My Mother at Sixty-six — CBSE Class 12 English Core Chapter Test

FREE CHAPTER TEST · CLASS XII · ENGLISH CORE (301) · PATTERN OF THE CBSE SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER 2026-27

TIME ALLOWED	MAXIMUM MARKS	QUESTIONS	NAME / ROLL NO.
45 minutes	21	13 (A 8 · B 4 · C 1)	

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Read the following instructions very carefully and strictly follow them:

1. This question paper contains 13 questions. All questions are compulsory.
2. This question paper is divided into three sections: A, B and C.
3. Section A (Q1–8) contains objective questions of 1 mark each.
4. Section B (Q9–12) contains short answer questions of 2 marks each; answer in 40–50 words.
5. Section C (Q13) contains a long answer question of 5 marks with an internal choice; answer in 120–150 words and attempt only one of the alternatives.
6. Answer in your own words, within the word limits.
7. This chapter test follows the question types, marks and word limits of the Literature section (Section C) of the CBSE Class XII English Core (301) Sample Question Paper 2026-27, for one chapter: 21 marks in 45 minutes.
8. The answer key and the marking scheme are at the end of this booklet. Attempt the paper in 45 minutes before you look at them.

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Chapter: My Mother at Sixty-six (Flamingo) · **Topics:** Ageing and the fear of loss · Imagery and contrast · Similes · The poet's feelings

SECTION A

This section comprises 8 objective questions of 1 mark each, testing comprehension, interpretation, inference and appreciation of the chapter.

1. Where was the poet going when she noticed her mother's face? 1

(A) To her parents' home (B) To Cochin airport

(C) To a hospital (D) To her office

2. The poet compares her dozing mother's pale face to 1

(A) a flower (B) the sun

(C) a corpse (D) a child

3. Why does the poet look out at the young trees and the merry children? 1

(A) To drive away the painful thought of her mother's ageing and possible death (B) To count the trees on the road

(C) Because the children called out to her (D) To find the way to the airport

4. The young trees 'sprinting' and the children 'spilling' out of their homes stand for 1

(A) the poet's childhood fear (B) old age

(C) the airport crowd (D) life, energy and youth, in contrast to the mother's ageing

5. My Mother at Sixty-six was written by 1

(A) Kamala Das (B) Sarojini Naidu

(C) Nissim Ezekiel (D) Adrienne Rich

6. Besides English, Kamala Das also wrote in 1

(A) Hindi (B) Malayalam

(C) Tamil (D) Bengali

7. Why does the poet say only that she would see her mother soon, and smile? 1

(A) She was in a hurry to catch her flight. (B) She was angry with her mother.

(C) She hid her fear and pain, so as not to upset her mother. (D) She did not care about her mother.

8. Which poetic device is used when the poet compares her mother's face to a late winter's moon? 1

(A) Metaphor (B) Personification

(C) Alliteration (D) Simile

SECTION B

This section comprises 4 short answer questions of 2 marks each. Answer each in 40–50 words.

9. What contrast does the poet draw between the scene inside the car and the scene outside? (40–50 words) 2

10. Why is the mother compared to a late winter's moon? (40–50 words) 2

11. What were the poet's feelings when she saw her mother's face at the security check? (40–50 words) 2

12. What does the repeated smile at the end of the poem convey? (40–50 words) 2

SECTION C

This section comprises 1 long answer question of 5 marks. Answer in 120–150 words.

13. (a) My Mother at Sixty-six is a poem about the fear of loss and the reality of ageing. Discuss. (120–150 words) 5

OR

(b) Discuss the use of imagery and contrast in My Mother at Sixty-six. (120–150 words)

END OF THE QUESTION PAPER

ANSWER KEY — SECTION A

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
(B)	(C)	(A)	(D)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)

MARKING SCHEME AND WORKED SOLUTIONS

Value points are shown with their marks in brackets. Credit any other relevant point made in the student's own words.

Q1. Answer (B). She was driving from her parents' home to Cochin airport, with her mother beside her.

Q2. Answer (C). The ashen, open-mouthed face reminds her of a corpse — the image of approaching death.

Q3. Answer (A). She turns from the image of decay to images of youth and life, to put away the painful thought.

Q4. Answer (D). These images of vitality contrast with the decline of the old mother.

Q5. Answer (A). Kamala Das, an Indian poet who wrote in English and in Malayalam.

Q6. Answer (B). She wrote in Malayalam under the pen name Madhavikutty.

Q7. Answer (C). The repeated smile hides her anxiety and grief; she wants to part on a hopeful note.

Q8. Answer (D). A comparison using 'as' or 'like' is a simile.

Q9. (2 marks) Answer: ageing and death inside; youth and life outside.
Inside, the old mother dozes, pale and corpse-like — an image of ageing and approaching death; [1] outside, young trees seem to sprint and happy children spill out of their homes — images of youth, life and energy. [1]

Q10. (2 marks) Answer: pale, fading, nearing the end.
The late winter's moon is pale, dim and hazy, its light fading; [1] the mother's face is similarly pale and lifeless, and she too is nearing the end of her life. [1]

Q11. (2 marks) Answer: childhood fear of loss; hidden pain.
She felt the old ache of her childhood — the fear of losing her mother; [1] she was pained and anxious, yet she hid her feelings behind a smile and a hopeful goodbye. [1]

Q12. (2 marks) Answer: hidden grief; hope; helplessness.
It shows the poet's attempt to hide her fear and sorrow and to part on a cheerful note; [1] it also suggests her helplessness — she can only smile and hope to see her mother again. [1]

Q13. (5 marks) Answer: ageing and death; contrast; childhood fear; hidden emotions.
Value points [5]: on the drive to Cochin airport the poet notices her mother's ashen, corpse-like face and realises she is old and may die; she turns to the sprinting trees and merry children — the contrast of youth and age; at the security check she sees the mother pale as a late winter's moon and feels her childhood fear of losing her; she hides her feelings, says she will see her soon, and smiles; the poem shows that ageing and death are inevitable and that love brings fear of separation; it is a universal experience of children who see their parents grow old.
OR Value points [5]: images of ageing and death — the dozing mother with open mouth, the ashen, corpse-like face, the late winter's moon; images of life — young trees sprinting, merry children spilling out of their homes; the contrast between inside the car and outside, between the old mother and the busy world, between the poet's inner fear and outer smile; the simple, conversational language and the single long sentence add to the effect.

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