

End-Semester Exam

Total Marks: 60

29 November 2025

**1. Answer any four of the following questions.****(5 marks x 4 = 20 marks; guideline: 100-200 words each)**

- a. What is a leitmotif? Define and provide one example with a proper explanation.
- b. Plays usually do not have narrators. What is the impact of the absence of a narrator on how the reader makes sense of the text?
- c. List and explain five features of language in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* and offer examples of each to illustrate how they work.
- d. What are typified and individualized characters? Explain and cite one example of each.
- e. Nigel Jenkins writes that the haiku
  - i. "cultivates the Zen ideal of according an object the kind of attention that enables us not so much to look *at* it but to look *as* it – or to commune directly with it, as co-participant in the wonder of existence."
  - ii. considers "the 'spiderness' of the spider ... not the author's esteemed ability to write about spiders."

Explain what Jenkins means, using an example from the haiku written by Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih.

**2. Answer any two of the following questions.****(20 marks x 2 = 40 marks; guideline: 800-1000 words each)**

- a. Amrita Pritam writes a poem urging her fellow Punjabis to recall community bonds and overcome the hatred that accompanied Partition. G. Shyamala chooses the short story as the medium to depict and critique the everyday realities of caste in Telangana. Agha Shahid Ali addresses profound questions about the politics of language and what that does to history, society, and culture through a ghazal written in English. Salman Rushdie writes *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* partly in response to the fatwa against him.

Why do novelists, poets, and playwrights choose creative writing to highlight and critique social and political realities? Using the texts mentioned above, write an essay exploring the features of creative writing that makes it an appropriate vehicle for such representation.

- b. What is self-referentiality? What impact does it have on the text? How does it shape the way you read the text?

Write an essay on self-referentiality using the following texts: "Broken Love," "The Woman in Black," "Beyond English," and *Silence! The Court is in Session*.

- c. "I want to talk here about the difference between imagination and wishful thinking, because it's important both in writing and in living. Wishful thinking is thinking cut loose from reality, a self-indulgence that is often merely childish, but may be dangerous. Imagination, even in its wildest flights, is not

detached from reality: imagination acknowledges reality, starts from it, and returns to it to enrich it. Don Quixote indulges his longing to be a knight till he loses touch with reality and makes an awful mess of his life. That's wishful thinking. Miguel Cervantes, by working out and telling the invented story of a man who wishes he were a knight, vastly increased our store of laughter and of human understanding. That's imagination. Wishful thinking is Hitler's Thousand-Year Reich. Imagination is the Constitution of the United States.

A failure to see this difference is in itself dangerous. If we assume that imagination has no connection with reality but is mere escapism, and therefore distrust it and suppress it, it will be crippled, perverted, it will fall silent or speak untruth. The imagination, like any basic human capacity, needs exercise, discipline, training, in childhood and lifelong."

These are the words of Ursula le Guin, an acclaimed American writer of science fiction. What do you think of le Guin's thoughts on the exercise of the imagination? Write an essay addressing the question of the imagination using *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* and *Silence! The Court is in Session*.

[Context: *Don Quixote* is a seventeenth-century Spanish novel written by Miguel de Cervantes. Don Quixote is the aging hero of the novel. He believes (quite erroneously) that he is a knight and sets out on a quest for adventure and romance.]

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**Instructions:**

1. Absolutely no bullet-points. Write in full sentences and paragraphs.
2. Do not summarise the plot because that adds nothing new. Your response is expected to focus on your own thoughts and analysis, supported by evidence from the texts.
3. Remember to explain your examples, ideas, and arguments clearly and thoroughly.