CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

IV.1. INTRODUCTION

Through content analysis method, the performance of the students in the skill based test was analysed and the scores tabulated section wise.

IV.2. GROUP WISE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The student sample consisted of 168 students from the CBSE and 143 students from the state board schools (who passed class X through the State and the Matriculation board); thus the total number of students who took the skill based test conducted by the researcher is 311 in all.

IV.2.1. ANALYSIS OF THE SCORES OF THE WHOLE SAMPLE

The sectionwise scores of each of the 311 students in the sample were tabulated. The total of each section’s scores – Reading, Writing, Grammar and Listening – and the total of the scores of the whole sample were calculated and converted into percentage of marks so that comparison of the performance of the students between groups and also comparison of the performance of each student in the four areas is facilitated. The scores converted into percentage for the four groups and also the percentage of the scores of the whole sample were tabulated. Then, by dividing the total scores by the whole sample size, the means of the scores and the standard deviations were calculated and tabulated for each section and for the total scores of the whole group as follows:
The mean of the scores of the whole sample is high indicating that the students were facile with the test paper in general though the standard deviation indicates a fairly wide dispersion from the mean. The mean of the scores is the maximum in the listening section and it is minimum in the grammar section which shows that the students have been able to perform very well in the listening section. Even though the matriculation and State Board do not have regular exposure to listening exercises in their curriculum in class X in English, their performance is commendable. Most of the students have lost marks in the grammar section being unable to score well in C2 testing passive forms and different tense forms of the verbs.

It is worth mentioning that most of the students lose marks in the writing compositions mainly due to errors in using verbs appropriately.

| Table IV.1. Mean and Standard deviation of the scores of the whole sample |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                               | Total             | Reading Section   | Writing Section   | Grammar Section   | Listening Section |
| Mean                          | 64.66             | 61.94             | 60.38             | 45.44             | 86.21             |
| Standard Deviation            | 15.08             | 17.7              | 23.95             | 21.48             | 17.07             |
**IV.2.2 ANALYSIS OF THE SCORES OF THE SUB-SAMPLES**

The 163 students who passed class X through the CBSE curriculum, the 148 students from the State board schools (who passed class X through the Matriculation board), the 65 students who took the skill based test from Aided schools and the 246 students from non-aided schools constitute the 4 different sub-samples.

**IV.2.2.1. CBSE STUDENTS**

The total of the scores and the total of the section wise scores – Reading, Writing, Grammar and Listening- obtained by the sub samples of those students who passed class X through the CBSE curriculum were calculated and tabulated. Using the data the mean of the total scores, means of the section wise scores and the corresponding standard deviations were calculated. The details are given in the table below:

**Table IV.2. Mean and standard deviation of the scores of the students who passed class X through the CBSE curriculum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Reading Section</th>
<th>Writing Section</th>
<th>Grammar Section</th>
<th>Listening Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>68.19</td>
<td>60.33</td>
<td>69.41</td>
<td>51.11</td>
<td>87.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this sub-sample the mean of the scores in the listening section is the maximum i.e. 87.88 and the mean of the scores in the grammar section is the least i.e. 51.11;
a unique feature is the mean of the score in the Writing section is more than that of the Reading section which shows that the students have performed very well in the writing section wherein usually students lose marks in expression of ideas.

IV.2.2.2 ANALYSIS OF THE SCORES OF THE STUDENTS WHO PASSED CLASS X THROUGH THE STATE BOARD

The total of the scores and the total of the section wise scores – Reading, Writing, Grammar and Listening- obtained by the sub samples of those students who passed class X through the State board and Matriculation curriculum were calculated and tabulated. Using the data the mean of the total scores, means of the section wise scores and the corresponding standard deviations were calculated. The details are given in the table given:

Table IV.3. Mean and standard deviation of the scores of the students who passed class X through the State Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Reading Section</th>
<th>Writing Section</th>
<th>Grammar Section</th>
<th>Listening Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>56.91</td>
<td>59.64</td>
<td>46.62</td>
<td>36.99</td>
<td>79.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Deviation</strong></td>
<td>12.91</td>
<td>12.93</td>
<td>22.52</td>
<td>20.78</td>
<td>18.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean of the scores in the listening section is the maximum while the mean of the scores in the grammar section is the least. Unlike the CBSE students,
the state board students' performance in the writing section is low and their performance shows inadequacy in content, inaccuracy in spellings, syntax (especially in tense forms) which is also reflected by the low mean of the scores in the grammar section. Regarding the reading section the difference between the means of the two sub-samples—CBSE and the State Board is comparatively less.

IV.2.2.3. ANALYSIS OF THE SCORES OF THE STUDENTS FROM THE NON-AIDED(SELF-FINANCED) SCHOOLS

The total of the scores and the total of the section wise scores—Reading, Writing, Grammar and Listening—obtained by the sub samples of those students who passed class X from the non-aided (self-financed) schools were calculated and tabulated. Using the data the mean of the total scores, means of the section wise scores and the corresponding standard deviations were calculated. The details are given in the table below:

Table IV.4. Mean and standard deviation of the scores of the students from the non-aided schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Reading Section</th>
<th>Writing Section</th>
<th>Grammar Section</th>
<th>Listening Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>68.448</td>
<td>67.87</td>
<td>62.18</td>
<td>47.14</td>
<td>91.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A noteworthy feature concerning this sub-sample is all the means – of the total scores and means of section scores- are more than the corresponding means of the whole sample showing that the students of the non-aided schools perform fairly better than the entire sample of school students. In this sub-sample students have performed very well in listening, fairly well in reading and writing, with the lowest mean of the scores falling in the grammar section.

IV.2.2.4. ANALYSIS OF THE SCORES OF THE STUDENTS FROM THE GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS

The total of the scores and the total of the section wise scores – Reading, Writing, Grammar and Listening- obtained by the sub samples of those students who passed class X from the government aided schools were calculated and tabulated. Using the data the mean of the total scores, means of the section wise scores and the corresponding standard deviations were calculated. The details are given in the table below:

Table IV.5. Mean and standard deviation of the scores of the students from the aided schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Reading Section</th>
<th>Writing Section</th>
<th>Grammar Section</th>
<th>Listening Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>66.97</td>
<td>49.14</td>
<td>86.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Deviation</strong></td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>22.21</td>
<td>20.60</td>
<td>21.56</td>
<td>15.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This sub-sample students' performance is the best in listening section with a mean of 86.99 which is almost the same as that of the whole sample and the mean of the scores in the grammar section is the least. A noteworthy point concerning the sub-sample is the students have performed better in the writing section than in the reading section.

IV.3. DIFFERENTIAL STUDIES

IV.3.1. COMPARISON BETWEEN THE STUDENTS FROM THE CBSE AND THE STATE BOARD STUDENTS (WHO DID CLASS X THROUGH THE MATRICULATION BOARD)

A. COMPARISON OF THE TOTAL SCORES

Table IV.6. t value for the total scores of the CBSE and the State Board students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBSE</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>68.19</td>
<td>14.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE BOARD</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>56.91</td>
<td>12.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{(S1)^2}{N1} + \frac{(S2)^2}{N2}}} \]

\[ = 7.291 \]
The obtained t value is greater than 2.58. Hence the difference is significant i.e. the total mean scores of the students of the CBSE and those of the matriculation board in the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. The CBSE students have performed better than the state and matriculation board students on the overall.

**E. COMPARISON OF THE SCORES OBTAINED BY THE STUDENTS OF THE CBSE AND THOSE OF THE STATE AND MATRICULATION BOARD IN THE READING SECTION OF THE SKILL BASED TEST**

Table IV.7. t value for the scores in the reading section of the CBSE and the State Board students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBSE</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>60.33</td>
<td>20.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE BOARD</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>59.64</td>
<td>12.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 0.352 \]

The obtained t value is less than 1.96. So the difference is not significant i.e. there is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the reading section of the skill based test.
The students from the CBSE curriculum do not differ in their reading skills from the State and the Matriculation board students.

C. COMPARISON OF THE SCORES IN THE WRITING SECTION

Table IV.8. t value for the scores in the writing section of the CBSE and the State Board students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBSE</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>69.41</td>
<td>19.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE BOARD</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>46.62</td>
<td>22.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 9.526 \]

The obtained t value is greater than 2.58. Hence the difference is significant i.e. the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the writing section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1 % level of significance. The students from the CBSE curriculum have performed better than the state and Matriculation board students in this section.
COMPARISON OF THE SCORES IN THE GRAMMAR SECTION

Table IV.9. t value for the scores in the Grammar section of the CBSE and the State Board students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBSE</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>51.11</td>
<td>19.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE BOARD</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>36.99</td>
<td>20.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 6.114 \]

The obtained t value is greater than 2.58. Hence the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the grammar section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. The students from the CBSE curriculum have performed better than the state and Matriculation board students in this section.

COMPARISON OF THE SCORES IN THE LISTENING SECTION

Table IV.10. t value for the scores in the Listening section of the CBSE and the State Board students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBSE</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>87.88</td>
<td>12.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE BOARD</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>79.64</td>
<td>18.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 4.487 \]
The obtained t value is greater than 2.58. Hence the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the listening section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. The students from the CBSE curriculum have performed better than the state and Matriculation board students in this section.

IV.3.2. COMPARISON BETWEEN THE STUDENTS FROM THE NON-AIDED AND GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS

A. COMPARISON OF THE TOTAL SCORES

Table IV.11. t value for the total scores of the non-aided and the aided school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aided Schools</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aided Schools</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 1.54 \]

The obtained t value is lesser than 1.96. Hence there is no significant difference between the total scores of the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the skill based test.
B. COMPARISON OF THE SCORES IN THE READING SECTION

Table IV.12. t value for the scores in the reading section of the non-aided and the aided school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aided Schools</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>67.87</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aided Schools</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>22.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 4.682 \]

The obtained t value is greater than 2.58. Hence the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the reading section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. The students from the non-aided schools have performed much better than the students from the aided schools in the reading section of the skill based test.

C. COMPARISON OF THE SCORES IN THE WRITING SECTION

Table IV.13. t value for the scores in the writing section of the non-aided and the aided school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aided Schools</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>62.18</td>
<td>24.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aided Schools</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>66.97</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 1.586 \]
The obtained t value is lesser than 1.96. Hence there is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the writing section of the skill based test.

D. COMPARISON OF THE SCORES IN THE GRAMMAR SECTION

Table IV.14. t value for the scores in the Grammar section of the non-aided and the aided school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aided Schools</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>47.14</td>
<td>21.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aided Schools</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>49.14</td>
<td>21.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 0.659 \]

The obtained t value is lesser than 1.96. Hence there is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the grammar section of the skill based test. So the students of the non-aided and aided schools do not differ in their performance in the grammar section.
E. COMPARISON OF THE SCORES IN THE LISTENING SECTION

Table IV.15. t value for scores in the listening section of the non-aided and the aided school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Number of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aided Schools</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aided Schools</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>86.99</td>
<td>15.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ t = 1.92 \]

The obtained t value is lesser than 1.96. Hence there is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non–aided schools and the aided schools in the listening section of the skill based test.

Both the sub-samples have performed well in the listening section and do not differ significantly in their performance.

IV.4. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED THROUGH INTERVIEWS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

The investigator interviewed all the 311 students- 163 from the CBSE schools and 148 students from the State Board schools- who took the skill based test informally and gathered the following details through the interaction during discussion:
Almost all the students felt that the test was new and interesting and so they were motivated to take it up in earnestness.

About 40 students — both from the CBSE and the State board sub-samples expressed their disappointment over the low scores they had got in class X public examination.

165 students were thankful and happy over the information they could get from the investigator regarding the entrance examinations for the undergraduate and graduate studies abroad, as they plan to take up undergraduation studies in the United States of America.

All the 311 students informed that they enjoyed the listening section the most of all and the grammar section, the least.

173 students expressed their difficulty concerning the multiple choice questions in A1 because of their inability to distinguish between the right answer and the close distracter. For example in A.I.1. the students could not identify the right answer — as they got confused by the close distracter. Another example: In A.I.6. the students have got confused between the right answer — c) he praises them for what they did though it was not sensible — and the close distracter — a) he criticises them for what they did as it was not sensible.

143 students preferred the inclusion of listening and speaking skills in the Class XI and XII year final examinations but 40 students were apprehensive about the inclusion of listening and speaking skills as they felt they would not be able to score well unless they had intensive practice in these skills; about 20 students were worried that if could not hear the passages properly they may lose marks for no fault of theirs.
The 37 English teachers from the schools where the investigation was done and those whom the investigator met during workshops and seminars expressed the views that are given below:

- Inclusion of poetry comprehension is appreciable as it may involve literary appreciation also.
- The choice of "The Ascent of Annapurna" was appreciated as it motivates students to read the passage and sustains their interest.
- Giving visual/verbal clues for longer writing compositions was liked by the teachers from the State board schools as they felt that the students would have some content to fall back on and use as a spring board for developing their longer composition exercises.
- The teachers who felt that it can be used in assessing longer written compositions of the students objectively appreciated writing assessment scale given in Chapter III. It was also felt that, if the split up of the scores obtained by the students in the test was shown for content, fluency and accuracy, besides rendering the evaluation objective, there is also a better scope for students to score more. For example, when a student is awarded marks out of 10 straight away, there is more chance for subjectivity; on the other hand, if the same answer is assessed in terms of the scores obtained for the content/4, accuracy/3 and fluency/3, the students have better chances of scoring more.
- Inclusion of conversation skills as part of the year final examination was treated with apprehension by the teachers as they felt that there might be subjectivity in assessment while following a stipulated scale for assessment.
IV.5. HYPOTHESES TESTING

H1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the students of the CBSE and those of the matriculation board in the skill based test.

The obtained t value is 7.29. Hence the difference is significant i.e. the total mean scores of the students of the CBSE and those of the matriculation board in the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

H2. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the reading section of the skill based test.

The obtained t value is 0.352. Hence the difference is insignificant. Hence the hypothesis is proved.

H3. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the writing section of the skill based test.

The obtained t value is 9.526. The difference is significant i.e. the mean scores of the students of the CBSE and those of the matriculation board in the writing section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

H4. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the grammar section of the skill based test.

The obtained t value is 6.115. The difference is significant i.e. the mean scores of the students of the CBSE and those of the matriculation board in the grammar section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.
H5. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the CBSE and the matriculation board in the listening section of the skill based test.
The obtained t value is 4.487. The difference is significant i.e. the mean scores of the students of the CBSE and those of the matriculation board in the listening section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

H6. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the skill based test.
The obtained t value is 1.54. The difference is insignificant, hence the hypothesis is proved.

H7. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the reading section of the skill based test.
The obtained t value is 4.682. The difference is significant i.e. the mean scores of the students of the CBSE and those of the matriculation board in the reading section of the skill based test differ significantly at 1% level of significance. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

H8. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the writing section of the skill based test.
The obtained t value is 1.586. The difference is insignificant. Hence the hypothesis is proved.
H9. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the grammar section of the skill based test. The obtained t value is 0.659. The difference is insignificant. Hence the hypothesis is proved.

H10. There is no significant difference between the means of the scores obtained by the student sample of the non-aided schools and the aided schools in the listening section of the skill based test. The obtained t value is 1.919. The difference is insignificant. Hence the hypothesis is proved.

IV.6. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STUDENTS IN THE SKILL BASED TEST

Performance in the Listening section

Out of the 311 students who took the skill based test, everyone of them has scored more than 50 % i.e. 6/12 in the listening section which carried 2 exercises - D1, for which the listening input was a telephone conversation after listening to which the students completed a message and D2, in which the listening input was the description of a monument by a guide after listening to which the students completed the a paragraph carrying the information about the monument by supplying a word or a phrase. The performance in Section D- testing listening skills- has been the best of the 4 sections attempted by the students both from the CBSE and the State Board schools. Further analysis the performance of the listening section reveals that the students’ performance in D1 is better than that in D2. In D1, 153 students have scored 4/4 and the others 3 – 3.5. The 2 answers in which the students have lost marks are:
- In supplying the name of the writer of the message in the signatory and
- In supplying the phrase – ‘pick you up’ as part of the message.

When the students were interviewed on this, they said that they were a little confused because the exercise involved 3 names. They also expressed that it was easy for them to get at very specific details such as time and the name of the competition.

In D2, 57 CBSE students and 48 State Board students have scored 8/8. Other students have lost 0.5 – 1.5 marks as they have gone wrong in any one of or all the three of the following answers:
- D2.h) – the states that were there at the time of Lincoln’s death.
- D2.m) – Inaugural speech
- D2.n) – Gettisburg speech

When asked for their opinion, the students said it was easy for them to listen to and write most specific information such as time, amount, number of states and years. They expressed their difficulty in writing the correct spelling for the words like Gettisburg, Colorado marbles etc. Due consideration was shown during correction of the answer scripts by awarding full score to the answers that revealed listening comprehension, ignoring errors in spellings. The performance of the students shows that they must be given intensive practice in listening to longer passages- stretching through 3 to 4 minutes – and culling out information and trained in supplying them in appropriate formats.
Performance in the reading section of the skill based test

The performance of the students in the reading section is the second best. The performance in A1 is not as good as in A2. Only 4 students have been able to score 4/4 in A.I.1. carrying multiple choice questions testing the reading comprehension skills of the students in the passage 'The Ascent of Annapurna'. Most of the students have lost marks in A.I.1., A.I.2., A.I.3 and A.I.6. In connection with this, when a discussion was carried out with the students, it was found that they were not able to discriminate between the close distracter and the right answer in these questions. The details are:

A.I.1. The writer says that

b) twenty two previous expeditions had failed to climb Annapurna.- Right answer.
c) nobody had climbed over 26000 feet before Herzog - distracter

A.I.2. The expedition

d) started quite well but became dangerous and insecure later. – Right answer
a) started quite successfully, but ended fatally – distracter

A.I.3. Lachenal and Herzog

a) reached the summit but had to return immediately because the weather worsened. – Right answer
b) could not reach the summit due to the sickness caused by high altitude – distracter

A.I.6. The writer’s opinion of the men’s refusal to leave Herzog and proceed with their journey is

c) he praises them for what they did though it was not sensible - Right answer
a) he criticises them for what they did as it was not sensible. – distracter
The students expressed their inability to locate the right answer as they do not have multiple choice questions in the reading comprehension exercises in their schools. This is an important matter to be looked into because, in the entrance examinations for higher studies like the GRE and the TOEFL, testing reading skills is done through only the exercises involving multiple choice questions. Hence it becomes essential to provide adequate exposure to our students in this line by training them in this area. When the teachers were spoken to about introducing multiple choice test items in testing reading skills, they express their fear over the chances for mal practice that multiple choice questions lend to and hence their hesitation. It is suggested that at least the reading comprehension skill teaching exercises can give students adequate exposure to answering multiple choice questions.

The performance of the students in A.II., testing their poetry comprehension, using fill in the blank type questions, has been better than in A.I. the students felt that they were able to do well in A.II.1 – A.II.4 as they could understand the poem well. About 40 students have gone wrong in A.II.4 testing their inferential comprehension. The students can be given training in poetry comprehension starting form simple poems and testing local and global comprehension (comprehension of specific details and the overall understanding) initially moving slowly to more difficult poems and testing students' inferential and evaluative comprehension skills through well graded exercises.

The word attack skills tested by asking the students to supply synonyms from the passage, carrying 5 marks in total, were covered in A.I.2 and A.II.5. The students felt that they were facile with finding synonyms of ‘wandered’ and ‘move at an angle’ from the poem but found A.I.2, which carried sentences in which they had to supply a suitable word from the given passage, a little difficult. It is suggested that students be trained in different types of exercises concerning word
attack skills. For example, picking out synonyms/antonyms/phrases from the passage which mean the same as those given in the question and also in giving the synonym/antonym or meaning of the given words or phrases in the passage. In connection with this different language games on vocabulary can be made a good use of.

**Performance in the Writing section**

When interviewed, the students expressed their liking towards the visual clues—the bar graph on exhaust emissions and the table on the annual increase in the number of vehicles in the metropolitan cities—and preferred such questions to long answer questions which merely demanded of them to write on pollution without giving them any content to base their ideas upon. The students found B.I—completing a paragraph based on the given notes—easy and interesting. Their performance in the test also reveals the same. About 210 students have got 4 to 5 marks (/5) in this question. The performance reveals that most of the students have gone wrong in supplying the right participle phrase in the blank ‘thus -------------------------- which prevents the lizard from sinking.’ Again, due to inconsistency in tense, the students have lost mark in ‘if men were to run on water they ----------------------------.’ The students, when asked to look for the mistake in their answer, were not able to locate the lack of sequence in tenses in their answer. As we all know, errors in tenses is a common weakness in the knowledge of grammar in our students which requires special attention and remedial work. They also require training in using non-finite verbs in phrases.

Though the students appreciated the question B.II., they have not scored well in this question and have not performed well in the following areas:

- not provided causes for pollution and the suggestions to minimize it.
- Not followed the right format for writing a letter to the editor.
- Incomplete answers
• Could not make use of the given clues
• Restricted the content only to the given clues
• In the area of accuracy, the errors spring from:
  • Wrong spellings for words like emission, address, pollution
  • Incorrect format for the letter
  • Incorrect syntax of sentences
  • Inconsistency in the use of tenses
• In the area of fluency, the students have lost marks owing to:
  • The inability to exercise the right choice of words
  • Not using a formal style in the letter to the editor
  • Wrong punctuation

To enable students to write correctly, clearly and cogently, to begin with longer composition exercises can be given as guided composition. For example, developing a given outline into a meaningful paragraph. Rigorous training in format for informal, formal and business letters should be given after indicating the differences among them. For each type, a few exercises atleast should be done, with each exercise involving oral composition work followed by written work. As some of the students are very weak in spellings, they must be trained in spellings separately through dictation and drilling.

Performance in the Grammar section

The students liked C.I., which involved integrated grammar practice more than C.II, which focussed on supplying verbs in the right format.

The students enjoyed the new format in C.I which involves correcting errors in a paragraph and they considered the exercise a challenge to them. In this
exercise, about 90% of the students have gone wrong in supplying the right particle in ‘padding ------’ . When asked what the difficulty in correcting ‘padding in’ as ‘padding up’ was, the students stated that they did not know the meaning. The students can be exposed to using different phrasal verbs through a series of exercises which will strengthen their communication skills too. This exercise also confirms the students’ inadequacy in using verbs in right tense forms, where they failed to correct the verbs in present tense by replacing them with the appropriate verbs in the past tense.

In C.II, though the students said that they had done well, during evaluation it was found that hardly 20 of the students have got 3/3 by supplying verbs in passive forms and in the right tense. This inadequacy in grammar is reflected in the students’ written composition work also making them lose many marks. Special training through numerous exercises should be given in order to remedy the weakness.

IV.7. INTERPRETATION OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STUDENTS IN THE SKILL BASED TEST

The performance of the whole student sample in the skill based test on the overall, has been good with a mean of 64.66 and the standard deviation is 15.09. But the performance of the CBSE student sample is significantly better than the State Board student sample especially with reference to Writing, Grammar and Listening sections. In the reading section there is marginal difference in the scores obtained by the two student samples. In this section, the performance in poetry comprehension has been better than in the prose comprehension in the whole group. Most of the students had gone wrong in the multiple choice questions, not being able to discriminate between the right answer and the close distracter. In the
testing of vocabulary most of the students have done A. II.5. better than A.I.2. in which many were not able to identify the words- fatally and descent correctly.

In the Writing section, though the CBSE students have performed significantly better than the State board students the performance in B1, the controlled exercise, is far better than in the B2, the longer composition based on visual inputs in the whole student sample. But there is marked difference between the CBSE student sample and the State Board sample in B2, the letter writing exercise( the longer composition). As the answers have been assessed for the content, accuracy and fluency in the language, with the split up of marks as 4,3 and 3 respectively, the study of the areas of weakness was facilitated. Though the ideas given in the visuals have been made use of in the content of the answer, with regard to ‘how pollution affects us’ and ‘how pollution can be arrested’ had not been touched upon in a sizable number of answers, say 20 % of the sample. But many students lack fluency in written English revealing inadequate vocabulary and inconsistency in expressing ideas which render their writing vague. Many answers do not carry the right format for a letter to the editor and an appropriate style. 52 students from the State Board sample and 14 from the CBSE have scored below 40 % in this composition. Their answers reveal many errors in spelling and inconsistency in the use of tenses.

In the Grammar section, C1 , the integrated grammar exercise, has been performed better than C2, the exercise on verb forms and tenses by the whole group. In this section also the performance of the CBSE student sample is better then the State Board student sample. Even in C1, most of the students have gone wrong in the correct use of the particle “up” instead of “in (padding up). As some students were not able to trace the past tense running through the passage, they have gone wrong in all the verbs in right tense forms. C2 reveals the need for intensive coaching in verbs in passive forms as about 80 % of the whole sample had failed to attempt correctly.
In the listening section, the performance of the whole group is better in D1, the telephone conversation, than in D2, the description of a monument. Though in this section also the CBSE student sample has performed better than the State board sample, the difference is not that significant as in the Writing and Grammar sections. A factor worth mentioning is that the State board students do not have an exposure to listening skills till class XI, hence their performance is commendable. Another noteworthy feature is that both the listening output texts are different from the input texts, yet the students have performed commendably.

It is unique that in the reading section, the students from self-financed schools have distinctly performed better than those from the aided schools while in Writing and Listening sections too they do differ. There is no significant difference in the performance in the Grammar section between the two groups.

IV.8. RECOMMENDATIONS

IV.8.1. TESTING READING COMPREHENSION

- Though the students do not differ significantly in their reading skills, as many of them have lost in the multiple choice questions, many reading comprehension exercises with multiple choice questions should be employed in order to train our students in this line especially when the competitive exams carry only multiple choice questions in testing the reading skills.

- As the reading habit is almost becoming extinct, students must be encouraged in extensive reading which will also facilitate speed and comprehension incidentally.
Many reading comprehension exercises involving the testing of reading skills and sub skills at different levels—local comprehension to synthesis of information should be included in composition work in English.

After analysing the errors of the students in the Reading section and considering the important role reading skills play in communication, the following analysis of sub-skills in reading and suggestions for improvement with sample test type items are given:

Until recently the many and diverse reading skills and strategies for use in everyday situations have been largely subordinate to a narrower range of skills required for dealing with simplified readers, especially at the elementary levels. Furthermore, on a few language courses, efficient reading skills have been pushed into the background in an attempt to develop oral fluency skills. Attempts at dealing with the many complex reading skills frequently come too late, at the tertiary level (i.e. at university, technical college), when students suddenly find themselves confronted with professional and technical literature in the foreign language.

In spite of the wide range of reading material specially written or adapted for English language learning purposes, there are a few comprehensive systematic programmes which have been constructed from a detailed analysis of the skills required for efficient reading. Much test material is still limited to short reading extracts on which general ‘comprehension’ questions are based. As with listening comprehension, reading comprehension test material is very closely related to the type of practice material used by the teacher to develop the reading skills. Few language teachers would argue against the importance of reading: what is still urgently required in many classroom tests is a greater awareness of the actual processes involved in reading and the production of appropriate exercise and test materials to assist in the mastery of these processes.
At this stage, it would be hopeful to attempt to identify some of the specific skills involved in reading as given below:

- Recognise words and word groups, associating sounds with their corresponding graphic symbols;

- Deduce the meaning of words by
  - Understanding word formation (roots, affixation, derivation and compounding);
  - Contextual clues (e.g. *One of the members of the group and exposed the plot, and the police were soon able to arrest the leaders.*);
- Understanding explicitly stated information (e.g. *I wish Ann had come = Ann did not come – hence my wish.*);
- Understand relations within the sentence, especially
  - Elements of sentence structure
  - Negation
  - Fronting and theme
  - Complex embedding;
- Understand relations between parts of a text through both lexical devices (e.g. repetition, synonyms, antithesis) and grammatical cohesive devices, especially anaphoric and categoric reference (e.g. he, they, it; the former, the latter) and connectives (e.g. since, after, because, although, however, in addition);
- Perceive temporal and spatial relationships, and also sequences of ideas;
- Understand conceptual meaning, especially
  - Quantity and amount
  - Definiteness and indefiniteness
  - Comparison and degree
  - Means and instrument
  - Cause, result, purpose, reason, condition, addition, contrast, concession;
- Anticipate and predict what will come next in the text;
• Identify the main idea and other salient features in a text;
• Generalise and draw conclusions;
• Understand information not explicitly stated by
  • Making inferences (i.e. reading between the lines)
  • Understanding figurative language;
• Skim and scan (looking for the general meaning and reading for specific information);
• Read critically;
• Adopt a flexible approach and vary reading strategies according to the type of material being read and the purpose for which it is being read.

Two different kinds of complementary reading activities to which students are usually exposed are generally classified as intensive and extensive reading. Short reading extracts of a moderate degree of difficulty and containing features which merit detailed study form a basis for intensive reading practice. Whole articles, chapters and books (usually simplified readers) are used for extensive reading practice; in this case, however, the material selected is generally slightly below the language attainment level of the students using it. Unfortunately, most reading tests concentrate on intensive reading to the exclusion of extensive reading, probably because it is more economical to have a large number of items based on a short reading extract than a few items based on a much longer one. However, these are insufficient grounds for neglecting to test extensive reading at certain levels.

In most tests, especially tests of general proficiency, it is useful to include a variety of text types for reading comprehension in addition to the usual, more literary prose extracts: e.g. newspaper articles, instructions for using appliances and machinery, directory extracts, public notices, timetables and maps, advertisements, etc. the inclusion of such text types will not only provide a more realistic and reliable means of assessment but will also help to motivate students.
by demonstrating how the target language is used in real life situations. Consequently, it becomes important that the actual presentation of the material should be as authentic as possible. In short, a newspaper article should appear in the actual form of a newspaper article, thereby giving a genuine feel to the material.

The reading sub-skills can be tested through different test type exercises:

A. COMPLETION ITEMS

Completion items measure recall rather than recognition. Although such items are similar in many ways to open-ended questions in tests of reading comprehension, they are often regarded as belonging more to the objective category of test items.

1. Read the following advertisement and complete each sentence. Write one word or more in each space.

2. Read the passage and complete the table.

3. Complete the summary by supplying information from the passage.

4. Testees can be provided with the dictionary definitions of a number of words. (This material is simply extracted from a good dictionary, together with information concerning pronunciation, verb patterns, parts of speech etc. and examples of use where appropriate.) Complete the following sentences using the words from the list.

5. In the following type of item the reading comprehension text is related to information contained in a diagram or table.

   Look at the following diagram. It shows the places to which trains travel from Chennai. It also shows the times taken to travel to these places.

B. REARRANGEMENT ITEMS
This item is particularly useful for testing the ability to understand a sequence of steps in a process or events in a narrative. While in an exercise for a classroom practice the students will often be required to rewrite the jumbled sentences in their correct sequence, it is obviously preferable for testing purposes to instruct them to write simply the numbers or letters of the jumbled sentences.

1. Rearrange the letters of the sentences in their correct order in the boxes below
2. Write the letters of the sentences in their correct order in the boxes at the end of the item.

B. CLOZE PROCEDURE

This can be applied to the testing of reading comprehension at both the elementary and the more advanced levels.

C. OPEN – ENDED AND MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The term 'open-ended' is used to refer to those questions which elicit a completely subjective response on the part of the testees. The response required may range from a one-word answer to one or two sentences:

(One-word answer)

1. Give the name of the town where the writer had a bad accident.

(Answer in a few words)

2. You have a friend who is keen on cross-country running. Which event can he enter at the end of the month?

(Sentence answer)

3. According to the article, why do you think so few foreign cars have been imported into Singapore recently?
When marking open-ended items which require answers in sentences, it is frequently advisable to award at least two or three marks for each correct answer.

D. CLASSIFICATION
1. Read the following passage and complete the tree diagram below with the words given underneath.
2. After reading the text, can you complete the following tree diagram where some of the boxes have been left empty?
3. Read the text which describes eighteenth-century houses in London. Then complete the diagram below showing the different types of housing.
4. In the following passage, Bertrand Russell explains one of the examples Plato gives of the method of division. After reading the passage, can you draw a tree diagram to represent the various categories mentioned in the text and find an example of what could appear at the end of each branch of the tree.

E. ARGUMENTATIVE AND LOGICAL ORGANISATION
In many argumentative passages, the various arguments presented can be found throughout the text, so that all the reasons given in favour of the point being discussed as well as those against it are not necessarily found together. An exercise of this type can be useful to help the students think about the meaning and value of the ideas expressed in the text.

1. In the following text, several arguments are presented for or against canned food. Decide whether the arguments contained in the underlined sentences are for or against food canning and write against each sentence 'for/against' as you understand from the passage.

2. You are thinking of having your windows double glazed. You want to consider all the aspects of the problem before making up your mind. Read the following
article and draw up a list of all the points you can find for and against double glazing.

3. Can you reorder the following sentences so as to form a coherent paragraph?

4. Now look at the text again and underline all the words and expressions that helped you to find the articulation of the passage.

5. Read the following text and complete the diagram.

F. THEMATIZATION

To train the students to recognise how the arrangement of the information in the passage can determine the order of the words in the sentences and understand relations between parts of a text.

1. Read this short passage and fill in the following table to show how the information is distributed within the text.

2. Decide which sentence is acceptable in the given context.

G. NON-LINGUISTIC RESPONSE TO THE TEXT

This exercise is important in showing the students that understanding a text often implies visualizing the information contained in it.

IV.8.2. TESTING VOCABULARY/WORD ATTACK SKILLS

A few ways in which vocabulary/word attack skills can be tested are:
A. The following dictionary definitions are for words used in the passage *Settlements*. Write the words from the passage next to the appropriate definition.

e.g. having or involving more than one part as an individual

B. Read the following paragraph and try to guess the meaning of the word 'zip'

C. In the following text, several words have been taken out. But they are all derived from the same root (e.g. kind- kindly- kindness- unkind, etc.). Read the text carefully and try to supply the missing words.

D. Read the following text and complete the blanks with the words which seem most appropriate to you.

E. Two words with the suffix- 'ible' appear in the text. What are they? What effect does the suffix have on the meaning of the word? Can you think of other words formed in the same way?

F. Underline the suffixes in the given words. Can you guess the meaning of the suffixes? Can you think of other words formed with the same suffixes?

G. Find two words with a prefix in the text. Define the value of each prefix. One of them is used to make a word negative. What prefix would you add to each of these adjectives/nouns in order to make them negative?

H. At the beginning of the text, you can find the word 'hypnotist'. Can you find another word formed in the same way? At the end of the text you can also find the corresponding adjective, 'hynotic'. Can you complete the following table with the appropriate words, bearing in mind that these words do not all appear
in the text, that the word-formation may not be the same for all of them and that some boxes may remain empty.

I. For each of the following statements choose the word or phrase that best completes the statement according to the information contained in the passage. Write the number of the question and the answer you have chosen in your answer book.

J. (synonyms)
Choose the alternative (A,B,C,D) which is closest in meaning to the word on the left of the page.

_Gleam_  A. gather  B. shine  C. welcome  D. clean

K. (definitions)
_loathe_ means  A. dislike intensely

B. become seriously ill
C. search carefully
D. look very angry

Note that all of the options are of the same length. It is said that test-takers who are uncertain of which option is correct will tend to choose the one which is noticeably different from the others. If _dislike intensely_ is to be used as the definition, then the distracters should be made to resemble it. In this case the item writer has included some notion of intensity in all of the options.

Again the difficult word could be one of the options.

One word that means to _dislike intensely_ is A. growl
B. screech
C. sneer
D. loathe
L. (Gap filling - multiple choice)

Context, rather than a definition or a synonym, can be used to test knowledge of a lexical item.

The strong wind .......... the man’s efforts to put up the tent.
A. disabled       B. deranged       C. hampered       D. regaled

Note that the context should not itself contain words which the candidates are unlikely to know.

M. (pictures)

The main difficulty in testing productive lexical ability is the need to limit the candidate to the (usually one) lexical item that we have in mind, while using only simple vocabulary ourselves. One way round this is to use pictures.

Each of the objects drawn below has a letter against it. Write down the names of the objects:
A. ...................................
B. ...................................
C. ...................................

This method of testing vocabulary is obviously restricted to concrete nouns which can be unambiguously drawn.

N. (definitions)

This may work for a range of lexical items:
A ......................... is a person who looks after our teeth.
............................. is frozen water.
............................. is the second month of the year.

But not all items can be identified uniquely from a definition.

IV.8.3. TESTING WRITING SKILLS
On the overall, most of the students have scored low marks in the longer composition of a letter to the editor carrying 10 marks, mostly losing marks in errors in expression, style and format.

Instead of writing short compositions using verbs in correct tense forms in the form of guided and controlled exercises should necessarily form a prelude to long compositions like Articles, Reports, Letters etc.

The writing skills are complex and sometimes difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements. The following analysis attempts to group the many and varied skills necessary for writing good prose into 5 general components or main areas.

- Language use: the ability to write correct and appropriate sentences;
- Mechanical skills: the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language- e.g. punctuation, spelling;
- Treatment of content: the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information;
- Stylistic skills: the ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs and use language effectively;
- Judgement skills: the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organise and order relevant information.

One large public examining body, Associated Examining Board, explicitly states the kinds of writing tasks its examinations test and the standards of writing expected in the performance of those tasks:

A successful candidate will have passed an examination designed to test ability to produce a selection of the following types of writing:

**Basic level:** letter; postcard; diary entry; forms
Intermediate level: as basic level, plus Guide; set of instructions
Advanced level: As intermediate level, plus newspaper report; notes

The candidate’s performance will have met the following minimum criteria:

Basic level: no confusing errors of grammar or vocabulary; a piece of writing legible and readily intelligible; able to produce simple unsophisticated sentences.

Intermediate level: accurate grammar, vocabulary and spelling, though possibly with some mistakes which do not destroy communication; handwriting generally legible; expression clear and appropriate, using a fair range of language; able to link themes and points coherently.

Advanced level: extremely high standards of grammar, vocabulary and spelling; easily legible handwriting; no obvious limitations on range of language candidate is able to use accurately and appropriately; ability to produce organised, coherent writing, displaying considerable sophistication.

First students should be trained in controlled and guided composition exercises. Once students are ready to write free compositions on carefully chosen realistic topics, then composition writing can be a useful testing tool. It provides the students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to organise language material, using their own words and ideas, and to communicate. In this way, composition tests provide a degree of motivation which many objective-type tests fail to provide.

In the composition test the students should be presented with a clearly defined problem which motivates them to write. The writing task should be such that it ensures they have something to say and a purpose for saying it. They should also have an audience in mind when they write. How often in real life situations do people begin to write when they have nothing to write, no purpose in writing and...
no audience in mind? Thus, whenever possible, meaningful situations should be
given in composition tests. Verbal and visual inputs play the main role of a spring
board. For example:

a) Your pen-friend is going to visit your country for a few weeks with her two
brothers. Your house is big enough for her to stay with you but there is not
enough room for her two brothers. There are two hotels near your house but
they are very expensive. The third hotel is cheaper, but it is at least five miles
away. Write a letter to your pen-friend explaining the situation.

b) You have just been on a school excursion to a nearby seaside town. However,
you were not taken to the beach and you had no free time at all to wander
round the town. You are very keen on swimming and you also enjoy going to
the cinema. Your teacher often tells you that you should study more and not
waste your time. On the excursion you visited the law courts, an art gallery and
a big museum. It was all very boring apart from one room in the museum
containing old-fashioned armour and scenes of battles. You found this room
far more interesting than you thought it would be but you didn’t talk to your
friends or teacher about it. In fact, you were so interested in it that you left a
small camera there. Your teacher told you off because you have a freputation
for forgetting things. Only your cousin seems to understand you. Write a letter
to him, telling him about the excursion.

c) Imagine that this is your diary showing some of your activities on certain days.
First, fill in your activities for those days which have been left blank. Then,
using the information in the diary, write a letter to a friend telling him or her
how you are spending your time. Write about 100 words. The address is not
necessary.
d) While you are away from home, some American friends are coming to stay in your house. You are leaving before they are due to arrive, so you decide to leave them some notes to help them with all the things they will need to know while staying in the house. Your friends have never been to your country before so there is quite a lot of advice you need to pass on. Write your message on the notelet pad sheet below.

(a blank notelet follows)

e) Read the following carefully and write a reply

f) Read the conversation carefully and write an account of Rajani’s holiday, using the conversation above as a guide. Imagine other things which happened to her during the camping holiday.

g) Imagine that a local newspaper has asked you to write an article of approximately 250 words about the information in the following table. Write down the conclusions you draw from the figures about the various ways in which people spent their holidays in 1968 as compared with 1988. Attempt to explain the reasons for these differences.

h) Use the chart together with the information below to give a brief survey of the causes of the accidents on Link road between 1977 and 1987.

i) Use the following notes to write an account of an accident for a newspaper. You should write about 250 words.
j) The picture below shows a junction where accidents often happen. Write a letter to your local newspaper, describing the junction and mentioning some of the dangers and causes of accidents.

**IV.8.4. TESTING SPELLINGS**

**Dictation**

As with vocabulary testing, sampling is of primary importance in the construction of spelling tests. Words used in connection with the students’ free composition work or everyday writing from the most suitable basis for tests of spelling, although items may also be drawn from the students’ vocabulary.

Dictation of long prose passages is still regarded as an essential method of testing spelling. However, dictation measures a complex range of integrated skills and should not be regarded as constituting simply a test of spelling. The dictation of single words, nevertheless, can prove a fairly reliable test of spelling. Several such tests consist of up to fifty words and use similar procedures to the following:

i) Each word is dictated once by the tester;

ii) The word is then repeated in a context; and finally,

iii) The word is repeated on its own.

**Multiple choice items**

Another fairly widespread method of testing spelling is through the use of multiple choice items usually containing five options, four of which are spelt correctly. The students are required to select the word which is incorrectly spelt, e.g.

1. A. thief   B. belief   C. seize   D. ceiling   E. decieve
2. A. happening   B. offering   C. occurring   D. beginning   E. benefitting

- In order to make the students improve in spellings, dictation method can be revived in schools.
IV.8.5. PUNCTUATION.

As the right use of punctuation plays a major role in written English, first the area(s) of weakness should be found. Based on the area of weakness and the extent of weakness, students should be given remedial exercises. After all, there is great difference between:

KILL HIM NOT, SPARE HIM

And

KILL HIM, NOT SPARE HIM
IV.8.6. GRAMMAR

A. Complete the passage below by writing one suitable word in each space.

The first one has been done as an example.

Sometimes the weathermen fail ______ to ______ make accurate predictions. People crack jokes at _______ but the meteorologists ________, are helpless. There is nothing _______ unpredictable as the weather. Swallows _______ fly high in the sky. But _______ a storm, they come down and fly close _______ the ground. Watch these birds. _______ they fly low you _______ can be sure of strong winds and perhaps rain _______ comes with the wind.

B. In the following one word has been omitted in each line. Mark the place where you think a word has been omitted in the space provided. The first correction has been done for you as an example.

I distinctly recall the time we/ this toured _______ country in 1986. It was during first _______ half of English summer, but the _______ Indian cricketers the climate seemed like _______ Winter than summer and I no exception. _______ I used to wear woollen track pant under my _______ cricketing flannels, and a woollen vest my _______ cricket shirt, over I’d put on two and _______ sometimes even three sweaters, to the _______ chill away. You say that _______
chill away. You say that it some padding up!

C. Look at the notes below. Then use the information to complete the report by writing a suitable word or phrase in each space. Do not add any new information. The first one has been done as an example

Identical twins – the bachelor brothers – hips replaced – on the same side earlier – death due to heart attack, while watching national fitness and body building championship – 61 years.

Identical in Every Way

Identical twins Bill and John Bloomfield, who lived together, dressed alike and did everthing for 61 years, ____________________________

__________________________ here today two minutes apart, of identical heart attacks, ambulance officials said. The bachelor brothers, who ______________ on the same side died while they ____________________________ national fitness and body building championship at a local casino before they collapsed with cardiac arrest.

D. Look at the words and phrases below. Rearrange them to form meaningful sentences to complete the passage which follows. Write each sentence in the space provided. The first one has been done as an example.

Major / of/ Anna Sewell’s “Black Beauty” / was / importance / the animal / first / story/ published in 1877 /

a) became/ Anna Sewell / and / an / lived /invalid / life / of / the / same / as / as a child/
b) "Black Beauty" / of / the / end / written / was / towards / life / her / 

c) to introduce / was / an / horse / of / aim / understanding treatment / her / a 

d) "Black Beauty" / first person account / story / by / the / the / the / in / is / form / of / a / horse / 

  e.g. The first major animal story of importance was Anna Sewell's "Black Beauty" published in 1877.

This is a spelling game. Letters in the following words are jumbled. Rearrange the letters, and find out the words. Some clues are given in brackets.

e.g. GORENA (a fruit) ORANGE

This is also a another language game. Find out the anagram of the following words. You are to write another word using the letters of the given word.

e.g. DOG ---------------- GOD

Grammar should be taught functionally using authentic situations and integrating grammar items meaningfully instead of the mere teaching of rules and giving exercises involving isolated sentences. Different types of exercises like editing, omission type, fill in the blanks, sentence reordering, reordering words and phrases within a sentence meaningfully, change of narration and completion of process writing can be taken up.

E. In the following conversation, the sentences numbered(1) to (6) have been left incomplete. Complete them suitably. Read the whole conversation before you begin to answer the question.

- Students require intensive training in 'Sequence of Tenses' and passive forms of verbs.
As all the competitive exams involving the use of English as a foreign language lay emphasis on listening skills, students should be trained in listening skills for which, if possible, each school can aspire to have a Language Laboratory for training the students right from Class I in the right pronunciation and the acquisition of listening skills for specific purposes.

Continuous assessment should necessarily form a part of evaluation of the language skills acquired by the students as language learning is an ongoing process. Maybe continuous assessment can constitute 40 to 60% of the total score at the end of the year for a student, covering assignments and conversation skills as its integral part. A pass in the continuous assessment should be made obligatory on the part of a student to pass in English at the end of a year.

**IV.8.7. TESTING LISTENING SKILLS**

It may seem rather odd to test listening from speaking, since the two skills are typically exercised together in oral interaction. However, there are occasions, such as listening to the radio, listening to lectures, or listening to railway station announcements, when no speaking is called for. Because it is a receptive skill, the testing of listening parallels in most ways the testing of reading.

As with reading, there is more than one level of analysis: Macro skills would be directly related to candidates' needs or to course objectives, and might include:

- Listening for specific information
- Obtaining gist of what is being said
• Following directions
• Following instructions

Microskills may include:
• Interpretation of intonation patterns (recognition of sarcasm etc.)
• Recognition of function of structures (such as interrogative as request, for example: Could you pass the salt?)

At the lowest level are abilities like being able to distinguish between phonemes (for example between /w/ and /v/).

Types of text might be first specified as monologue, dialogue, or multiparticipant, and further specified: announcement, talk or lecture, instructions, directions etc. Texts may be intended for the general public, students (either specialists or generalists), young children, and so on. Topics will often be indicated in quite general terms.

Setting criterial levels of performance

If the test is set at an appropriate level, then, as with reading, a near perfect set of responses may be required for a 'pass'.

Setting the tasks
Selecting samples of speech

Passages must be chosen with the test specifications in mind. If we are interested in how candidates can cope with language intended for native speakers, then ideally we should use samples of authentic speech. In fact these can usually be readily found, with a little effort. Possible sources are: radio broadcasts, teaching materials (see the further reading section for examples), and our own recordings of native speakers. If, on the other hand, we want to know whether
candidates can understand language which may be addressed to them as non-native speakers, these too can be obtained from teaching materials and recordings of native speakers which we can make ourselves. In some cases the indifferent quality of the recording may necessitate re-recording. A poor recording introduces difficulties additional to the ones that we want to set, and so reduces the validity of the test. It may also introduce unreliability, since the performance of individuals may be affected by the recording faults in different degrees from occasion to occasion. In some cases (see below), a recording may be used simply as the basis for a ‘live’ presentation.

*Writing items*

In testing extended listening, it is essential to keep items sufficiently far apart in the passage. If two items are close to each other, candidates may miss the second of them through no fault of their own, and the effect of this on subsequent items can be disastrous (candidates listening for ‘answers’ that have already passed). Since a single faulty item can have such an effect, it is particularly important to trial extended listening tests, even if only on colleagues aware of the potential problems.

Candidates should be warned by key words that appear both in the item and in the passage that the information called for is about to be heard. For example, an item may ask about ‘the second point that the speaker makes’ and candidates will hear ‘My second point is.....’. The wording does not have to be identical, but candidates should be given fair warning in the passage.

Other than in exceptional circumstances (such as when the candidates are required to take notes on a lecture without knowing what the items will be, see below), candidates should be given sufficient time at the outset to familiarise themselves with the items.

*Possible techniques*
Example: When stopped by the police, how is the motorist advised to behave?

A. He should say nothing until he has seen his lawyer.
B. He should give only what additional information the law requires.
C. He should say only what the law requires.
D. He should in no circumstances say anything.

**Short answer**

Provided that the items themselves are brief, and only really short responses are called for, short-answer items can work well in listening tests. The completion variety, requiring minimal writing from the candidate, is particularly useful.

**Information transfer**

This technique is as useful in testing listening as it is in testing reading, since it makes minimal demands on productive skills. It can involve such activities as the labelling of diagrams or pictures, completing forms, or showing routes on a map.

An example: In this question you must write your answers. Tom also has to draw a sketch map of the accident. He has drawn the streets, but he can't write in the names. He asks you to fill in the details. Look at the sketch map in your book. Listen to Tom and write on the map what he tells you.

**Note taking**

Where the ability to take notes while listening to, say, a lecture is in question, this activity can be quite realistically replicated in the testing situation. Candidates take notes during the talk, and only after the talk is finished do they see the items to which they have to respond. When constructing such a test, it is
essential to use a passage from which notes can be taken successfully. This will only become clear when the task is first attempted by test writers.

Partial dictation

While partial dictation may not be a particularly authentic listening activity (though in lectures at university, for instance, there is a certain amount of dictation), it can be useful. It may be possible to administer a partial dictation when no other test of listening is practical. It can also be used diagnostically to test students’ ability to cope with particular difficulties (such as weak forms in English).

Recordings or live presentations?

The great advantage of using recordings when administering a listening test is that there is uniformity in what is presented to the candidates. This is fine if the recording is to be listened to in a well-maintained language laboratory or in a room with good acoustic qualities and with suitable equipment (the recording should be equally clear in all parts of the room). If these conditions do not obtain, then a live presentation is to be preferred.

If presentations are to be live, then greatest uniformity (and so reliability) will be achieved if there is just a single speaker for each (part of a) test. If the test is being administered at the same time in a number of rooms, more than one speaker will be called for. In either case, a recording should be made of the presentation, with which speakers can be trained, so that the intended emphases, timing etc. will be observed with consistency. Needless to say, speakers should have a good command of the language of the test and be generally highly reliable, responsible, and trustworthy individuals.
Scoring the listening test

It is probably worth mentioning that in scoring a test of receptive skill there is no reason to deduct points for errors of grammar or spelling, provided that it is clear that the correct response was intended.