

CBSE CLASS X

English Language & Literature (184)

ANSWER KEY

From previous CBSE Board Exam questions

Code: SIMEHZ	Questions: 12	Maximum Marks: 59	Generated: 2026-06-15 13:05
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SELECTIONS USED

Source	Previous-year board
Subject	English Language & Literature
Lessons	Footprints without Feet
Year	2022-2026
Questions selected	12

Composition — Types: 5 literature_long · 4 literature_extract · 3 Short

Q1.

[6]

Answer in 100-120 words.

Griffin's brilliance as a man of science fades before his darker traits. Give reasons from the text to support your answer.
(Footprints Without Feet)

Previously asked in: 2024 2/3/1 Q11(a)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Griffin's scientific brilliance is undeniable — he successfully made the human body transparent through persistent experimentation. However, his darker traits consistently overshadow this achievement.

Lawlessness: The text explicitly states, "Brilliant scientist though he was, Griffin was rather a lawless person." When his landlord tried to evict him, Griffin set fire to the house — a dangerous, criminal act of revenge.

Theft: In London, he broke into a store and helped himself to food, clothes, and wine without payment. He then robbed the theatrical shopkeeper of all his money after callously attacking him from behind.

Burglary: In Iping, he stole the clergyman's housekeeping money and then used the stolen cash to pay his bills.

Violence: At the inn, he terrorised Mrs Hall with moving furniture, and finally knocked Constable Jaffers unconscious to escape arrest.

Thus, Griffin used his remarkable discovery not for the benefit of humanity but purely for personal gain, revenge, and violence.

Source: *Footprints Without Feet*, Chapter 5 — H.G. Wells

Explanation

- Examiners look for **textual evidence** supporting the contrast between Griffin's scientific ability and his criminal nature — don't just say he was "bad," quote or closely paraphrase the text.
- The key phrase the chapter itself provides — "lawless person" — should appear in your answer; it shows you've read carefully.
- Organise around **specific incidents**: arson, theft in London, robbing the shopkeeper, burglary at the clergyman's, violence against Jaffers. This earns full marks for coverage.
- Keep each point brief — one or two sentences each — so you hit all incidents without exceeding the word limit.

Q2.

[6]

Answer in about 100-120 words: Evaluate Griffin's character as a brilliant scientist and a lawless person. (Footprints without Feet)

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

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Griffin, the central character in *Footprints without Feet*, presents a contradictory personality — a gifted scientist who misuses his genius.

As a Brilliant Scientist: Griffin carried out experiment after experiment to prove that the human body could be made invisible. Finally, he succeeded by swallowing certain rare drugs, making his body as transparent as glass while remaining solid. This remarkable achievement places him among the most gifted scientific minds.

As a Lawless Person: Despite his brilliance, Griffin was essentially a criminal. He set fire to his landlord's house out of revenge, stole from a theatrical shop after attacking its owner, robbed the clergyman's house, and assaulted Constable Jaffers. He used his invisibility not for the benefit of mankind but for selfish and violent purposes.

Thus, Griffin is a classic example of a scientist who misuses knowledge — brilliant in intellect but reckless and dangerous in character.

Source: *Footprints without Feet*, Chapter 5 — H.G. Wells

Explanation

- Examiners expect a **balanced evaluation**: acknowledge his scientific genius first, then discuss his lawlessness with specific examples from the text.
- Use **evidence from the passage**: setting fire to the landlord's house, robbing the clergyman, attacking the shopkeeper, and fighting the constable.
- The concluding line linking misuse of science to his character earns the **higher-order thinking** mark.
- Avoid writing a one-sided answer; the question word "*evaluate*" demands both sides.

Q3.

[3]

Discuss the character development of Griffin, as he grapples with the repercussions of his actions and attempts to navigate a world, where his once extraordinary abilities have become a burden.

(Footprints without Feet)

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

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Griffin begins as a brilliant but **lawless** scientist — he burns his landlord's house and wanders London homeless and invisible. His invisibility, though remarkable, proves more curse than gift: he suffers bitterly in the cold, is forced to steal food and money, and must disguise himself with bandages and a false nose. He resorts to robbery and violence, attacking a shopkeeper callously. At Iping, suspicion closes in, and when exposed, his furious, uncontrolled temper leads to his complete unmasking. His genius is overshadowed by moral recklessness, making him a fugitive whose extraordinary power only deepens his isolation and criminality.

Source: Chapter 5 — *Footprints without Feet*

Explanation

The examiner expects you to trace Griffin's **character arc** — from a gifted scientist to a desperate, violent outlaw. Key points to cover:

- His **lawlessness** (burning the house, theft, assault)
- Invisibility as a **burden** (cold, hunger, constant hiding)
- **Escalating crime** showing moral decline
- **Loss of control** — temper and eventual unmasking

Avoid retelling the plot alone; always link events to character traits. Words like "reckless," "lawless," "isolated," and "fugitive" earn credit.

Q4.

[3]

Why does Griffin, despite his scientific genius, end up leading a destructive life? (Footprints Without Feet)

Previously asked in: 2026 2/5/1 Q9 (i)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Griffin's scientific genius is undermined by his **lawless and selfish character**. He misused his invisibility for personal gain rather than humanity's benefit.

Firstly, he set fire to his landlord's house out of pure revenge. Later, he attacked a shopkeeper and robbed him of money. At Iping, he stole from a clergyman's desk and terrorised Mrs Hall's household.

His inability to control his **quick temper and criminal instincts** turned a brilliant discovery into a tool for destruction. He had no moral responsibility, only self-interest — which made his genius dangerous rather than beneficial.

Source: *Footprints Without Feet*, Ch. 5

Explanation

The examiner expects you to link **character flaw + specific examples of wrongdoing**. Three marks = three clear points: (1) his lawless nature/revenge against landlord, (2) robbery and violence, (3) conclusion that moral failure destroyed the potential of his genius. Avoid vague statements; cite textbook incidents (fire, shopkeeper attack, clergyman's burglary). The phrase "lawless person" comes directly from the text — use it.

Q5.

[6]

Answer any one of the following two questions, in 100-120 words: Imagine that Griffin's conscience pricks him and he decides to write a diary entry, about misusing science and endangering society, in the context of his own experience. Write this diary entry, as Griffin, in about 120 words. (Reference – Footprints without Feet by H.G. Wells)

Previously asked in: 2024 2/2/1 Q11(a)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Diary Entry — Griffin

Date: A winter night, Iping

Dear Diary,

Tonight, my conscience torments me. I, Griffin, once a brilliant scientist, have reduced myself to a common thief and a violent fugitive. I set fire to my landlord's house in revenge — what had science to do with revenge? I robbed a clergyman's desk in the dead of night, stole from a shopkeeper after attacking him from behind, and terrorised an innocent woman by hurling her own furniture at her.

I discovered something extraordinary — human invisibility. This could have been a gift to mankind. Instead, I have used it to escape consequences, to steal, to harm.

Science demands responsibility. I pursued my experiment with brilliance but without conscience. Invisibility did not free me — it imprisoned me in cold, hunger, and crime.

I fear I have not served science. I have shamed it.

— Griffin

Source: Footprints without Feet, H.G. Wells, Chapter 5

Explanation

- **What examiners look for:** The diary must be written **in first person as Griffin**, show **genuine remorse**, and reference **specific incidents** from the text — theft from the clergyman, attack on the shopkeeper, furniture incident, setting fire to the landlord's house.
- **Key phrase to include:** Misuse of science / science without conscience.
- **Format:** Date/place heading, first-person voice, reflective tone, signed "Griffin." These presentational features carry marks.
- **Do not** invent events not in the text. Stick to incidents mentioned in the chapter.

Q6.

[5]

The two boys started in surprise at the fresh muddy imprints of a pair of bare feet. What was a barefooted man doing on the steps of a house in the middle of London ? And where was the man ?
As they gazed, a remarkable sight met, their eyes. A fresh footmark appeared from nowhere !
Further footprints followed, one after another, descending the steps and progressing down the street. The boys followed, fascinated, until the muddy impressions became fainter and fainter and at last disappeared altogether.

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow :

- (i) The boys were surprised to see a barefooted man in London because _____. [1]
 (a) everybody in London moved around in shoes.
 (b) it was very cold in London to move around barefoot.
 (c) the muddy footprints were fresh.
 (d) only a homeless person would walk barefoot.
- (ii) Select the option that correctly captures the usage of the word 'started' in the above extract. [1]
 (a) When I reached the theatre the movie had already started.
 (b) The fire started from the kitchen.
 (c) On hearing the bell ring, the sleeping Raman started and jumped out of bed.
 (d) Taking a deep breath, Ravi started down the stairs.
- (iii) The boys reaction can best be described as [1]
 (a) captivated, bored
 (b) repulsed, absorbed
 (c) curious, unhappy
 (d) captivated, interested
- (iv) Complete the analogy by selecting the suitable word from the text : Disappeared : Vanished :: Extraordinary : _____ [1]
- (v) According to the extract the boys were _____ when they saw the footmark. 1. terrified 2. nervous 3. delighted 4. curious 5. puzzled Select the correct option : [1]
 (a) 1, 2, 4
 (b) Only 1
 (c) 4 and 5
 (d) 2 and 3

Previously asked in: 2023 2/6/1 Q6(b)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

- (i) (a) everybody in London moved around in shoes.
- (ii) (c) On hearing the bell ring, the sleeping Raman started and jumped out of bed.
(Here 'started' means to move suddenly in surprise, which matches the extract's usage.)
- (iii) (d) captivated, interested
(The boys followed the footprints "fascinated," showing they were captivated and interested throughout.)
- (iv) Disappeared : Vanished :: Extraordinary : **Remarkable**
(The extract uses the word "remarkable" — "a remarkable sight met their eyes" — which is a synonym of 'extraordinary'.)

(v) (c) 4 and 5

(The boys were curious — they "followed, fascinated" — and puzzled — they wondered "What was a barefooted man doing...? And where was the man?" There is no evidence of terror or nervousness.)

Source: *Footprints Without Feet*, H.G. Wells — Introduction and Opening Incident

Explanation

- (i) The surprise was triggered by seeing **bare feet** in London where shoes are the norm; the other options are not supported by the text.
- (ii) In the extract 'started' = a sudden involuntary movement of surprise/shock. Only option (c) uses it in the same sense.
- (iii) 'Fascinated' in the passage maps to 'captivated' and 'interested'; there is no boredom, repulsion, or unhappiness shown.
- (iv) Analogy questions ask for a word from the passage that means the same as 'extraordinary'. The word 'remarkable' appears directly in the extract.
- (v) 'Curious' and 'puzzled' are supported by the questioning tone and the boys following the footprints; 'terrified' and 'nervous' are not indicated.

Q7.

[6]

Elucidate with reference to the text. (Question relates to a supplementary reader text; exact phrasing partially obscured in OCR layer.)

Previously asked in: 2023 2/2/1 Q11(a)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Griffin's behaviour throughout the story reveals him to be both a brilliant but deeply lawless and irresponsible person.

Misuse of science: Griffin discovered how to make the human body transparent — a remarkable scientific achievement. However, instead of using it for the benefit of humanity, he used his invisibility for selfish and criminal purposes.

Acts of lawlessness:

- He set fire to his landlord's house in **revenge**, showing cruelty.
- He stole food, clothing, and money from the London store without payment.
- He **robbed and callously attacked** the shopkeeper at Drury Lane after stealing money.
- He burgled the clergyman's home and stole the housekeeping money.
- He produced sudden "ready cash" after claiming to be penniless, raising suspicion.
- He terrorised Mrs Hall's household by using his invisibility to animate furniture.

Conclusion: Griffin's genius is beyond doubt, but his misuse of his discovery for revenge, theft, and violence makes him a danger to society rather than a contributor to it.

Source: Chapter 5 — *Footprints without Feet*, H.G. Wells

Explanation

The examiner expects you to address **both** aspects implied by the question: Griffin as a **scientist** (brilliant, pioneering) and as a **person** (lawless, irresponsible). Cite specific incidents from the text — setting fire to the house, theft from the store, robbing the shopkeeper, burgling the clergyman — rather than making vague claims. The concluding line balancing his genius against his criminality earns full marks. Aim for 6 concrete, text-based points for a 6-mark answer.

Q8.

[5]

His landlord disliked him and tried to eject him. In revenge, Griffin set fire to the house. To get away without being seen he had to remove his clothes. Thus it was that he became a homeless wanderer, without clothes, without money and quite invisible — until he happened to step in some mud, and left footprints as he walked!

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

- (i) The landlord tried to eject him because [1]
(a) he was a lawless person.
(b) he had set his house on fire.
(c) he disliked him.
(d) he was a drug addict.
- (ii) Fill in the blank with one word only. Griffin deliberately removed his clothes because he wanted to become _____. [1]
- (iii) Select the option that correctly captures the application of the word 'fire' as used in this extract. [1]
(a) Griffin said that he would fire the manager.
(b) The soldiers opened fire at the enemy.
(c) His remarks provoked heavy fire from the political opponents.
(d) The Amar Palace was completely destroyed by the fire.
- (iv) Griffin's invisibility was revealed because [1]
(a) he jumped into the water with a splash.
(b) he wore clothes.
(c) he left muddy footprints.
(d) he stepped in mud.
- (v) Which of the following is not true with reference to the given extract? [1]
(a) Griffin had become penniless.
(b) Griffin promised to behave himself.
(c) Griffin revealed himself by his muddy footprints.
(d) No one could see Griffin when he took off his clothes.

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

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

(i) (c) he disliked him.

(ii) Griffin deliberately removed his clothes because he wanted to become **invisible**.

(iii) (d) The Amar Palace was completely destroyed by the fire.

(Here 'fire' is used as a noun meaning actual flames/combustion, same as in the extract.)

(iv) (d) he stepped in mud.

(Stepping in mud caused the footprints, which revealed his presence.)

(v) (b) Griffin promised to behave himself.

(This is not mentioned anywhere in the extract. The extract only states he became a homeless wanderer without clothes or money, and his footprints gave him away.)

Source: *Footprints without Feet*, Chapter 5 – Introduction and Opening Incident

Explanation

- **(i):** The extract clearly states "His landlord **disliked** him and tried to eject him" — the reason is dislike, not Griffin's actions (fire came after).
- **(iii):** The word 'fire' in the extract means actual burning flames (noun). Option (d) uses it in the same sense. Options (a) and (b) use 'fire' as a verb; option (c) uses it as a metaphor for criticism.
- **(iv):** Both (c) and (d) are close — but the **cause** is stepping in mud; leaving footprints is the **effect**. The question asks why invisibility was *revealed*, so (d) is the root cause. Accept either, but (d) is more precise.
- **(v):** Examiners want the statement not supported by the passage. Griffin making a promise is never mentioned — that is the false option.

Q9.

[5]

Mrs. Hall almost fell down the stairs in hysterics. She was convinced that the room was haunted by spirits and that the stranger had somehow caused these to enter into her furniture.

Attempt any one of the given extracts:

- (i) Mrs. Hall tripped because _____. [1]
 (a) the floor was oily.
 (b) she was standing on a chair.
 (c) she was in a state of panic.
 (d) the door was slammed.
- (ii) Mrs. Hall suspected everything in the room was put under a spell of witchcraft by _____. [1]
- (iii) Fill in the blank with one word only: Mrs. Hall was afraid that spirits had entered _____. [1]
- (iv) According to the extract, the feeling of Mrs. Hall can be best described as (1) stunned (2) happy (3) awestruck (4) nervous (5) outraged (6) agitated Select the correct option: [1]
 (a) (2) and (4)
 (b) (3) and (6)
 (c) (5) and (6)
 (d) (1) and (6)
- (v) 'Spirits' in the above lines means the same as [1]
 (a) ghosts
 (b) conscience
 (c) ego
 (d) attitude

Previously asked in: 2023 2/1/1 Q6(b)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

- (i) (c) she was in a state of panic.
- (ii) Mrs. Hall suspected everything in the room was put under a spell of witchcraft by **the stranger (Griffin)**.
- (iii) Mrs. Hall was afraid that spirits had entered **her furniture**.
- (iv) (d) (1) and (6) — stunned and agitated.
- (v) (a) ghosts

Source: Chapter – Footprints without Feet, Section – Arrival at Iping and Strange Events at the Inn

Explanation

- (i) The extract says she "almost fell down the stairs in hysterics" — hysterics means extreme panic/frenzy, so (c) is correct.
- (ii) The extract directly states "the stranger had somehow caused these to enter into her furniture" — the stranger refers to Griffin.
- (iii) The extract explicitly says spirits entered "her furniture" — copy the exact phrase from the passage.
- (iv) Mrs. Hall was clearly stunned (shocked by the furniture's behaviour) and agitated (in hysterics). "Happy" and "awestruck" don't fit; "outraged" comes later. Option (d) fits best.

- (v) In this context, "spirits" means supernatural entities/ghosts — the passage is about a haunted room, so (a) is correct.

Q10.

[3]

Scientists contribute to make the world a better place. Griffin is an antithesis to this statement. Justify. (Footprints Without Feet)

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

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Scientists are expected to use their discoveries for the benefit of humanity. However, Griffin proves to be the opposite.

Griffin was a brilliant scientist who discovered how to make the human body invisible. Instead of using this discovery for good, he misused it repeatedly. He set fire to his landlord's house out of revenge, robbed a shopkeeper after attacking him from behind, and stole money from a clergyman's home. He terrorised the villagers of Iping and violently assaulted a constable.

Thus, Griffin's brilliance served only selfish, destructive, and criminal purposes, making him an antithesis to the idea that scientists make the world a better place.

Source: *Footprints Without Feet*, Chapter 5 – "*Footprints Without Feet*" by H.G. Wells

Explanation

Examiners look for: (1) acknowledgement that Griffin **was** a gifted scientist, (2) specific examples of his **lawless/harmful actions** (arson, robbery, assault), and (3) a concluding link to the statement that he **misused** science rather than benefiting society. The word "antithesis" in the question signals you must show the **contrast** between the ideal scientist and Griffin's actual conduct. Keep examples crisp — two or three are enough for 3 marks.

Q11.

[6]

Answer any one of the following two questions in 100–120 words:

A character arc is the transformation or development of a character throughout a story and refers to the changes a character undergoes as a result of his/her experiences, challenges and interactions with other characters.

In light of the above information, trace the character arc of Griffin in H.G. Wells' 'Footprints without Feet'.

Previously asked in: 2024 2/5/1 Q11(b)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

Character Arc of Griffin in 'Footprints without Feet'

Griffin begins as a brilliant scientist who successfully discovers how to make the human body transparent — a remarkable scientific achievement. However, his character is fundamentally flawed from the start; he is described as "rather a lawless person."

His arc moves steadily downward. When his landlord tries to evict him, he burns down the house out of revenge — showing he prioritises spite over reason. Forced to wander London invisible and naked, he steals clothes and food from a store, then callously attacks a shopkeeper to rob him of money.

At Iping, he burglarises the clergyman's home and uses stolen money to pay rent. He grows increasingly irritable, violent, and reckless, ultimately terrifying the village and assaulting the constable.

Griffin's arc is a tragic decline: from gifted scientist to dangerous, selfish criminal. His brilliance is entirely overshadowed by his lawlessness and cruelty.

Source: Chapter 5 — 'Footprints without Feet', H.G. Wells

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to **trace the arc chronologically** — beginning (brilliant scientist), middle (thefts, violence, deceit), end (unmasked criminal).
- Use the key phrase from the text: **"lawless person"** — examiners reward textual evidence.
- Show that his **downfall is moral, not intellectual** — this is the central irony of the story.
- Aim for 6 clear points/movements in the arc to match the 6 marks.
- Do not simply retell the plot — always link events to **how his character changes or is revealed**.

Q12.

[5]

The arrival of a stranger at an inn in winter was in any case an unusual event. A stranger of such uncommon appearance set all tongues wagging. Mrs. Hall, the landlord's wife, made every effort to be friendly. But Griffin had no desire to talk, and told her, "My reason for coming to Iping is a desire for solitude. I do not wish to be disturbed in my work. Besides, an accident has affected my face." Satisfied that her guest was an eccentric scientist, and in view of the fact that he had paid her in advance, Mrs. Hall was prepared to excuse his strange habits and irritable temper.

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

- (i) State any one inference about Griffin from the given context: "My reason for coming to Iping is a desire for solitude. I do not wish to be disturbed in my work. Besides, an accident has affected my face." [1]
- (ii) State True or False: Even though Mrs. Hall was satisfied with Griffin, she was skeptical to excuse his strange habits and irritable temper. [1]
- (iii) It was not difficult for Griffin to convince the landlord and his wife about his strange appearance and eccentric behaviour. Elaborate in about 40 words with reference to the context. [2]
- (iv) Which phrase would correctly substitute the underlined phrase in the given sentence from the extract? A stranger of such uncommon appearance _____. [1]

Previously asked in: 2024 2/4/1 Q6(b)

♦ Footprints without Feet

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Model Answer

- (i) One inference about Griffin is that he was secretive and anti-social. He deliberately avoided interaction and used the excuse of an accident to explain his unusual appearance, hiding the truth that he was an invisible man.
- (ii) False. Mrs. Hall was satisfied that Griffin was an eccentric scientist and, since he had paid her in advance, she was quite willing (not skeptical) to excuse his strange habits and irritable temper.
- (iii) Griffin convinced Mrs. Hall by giving two reasons — his desire for solitude to carry out his work, and an accident that had affected his face. More importantly, he paid her in advance. This advance payment satisfied her practical concerns, making her willing to overlook his eccentricities without much suspicion.
- (iv) The phrase that correctly substitutes "set all tongues wagging" is:
became the talk of the town / aroused everyone's curiosity

Source: *Footprints Without Feet*, Chapter 5 — "*Footprints Without Feet*" by H.G. Wells, *Arrival at Iping and Strange Events at the Inn*

Explanation

- (i) The examiner wants a clear, direct inference — one point is enough. Link Griffin's words to his secretive, evasive nature.
- (ii) The passage explicitly says Mrs. Hall *was prepared to excuse* his habits — so "skeptical" makes the statement False.
- (iii) For 2 marks, mention both the verbal justification (solitude + accident) AND the advance payment — both are reasons Mrs. Hall was convinced.

- **(iv)** "Set all tongues wagging" is an idiom meaning everyone was talking about it. Acceptable substitutes: "became the talk of the town," "made everyone gossip," or "aroused general curiosity." Write the most standard one.

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