

West Bengal State University  
B.A./B.Sc./B.Com ( Honours, Major, General ) Examinations, 2015

PART - III

ENGLISH — HONOURS

Paper - VIII

Duration : 4 Hours ]

[ Full Marks : 100

*Candidates are required to give their answers in their own words as far as practicable.*

*The figures in the margin indicate full marks.*

**Candidates are required to answer Question No. 1 compulsorily  
and choose one option from Option-1 and Option-2.**

1. Answer any *four* of the following : 4 × 5 = 20
- a) Distinguish between the 'Signifier' and the 'Signified'.
  - b) Explain the notion of 'hegemony' after Gramsci.
  - c) Discuss the basic tenets of 'Second-wave feminism' and name its major proponents.
  - d) Is Post-modernism a reaction against Modernism ? Discuss in brief.
  - e) What does Marx mean by 'class struggle' ?
  - f) Write a brief note on 'hybridity' in the context of Post-colonialism.

**OPTION - 1**

**( Indian Writing in English )**

2. Answer any *one* of the following : 1 × 10 = 10
- a) Comment on the element of humour in Narayan's art of storytelling in 'The English Teacher'. Mention at least two incidents from the novel to illustrate your answer.

OR

Justify the title of the novel *The English Teacher*.

- b) Briefly discuss that 'Kanthapura' is India in microcosm.

OR

Give a critical analysis of the character of Moorthy in microcosm.

- c) Location plays a pivotal role in defining identity in *The Inheritance of Loss*. Elucidate with suitable illustrations.

OR

Discuss *The Inheritance of Loss* as a post-colonial text.

- d) To what extent does Moni's cultural background affect her marriage in *Memories of Rain* ?

OR

Comment on the narrative technique of *Memories of Rain*.

3. Answer briefly any *two* of the following from any *one* Group of your choice :

2 × 5 = 10

**Group - 1**

- a) Briefly comment on the role of Krishna's father.  
 b) Write a brief note on the element of superstitions in *The English Teacher*.  
 c) Describe Krishna's view of the English education system at the time of his resignation.

**Group - 2**

- d) 'Nobody knows how large it is when it was founded ... .' What does it refer to ? Give a brief description.  
 e) Comment on the role of women characters in 'Kanthapura'.  
 f) What is the role of Kenchamma in 'Kanthapura' ?

**Group - 3**

- g) Comment on two elements of conflict between past and present in *The Inheritance of Loss*.  
 h) Show how Jemubhai depicts his hatred and disgust for Indian ways and customs.  
 i) Comment on the character of the cook in *The Inheritance of Loss*.

**Group - 4**

- j) Write a short paragraph on Oxford Street as described in the opening lines of *Memories of Rain*.  
 k) Comment on the significance of any one of Tagore's song used in *Memories of Rain*.  
 l) Describe three Calcutta locations used in *Memories of Rain*.

4. Answer any *one* of the following : 1 × 10 = 10
- a) *The Terrorist* deals with the realities and brutalities of the Indian freedom struggle. Discuss.
  - b) Discuss how in *The Accompanist* the climate of sensibility is more compelling than the visible action.
  - c) Justify the title of the story *Glory at Twilight*.
  - d) Write a note on the mother-daughter relationship in *My beloved Charioteer*.
  - e) Comment on the title of the story *The Journey*.
  - f) How does Ruskin Bond intertwine the past and the present in *My Father's Trees in Dehra* ?
5. Answer any *two* of the following : 2 × 5 = 10
- a) How did Bir Singh interpret the derisive smiles of the English ministers sitting at the head of the official benches in Parliament ?
  - b) "Pray for me." — Whose statement was this ? How did it affect Bhaiyya ?
  - c) How is Satyajit's financial crash introduced to the reader in *Glory at Twilight* ?
  - d) Who is the beloved charioteer and why ?
  - e) Mention any two aspects of Naga life in *The Journey*.
  - f) 'No one was any longer interested in the Europeans' — In what context does Ruskin Bond say so ?
6. Answer any *one* of the following : 1 × 10 = 10
- a) Elaborate the philosophical aspect of 'The Tiger and the Deer' by Sri Aurobindo.
  - b) Analyse the symbolism in Kamala Das's poem *The Old Playhouse*.
  - c) Show how Kolatkar heightens his central theme of alienation through imagery and symbolism in his poem, *An Old Woman*.

7. Comment, with reference to the context, on any *two* of the following :  $2 \times 5 = 10$
- Hér life is a revolving dream  
Of languid and sequestered ease;
  - That language is a tree, loses colour  
Under another sky.
  - Not only flesh and bone but myths of light  
With darkness at the core, and sense is found.
  - Tis hushed at last  
And melts the picture from their slight away.
  - No door could shut out from our black  
Pillared house whose walls had ears and eyes.
8. Answer any *one* of the following :  $1 \times 10 = 10$
- Comment on the all pervasive symbols of the bonsai in *Bravely Fought the Queen*.  
OR  
How does Datlani portray a contemporary patriarchal society in *Bravely Fought the Queen*.
  - Comment on the dramatic structure of Mahesh Datlani's play *Tara*.  
OR  
Consider the gender issues and ingrained violence highlighted in Datlani's play *Tara*.
9. Answer any *two* of the following :  $2 \times 5 = 10$
- Comment on Dr. Thakkar's discrimination against Tara.  
OR  
Comment on the character of Kanhaiya.
  - What kinds of family do the audience find in *Bravely Fought the Queen*?  
OR  
Explain the role of Tara's local friend.
  - Comment on the significance of Roopa in *Tara*.  
OR  
Do you think Baa is no more than a shadow of her former self? Give your own opinion.

## OPTION - 2

## ( American Literature )

2. Answer any *one* of the following : 1 × 10 = 10

a) Discuss the role of the Mississippi in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

OR

Discuss *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a realistic portrayal of American racism before and after the Civil War.

b) Critically analyse the narrative structure of *The Great Gatsby*.

OR

Discuss *The Great Gatsby* as a novel representing the American Dream.

c) Justify the appropriateness of the title of Steinbeck's novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*.

OR

Critically evaluate *The Grapes of Wrath* as a faithful chronicle of Depression-era America.

d) Critically comment on Harper Lee's portrayal of racial discrimination in *To Kill a Mocking Bird*.

OR

Evaluate the role of Boo Radley in *To Kill a Mocking Bird*.

e) Critically evaluate Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* as an epistolary novel.

OR

Make an assessment of Celie's character in *The Colour Purple*.

3. Answer any *two* of the following from any *one* Group of your choice :

2 × 5 = 10

**Group - 1**

a) Comment on Huck's relationship with Widow Douglas and her sister Miss Watson.

b) Briefly describe how Huck escapes his father.

c) Comment on the episode of the recapturing of Jim.

**Group - 2**

d) Does Jay Gatsby really deserve to be called 'great' ? Briefly explain your answer.

e) Why did Gatsby believe in the green light ?

f) Describe the incident at Plaza Hotel.

**Group - 3**

- g) Can Noah be called a 'lotos-eater' ?
- h) What is the significance of the last episode where Rose of Sharon nurses a starving man ?
- i) What is the significance of the turtle in *The Grapes of Wrath* ?

**Group - 4**

- j) *To Kill a Mocking Bird* refers to the local belief that it is a sin to kill a mocking bird. How is the belief related to the story ?
- k) Comment briefly on Aunt Alexandra's role.
- l) Examine Miss Mandie's relationship to the finches.

**Group - 5**

- m) Comment critically on two instances of domestic violence in *The Color Purple*.
  - n) Explain the following with reference to the context : "Dear God, dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear peoples."
  - o) Describe the changes that are brought about in Celie by Shug Avery.
4. Answer any *one* of the following : 1 × 10 = 10
- a) What are the images used by Hawthorne in *The Ambitious Guest* ?
  - b) How does Poe create suspense and horror in *The Cask of Amontillado* ?
  - c) Write a note on O. Henry's narrative technique in *The Cactus*.
  - d) Is *The Monkey's Paw* more a moral tale than a supernatural story ? Justify your answer.
  - e) Do you accept the view that Mamzelle Aurélie "lacks ... the maternal relationship" ? Justify your answer.
  - f) Discuss Willa Cather's story, *On the Gull's Road* as a document of the poignancy of first love.
5. Answer any *two* of the following : 2 × 5 = 10
- a) "The secret of the young man's character was, a high and abstracted ambition." Explain with reference to the context.
  - b) "For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. In pace requiescat !" — Explain the last line of the short story *The Cask of Amontillado*.

- c) "... he had absorbed the oblation as a desert drinks the rain that can coax from it no promise of blossom or fruit." Who is 'he' ? What does quoted line tell you about his character ?
- d) Comment on the significance of the game of chess in *The Monkey's Paw*.
- e) "But at the end of two weeks Mamzelle Aurélie had grown quite used to these things, and she no longer complained." What are "these things" ? Why did she no longer complain ?
- f) What is the significance of the things found by the painter in the box in *On the Gull's Road* ?
6. Answer any *one* of the following : 1 × 10 = 10
- a) Analyse the structure of the poem, *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry* and show how repetition of words and phrases reinforces the poem's thematic content.
- b) Analyse Sylvia Plath's *Daddy* as an autobiographical poem with rich symbols.
- c) Critically analyse Ginsberg's poem, *A Supermarket in California*.
7. Explain and annotate with reference to the context any *two* of the following : 2 × 5 = 10
- a) We paused before a house that seemed  
A swelling on the ground  
The roof was scarcely visible,  
The cornice but a mound.
- b) And lonely as it is that loneliness  
Will be more lonely ere it will be less  
A blanker whiteness of benighted snow  
With no expression, nothing to express.
- c) I've known the rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of  
human blood in human veins.
- d) Your slightest look easily will unclothe me  
though I have closed myself as fingers,  
You open always petal by petal.
- e) Daddy, daddy, you bastard, I'm through.

8. Answer any *one* of the following : 1 × 10 = 10

- a) Who should, according to you, be called the protagonist of *The Glass Menagerie* — Laura, Tom or Amanda ? Give proper justification for your choice.

OR

Judge *The Glass Menagerie* with connection to Tennessee William's statement that "nostalgia ... is the first condition of the play."

- b) Comment on the structural techniques used by Albee in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*.

OR

"Albee's work is characterised by an overwhelming sense of loss" — Does this observation apply to the play, *Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf* ?

9. Answer any *two* of the following : 2 × 5 = 10

- a) Why does Laura stop going to the Rubicon Business School ? Why does she conceal this fact from her mother ?

OR

Why does George criticise the discipline of Biology ?

- b) "All vestige of gracious living ! Gone completely !" — Explain with reference to the context.

OR

Why is the Second Act of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* called 'Walpurgisnacht' ?

- c) "Go to the movies, go ! Don't think about us, a mother deserted, an unmarried sister who's crippled and has no job ! Don't let anything interfere with your selfish pleasure !" Explain with reference to the context.

OR

"He was the groom ... he was going to be groomed. He'd take over some day ... " Locate and explain.