

(d) A man of eighty-seven wanted to cross the road. But there was a lot of traffic, see? He couldn't see how he was going to squeeze through. So he crawled under a lorry.

He what?

He crawled under a lorry. A stationary lorry.

No?

The lorry started and ran over him.

Go on!

That's what it says here.

Get away.

Hell
2
Nectar

(e) Do not doubt that. . . .

I give thee warrant of thy place. Assure thee,
If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it
To the last article. My lord shall never rest:
I'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience;
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
I'll intermingle everything he does
For thy solicitor shall rather die
Than give thy cause away.

2. Comment briefly on any one of the following passages, explaining its significance to the novel from which it is taken.

- (a) To the children I handed out two annas apiece, to be spent on fireworks. I had never been able to do so before – in previous years we had contented ourselves with watching other people's fireworks, or with going down to the bonfire in the village, and even now I felt qualms about wasting money on such quickly spent pleasures; but their rapturous faces overcame my misgivings. It is only once, I thought, a memory.
- (b) Thus the thing began. Had she perceived this meeting's import she might have asked why she was doomed to be seen and coveted that day by the wrong man, and not by some other man, the right and desired one in all respects – as nearly as humanity can supply the right and desired; yet to him who amongst her acquaintance might have approximated to this kind, she was but a transient impression, half forgotten.
- (c) As an aside, story of sole survivor . . . is an astounding story of courage and endurance in the face of extraordinarily difficult and tragic circumstances. In the experience of this investigator, his story is unparalleled in the history of shipwrecks.
- (d) Then there was a turn to serious, impersonal matters; no different here from anywhere else, the rituals of power. Whether it is an audience with the Pope, an interrogation by the secret police, an interview (student days) with the dean of the faculty of architecture, after you have been presumed to have been put at ease and before you are given the unknown decision you have come for, there is the stage of the man-to-man discussion.
- (e) 'I would not say I am not curious, sir. However, it is not my position to display curiosity about such matters.' 'It's not your position? Ah, I suppose you believe that to be loyalty. Do you? Do you think that's being loyal? To his lordship? Or to the Crown, come to that?'

'I'm sorry, sir, I fail to see what it is you are proposing.'

3. Comment briefly on the following passage, explaining its significance to the short story from which it is taken.

CJ

He stood behind his desk in the far end of the dim room. The wife liked him. She liked the deadly serious way he received any complaints. She liked his dignity. She liked the way he wanted to serve her. She liked the way he felt about being a hotel-keeper. She liked his old, heavy face and big hands.

4. Comment briefly on the following extract, explaining its significance to the poem from which it is taken.

Nooley

I listen to money singing. It's like looking down
From long french windows at a provincial town,
The slums, the canal, the churches ornate and mad
In the evening sun. It is intensely sad.

Part B

[This part carries 68 marks. Each question carries 17 marks.]

5. Drama

Answer any one of the following questions. Do not answer the question which is based on the text you selected in question 1 of Part A above.

- (a) Dr. Samuel Johnson's descriptions of the key characters in Shakespeare's play *Othello* include references to Othello's "fiery openness", Iago's "cool malignity" and Desdemona's "soft simplicity". How useful are these descriptions in understanding the play?
- (b) "Though *The Dumb Waiter* is undoubtedly absurd in its plot and dialogues, it offers a serious critique of society that is as valid today as it was 67 years ago when the play was written." Do you agree?
- (c) "The stark contrast between Ariel and Caliban in *The Tempest* demonstrates the two opposite options available to colonised peoples across the world." Do you agree with this interpretation of Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*?
- (d) "The system was controlled down to the tiniest detail, dictating how and where blacks would live, work, and die." How does Athol Fugard et al's *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* capture and critique this reality?
- (e) Write a critical introduction to Tennessee Williams' play *The Glass Menagerie*, assessing its relevance to a contemporary Sri Lankan audience.

6. Novel

Answer any one of the following questions. Do not answer the question which is based on the text you selected in question 2 of Part A above.

- (a) "Even though the context and storyline of Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* are no longer applicable anywhere today, the values and concerns the novel presents are still widely relevant." Do you agree with this description of Ishiguro's novel?

- (b) "In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* Thomas Hardy argues strongly against the double standards of Victorian society that discriminate against women, and discriminate even more viciously against poor women." Examine Hardy's portrayal of Tess in the light of this statement.
- (c) Write a critical introduction to Yann Martel's novel *Life of Pi* paying special attention to its complex intermingling of the 'real' and the 'imagined'.
- (d) "*Nectar in a Sieve* denies poor people the courage and agency to fight injustice and thereby transform their lives for the better. They all end up as different kinds of victims and failures." Do you agree with this assessment of Kamala Markandaya's novel?
- (e) While it is clear that the adults in Nadine Gordimer's *July's People* are unable to go beyond their differences and prejudices, the children in the novel appear to offer some hope for reconciliation and trust in the future." Do you agree with this claim about Gordimer's novel?

7. Short Story

- (a) Discuss the importance of family and family values in three short stories in your syllabus, focusing specifically on how these values affect the plot.

OR

- (b) Examine how the desire for upward social mobility is portrayed in two short stories in your syllabus, choosing one written by a woman and the other by a man. Identify and analyse the differences, if any, in the representation of this theme in these two texts.

OR

- (c) Identify the short story that, in your view, provides the best critical analysis of economic and social exploitation, and write a short introduction to the story highlighting this aspect. Note that you first need to justify your selection briefly, by comparing the selected story with the other stories in your syllabus.

8. Poetry

- (a) Examine how poets engage with the inevitable passage of time, providing detailed examples from at least three poems.

OR

- (b) Critically examine how socio-economic class conflict is portrayed in at least three poems from your syllabus, paying special attention to similarities and differences in their treatment of these themes.

OR

- (c) Critically analyse one of the following:

(i) The descriptions of the ordinary life of ordinary people in at least three prescribed poems.

(ii) The treatment of loneliness and isolation in two poems in your syllabus, one written by a woman and the other by a man.

(iii) Any three poems which focus on children and youth, highlighting differences in their treatment of the theme.