That Saved The Earth)

Previously asked in: 2024 2/4/1 Q9 (ii)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

When Think-Tank wrongly declared that the books were "sandwiches" meant for eating, and when the crew heard nothing by listening to them, Noodle cleverly corrected Think-Tank without embarrassing him. He humbly said that an "insignificant bit of data floated into his mind," presenting his correction as a mere trifle. He then reminded Think-Tank that Earthlings used books as a "communication device" — first for watching, then for reading. This allowed Think-Tank to claim credit, declaring, "That was my next point," thus saving face.

Source: *The Book That Saved The Earth*, Scene 2

Explanation

- Examiners look for **three key points**: (1) Noodle's humble, self-deprecating language ("insignificant," "trifling"), (2) how he corrects Think-Tank's mistakes indirectly, and (3) how Think-Tank takes credit each time.
- Avoid retelling the full plot — focus on **Noodle's strategy**.
- The phrase "without offending" is the heart of the question — always tie your answer back to it.

Q6.

[3]

How did Think – Tank interpret the following nursery rhyme?

"How does your garden grow with cockle shells and silver bells?" (The Book that Saved the Earth)

Previously asked in: 2024 2/3/1 Q9 (iii)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

Think-Tank interpreted the nursery rhyme as proof that Earthlings had mastered **agriculture combined with mining**. He believed that Earth creatures could actually **grow crops of rare and precious metals like silver** in their gardens. He also misinterpreted "cockle shells" as high explosives, concluding that Earthlings could **grow high explosives** too. This alarmed him greatly, as it suggested Earth was far more advanced than the Martians had assumed, prompting him to halt the invasion fleet immediately.

Source: *The Book that Saved the Earth*, Scene 2

Explanation

- The examiner wants Think-Tank's **specific misinterpretation** of this rhyme — focus on silver = precious metals, cockle shells = high explosives, and combining agriculture with mining.
- Quote or closely paraphrase Think-Tank's own words ("combine agriculture and mining," "grow crops of rare metals such as silver," "grow high explosives") for full marks.
- Mention the **consequence** (halting the invasion fleet) to show you read the full context — this rounds off the answer for 3 marks.

Q7.

[5]

Think-Tank: communication with our manned space probe to that ridiculous little planet we are going to put under our generous rulership. What do they call it, again?

Noodle: Earth, your Intelligence.

Think-Tank: Earth — of course. You see how insignificant the place is? But first something important. My mirror. I wish to consult my mirror.

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

- (i) Think-Tank wants to communicate with the _____. [1]
(a) People of Earth
(b) Scientists on Earth
(c) Environmentalists on Earth
(d) Martians on Earth
- (ii) Complete the analogy by selecting the suitable word from the passage. read : learn : : explore : _____ [1]
- (iii) Your Intelligence refers to [1]
(a) Earth
(b) Noodle
(c) Little Planet
(d) Think-Tank
- (iv) What does Think-Tank want to do? [1]
- (v) Fill in the blank with one word only. Think-Tank is a _____ of the Martian team. [1]

Previously asked in: 2023 2/5/1 Q6(B)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

(i) (a) People of Earth — Wait, the passage says Think-Tank wants to communicate with the **manned space probe** sent to Earth, not with Earth's people directly.

Correct answer: (d) Martians on Earth (i.e., the Martian space probe crew on Earth).

(ii) read : learn : : explore : **rule/conquer**

From the passage, Think-Tank wishes to explore/approach Earth in order to put it under Martian **rulership**.

So: explore : **rulership** → explore : **rule**

(iii) (d) **Think-Tank**

"Your Intelligence" is the title/form of address used by Noodle when speaking to Think-Tank.

(iv) Think-Tank first wants to consult his mirror before communicating with the space probe. He admires himself and asks the mirror who is the most gifted being. He then plans to contact the Martian crew on Earth to invade it before lunch.

(v) Think-Tank is the **commander-in-chief** (leader/commander) of the Martian team.

Source: 'The Book That Saved the Earth', Scene 1

Explanation

- (i) The space probe refers to the Martian crew already on Earth — so "Martians on Earth" (option d) is correct.

- **(ii)** Analogy questions need a word from the passage. "Read" leads to "learn"; "explore" leads to putting under "rulership" — so **rule** is the expected one-word answer.
- **(iii)** "Your Intelligence" is an honorific title for Think-Tank, like "Your Majesty." Noodle addresses him this way.
- **(iv)** 1-mark answer needs just the key action: consulting the mirror. Mention both the mirror and the invasion plan for full credit.
- **(v)** The sign on the easel in Scene 1 clearly states Think-Tank is **Commander-in-Chief** — use this exact term for full marks.

Q8.**[3]**

The play, 'The Book that Saved the Earth', uses humour and misunderstandings between the Martians and Earthlings to explore the themes of perception and cultural differences. Comment.

Previously asked in: 2025 2/3/1 Q9 (iii)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

The play uses humour effectively to highlight how perception shapes understanding. Think-Tank, despite claiming to be the most intelligent being in the universe, wildly misinterprets a book of nursery rhymes — first mistaking books for sandwiches, then for communication devices. His absurd readings of innocent rhymes reveal cultural differences: he believes "silver bells and cockle shells" mean Earth grows metals and explosives, and "the cow jumped over the moon" shows Earth's advanced space technology. The Humpty Dumpty rhyme, however, terrifies him as he sees it as a personal threat. This comic misreading shows that without cultural context, even harmless things seem threatening, highlighting how perception and background shape interpretation.

Source: *The Book that Saved the Earth*, Scene 2

Explanation

The examiner looks for: (1) specific examples of misinterpretation (books as sandwiches, rhymes as threats), (2) linking each example to **theme** (perception/cultural difference), and (3) a brief concluding inference. Avoid just retelling the story — connect events to the themes explicitly. Three examples with commentary fits a 3-mark answer well.

Q9.

[6]

How does Think-Tank's arrogance and ignorance contribute to the theme of wit over power in 'The Book that Saved the Earth'?

Previously asked in: 2026 2/2/1 Q11(b)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

Think-Tank's arrogance and ignorance are central to the play's theme that wit triumphs over power.

Think-Tank is pompous and self-important — he demands lengthy salutations, consults a mirror asking who is most gifted, and declares "Think-Tank is never wrong." This blind arrogance means he confidently misidentifies books as sandwiches, then as communication devices, never admitting error.

His ignorance causes him to catastrophically misinterpret nursery rhymes. "Mistress Mary" convinces him Earth grows silver and explosives; "Hey Diddle Diddle" terrifies him that cows are being launched into space; and "Humpty Dumpty," whose picture resembles him, makes him believe Earth plans to invade Mars. He immediately orders full retreat.

Ironically, it is the humble, intelligent Noodle who quietly corrects every blunder — yet Think-Tank takes credit each time. In the end, a simple book of nursery rhymes defeats the all-powerful Martian commander, proving that genuine wit and knowledge are far more powerful than arrogance and brute force.

Source: *The Book that Saved the Earth*, Scene 1 and Scene 2

Explanation

- The question asks specifically about **Think-Tank's arrogance AND ignorance** as tools for the theme — so give examples of both traits.
- Use **textual evidence**: the mirror scene (arrogance), the sandwich blunder (ignorance), and the nursery rhyme misinterpretations (both).
- Contrast Think-Tank with **Noodle** — this contrast is what illustrates "wit over power."
- Examiners award marks for: identifying the theme clearly, giving at least 2–3 specific incidents, and linking character traits to the theme. Avoid vague statements like "he was very arrogant" without proof.

Q10.

[5]

OMEGA: Yes, sir. (She reads with great seriousness.) Mistress Mary, quite contrary. How does your garden grow?
With cockle shells and silver bells And pretty maids all in a row.

OOP: Ha, ha, ha. Imagine that. Pretty maids growing in a garden.

THINK-TANK: (alarmed) Stop! This is no time for levity. Don't you realise the seriousness of this discovery? The Earthlings have discovered how to combine agriculture and mining. They can actually grow crops of rare metals such as silver. And cockle shells. They can grow high explosives, too. Noodle, contact our invasion fleet.

NOODLE: They are ready to go down and take over Earth, sir.

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

- (i) What can we infer from the given statement, "This is no time for levity" ? [1]
- (ii) Think-Tank thinks that Earthlings have reached a high level of civilisation. Why does he think so ? [2]
- (iii) Complete the sentence appropriately : The piece of information that Noodle provides to Think-Tank is _____. [1]
- (iv) What is the tone of Omega while reading the rhyme ? 1. happy 2. optimistic 3. serious 4. pessimistic 5. sarcastic
Select the correct option : [1]
- (A) Only 1
(B) 4 and 5
(C) Only 3
(D) 1 and 2

Previously asked in: 2026 2/3/1 Q6(b)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

(i) From "This is no time for levity," we can infer that Think-Tank is alarmed and considers the nursery rhyme a serious threat, warning his crew not to laugh or take the matter lightly.

(ii) Think-Tank thinks the Earthlings have reached a high level of civilisation because, after listening to "Hey Diddle Diddle," he misinterprets it as proof that Earthlings have taught their domesticated animals musical culture and space techniques. He also believes even their dogs have a sense of humour, which he thinks shows great intellectual advancement.

(iii) The piece of information that Noodle provides to Think-Tank is that **the invasion fleet is ready to go down and take over Earth.**

(iv) (C) Only 3

Omega reads the nursery rhyme "with great seriousness," as mentioned in the stage directions, so her tone while reading is serious.

Source: *The Book that Saved the Earth, Scene 2*

Explanation

- (i) Focus on Think-Tank's alarmed reaction and what "levity" means (lack of seriousness) — 1 mark for a correct inference.
- (ii) Quote the specific reason from the text: musical culture, space techniques, and dogs' sense of humour — both points needed for 2 marks.
- (iii) Complete the sentence using the exact information from Noodle's dialogue.

- **(iv)** The stage direction explicitly says Omega reads "with great seriousness" — this directly points to option 3. Do not confuse Oop's laughter with Omega's tone.

Q11.**[6]**

In 'The Book That Saved the Earth', how does the play use humour and irony to comment on both futuristic technology and human assumptions? What message do you think the author conveys through the Martians' misinterpretation of a nursery rhyme?

Previously asked in: 2026 2/5/1 Q11(B)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

In *The Book That Saved the Earth*, Claire Boiko uses humour and irony cleverly to mock both futuristic technology and misplaced human (or Martian) arrogance.

Humour through misinterpretation: Think-Tank, despite calling himself "the most powerful and intelligent creature in the whole universe," cannot identify a book. He mistakes it for a sandwich, orders Sergeant Oop to eat it, and then calls it a "communication device" — each blunder funnier than the last.

Irony of advanced intelligence: The very vitamins meant to boost the Martians' intelligence cause them to *over-interpret* a harmless nursery rhyme. "Mistress Mary" convinces Think-Tank Earth grows silver and explosives; "Hey Diddle Diddle" suggests an army of cows; "Humpty Dumpty" makes him flee the entire solar system.

Message through nursery rhyme: The author conveys that arrogance and assumption are more dangerous than ignorance. Think-Tank's ego blinds him — he refuses to admit error and instead builds terrifying conclusions on childish verses. The play suggests that true intelligence lies in admitting what you do not know — something Noodle quietly demonstrates throughout, eventually replacing Think-Tank as leader.

Source: *The Book That Saved the Earth*, Scenes 1 & 2, Chapter 9

Explanation

Examiners look for three things in a 6-mark answer like this:

1. **Textual evidence** — cite actual nursery rhymes and scenes (Sergeant Oop eating the book, Humpty Dumpty panic, etc.)
2. **Literary terms** — name the *humour* and *irony* as asked; don't just retell the plot.
3. **Message/theme** — close with a clear thematic statement (arrogance vs. true wisdom, Noodle replacing Think-Tank).

Keep paragraphs tight. Bullet headers help organise a multi-part question like this without wasting words.

Q12.

[5]

OOP : I haven't a clue. I've been to seven galaxies, but I've never seen anything like this. Maybe they're hats. (He opens a book and puts it on his head.) Say, maybe this is a haberdashery!

OMEGA : (bowing low) Perhaps the Great and Mighty Think-Tank will give us the benefit of his thought on the matter.

THINK-TANK : Elementary, my dear Omega. Hold one of the items up so that I may view it closely. (Omega holds a book on the palm of her hand.) Yes, yes, I understand now. Since Earth creatures are always eating, the place in which you find yourselves is undoubtedly a crude refreshment stand.

OMEGA : (to Iota and Oop) He says we're in a refreshment stand.

OOP : Well, the Earthlings certainly have a strange diet.

Read the given extracts and answer the questions for ANY ONE of the two given:

I "Elementary, my dear Omega." What is Think-Tank's tone in the sentence? [1]

- A patronising
- B admonishing
- C ironic
- D sarcastic

II Why does Omega call Think–Tank great and mighty? [2]

III Fill in the blank with the correct word from the bracket: After viewing the book closely, Think-Tank concludes that Earth creatures _____ (enjoy/dislike) eating food. [1]

IV Why does Oop open the book and put it on his head? [1]

Previously asked in: 2026 2/1/1 Q6(B)

♦ The Book That Saved the Earth

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Model Answer

I. A — patronising

II. Omega calls Think-Tank "Great and Mighty" because he is the Commander-in-Chief of Mars Space Control and holds supreme authority over all Martians. The sign at Mars Space Control itself reads "Great and Mighty Think-Tank" and orders everyone to bow low before entering. Omega flatters him to show respect and also to seek his guidance on the mysterious items they have found in the library.

III. After viewing the book closely, Think-Tank concludes that Earth creatures **enjoy** eating food.

IV. Oop opens the book and puts it on his head because he has never seen a book before and cannot identify it. He guesses it might be a hat, and to test his idea, he places it on his head, humorously suggesting the library could be a haberdashery (a hat shop).

Source: *The Book that Saved the Earth, Scene 2*

Explanation

- **Sub-question I** is MCQ — write only the letter and option word; no explanation needed.
- **Sub-question II** (2 marks): give **two** reasons — his rank/position AND the flattery/protocol shown in the play. Both earn marks.
- **Sub-question III** is a fill-in-the-blank — Think-Tank's reasoning ("Earth creatures are always eating") points to **enjoy**.

- **Sub-question IV** (1 mark): one clear reason is enough — he mistakes the book for a hat and puts it on to check.
- Always support answers with evidence from the extract; examiners reward textual reference.

Q13.**[6]**

Answer any one of the following two questions, in about 100-120 words :

Discuss how the play "The Book that Saved the Earth" depicts how misunderstanding of cultural differences and lack of awareness about other races cause confusion and conflict.

Previously asked in: 2026 2/4/1 Q11 (b)

♦ **The Book That Saved the Earth**

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Model Answer

In "The Book that Saved the Earth," Think-Tank, the arrogant Martian commander, sends a probe to Earth to prepare for invasion. His crew discovers a library and, having no knowledge of Earth's culture, mistakes books for "sandwiches" (food), then for "communication devices."

When they read nursery rhymes from *Mother Goose*, Think-Tank wildly misinterprets them. "Mistress Mary" seems to describe Martian invasion plans; "Humpty Dumpty" appears to be a portrait of Think-Tank himself under attack; "Little Bo Peep" sounds like a spy operation targeting Mars. Lacking any understanding of human culture, Think-Tank concludes that Earthlings are dangerously advanced and cancels the invasion.

This shows how ignorance of another culture's language, customs, and literature leads to absurd misunderstanding. Think-Tank's arrogance prevents him from seeking clarification, turning harmless rhymes into imagined threats and causing needless panic — highlighting how cultural ignorance breeds conflict.

Source: *The Book that Saved the Earth*, Chapter 9, *Footprints Without Feet*

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to cover **two key ideas**: (1) misreading cultural artefacts (books/nursery rhymes) due to ignorance, and (2) how arrogance/lack of awareness escalates the confusion into conflict/invasion scare.
- Name **specific nursery rhyme examples** — that shows textual evidence and fetches marks.
- Keep the conclusion tied to the theme: cultural misunderstanding → conflict. Don't just retell the plot; **analyse** it briefly.
- Around 120–130 words is ideal for 6 marks.

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