

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



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**UGRC 110: ACADEMIC WRITING (3 CREDITS)**  
**FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS: 2010/2011**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

**PLEASE WRITE YOUR LECTURER'S NAME, GROUP NUMBER AND LECTURE TIME  
ON YOUR ANSWER BOOKLET**

**ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS IN SECTIONS A, B, C, AND D.**

**SECTION D SHOULD BE ANSWERED ON THE QUESTION PAPER  
AND FASTENED TO THE ANSWER BOOKLET**

**TIME ALLOWED: THREE HOURS**

**SECTION A (30 Marks)**  
**SUMMARY WRITING**

**READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE CAREFULLY AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON IT.**

Were they pressed hard enough, most men would probably confess that political freedom – that is to say, the right to speak freely and to act in opposition – is a noble ideal rather than a practical necessity. As the case for freedom is generally put to-day, the argument lends itself to this feeling. It is made to appear that, whereas each man claims his freedom as a matter of right, the freedom he accords to other men is a matter of toleration. Thus, the defence of freedom of opinion tends to rest not on its substantial, beneficial, and indispensable consequences, but on somewhat eccentric, a rather vaguely benevolent, attachment to an abstraction.

It is all very well to say with Voltaire, "I wholly disapprove of what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say it," but as a matter of fact most men will not defend to the death the rights of other men: If they disapprove sufficiently what other men say, they will somehow suppress those men if they can.

So, if this is the best that can be said for liberty of opinion, that a man must tolerate his opponents because everyone has a "right" to say what he pleases, then we shall find that liberty of opinion is a luxury, safe only in pleasant times when men can be tolerant because they are not deeply and vitally concerned.



Yet actually, as a matter of historic fact, there is a much stronger foundation for the great constitutional right of freedom of speech, and as a matter of practical human experience there is a much more compelling reason for cultivating the habits of free men. We take; it seems to me, a naïvely self-righteous view when we argue as if the right of our opponents to speak were something that we protect because we are magnanimous, noble, and unselfish. The compelling reason why, if liberty of opinion did not exist, we should have to invent it, why it will eventually have to be restored in all civilized countries where it is now suppressed, is that we must protect the right of our opponents to speak because we must hear what they have to say.

We miss the whole point when we imagine that we tolerate the freedom of our political opponents as we tolerate a howling baby next door, as we put up with the blasts from our neighbor's radio because we are too peaceable to heave a brick through the window. If this were all there is to freedom of opinion, that we are too good-natured or too timid to do anything about our opponents and our critics except to let them talk, it would be difficult to say whether we are tolerant because we are magnanimous or because we are lazy, because we have strong principles or because we lack serious conviction, whether we have the hospitality of an inquiring mind or the indifference of an empty mind. And so, if we truly wish to understand why freedom is necessary in a civilised society, we must begin by realizing that, because freedom of discussion improves our own opinions, the liberties of other men are our own vital necessity.

We are much closer to the essence of the matter, not when we quote Voltaire, but when we go to the doctor and pay him to ask us the most embarrassing questions and to prescribe the most disagreeable diet. When we pay the doctor to exercise complete freedom of speech about the cause and cure of our stomach ache, we do not look upon ourselves as tolerant and magnanimous, and worthy to be admired by ourselves. We have enough common sense to know that if we threaten to put the doctor in jail because we do not like the diagnosis and the prescription it will be unpleasant for the doctor, to be sure, but equally unpleasant for our own stomach ache. That is why even the most ferocious dictator would rather be treated by a doctor who was free to think and speak the truth than by his own Minister of Propaganda. For there is a point, the point at which things really matter, where the freedom of others is no longer a question of their right but of our own need.

The point at which we recognize this need is much higher in some men than in others. The totalitarian rulers think they do not need the freedom of an opposition: They exile, imprison, or shoot their opponents. We have concluded on the basis of practical experience, which goes back to Magna Carta and beyond, that we need the opposition. We pay the opposition salaries out of the public treasury.

In so far as the usual apology for freedom of speech ignores this experience, it becomes abstract and eccentric rather than concrete and human. The emphasis is generally put on the right to speak, as if all that mattered were that the doctor should be free to go out into the park and explain to the vacant air why I have a stomachache. Surely that is a miserable caricature of the great civic right which men have bled and died for. What really matters is



that the doctor should tell *me* what ails me, that I should listen to him; that if I do not like what he says I should be free to call in another doctor; and that then the first doctor should have to listen to the second doctor; and that out of all the speaking and listening, the give-and-take of opinions, the truth should be arrived at.

This is the creative principle of freedom of speech, not that it is a system for the tolerating of error, but that it is a system for finding the truth. It may not produce the truth or the whole truth all the time, or often, or in some cases ever. But if the truth can be found, there is no other system which will normally and habitually find so much truth. Until we have thoroughly understood this principle, we shall not know why we must value our liberty, or how we can protect and develop it.

**SOURCE:**

Walter Lippmann (1990) In: *Arguing in Communities* Gary Layne Hatch pp 24- 26, London: Mayfield Publishing Company.

**QUESTIONS**

1. State the arguments advanced by the writer.
2. Develop an outline based on the passage.
3. Write a summary of not more than 200 words based on the outline.
4. Give a suitable title to the passage.

**SECTION B (30 Marks)**  
**ESSAY WRITING**

**ANSWER ONLY ONE OF THE QUESTIONS FROM THIS SECTION. YOUR ANSWER SHOULD NOT BE LESS THAN 450 WORDS.**

5. 'The oil-find in Ghana is a blessing.' Discuss.
6. Violent crimes and armed robbery seem to be on the rise in Ghana in recent times. Discuss what factors may account for this and suggest some practical measures to control the menace.
7. Assess the influence of the mass media on the behaviour and attitude of the youth in Ghana today.

**SECTION C (10 Marks)**

**WRITE SHORT NOTES ON ANY TWO OF THE FOLLOWING:**

8. The relationship between reading and writing.
9. The characteristics of a good paragraph
10. Plagiarism
11. The thesis statement
12. The topic sentence





## SECTION D (30 Marks)

**READ THE PASSAGES BELOW CAREFULLY AND CORRECT ERRORS IN SPELLING, GRAMMAR AND USAGE. INSERT ANY MISSING PUNCTUATION MARKS.**

**1. PASSAGE A**

To get to it I had to walk through neighbourhoods where not even the carcasses of rusted cars on blocks or the death traps of discarded appliances was parted with, so that the yards of the borderline poor, people who lived not in a huge building as I did, but in there own decrepit little houses, looked like a reversed archaeological cite, incongruous next to the pillared palace of the Paterson Public Library.

The library must have being built during Paterson, New Jersey's, boom years as the model industrial city of the North. Enough marble was used in its construction to have kept several Michelangelos busily satisfied for a lifetime. Two roaring lion, taller than a grammar school girl, greeted those brave enough to seek answers there. Another memorable detail about the facade of this most important place to me were the phrases carved deeply into walls – perhaps the imortal words of Greek philosophers – I could not tell since I was developing an astigmatism at that time and could only make out the lovely geometric designs they made.

All during the school week I both anticipated and feared the long walk to the library because it took me through enemy territory. The black girl Lorraine, who had chose me to hate and terrorize with threats at school, lived in one of the gloomy little houses that circled the library like sackclothed supplicants. Lorraine would eventually carry out her violence against me by beating me up in a confrontation formally announced through the school grapevine so that for days I leaved with a panic that have rarely been equalled in my adult life, since now I can get grownups to listen to me, and at that time disaster had to be a *fait accompli* for a teacher or parent to get involved.

Why did Lorraine hate me for reasons neither one of us fully understood at the time. All I remember was that our sixth-grade teacher seemed to favour me, and her way of showing it was by having me tutor “slow” students in spelling grammar. Lorraine, older and bigger than myself since she was repeating the grade was subjected to this ritual humiliation, which involve sitting in the hallway, obviously separated from the class – one of us for being smart, the other for the opposite reason. Lorraine resisted my efforts to teach her the basic rules of spelling. She would hiss her threats at me, addressing me as “You little Spic.”

Her hospitality sent shudders through me. But baffling as it was, I also accepted it as inevitable. She would bit me up. I told my mother and the teacher, and they both reassured me in vague adult terms that a girl like Lorraine would not dare get in trouble again. She had a history of problems that made him a likely candidate for reform school. But I and Lorraine knew that the violence she harboured had found a target: me – the skinny Puerto Rican girl whose father was away with the navy most of the time and whose mother did not speak English; I was the perfect choice.

## 2. PASSAGE B

Human communication is hardly limited to former language; nonverbal communication of mood or intentions also play a large and increasingly recognised role in human affairs. We make inferences about people’s feelings and taughts, especially those of very young children, from many kinds of communication, verbal and nonverbal; we should similarly use all available evidence in exploring the possibility of thoughts or feelings in other species. When animals leave in a group and depend on each other for food, shelter, warning of dangers, or help in raising the young, they need to be able to judge correctly the moods and intentions of there companions. This extends to animals of other species as well, especially predators or pray. It is important for the animal to know whether a predator is likely to attack or whether



the prey is so alert and likely to escape that a chase is not worth the effort. Communication may either inform or disinform, but in either case it can reveal something about the conscious thinking of the communicator.

Vervet monkeys for example, has at least three different categories of alarm call, which were described by Struhsaker (1967) after extensive periods of observation. He found that when a leopard or other large meat eating animal approached the monkeys gave one type of alarm call; quite a different call was used at the sight of a martial eagle, one of the few flying predators that capture vervet monkeys. A third type of alarm call was given when a large snake approached the group. These degree of variety in alarm calls is not unique, although it has been described in only a few kinds of animals. For example, squirrels of western north america use different types of calls when frightened by a ground predator or by a predatory bird such as a hawk (Owings and Leger 1980).

The question is whether the vervet monkey's three types of alarm calls convey to other monkey's information about the type of predator. Such information is important because the animal defence tactics, or strategies, are different in the three cases. When a leopard or other large carnivore approaches, the monkeys climb into trees. But leopards are good climbers, so the monkeys can escape them only by climbing out onto the smallest branches, which are too weak to support a leopard. When the monkeys see a martial eagle, it move into thick vegetation close to a tree trunk or at ground level. Thus the tactics that help them escape from a leopard make them highly vulnerable to a martial eagle, and vice versa. In response to the threat of a large snake they stands on their hind legs and look around to locate the snake, then simply move away from it, either along the ground or by climbing into a tree