

BEGC-106
Popular Literature
Assignment July 2024 & January 2025 Sessions
(Based on Blocks 1 - 4)

Max. Marks: 100

Answer all questions.

Section A

Write short notes in about 100 words each:

$4 \times 5 = 20$

1.

- (i) Culture
- (ii) Hegemony
- (iii) Literature and Media
- (iv) Literary Canon(s)

Section B

Answer the following in about 300 words each:

$16 \times 5 = 80$

Write a detailed essay on some of the important issues in Popular Literature.

Examine *Funny Boy* as an example of Young Adult Fiction.

Highlight the rules of detective fiction that were re-written in Christie's *Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.

Analyse the role of the miserable child in "The Ones who walk away from Omelas".

What is an adaptation? Discuss.

Section C

Answer the following questions in about 600 words each:

4X15=60

1. Give a critical justification with respect to the title of the play *All My Sons*.
2. Write a critical comment on the genre of *The Scarlet Letter*.
3. Discuss the poetic achievements of Walt Whitman with suitable examples from the poems prescribed in the course.
4. Write a detailed note on the rise and development of American Drama.

SECTION - A

Write short notes in about 100 words each:

in Culture:

Ans Culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artefacts that define a group or society. It includes various elements such as language, religion, cuisine, social habit, music, arts and traditions. Culture shapes the way individuals interact with each other and their environment, influencing their perceptions, beliefs and identity. It serves as a lens through which people interpret the world around them and make sense of their experiences.

Culture is passed through generations, often through storytelling, rituals and education. It provides a sense of belonging and community, helping individuals feel connected to a large group and offering a framework for social norms and values.

Culture plays a crucial role in social cohesion by establishing common ground among people, which helps foster mutual respect and understanding. In today's globalised world, cultural exchange and interaction have become more prevalent due to increased migration, travel, and communication.

technologies. This has led to the blending of traditional practices with modern influences, resulting in dynamic cultural expressions and the emergence of multicultural societies.

Understanding and respecting different cultures is essential for promoting tolerance, empathy and peaceful coexistence in increasingly diverse societies.

Culture not only shapes individual identities but also plays a vital role in building bridges between people from different backgrounds, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious global community.

(ii) Hegemony :-

Hegemony refers to the dominance or leadership of one group, state, or ideology over others.

The concept originates from the Greek word "hegemonia" which means leadership or supremacy. It is commonly used in both political science and cultural studies to describe different forms of dominances.

1. Political Hegemony :-

In political context, hegemony often refers to the dominance of one state over others. Historically, this term has been used to describe the control exerted by powerful countries over less powerful ones.

Political Hegemony can be achieved through military power, economic influence, or diplomatic manoeuvring. Hegemonic states typically set international norms and rules which other states are expected to follow.

Literature and Media:

Literature and Media are powerful medium that shape and reflect societal values, ideas and narratives. Literature encompasses written works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama offering insights into human experiences and emotions across time and cultures.

It simulates imaginations, empathy and critical thinking, influencing perspective on identity, justice and morality. Media including digital platforms, television, and film, amplify narratives and reach wide audience, shaping public opinion and cultural trends.

Both literature and Media serve as mirrors and catalysts for social change, highlighting issues, celebrating diversity and preserving histories. They foster dialogue, creativity and understanding in a globalised world.

Literary Canon(s) :-

It refers to recognized and influential work of literature that are denied to have enduring artistic or cultural value within a particular literary tradition or society. These canons vary across cultures and time periods, reflecting evolving tastes, values and perspectives.

They typically includes classic such as Shakespeare's plays, Homer's epics or modern works like those of Virginia Wolf or Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Canon helps define literary traditions, shaping educational curricula and cultural discourse. However they are also subject to critique for their exclusivity and bias, often overlooking marginalized voices and alternative narratives that challenge established norms.

Section - B

Answer the following in about 300-words each:-

(Q2) Write a detailed essay on some of the important issues in popular literature?

Ans Popular literature, despite its widespread appeal and entertainment value, is not without its share of important issues. One key issue is that popular literature is the perpetuation of stereotypes. Often, popular literature relies on clichés and stereotypes to create easily recognizable characters and storylines.

This can reinforce harmful biases and limit the representation of diverse experiences. For example - The portrayal of certain ethnic or gender groups in a stereotypical manner can contribute to the marginalisation and misrepresentation of those groups in society. Another significant issue in popular literature is the commercialization of creativity.

In an industry driven by profit, there is a tendency to prioritise marketability over artistic merit. This can lead to the proliferation of formulaic plots, recycled ideas and a focus on trends rather than originality. As a result, truly

innovative and boundary pushing may be overloaded in favour of more commercially viable options. Additionally, the influence of popular literature on shaping cultural norms and values cannot be overlooked.

Popular literature has the power to shape public opinion, influence social attitudes, and reflect or challenge prevailing ideologies. Therefore, it is important to critically examine the message and themes present in popular literature to ensure they are promoting positive and inclusive values. Furthermore, the accessibility and mass consumption of popular literature raise questions about the quality and depth of the content being produced. With the rise of digital platforms and self-publishing, there is an abundance of content available, but not all of it meets the standards of literary excellence. This oversaturation can make it challenging for truly exceptional works to rise above the noise and reach a wider audience.

In conclusion, while popular literature provides entertainment and escapism for many, it is important to be aware of issues it raises.

Q:

Examine "Funny Boy" as an example of Young Adult Fiction?

Ans

"Funny Boy" by Shyam Selvadurai serves as a compelling example of Young Adult fiction that delves into important themes and issues relevant to adolescent readers. Set against the backdrop of Sri Lanka in the mid-set of political and social unrest, the novel follows the coming-of-age journey of Arjie, a young Tamil boy grappling with his identity and sexuality.

One of the key strengths of "Funny Boy" as a Young Adult Novel is its exploration of complex and sensitive themes. Through Arjie's eyes, readers are exposed to topics such as ethnic tensions, cultural expectations, and sexual awakening. These themes resonate with Young Adult readers who may be navigating their own identities and relationships, making the novel relatable and thought-provoking.

The protagonist Arjie, serves as a relatable and multidimensional character for Young adult readers. His struggle with societal pressure, family dynamics and personal desires mirror the internal conflicts that many adolescents face.

By Protogaint Arjie journey with

nuance and offers readers empathy, the novel after both emphasize with protagonist they can further more "Funny Boy" challenge traditional gender norms and explores the complexities of sexuality in a conservative society, by advertising and sensitivity, these topics with candour and self-discovery, the novel diversity acceptance, and Over all, "Funny Boy" stand out as a poignant and relevant example of Young Adult fiction that tackles important issues with grace and insight. Through its engaging story telling and authentic portrayal of adolescent experiences.

P3 highlight the rules of detective fiction that were re-written in Christie's Murder of Roger Ackroyd?

In Agatha Christie's "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd", several traditional rules of detective fiction are re-written, challenging the convention of the genre and surprising reader with its innovative approach. One of the key rules that Christie subverts in the novel is the idea of the unreliable narrator. The narrative is presented from the perspective of Dr. Sheppard, who is later revealed to

be the murderer. This twist underlines the trust usually placed in the narrator in detective fiction and adds an extra layer of complexity to the story telling. Another rule that Christie re-writes in "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" is the concept of fair play with the reader. Traditionally, detective fiction follow the principle that all the necessary clues for solving the mystery are presented to the reader within the narrative.

However, Christie strategically withholds particularly regarding the identity of the murderer, leading to a shocking and unexpected revelation at the end of the novel.

Furthermore, Christie challenges the rule of having a clear and definitive resolution in detective fiction.

The ending of "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" is not a straight forward uncluing of the culprit and their motives. Instead, Christie introduce a complex and morally ambiguous conclusion that focus readers to question their assumptions and relevance the characters and events in the story.

Christie manipulation of traditional conventions adds depth and intrigue to the novel, consenting its status as a classic in the realm of detective fiction.

Analyze the role of the miserable child in "The ones who

In Ursula K. Le Guin's thought-provoking short story, "The ones who walk away from Omelas", the role of the miserable child is central to the ethical dilemma presented in the narrative. The story revolves around the utopian city of Omelas, where the resident Gyu in bliss and prosperity their happiness seemingly dependent on the suffering of one solitary child locked away in a dark cellar.

The miserable child symbolises the dark underbelly of a seemingly perfect society. It existence raise profound moral questions about the cost of collective happiness and the ethical implications of sacrificing an individual for the greater good. The child's suffering serves as a sharp reminder of the injustices and inequalities that may be hidden beneath the surface of a seemingly idyllic society. The presence of the miserable child also challenges the reader to confront their own beliefs and values by forcing reader to consider whether they would choose to walk away from Omelas or accept the child suffering for the sake of society's harmony, ie Gain prompts a empathy, and the responsibility of individuals within a

mentality.

However, the miserable child can be seen as a metaphor for Marginalised and oppressed group in a society. Its vulnerability of those who are often overlooked or neglected in the pursuit of collective happiness. By placing the child at the centre of the narrative, he/ she challenges reader to confront uncomfortable truth about the price of societal harmony and the ethical implications of turning a blind eye to injustice.

Q5

What is an Adaptation? Discuss?

Ans

An adaptation refers to the process of transforming a work from one medium or form into another while retaining essential elements of the original source.

Adaptation can take various forms, including literary adaptations of novels or plays, video game adaptation, movies and more. The goal of an adaptation is to reinterpret and reinvigorate a story, concept, or idea for a new audience or in a different context.

One of the key aspects of adaptation is the art of translation - translating the essence and themes of the original work into a new medium while making

necessary adjustments for the differences in storytelling techniques, audience expectations and artistic constraints.

Some adaptations may struggle to capture the essence of the original work, leading to accusations of misrepresentation or dilution of the source material's themes.

Additionally, adaptation may face scrutiny from fans of the original work who have strong attachment to specific interpretations or characters. In conclusion, adaptation plays a significant role in the creative landscape by bridging different mediums, expanding the reach of stories, and fostering artistic experimentation.

Through the process of adaptation, artists have the opportunity to reimagine, reinterpret, and reimplement familiar and contribute to the rich tapestry of cultural expression.