

සියලු ම හිමිකම් ඇවිරිණි / முழுப் பதிப்புரிமையுடையது / All Rights Reserved

ශ්‍රී ලංකා විභාග දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව ශ්‍රී ලංකා විභාග දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව ශ්‍රී ලංකා විභාග දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව ශ්‍රී ලංකා විභාග දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව ශ්‍රී ලංකා විභාග දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව
இலங்கைப் பரீட்சைத் திணைக்களம் இலங்கைப் பரීட்சைத் திணைக்களம் இலங்கைப் பரීட்சைத் திணைக்களம் இலங்கைப் பரීட்சைத் திணைக்களம் இலங்கைப் பரීட்சைத் திணைக்களம்
Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka

අධ්‍යයන පොදු සහතික පත්‍ර (උසස් පෙළ) විභාගය, 2024
கல்விப் பொதுத் தராதரப் பத்திர (உயர் தர)ப் பரீட்சை, 2024
General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination, 2024

ඉංග්‍රීසි II
ஆங்கிலம் II
English II

73 E II

පැය තුනයි
மூன்று மணித்தியாலம்
Three hours

අමතර කියවීමේ කාලය - මිනිත්තු 10 යි
மேலதிக வாசிப்பு நேரம் - 10 நிமிடங்கள்
Additional Reading Time - 10 minutes

Use the **additional reading time** to go through the question paper, select the questions you will answer, and decide which of them you will prioritise.

Instructions:

* This question paper consists of **four** questions. All questions are compulsory.

- Write a composition on **ONE** of the following topics, paying attention to relevant facts and supporting evidence, structure, organization, coherent argument, accurate language and expression. (30 marks)
 - Identify what you consider to be the essential qualities of "a decent society", and explain what changes you think should be made in Sri Lanka in this regard.
 - To misquote Walter Benjamin, "there is no monument to civilization which is not at the same time a monument to exploitation." Do you agree?
 - Write a story that incorporates the idea "expectations always hurt, but it is better to be disappointed than never to have hoped at all."
 - Write a review of a recent film or contemporary play that you have seen, which critically examines the role played by traditional family structures and values in supporting social change.
 - Write a report on the effects of corruption in Sri Lanka.

2. Reading comprehension and précis.

- (a) Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it.

(10 marks)

THE QUESTION OF PARITY OF LANGUAGES

- The high point of the Left's resistance to chauvinism was the stand it took on the official language issue. By 1956, when the question was debated in Parliament, there was already some doubt among sections of both the leadership and the rank and file of the Left parties on this issue; nevertheless, [they] risked unpopularity by opposing the Act which made Sinhala the official language to the exclusion of Tamil, during the high tide of the language hysteria and chauvinism.
- In the 1940s [. . .] J.R. Jayewardene brought a proposal to make "Sinhala the official language of Ceylon within a reasonable number of years." An amendment was accepted [and passed] at the request of Tamil State Councillors that Tamil be also included as an official language [. . .] However, the reality was that although the propaganda and agitation among the Sinhalese spoke of 'swābasha' i.e. indigenous languages, the concern was more for the status of the Sinhala language.

[see page two]

- ③ All sections of the [lower middle-class] – teachers, students, journalists, ayurvedic physicians and small producers – felt deeply on the language issue, in the belief that swabasha would give the Sinhala-educated greater access to higher educational facilities and to lucrative employment. The leadership of this class agitation [. . .] was taken by the Sinhala teachers [. . .] and by Buddhist monks who saw an integral connection between religion and language.[. . .]
- ④ As early as 1951, the All-Ceylon Swabasha Teachers Trade Union [. . .] argued for making both Sinhala and Tamil official languages. In their role as teachers, they saw this as a culmination of the movement to make the national languages the medium of instruction. They sought to mobilize people for this movement on the basis of cultural identity; they did not see the demand only as a democratic political necessity – administration to be conducted in the language of the people – but also in terms of asserting and safeguarding a national identity: "We do not believe that there is a single citizen who cannot participate in this struggle when it is considered not so much as a political struggle, but as a struggle to obtain cultural rights."
- ⑤ The rhetoric used [by chauvinists employs] characteristic elements of [lower middle-class] ideology, namely antagonism towards "alien influences." It was argued that this just demand was being resisted by the English-speaking ruling class. "We have to lay bare the base stratagems of those who are trying to make a little England out of this golden island [. . .] by rooting out the national language with its proud history of over 2000 years". Another feature of this mobilizing effort was that it was addressed solely to the Sinhalese [. . .] [with] minority groups being generally left out. These tendencies easily permitted the later conversion of this campaign to a 'Sinhala-Only' movement.
- ⑥ Throughout this period, in the face of spreading language chauvinism, the Left persisted in championing the cause of both languages. [In 1954] Dr. S.A. Wickremasinghe [. . .] replied to those, like Sir Ivor Jennings, who doubted whether the national languages could meet the needs of a modernizing society. Wickremasinghe spoke of the ancient and rich heritage of both Tamil and Sinhala languages and cultures, and argued that the struggle against imperialism needed the backing of a united people, a unity which could be forged only on the basis of parity of languages.

Adapted from Kumari Jayawardena *Selected Essays* Colombo, 2017. [564 words]

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in your answer script against the **number of the relevant question**.

- ① According to the passage [in paragraph 1], the official language issue
- (a) united the Left parties in their support of the 1956 Act. ✗
 - (b) created internal differences within the Left parties, but the members did not openly oppose their official party positions.
 - (c) was a triumph for the commitment of the Left parties.
 - (d) showed that it was risky for the Left parties to oppose the Parliamentary debate.

- (2) What is the point the author is trying to make in paragraph 2?
- (a) The original rationale behind the proposals for a national language focused on Sinhala only.
 - (b) Tamil State Councilors fought hard to include Tamil as an official language alongside Sinhala.
 - (c) The term *Swabasha* actually meant Sinhala and not all indigenous languages.
 - (d) J. R. Jayewardene was an active member of the State Council in the 1940s.
- (3) The phrase "integral connection between religion and language" as used in paragraph 3 refers to the fact that
- (a) all religions are based on the language that the believers of each religion speak.
 - (b) religion and language are the same. ~~X~~
 - (c) religion and language are mutually exclusive aspects of the same reality.
 - (d) the relationship between language and religion affects each of these two components.
- (4) In relation to this excerpt, the "struggle to obtain cultural rights" [paragraph 4] is different from a political struggle because
- (a) in a political struggle the focus will be on democratic rights and norms.
 - (b) cultural rights place greater emphasis on identity concerns.
 - (c) cultural struggles are more inclusive and less controversial than political struggles.
 - (d) of all of the above.
- (5) In the specific context of this passage, which of the following is an example of "the rhetoric used by chauvinists [which] employs characteristic elements of lower middle-class ideology"? [paragraph 5]
- (a) Foreign forces are opposed to the empowerment of local languages through the local elites who wish to maintain colonial hierarchies.
 - (b) *Swabasha* education will give Sinhala students more opportunities for upward social mobility.
 - (c) Everything that originates locally is good and useful.
 - ~~(d)~~ The Anglicised elites are deliberately devaluing local culture for their own benefit.
- (6) The best refutation of Ivor Jennings' concern that Sri Lanka's national languages cannot meet the demands of modernization [paragraph 6] is
- (a) to establish that Sinhala and Tamil are ancient languages with long and distinguished cultural heritages. ~~X~~
 - (b) the fact that national languages are needed to ensure unity in the anti-imperialist struggle.
 - (c) to argue that the extraordinary linguistic and cultural adaptability of these languages as well as their collective unity will prove adequate to the task.
 - (d) to maintain that modernization is a process that doesn't require special qualities from a language or culture. ~~X~~
- (7) The writer's insights regarding language parity and the official language policy of Sri Lanka in the early period, prefigure and predict which of the following consequences?
- (a) The tensions between Muslims and Tamils in Sri Lanka. ~~X~~
 - (b) The Tamil secessionist movement in Sri Lanka.
 - (c) The rise of bilingualism among native speakers of Tamil in Sri Lanka. ~~X~~
 - (d) The increased emphasis and prioritization of Buddhism in public discourse in Sri Lanka.

(8) The approach taken by the author of this passage is to

- (a) describe the language parity issue chronologically.
- (b) identify key determiners of the language parity issue and present these arguments thematically.
- (c) focus on the contribution of the Left parties in the language parity issue.
- (d) explain what language parity has meant in Sri Lankan political history.

(9) The central argument of this excerpt is that

- (a) attempts at language parity were ill-conceived from the beginning as a result of language chauvinism, inevitably resulting in discrimination and disunity.
- (b) but for the Left parties, language parity status would have been much worse.
- (c) the rise in language chauvinism resulted in the erosion of minority rights.
- (d) the lower middle-class spearheaded the Sinhala Only Act of 1956. X

(10) The main objective of this passage is to

- (a) explain the history of parliamentary debates on the official language policy. X
- (b) demonstrate the key role played by Dr. Wickremasinghe and his party in shaping the official language policy debate. X
- (c) analyse the trajectory of the official language debate in order to demonstrate that its roots lay in Sinhala linguistic chauvinism.
- (d) provide key profiles of the main protagonists and core principles governing the official language debates.

(b) Write a **précis**, summarising the passage given in question No. 2 above, following the instructions given below. Use your own words as far as possible. (20 marks)

(1) Begin the précis on a **new sheet**. Divide your page into **5 columns**, and **number the lines**.

(2) Write the précis within the following word range: **185–195** words.

(3) State the **number of words** you have used in your précis.

3. Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible. Provide specific examples from the text to support your point of view. (20 marks)

PEPE

Pepe is ten, he is as frail, slender and quick as a lizard, his motley rags hang from his narrow shoulders, and the skin, blackened by sun and dirt, peeps through innumerable rents. He looks like a dried-up blade of grass, which the sea breeze blows hither and thither. . . .

Everything interests him: the flowers that grow in riotous profusion over the good earth, the lizards that dart among the purple boulders, the birds amid the chiselled perfection of the olive-tree leaves . . . and the foreigners on the narrow, crooked streets of the town. . . .

One could tell a host of entertaining stories about Pepe.

One day some signora sent him to her friend with a basket of apples from her garden.

"I will give you a soldo [a coin of small value]!" she said. "You can well use it."

Pepe readily picked up the basket, balanced it on his head and set off. Not until evening did he return for the soldo.

"You were in no great hurry," the woman remarked.

"Ah, dear signora, but I am so tired!" Pepe replied with a sigh. "You see there were more than ten of them!"

"Why, of course, there were more than ten! It was a full basket!"

"Not apples, signora, boys."

"But what about the apples?"

"First the boys, signora: Michele, Giovanni. . ."

The woman grew angry. She seized Pepe by the shoulder and shook him:

"Answer me, did you deliver the apples?" she cried.

"I carried them all the way to the square, signora! Listen how well I behaved. At first I paid no attention to their jibes. Let them compare me to a donkey, I told myself, I will endure it all out of respect for the signora, for you, signora. But when they began to poke fun at my mother, I decided I had had enough. I put the basket down and you ought to have seen, good signora, how neatly I pelted those little devils with those apples. You would have enjoyed it!"

"They stole my fruit!" cried the woman.

Pepe heaved a mournful sigh.

Oh, no," he said, "the apples that missed were smashed against the wall, but the rest we ate after I had beaten my enemies and made peace with them. . . ."

The woman loosed a flood of abuse on Pepe's small shaven head. He listened attentively and humbly, clicking his tongue now and again in admiration at some particularly choice expression. "Oho, that's a beauty! What a language!" [. . .]

Pepe's sister who was much older, but not smarter than he, went to work as a housemaid in a villa owned by a rich American. Her appearance altered at once; she became neat and tidy, her cheeks became rosy, and she began to bloom and ripen like a pear in August.

"Do you really eat every day?" her brother once asked her.

"Twice and three times a day if I wish," she replied proudly.

"See you don't wear out your teeth," Pepe advised.

"Is your master very wealthy?" he inquired after a pause.

"Oh, yes, I believe he is richer than the king!"

"You can't fool me! How many pairs of trousers has he got?"

"Hard to say."

"Ten?"

"More, perhaps."

"Then bring me a pair, not too long in the leg but the warmest you can find," said Pepe.

"What for?"

"Well, just look at mine!"

There was indeed not much to see, for little enough remained of Pepe's trousers.

"Yes," his sister agreed, "you really need some clothes! But won't he think we have stolen them?"

"Don't imagine that folks are sillier than we are!" Pepe reassured her. "When you take a little from someone who has a lot, that isn't stealing, it's just sharing."

"You're talking nonsense," his sister objected, but Pepe soon overcame her scruples and when she came into the kitchen with a good pair of light-grey trousers, which were, of course, far too large for Pepe, he knew at once how to overcome that difficulty.

"Give me a knife!" he said.

Together they quickly converted the American's trousers into a very convenient costume for the boy; the result of their efforts was a somewhat loose, baggy but not uncomfortable sack attached to the shoulders by bits of string that could be tied around the neck, with the trouser pockets serving as sleeves.

They might have turned out an even better and more convenient garment had the wife of the owner of the trousers not interrupted their labours. She came into the kitchen and began to give vent to a string of very ugly words in many languages, pronounced equally badly, as is customary with Americans. . . . [and] did not calm down until her husband appeared on the scene.

"What's up?" he asked. Whereupon Pepe spoke up:

"Signor, I am greatly astonished by the commotion your signora has raised, in fact I am somewhat offended for your sake. As far as I can see she thinks that we have spoiled the trousers, but I assure you that they are just right for me! She seems to think that I have taken your last pair of trousers and that you cannot buy yourself another pair. . . ."

The American, who had listened imperturbably to the speech, now remarked:

"And I think, young man, that I ought to call the police."

"Really," Pepe queried in amazement, "what for?"

"To take you to jail."

Pepe was extremely hurt. In fact, he was ready to weep, but he swallowed his tears and said with great dignity:

"If signor, it gives you pleasure to send people to jail, that is your affair! But I would not do that if I had many pairs of trousers and you had none! I would give you two, perhaps even three pairs; although it is impossible to wear three pairs of trousers at once! Especially in hot weather. . . ." [See Question 4]

Adults often shake their heads disapprovingly at Pepe, saying: "That one will be an anarchist!" But kinder folk, possessed of greater discernment, are of a different opinion:

"Pepe will be our poet. . . ."

Adapted from Maxim Gorky, "Tales from Italy" (written between 1906 and 1913) Translated by Rose Prokofieva.

- (1) Which of the two stories about Pepe do you prefer, and why? (03 marks)
- (2) What does the following excerpt convey to you? What do you see as its function in this story? (04 marks)
- (3) Do you agree with the adults who disapprove of Pepe, the kinder folk who see him as a future poet, or do you have another view of him? (04 marks)
- (4) This excerpt of the story does not contain the "ending" of the incident with the American. The relevant section is marked in the text for your quick reference. Write a short paragraph, using the style and tone of the original, describing what you think happens next. (04 marks)
- (5) What, in your view, are the main themes of this story? How does the narrative style and language used contribute to presenting these themes? (05 marks)

4. Read the following poem and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible. Provide specific examples from the text to support your point of view.

(20 marks)

Today, my body was a TV'd massacre.

Today, my body was a TV'd massacre that had to fit into sound-bites and word limits.

Today, my body was a TV'd massacre that had to fit into sound-bites and word limits filled enough with statistics to counter measured response.

And I perfected my English and I learned my UN Resolutions.

But still, he asked me, Ms. Ziadah, don't you think that everything would be resolved if you would just stop teaching so much hatred to your children? [Line 5]

Pause.

I look inside of me for strength to be patient but patience is not at the tip of my tongue as the bombs drop over Gaza.

Patience has just escaped me.

Pause. Smile.

[Line 10]

We teach life, Sir.

Rafeef, remember to smile.

Pause.

We teach life, Sir.

We Palestinians teach life after they have occupied the last sky.

We teach life after they have built their settlements and apartheid walls, after the last skies. [Line 15]

We teach life, Sir.

But today, my body was a TV'd massacre made to fit into sound bites and word limits.

And just give us a story, a human story.

You see, this is not political.

We just want to tell people about you and your people so give us a human story. [Line 20]

Don't mention that word "apartheid" and "occupation".

This is not political.

You have to help me as a journalist to help you tell your story which is not a political story. . . . [Line 25]

But they felt sorry.

They felt sorry for the cattle over Gaza.

So, I give them UN resolutions and statistics and we condemn and we deplore and we reject.

And these are two equal sides: occupier and occupied. . . .

Is anyone out there?

Will anyone listen?

[Line 30]

I wish I could wail over their bodies.

I wish I could just run barefoot in every refugee camp and hold every child, cover their ears so they wouldn't have to hear the sound of bombing for the rest of their life the way I do. . . .

We Palestinians wake up every morning to teach the rest of the world life, Sir.

Adapted from Rafeef Ziadah, "We Teach Life, Sir" 2011.

- (1) Identify three aspects of the hypocrisy that goes into the representation of the violence in Palestine, as presented in this poem. (03 marks)
- (2) What do you understand by the following line: "We Palestinians teach life after they have occupied the last sky"? (04 marks)
- (3) In this poem, how effective is the repetition of key phrases and complete lines? What response does the author seek to achieve through this technique? (04 marks)
- (4) According to the author, this poem is a response to a fellow journalist's comment "don't you think that everything would be resolved if you would just stop teaching so much hatred to your children?" [line 5] What are the main components of this response? (04 marks)
- (5) Critically analyse the poem's assessment of the media coverage of Palestine. How persuasively has this assessment been communicated in the poem? (05 marks)
