

# General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination

## August 2017

### English I

#### Part A

Q1.

- (a) This extract is from William Shakespeare's play "Othello" and is part of a soliloquy by Iago and refers to his plans to destroy Othello whom he hates for various reasons the most recent being that he has not been given the post of Lieutenant but was appointed the Ancient instead. The first four lines refer to Roderigo a rich young man whose love for Desdemona is used by Iago to obtain money – he is Iago's "purse". But Iago considers him to be a "fool" and "a snipe". He refers to Othello as "the Moor". This perhaps, is a racialist attitude. He also makes use of a suspicion that Othello has slept with his wife. At the same time he knows that Othello likes and trusts him. Thus he finds a source of money and apparent reasons for hating and wanting to harm Othello. His words show Iago to be untrustworthy, treacherous, unscrupulous, dishonest yet clever.
- (b) This extract is from the play "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare and the situation is the play within the play "Pyramus and Thisbe" followed by the comments of Theseus, Demetrius and Hippolyta who are watching the play. The wall which separated Pyramis and Thisbe is represented by an actor. The story has already been told to the bored audience and they expect the moon (another) actor to come in. The play is poorly done by simple workmen with no imagination and at the same time nothing is left for the audience to imagine for there is no dramatic illusion in the play within the play.
- (c) This extract is from the Russian play "The Seagull" by Anton Chekov and the words are those of Sotin, the brother of the popular actress Arkadina. Sotin is aging, has health problems, lives on his estate where the action of the play takes place and is disappointed over what he couldn't get in life, especially love. In this instance he is replying to Dorn, a doctor and guest, who has been advising him against his drinking and smoking habits which bring about such a change in him. But, Sotin's response is that he 'wants to live; he has missed out on what he considers to be real living and he tries to 'live' now with alcohol and cigarettes.
- (d) This extract is from the play "The House of Bernarda Alba" by the Spanish playwright Garcia Lorca and what is given here is part of a conversation between two of Bernarda's daughters Martirio and Amelia who are discussing certain gossipy facts about the family background of another girl from their village Adelaida, who hadn't come for their father's funeral. This type of talk is not allowed by their authoritative mother but the girls relish it and gather information from their maid Poncia and others. Martirio is fairly old and sickly and Adela the youngest full of life. Both along with their sisters are in love with the only suitable man around Pepe el Romano and all five are frustrated due to Bernarda's attitude.
- (e) The extract given here is from the play "Waiting for Godot" an absurd drama by Samuel Beckett. The chief speaker here is Pozzo and the comments come from the two tramps Estragon who hopes to get some money and Vladimir who makes sarcastic remarks in opposition to Estragon. Pozzo's talk of giving them something for being kind to him is just empty talk and nothing comes of it viz as nothing comes from anything that happens in the play.

2.

- (a) This extract from Charles Dickens' novel 'Great Expectations' gives Pip's impression of the manner in which the starving convict who had accosted him the day before in the grave - yard, hungrily gobbled up the food Pip had brought to him. The food stolen from his sister's larder included Christmas goodies but the convict hardly felt the taste due to his hunger and also because he feared being caught as he was an escaped convict. The comparison between man and dog is very apt and striking.
- (b) In this passage from Jane Austen's novel "Sense and Sensibility" Marianne Dashwood reacts to a good - natured but at the same time slightly ironic comment made by Elinor about the friendly, enthusiastic conversation she had had with Willoughby on his first visit. The day before Willoughby who was hitherto unknown to then, had brought (carried) Mariane back home when she hurt her ankle stumbling down a hill. Next morning he had called to see how she was. After a while Marianne in her usual, outgoing manner had talked freely in her usual uninhibited way. After Willoughby left Elinor had laughingly commented on the rapid progress of her friendship. The extract given is the hurt, sensitive reaction of Marianne to Elinors comment.
- (c) This extract is from Nadine Godimer's novel "July's People" and the occasion referred to here is what was called a "gumba gumba" in the native language. It was an entertainment organized in a native African village when a man with a battery - operated amplifier with a record - player attached dropped by and the people - both adults and children enjoyed themselves dancing, singing, drinking. The Smale children were as excited as the rest and that is how their parents were brought along. This incident focusses attention on the backwardness and conditions of life of native rural people in an African country colonized by whites.  
*+ Godimer's writing skill*
- (d) The conversation given in this extract from Nihal de Silva's novel "The Road from Elephant Pass", is between the Sri Lankan Army Captain. Wasantha Ratnayake and the LTTE cadre Kamala Velaithan who had to be handed over to the Army authorities in Colombo as she claimed to have some important information she was ready to give them. Unforeseen circumstances caused them to trek through jungle to get to Colombo. In this instance they were sheltering in a small shattered abandoned railway station and were continuing their conversation regarding themselves their ideas and attitudes. Both are biased yet open in what they express. These were early conversations which finally led to understanding.
3. This passage is from the short story "The Open Window" by Saki (H.H. Munro). Farmton is a neurotic visitor who is in the village for a health cure and the child is Vera the fifteen - year - old neice of Mrs. Sappleton to whom Framton has come with a letter of introduction from his sister. Vera who is deputising for her aunt till she comes down, has quickly summed - up the visitor and related a story about her aunt's 'tragedy' and he aunt's response to it. The story is a made - up incident based on a true situation. The aunt when she comes down looks through the open window to see if her husband and brother are returning. The girl stares too as part of her mischievous story and Framton scared and nervous looks too. The party that went out are seen returning, the scared Framton runs off and Vera, with more imaginative additions gets away with her clever jokes. This brings out one of Sakis favourite themes, one very suitable for Victorian attitude - the intelligence and ability of children to think and act on their own.
4. This extract is from "Portrait of Zimri" a character sketch from John Dryden's long poem "Absalom and Achitophel". It is written using the heroic couplet with consecutive lines, written in the iambic pentameters, rhyming. The king of England at this time was Charles II and there was division in the country regarding the succession to the throne Dryden saw this as a parallel to a Biblical story and wrote the poem to ridicule the kings enemies. Zimri in the poem is the Duke of Buckingham who is ironically called "all mankind's epitome" - a person who is changeful, dabbles in various things, seems to have all talents and abilities found among humans yet the final impression created is that of a foolish, untrustworthy man. Thus the lines present a humorous satirical character - sketch.

## Part B

## Drama

- (a) The character Othello, in Shakespeare's "Othello" has been described as "by his very nature being caught within a mix of power and utter simplicity without which Othello cannot be made plausible either as a role or as a play". Do you agree?

"Othello" differs from Shakespeare's other great tragedies in that it is a domestic tragedy depending on the character of its hero for its success.

Othello, though he serves in Venice, is a Moore, dark-skinned, coming from a back-ground full of danger, adventure and narrow escapes which he related and which attracted Desdemona. But at the same time he was well-born.

"I fetch my life and being from men of royal seige"

Thus bravery and prowess at war were in his blood. He was the General of the Venetian forces and the Duke had full confidence in him and even on the day of his marriage to Desdemona needed him to manage the expected Ollomite attack on Cyprus

Duke : "Valient Othello, we must straight employ you

Against the general enemy ...."

But brave and great as he is, there is another side to his character, On the 'social' side Othello is very simple lacks experience and understanding of human nature, is trustful, accepts, does not think far and is easily duped. He has had very little experience of female society and specially Venetian female high society. He also has the oriental ideas of female purity and is suspicious by nature.

These qualities make him an easy victim of the jealous scheming Iago's clever machinations. Everything said, explained and dishonestly 'proved' are accepted by Othello as 'truth'. His jealousy is roused, he feels betrayed and insulted, he does not have the common-sense to weigh the pros and cons and though he still loves Desdemona, in this war-trained manner he sees killing her as the only solution. The play and the character are dependent on each other and as such the statement given is acceptable.

- (b) Shakespeare's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' can be dismissed as a "weak and idle theme. No more yielding but a dream" to use his own words from the end of the play. Is this a fair assessment?

Shakespeare's romantic Comedy "A Midsummer Night's Dream" has at times been regarded as a light play done at short notice for entertainment at a function, perhaps a wedding at the home of a nobleman. Perhaps this is why the play is an enjoyable dramatic fantasy based on the theme of youthful, irrational love.

The plot involves love mix-ups with fairies and Puck involved, a play within a play badly done by a group of workmen, the characters are mediocre unlike the well-defined stand-out ones of Shakespeare's other plays and speeches are lengthy. All this is a fantasy dream which finally ends and reality prevails. Looked at from this angle the assessment quoted could be more or less accepted. But a deeper look reveals its real worth.

The interplay of love relationships is the capriciousness and transforming nature of love. Puck and Demetrius keep changing partners; Lysander and Hermia don't see eye

of women was such that it was imperative that they marry within a stipulated age stretching from the teens to the early twenties or remain old – maids dependent on family members. Professional or working women were not seen in this level of society so that matrimony and finding moneyed partners of acceptable Social status was the aim of all the young girls aided and encouraged by their mothers, family members and friends of the family.

In this hunt for partners the, girls had their own standards requirements and methods of guidance. Thus we see intelligent down-to-earth Elinor guided by sense and the emotional Marianne guided by sensibility and to Lucy Steel the guiding light is greed for money and status.

In 'Sense and Sensibility' three main male characters are available for the girls. These are the quiet Edward Ferrars dependent on a proud, domineering mother for his financial requirements, the handsome dashing Willoughby leading a gay irresponsible life in the expectancy of a rich inheritance and the quiet sensible Colonel Brandon regarded as old and tedious by Marianne and Willoughby.

The fortunes of these main characters face ups and downs as they progress or proceed in the matrimony dominated social setup. Extremes of sense and sensibility play a dominant role creating various difficulties and situations until finally the characters especially Elinor and Marianne realize the necessity of a balance between sense and sensibility in their thinking and actions.

(c) In 'July's People' Gordimer presents the stark reality of the gulf between 'Whites' and blacks' in South Africa, going beyond racism and inequality to focus on the irreconcilable differences in their understanding of the world. Do you agree?

Nadine Gordimer's 'July's People' deals with a period of turmoil in South Africa due to an imagined uprising of the indigenous 'blacks' against the 'whites' who were dominating their homeland. The story in particular deals with the Smales, Bam and Maureen and their three children and July their loyal, coloured servant. The Smales are a more enlightened middle – class white family who have treated July in a more human, enlightened manner than many of their white compatriots. Hence when the 'black' uprising started and the 'whites' were getting the worst of it July managed to bring them to the safety of his little village in a bakkie or small truck and tried to make them as comfortable as possible in his mothers hut.

But the 'black' 'white' difference, the 'master' 'servant' setup, was hard to overcome. The children, two boys Royce and Victor and a little girl Gina adapted to the new set – up quickly but not so the adults, specially Maureen. Back in his own village among his own people July was not a servant but a man of standing looked up to and respected by his people. Maureen's attempts to make friends with the local women, to work and act like them did not have much success. The bakkie and Bam's gun attracted the men; July used the bakkie keys on his won; permission was no longer needed. At the same time the locals became aware of the danger of harbouring whites and July's mother felt she needed to get back her own home. Thus though racism and inequality no longer existed in the village environment of July's home difference in outlook, attitudes actions in the way of living and thinking could not be overcome. Maureen's attempts to fit – in, to build a sexual bond with July only raises bitterness and a sense of having been humiliated. Finally there is nothing left but the wish to survive and this is seen in Maureen's desperate bid to reach the plane not knowing if it belongs to blacks or 'whites'

Thus 'July's People' shows that reconciliation between blacks and whites is impeded by the difference that exist in the understanding of the world in the two groups.

(d) Nihal de Silva's 'The Road from Elephant Pass' merely reinforces ethnic and gender stereotypes even in describing the central relationship between Kamala and Wasantha and hence trivialize the causes and consequences of the Lanka civil war." Discuss.

The novel 'The Road from Elephant Pass' gives the story of a Sinhala army officer and an LTTE woman cadre thrown into each others company due to unforeseen circumstances, fighting for survival in a long and dangerous trek

the effect of the Indian and western cultures and made worse by the fact that the baby was a boy.

In 'The Boarding House' too Mr. Doran entrapped into marrying a girl who he knows is below the level of his own family and aware that he is the victim of a scheming mother - daughter couple, has no choice but to give in due to moral, religious, and social norms.

- (c) Using detailed examples from at least three short stories in your selection describe how gender roles and stereo - types shape the lives of the men and women portrayed in these stories.

Three stories in the short story selection that shown how gender roles and stereotypes shape the lives of men and women portrayed in these stories, are "The Boarding House" "Action and Reaction" and "The Open Window"

To start with in "The Open Window" we see Vera the fifteen - years - old neice of Mrs Sappleton deputising for her aunt until this lady comes down to meet a caller- Mr. Framton Nuttel here for a nerve cure - who has come with a letter of introduction. Vera is quick and clever, is a good judge of people and has an unusual sense of humour and dramatic talent. With a few potent questions such as

"Do you know many of the people around here?"

"Then you know practically nothing about my aunt?"

she gauges the caller and quickly weaves the story about the aunt's great tragedy" and the reason for the window being kept open so late. What she says cleverly coincides with the return of the Mrs. Sappleton's husband and brother's and dog and makes the horror - stricken nerve patient run for his life while Vera with another

"romance at short notice" smooths out the situation

In "The Boarding House"

Mrs. Money the butcher's daughter, frees herself from a never - do - well husband, collects what remains of her wasted fortune, assumes the role of head of the family, starts a boarding house and plans to discharge family responsibilities which includes getting her daughter Polly "Well - married" The boarding house lodges people of the social class that would suit her. She finds the 'best catch', Mr. Doran and slowly but steadily entraps him. The daughter Polly, with never a word from Mrs. Mooney but with silent understanding plays her part to perfection Mr. Doran who is very moral but certainly not so sure that Polly is the right choice for him or would be acceptable to his family finds himself in a position where he can do nothing but marry Polly and make the best of it. Thus Mrs Mooney fulfils her obligations as head of the family

In "Action and Reaction" Loku Nenda is the paragon of virtue and regarded as such by her family circle but not its younger members represented by Mahinda and his sister. Her admiring family were quite certain that at the very least she could be sure of a place in the Tusitha heaven. Her "generosity and compassion and piety led her to adopt a little girl Kusuma, from a large, very poor family but in deference to the social status of Loku Nenda's family Kusuma was adopted as a servant. She was denied even a basic education; instead she was taught to crochet and make lace table mats for these were very much in demand. She was made to clean, sweep polish brass - ware; she was prevented from getting married; in short she was made to grow up into a woman after Loku Nenda own image full of Shardha, hard selfish practical - a hypocrite. As Loku Nenda grew old, sickly and frail Kusuma became more and more like her, with the same false Sharadha, selling Loku Nenda's precessions until the frail old woman did not even have her ear - studs bringing Loku Nendas oft repeated 'Karma' to bear upon her with a vengeance

## Poetry

- (a) Write a brief introduction to a selection of three poems in your syllabus which discusses the themes of political and social justice.

There poems in the syllabus which discuss the themes of political and social justice are the sonnet "My Dreams, My Works, Must Wait Till After Hell" by Gwendolyn Brooks, "Feast" by Edna St Vincent Millay and "A Day Off" from Africa" by Derek Walcott.

The Way to AnswerGeneral Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination,  
August 2017**English II**

3 Hours

2. (a)

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

(b)

**Empowerment of Women**

Education is considered to be  
 a key factor in emancipating  
 and empowering women. It gives,  
 not only knowledge but also  
 courage to face life's challenges.  
 It also opens job opportunities  
 enabling women to supplement family  
 income and social status.  
 Further, education will equip women  
 to par with men in population control  
 and nation building. Hence India included  
 women's education in the Sixth  
 Five Year Plan to remove illiteracy  
 among the 15-35 age group and organized  
 various programs to achieve this  
 target which would automatically lead  
 to other forms of development.  
 Earlier education was merely for  
 providing character building.  
 Its importance in nation building  
 was recognized latterly. But  
 still despite education females  
 regarded their choice of fields  
 study as home limited to social

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But slowly, woman's higher Yet and Often social Crimes the of necessitates and equalize justice.

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210 words

3.

- (1) The doctor is very observant and understanding, interested in the patients not as mere 'cases' but as people. The very first line shows this "I spy on my patients. Ought not a doctor to observe his patients by any means and from any stance, that he might the more fully assemble evidence". Further this shows his interest in his profession and his constant efforts to further his knowledge for the benefit of people.
- (2) The patient's state of mind is depicted by some of his responses and actions. For instance when the doctor presses the button and says "Down you go" the patient's response is "Yes down". There is also his rejection of the food and his demand for his shoes – indications of his wish to give up life.
- (3) The head nurse is so angry with the patient because of his responses to her attempts to feed him and treat him like any other patient – In fact regarding his death she says "It's a blessing" But in reality she does not understand that due to the terrible state he is in what he wants is to die and not to be kept alive.
- (4) Significance of bringing to the reader's focus the very clean and very white spot on the wall is to show the stereotyped treatment meted out to a desperately ill patient in a hygienic ward without real consideration for the patient himself as an individual with needs and wishes of his own.
- (5) What is depicted here is a stereotyped medical system under which the sick are all treated alike, according to the book while the fact that they are individuals with minds and feelings of their own is callously ignored.

4.

- (1) The marriage described in the poem is one in which the wife has had no life of her own but has slaved for the self-centred husband and looked after the children and the home she has lived "in deference to" his selfish demands.
- (2) The reasons as to how the marriage lasted for thirty long years are that she was meek and accepted the type of life she led; that she was duty conscious, tolerant and forgiving; that "he brought the money in" and that she liked him "she grieved for him with a real grief" and missed him when he died.
- (3) The social class of the couple is depicted through the type of life each leads. The man apparently tries to live well above his station in life getting comforts entertaining (the reference to guests) drinking, smoking, making a show of wealth at Christmas time and on birthday.

"And he brought Belleek and Waterford for birthdays;

rings and rare scents for Christmas ...."

Went for "dinner dances"

On the other hand the wife worked like any low-income-group woman leaving the best of everything to the man

"the rocking chair was his, the window seat  
the firm side of the mattress ...."

Thus, they must have belonged to the lower muddle class with the man pretending to be from an upper class.

- (4) The words "gassy" and "sorely" reflect the type of life each led. The man's pretence of society life and its emptiness when he dies at fifty is reflected in the use of "gassy" "Sorely" reflects the woman dependence on whatever help he gave financially which she would now miss and also the fact that she was dependent on him and also liked him.
- (5) For thirty years the woman had led a life of drudgery while the man was looked after and enjoyed the best of life. After his death she missed him and grieved for six months during which time she may have enjoyed a more relaxed life. She had done what considered to be her duty. Hence it was not wrong for her to feel relieved.