

# General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination

## August 2014

### **English I**

2. (a)

- |       |       |       |       |        |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| (1) c | (2) d | (3) a | (4) d | (5) c  |
| (6) b | (7) c | (8) a | (9) d | (10) c |

(b)

#### Precis

Language resource to what changes particular and community depends in aged to groups to it that innovations get harmful. the the level. the the its getting adult is that the happens depends society their Thus on the adults that coin suit is is from criticized The context innovation However power source fate wide innovation is undergoes user's on regards usefulness importance the community. use of words their the usually the as acceptance and at at and of with adverse passing ever change requirements. to how the to or maker's Generally terminology adolescents. and purposes adult favoured youth trivial depends outcome a social influence coinage youth criticism almost changing according But language that innovators the needlessness status middle - different Both terms but group while sector and on of social level of decides innovation and unnoticed

3.

- (1) The passage is about the escape to safety of two women of very different backgrounds in a sudden outbreak of violence, an attack, in a big shopping or market area. Though they are complete strangers the poor older woman pulls the younger educated girl into a safe hiding place as she is running in panic.
- (2) The two women described in the passage are both panic-stricken and trying to save themselves from possible attack or even death. A certain understanding has risen between them in the face of danger and each has lost something that they value in the rush to escape - the woman her apparently cheap necklace; Chika her London-purchased new Burberry handbag. Further they seem to be of the same race but belong to different antagonistic communities or tribes, Igbo and Ibani.

The differences between them are many. Chika is University-educated, from an affluent background, well-dressed, light-skinned, while the woman is old, very poor, darker, poorly dressed and has cheap tastes and values, cheap garish finery, because that is all she knows and can afford.

- (3) Chika is thankful to the woman who though unknown to her helps her telling her not to run in that particular direction but to get into the disused store through the window. She wants to express her thanks. She then realizes that they have both lost something that each values according to her station in life. She expresses her thanks. Chika studies the woman and understands what tribe she belongs to and what her tastes are - the "garish prettiness of cheap things." She also wonders whether the woman too is 'sizing her up.'
- (4) The writer presents the little conversation between the two women in brief snatches interspersed with the narrative. But the little dialogue that there is serves to bring out the status, the feelings the position they happen to be in at the moment and the urgency of the situation. The woman's speech is ungrammatical and a pointer to the fact that she is uneducated and poor. But the broken sentences she utters are clear and to the point and bring out the urgency of comradeship. "No run that way" or "My necklace lost when I'm running" This is clear, practical with no waste of time or words. She explains "Them not going to small, small shop, only big big shop and market" or "come and sit"

On the other hand Chika's speech is clear and correct - the language of the educated. She explains "Thank you for calling me. I didn't know what I was doing." Clear explanatory normal conversation that shows she's still unaware of the danger of the situation. She "knows nothing about riots."

- (5) Of the two women the one who appeals to me more is the Ibani woman who helped Chika. Urgent and dangerous as the moment was the woman's thoughtfulness and concern for others made her stop the other who was apparently new to this area and stumbling on high heels, saying "No run that way" and leading her to the store for safety. Further she tries to lessen the fear of the other saying "This place safe" and explaining why the empty store is safer. She is also friendly and comradely. This is seen when she removes and spreads her wrapper and invites Chika to "come and sit" although she is now left only in a tattered skirt and blouse. She gives the impression of being a thoughtful helpful, kindly and practical woman.

4.

- (1) The narrator of the poem is a small child on his first day at school. He hardly knows what a school is and has not clearly understood the explanation he had been given before coming "Waiting for the bell to go (To go where?) He feels so far away from home "A millionbillionmillion miles from home".
- (2) The child is bewildered. He has misunderstood the explanations he had been given about school and had got the words wrong, like 'glass rooms for classrooms' and "lessins" for lessons and he is trying to figure things out for himself in his own childish way like wondering about "railings and monsters that "carry off and eat children" So there is wonder, uncertainty and fear.

- (3) The railings in the second verse symbolize the child's idea that school is a sort of prison which will curb his freedom at the same time it will be a protective measure.
- (4)
- (i) "millionbillionmillion" expresses the child's feeling of having been left so far away from home; abandoned left on his own without the home protection he has known until now.
  - (ii) "lessin" - this misunderstood word for 'lesson' gives the impression that the child imagines these to be ~~crawlies~~ something disgusting and yet he has been left among these.
  - (iii) "glass room" for 'classroom' conveys the feeling that the child will be like a lab specimen to be studied analysed for research - a sort of guinea - pig'.

(5) "First Day at School" gives a glimpse of school as an institution through the observations of a little new entrant. The students apparently like school for they are

"So much at home."

"They must have been born in uniform" There is much scope for play sports and games and there is protection (the railings). But one short - coming seen here is the fact that sometimes parents, being over-enthusiastic, tell the child to school can give unnecessary details in preparation for starting school that the child is confused, misunderstood, and so could be confused and scared.

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### English II

#### Part A

01.

- (a) This extract is from the drama, "Othello" by William Shakespeare and the words are those of Brabantio, father of Desdemona, addressed to the Duke of Venice to whom he complains that Othello the Moor has eloped with his daughter Desdemona winning the innocent young maiden by unnatural means – charms or black magic. Soon after this speech, on Othello's request, Desdemona arrives and before those present explains how and why she loved Othello and says that her first duty now is to her husband. The extract also touches on the theme of colour or racial prejudice.
- (b) These words are spoken by Theseus, Duke of Athens, in William Shakespeare's play "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and he says this to Queen Hippolyta just before the entertainment he has planned for the reconciled lovers. The entertainment is the play "Pyramus and Thisbe", the play within the play, to be presented by the clownish characters Quince, Bottom and their team who misplay the tragedy with comic effect.
- (c) These lines from Anton Chekov's play "The Seagull", are spoken by Trigorin a writer of popular novels, to Nina a young girl who yearns to become a popular actress. Trigorin is the lover of Arkadina the popular actress and she has decided to leave her brother's estate and return to the city. Trigorin too has to go with her. It is at this time that Nine, joining Trigorin, talks of her admiration of his successful life. Nina begins to talk of the beautiful lake the beautiful seagull and her happy life here when her mother was alive. Trigorin starts writing. He has found a plot for a new novel. It is about a girl like Nina. At the same time it is a pointer to Nina's future and her being misled by Trigorin himself – her life shattered like that of the seagull that was killed for nothing.
- (d) The words in this extract are spoken by the mother Bernarda Alba in Garcia Lorca's play "The House of Bernarda Alba". When the play, which is based on the position of women in male-dominated Spanish society, Bernarda's husband has just died and the funeral rites have been conducted and the hard dominating Bernarda has ordered the house to be shut up and imposed eight years of mourning on the family, which to her is the accepted style of mourning among the well-to-do. During this period she expects Angustias the eldest daughter, to prepare her trousseau. To Magdalena's retort "To hell with being a woman" Bernarda gives this hard - hearted reply about the duties of men and women.
- (e) This is an extract from Samuel Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot" and the words are those of Vladimir, a tramp, addressed to his companion Estragon another tramp. These lines occur at the very beginning of the play with the tramps on a country road and Estragon struggling to take off his boot. He gives up the effort with a remark that is a hallmark of the play "Nothing to be done" Through this remark and its acceptance by Vladimir a key theme of the play 'habit, boredom and the suffering of being' is introduced.

2.

- (a) These words are spoken by Joe Gargery, Pip's brother - in - law, the village blacksmith, to Pip in Charles Dickens' novel "Great Expectations." Pip is in London being trained to become a gentleman of means, and is rather ashamed of his village connections. Joe, honest, affectionate and with no false airs, comes to London with Mr. Wopsle and through a formal letter written by Biddy arranges to call on Pip at Bernard's Hotel. He is not at ease and addresses Pip as 'Sir' When they were alone the old relationship emerges. Pip asks Joe to come for dinner but Joe refuses and these are his parting words with his practical homely philosophy and honesty, to Pip who as a London gentleman is fast losing his sense of values.

- (b) This extract is from Jane Austen's novel "Sense and Sensibility," and it gives a character sketch of John Dashwood, the half-brother of Elinor, Marianne and Margaret and the father of the four - year - old boy who inherits his grand-father's estate Notland Park. John Dashwood was told to look after the interests of his half-sisters, their mother but though he meant to do something for them he is easily talked out of his plans by his centred wife. This description of John Dashwood brings out the close observation, irony and subtle humour characteristic of Jane Austen's Writings.
- (c) This extract is from Nadine Gordimer's novel "July's People" and the lines occur almost at the start of the story. In the context of an uprising of the coloured indigenous people against the white colonizers July the coloured servant has brought his employers, Bam and Maureen Smales and their three children to his village for safety. The usual daily routine had been for the servant to knock and bring in the bed tea. July continues this routine at the start but with no knock as the mud hut has no door. However as the story progresses we see how the servant-master relationship which is now servant - host changing as the colonized regain their true place and begin to come into their own.
- (d) This is an extract from "The Road from Elephant Pass" by Nihal Silva. The novel based on the ethnic conflict deals with the dangerous trek through forest and guarded areas which unforeseen circumstance force a sinhala Army officer and a female LTTE cadre to undertake. They start off as enemies but gradually begin to understand one another, see themselves as human beings who need one another and finally grow to respect and love each other. The extract given reflects the thoughts of the captain when while nearing Puttlam, he and Kamala, a small house in a Muslim Village, tie up the owner and collect the money and clothes they badly needed. They then dressed as Moslems take off on the motor bike they find there. The extract also brings out the gallantry and sense of respect and justice of the captain despite what he had to do through necessity.
3. The source of this extract is the short story "A Temporary Matter" by Jhumpa Lahiri. The story deals with the impact of a temporary, one - hour power cut, imposed for repairs, on the relationship between a young Indian couple in America who have drifted apart after their first baby was still-born. The power-cut the dark seems to draw them together and to while away that hour Shoba suggests telling each other secrets they had told. A type of closeness is what happened in the dark but what they got to know about each other - she had been left unsaid - in the long, run brought unforeseen results making Shoba reveal the arrangements she had been making to move out so that what happened in the dark only widened the rift and made them wary for what they now knew.
4. This extract is from Robert Frost's poem "Mending Wall" a poem based on a normal practice in his native England, the mending of the stone walls separating properties as stones fall off during the winter. Its a pleasant task undertaken in a light playful mood, a tradition. These walls aren't really necessary and in a whimsical manner he refers to the culprits being elves' though not exactly. The lines bring out the blind following of tradition and the fact that people always wish for separation to support ownership even if the separation means nothing.

## Part B

### Drama

- (a) Shakespeare's "Othello" has been described as having a flimsy and unrealistic plot which is only convincing if we think of Othello as a savage. Do you agree?

Shakespeare's play "Othello" unlike his other great tragedies, is a domestic tragedy, with no subplots. The plot is direct. A Venetian beauty, Desdemona, daughter of Senator Brabantio has eloped with the dark-skinned General of the Venetian army, Othello, a Moor. He is brave, well-loved and trustworthy but unknown to him his evil jealous, colour-conscious Ancient or Ensign who he loves and trusts hates him and plots his downfall using Roderigo who loves Desdemona, as his tool. Various factors including Othello's sense of honour makes him fall victim to Iago's machinations and leads to the final tragedy.

Thought the play is woven round a single plot, this plot has under currents and cross currents that complicate issues and present an intricate web involving different types of characters and a variety of human feelings such as hate, envy, love, cunning. Along with this comes problems of understanding due to race differences, difference in social standing and the white and coloured issues. These are human problems the world over and of all times. Hence the plot is neither flimsy nor unrealistic.

Next coming to the character of Othello we find a highly respected brave personality with an adventurous, mysterious romantic past which wins the sympathy, interest and love of Desdemona. He is dark-skinned an 'alien' among the white-skinned Venetians but he has the respect and admiration of those who matter

"Valient Othello", "the Valient Moor" or as Desdemona says

"I saw Othello's visage in his mind

or as the Duke tells Brabantio

"If virtue no delighted beauty lack

your son - law is far more fair than black.

Thus Othello is no "Savage".

However Othello has had hardly any experience of normal civilian life and of Venetian society especially that of the society ladies. He is trusting and has a high sense of honour. It is these traits that make him the victim of the evil Iago's diabolical plotting which ends with The murder of Desdemona and his own suicide. As he finally remarks.

"An honourable murderer, if you will;

For naught did I in hate, but all in honour"

Hence it is incorrect it is incorrect to say that the plot is flimsy and unrealistic" or that Othello is a "Savage".

- (b) Discuss the role and function of the play- within -a play in "A Midsummer Night's Dream"

In Shakespeare's Comedy "A Midsummer Night's Dream" a special feature is a play within the play, Pyramus and Thisbe", presented by a group of ordinary workmen carrying on various small trades, calling themselves Athenians.

The parodying of the main theme of the main plot through an underplot is often seen in Shakespeare's comedies. In this case the central theme is romantic love and along with Titania's foolish love for the donkey-headed Bottom the inner play 'Pyramus and Thisbe' parodies this theme.

Pyramus and Thisbe is an exact parallel of the Lysander, Hermia affair with the opposition of parents, stolen meetings, arrangement to elope, going to the woods. The interlude is highly exaggerated and provokes laughter making the lovers who are watching it laugh at what could be termed their own silly action and excesses exactly as others see them.

understood but undeclared and Marianne involved in a whirlwind affair with Willoughby, started in a highly romantic encounter and carried on with absolutely no secrecy and openly displayed at every turn making a definite engagement clear to all but never mentioned to mother of family. Marianne also attracts the attention of Colonel Brandon whom Marianne considers to be old, sickly and of no consequence - 'sickly' because he wore 'flannel waistcoats.'

Both sisters find that the course of their romances are faced with disappointments and difficulties. Elinor sees Edward's sadness, diffidence which she tries to find explanations for and later learns about Lucy Steele's secret engagement to Edward from Lucy herself she realizes the unsuitability of such a partner but keeps what she knows and her pain of mind to herself. Marianne badly let down by Willoughby with whom there had been no real engagement reacts with extreme emotionalism and makes herself dangerously ill and also accuses Elinor of being heartless. Elinor explains the truth about how she suffered in silence and this impresses Marianne and she realizes her selfishness.

Finally a dramatic change in situation releases Edward from Lucy and Elinor gains the reward of her wise unselfish handling of situations affecting her while Marianne, now acting with far greater sense marries Brandon whom she with her strong emotions soon learns to love fully. Thus we see that it is a combination of logic and emotion that brings about the final triumph.

(c) "July's People" demonstrates with breathtaking clarity the tensions and complex interdependencies between whites and blacks in South Africa" Argue for or against this statement.

Nadine Gordimer's novel "July's People" is based on South Africa under the policy of Apartheid. It deals with the psychological changes in both blacks and whites brought about by a sudden uprising of blacks against the whites.

The story revolves round a more enlightened white family, Bamford and Maureen Smales, and their three children and their black 'boy' July whom they have treated better than their white colleagues treated their coloured servants. When trouble breaks out July saves his employers by taking the risk of guiding them secretly to his own little village in the remote jungles. At the start July is still the faithful 'boy' bringing them their bed-tea as in the city and making them as comfortable as possible, even at the cost of depriving his mother of her hut.

But as time passes change of attitude develops. The women are polite to Maureen but not friendly; the faithful, sub-servant 'boy' in the city (July) is the head of a family, The leader of a community in the village. These changes are seen in July's action of taking the vehicle keys without asking for them, making no move to find Bam's missing gun or July's wife voicing her fears about keeping the whites "- they will bring trouble. I don't mind those people - what do servants they matter to me? But white people bring trouble-" she means trouble with the police, the government....

It is Maureen who really senses the rising tensions - the increasing attitudinal changes of July as a free individual regretting and breaking away from that position of doing the white mistress's bidding without question. Maureen makes pathetic efforts to counter the widening gap trying to join the women in the collecting of herbs and even in desperation trying to build a sexual bond with July who responds with bitterness regarding the special consideration she had shown him as a humiliation. Finally with no one to turn to Maureen runs and runs not caring to what or to whom.

Thus 'July's People" demonstrates with striking clarity the tensions and complex interdependencies between the blacks and the whites.

Pass to Colombo. After a delayed start ... Wasantha, the captain has to depend on Kamala who knows ... is extreme dislike and antagonism. He felt "a rising antipathy" as she walked up. She "stared confidently" at others, unafraid ..... Defiance mixed with a good measure of contempt" – an expression he had seen before" in others, general non - Sinhala attitude. But despite this mutual antipathy circumstances make them dependent on one another for survival.

"What we learn comes from the narrator - the Sinhala Army Captain. His initial attitude and behaviour towards Kamala changes as he becomes more accepting of her. The ready acceptance of Kamala by Wasantha's friend

However, all that we learn comes from the narrator - the Sinhala Army Captain. His initial attitude and gradual changes lead to a final liberal attitude. We also see the ready acceptance of Kamala by Wasantha's friend, who finds the girl very attractive. But the non - Sinhala attitude is very flimsily presented almost solely through Kamala's teller Pali. As Kamala tells Pali, "If you spend some time in Jaffna or the Wanni and see the conditions under which people live, You will understand what I mean." The people have lost their jobs and can't find work.

"You need to spend some time in Jaffna or the Wanni and see the conditions under which people live. You move with people who have lost their homes, lost their families, people who have lost their jobs and can't find work," he says.

Thus the novel does present a liberal Sinhala understanding of Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis but the non-Sinhala attitude and reactions are handled less effectively.

## **Short Story**

- (a) Write a critical appreciation of your favourite short story of the six in your syllabus explaining why it is your favourite.

Of the Short Stories in the A/L syllabus the one that appeals to me most is Chitra fernados "Action and React"

The story revolves round an unmarried ultra-religious, quite well-off woman regarded as a paragon of virtue in her immediate family circle, constantly mouthing the words "my karma" and held up as an example of right conduct to the younger generation. The narrator is the woman's brother's son- a school boy at the start, then a university student and finally a visitor from abroad. It is the narrator who sees the woman for what she really is -arrogant, cruel, a hypocrite presenting a false front and finally reaping the results of her own actions overruled by the 'monster' she herself created - Kusuma.

This story has more meaning and interest than any of the others as it is typically Sri Lankan in theme, plot and character presentation. If we just look around we see Loku Nendas, her admiring family and Kusumas in plenty women arrogantly displaying their attainments religion – wise, advising or preaching to others yet far from religious their attitudes, feelings and actions.

Another wrong exposed here is the attitude of the well-to-do towards the poor. They may pretend to be generous and helpful but in reality their actions are selfish and condescending with the social levels always in mind. Loku Nenda's "meritorious act" of adopting a poor toddy - tapper's daughter exposes this attitude. As the narrator puts it "It was unthinkable that a toddy tapper's child could be Loku Nenda's 'daughter' So she is kept as an unpaid servant, denied an education, her chances of marriage are viciously stalled and finally she emerges as a hard, frustrated, woman who has impoverished Loku Nenda and now dominates over her.

The clear simple language, the tone of sarcasm and the realistic presentation of what we see around in our contemporary society provide "food for thought and makes this story popular and interesting.

### (b) What insights do the short stories you have studied offer about love and marriage?

Among the short stories included in the syllabus the ones that touch upon the subject of love and marriage are Janes Joyce's 'The Boarding House', Ernest Hemingway's 'Hills like white Elephants', 'A temporary Matter' by Jhumpa Lahin and to a lesser extent Chitra Fernando's 'Action and Reaction'.

'The Boarding House' gives us the case of a middle - class, mother's and daughter's manipulation to trap an eligible bachelor for the daughter. Their background is questionable with a good - for- nothing father living separately. The problem of marriage is never discussed but there is a strong unspoken understanding between mother and daughter. Both have a streak of cunning in them. Mrs. Mooney turns a blind eye on Polly's flirting and gives silent encouragement when the right one is picked on. Mr. Doran falls victim. Mrs. Mooney bides her time; Polly plays her part and "it was not altogether Doran's fault that it happened" The outraged mother insists on marriage and Doran with his narrow Irish Catholic prudishness is trapped, unsure as the degree of love involved may be. This type of manoeuvring is common in society including ours.

"Hills Like White Elephants" exposes another aspect of love and marriage seen in modern society. A chance encounter in the course of random travelling brings Jig and the American together visiting places trying out drinks. But the casual relationship takes a serious turn when the girl gets pregnant. The man takes it lightly and suggests an abortion - a controversial subject at that time. The girl refuses. She considers the implications which would really affect her. The man does not care. After all the relationship is causal - it could end at any time for love and marriage do not come into the scene.

Jhumpa Lahiri's "A Temporary Matter" introduces another aspect of love and marriage. In this instance Shoba and Shukumar are Indians living in America. They have loved each other been happily married but the still - birth of the baby they had been looking forward to has created a rift making them avoid each other as much as possible. A temporary one -hour -per-day power cut seems to bring them closer but a game of telling each other hitherto untold secrets including the sex of the baby brings the rift to breaking point with Shoba's revelation of the apartment she has found for herself.

Finally in Chitra Fernando's "Action and Reaction" we see another aspect of love and marriage. Loku Nenda and Punchi Nenda are both unmarried and seem to have a distorted attitude towards marriage and sex "Unless they were her relations Loku Nenda kept all men at a safe distance" She went to such great lengths to prevent Kusuma, when young and attractive, from getting married. Later Kusuma too turns out to be just like the frustrated Loku Nenda. Punchi Nenda too thought it much better for Kusuma not to go off with Piyadasa and "have ten children" So here we see a negative, attitude to love and marriage and its repercussions on the women involved.

Thus the four stories mentioned give varied insights into love and marriage.