

UPC: 62031901

Name of the course: B.A. Programme (LOCF)

Name of the paper: English Language Through Literature

Semester: 3

Marks: 75

Time limit: 3+1 (one hour reserved for downloading of question paper, scanning and uploading of answer sheets)

The paper contains 3 unseen passages.

Answer any three of the following questions:

Questions 1 and 2 are based on passage 1.

Questions 3 and 4 are based on passage 2.

Questions 5 and 6 are based on passage 3.

All questions carry equal marks (25 Marks x 3 = 75 Marks).

Passage 1: [745 words in length]

My father's name was Pandharinath. He was a contractor by profession, but he had so generous a heart that he was called Karna, the epitome of generosity in the Mahabharata. An extremely kindhearted man, he had no craving for wealth. His only wish in life was to make people happy...

In those days, it was the custom to keep women at home, behind the threshold. The honour enjoyed by a family was in proportion to the restrictions imposed on the women of the house. When no one could see even a nail of the woman thus confined within the four walls of the house, then this 'honour' became the talk of the town—a byword among the relatives and friends in the surrounding villages. Then people would tell each other, how one Pandharinath Mistry kept his wife completely hidden in the house and how even the rays of the sun did not know her. My father had locked up my aai in his house, like a bird in a cage. Whatever money he earned, he would squander away. While his contracts lasted, there would be plenty of food, clothes and fun. But when he was out of work, we had to go without food even. My father gradually became

an expert in his field. Even then, it used to be awfully difficult at times to get a little kerosene to light a single lamp in the house. My father loved to drink tea. Even during his lean days, he refused to go without tea. He would boil tea leaves without any sugar and happily drink the strong bitter brew. But he would never go without tea. My aai would always fight with him. ‘What’s the use of earning so much money?’ she would grumble. ‘You don’t even have a hut in the village. What’s the point? You earn so much and here we are, without even a few morsels. What will the children do?’ Then my father tried to ‘educate’ her, ‘Come on, can you only get happiness by hoarding money? I have earned a lot of merit, you see! Just as children inherit their parents’ wealth, they also inherit their merits and sins. God sees to it that they do so. Don’t you worry! Our children will be comfortable. If I do well unto others, I will earn a lot of merit. Then they will automatically get a share of my merit. They will be quite well off. Why do you unnecessarily worry about such petty matters? I don’t care for money.’

My aai must have felt so oppressed, so suffocated! And that must have made her so insensitive, so cruel towards the others. She could never maintain good relations with her relatives, not even with her own mother and sister. She could never get along with people. She was basically a very difficult person, with scant regard for others. My father was the exact opposite of her. He loved people far more than he loved money. Thus they were two opposite poles. They never got along well with each other. Aai used to expose my father’s so-called capital, that is, his sense of morality. If I was around, she used the opportunity to push a few lessons down my throat too, ‘What have we earned with such values? We followed the path of morality all right but what have we gained? What has morality earned for us?’ ‘Morality! What rubbish!’ She would say angrily. ‘The world belongs to the man with money. Don’t ever be taken in by your father’s lovely words. There’s no merit, no sin. It’s only money that matters. Money whitewashes your sins. It’s money that brings fame. Nobody is bothered about how you earned it. Be rich and people will willingly pluck ticks off your body. You can earn while you are young. Earn money you must, whichever way, then your children won’t have to worry.’ She often told me, ‘Baby, you have only one brother. It is your duty to help him!’ She would go on and on like this. I wonder whether this was her true nature or whether her poverty-stricken life made her speak in this way. Actually, she learnt to speak out only because she travelled to many cities with my father. It was staying in the cities that had taught her how to live. Whichever city my father went to, the only thought he had in his mind was of helping his people to survive.

1. This question has two subparts, A+B. Both have to be answered:

A. In passage 1, the behavior and personality traits of the writer’s mother and father are shaped by gender inequality. Comment on the given statement (in 250-300 words) with reference to the events and conversations described by the writer. (10 marks)

B. Imagine you are the writer’s mother. Write a diary entry (in 350-500 words) describing the fight that you had with your husband (the writer’s father), and the way his behavior impacts you and your family. Keep in mind that entries in personal diaries are typically in the informal register. (15 marks)

2. This question has two subparts, A+B. Both have to be answered:

A. In passage 1, the writer describes her parents, their character, personality traits and behaviour. Based on these descriptions, assess how she feels about her mother. Refer to the reasons she offers for her mother's behavior, the adjectives she uses to describe her, her views about her parents' relationship to substantiate your arguments. Your answer should be in about 250-300 words. (10 marks)

B. Imagine you are the writer, and have to write a biographical note on your father. Based on the information given, prepare a biographical piece in 350-500 words (describe his personality, facts about his life such as information about his family and work etc). (15 marks)

Passage 2 [725 words]:

UMA RAO

SURESH RAO

CONSTABLE MUNSWAMY

ANARKALI

Sanskrit mantras fade in, the one chanted during a Hindu wedding. Fire. The sound of the fire grows louder, drowning the mantras. A scream. The flames engulf the scream.

Interior. The office of the Superintendent of Police.

Whirring of fan (stays throughout the scene). Rustle of paper. Footsteps approaching.

MUNSWAMY. You may see the hijra now if you wish, madam.

UMA. Will she talk to me?

MUNSWAMY (chuckling). She! Of course it will talk to you. We will beat it up if it doesn't.

Rustle of paper. Pause.

Madam, if you don't mind me saying, why is a lady from a respectable family like yourself . . . ? There are so many other cases. All murder cases. Man killing wife, wife killing man's lover, brother killing brother. And that shelf is full of dowry death cases. Shall I ask the peon to dust all these files?

UMA. No. Maybe some other time. I think this particular one is of interest to me at this time.

MUNSWAMY. If you don't mind me saying, what is the use of talking with it? It will only tell you lies. I will bring it.

UMA. No. Can I meet her in there?

Prison gates clang shut.

Interior. The male section of Central Jail, Bangalore.

Banging of metal plates on the floor. Quite a din. Munswamy runs his stick on the bars of the prison.

MUNSWAMY. Quiet! Quiet!! (A whack on an arm followed by a yowl.) Quiet, I say. You sons of . . . loafers. Do you know who this madam is? She is the daughter-in-law of the Deputy Commissioner and the wife of our Superintendent!

Silence.

(Taps on bars with his stick.) Now come on, come on. Do namaskara to madam.

Silence.

UMA. Er—namaskara.

A chorus of meek male namaskars.

MUNSWAMY. Madam, once again I request you to take up some other case. Look at this man. He cut off his wife's nose. He will give you an interesting story.

UMA. I would like to meet Anarkali.

Titters from the prisoners.

Where is she?

MUNSWAMY. Anarkali! Come here.

ANARKALI (from far). No! I don't want to meet any journalist.

MUNSWAMY. I will come inside and beat you up, you worthless pig!

ANARKALI. I am not in the mood.

UMA. I am not a journalist.

ANARKALI. I don't care! I said I am not in the mood!

MUNSWAMY. Why do you want to bring this shame on your family, madam? I beg of you go home.

UMA. Anarkali! Please, help me.

ANARKALI. Go away!!

MUNSWAMY (nearly in tears). Madam! I beg of you! If Sir finds out I let you in here, he will have me transferred!

Silence.

UMA. All right. Perhaps I better look at some other . . . case.

MUNSWAMY. Yes! Come, madam, you can sit comfortably in the office. Will you like some tea or Pepsi?

ANARKALI. Wait. (Approaches.) Are you really the wife of the big Munswamy? Or is this man lying so I will talk to you?

MUNSWAMY. Go away. Madam is no longer interested in your filthy lies.

ANARKALI. I didn't kill her. She was my sister!

MUNSWAMY (hits the bars with his stick). Ai! Go back! (Hits harder.) Back!

ANARKALI. Would you kill your sister?

MUNSWAMY (hits the bars again). Back! Beat it! Kick the hijra!

The other inmates begin to beat Anarkali up.

ANARKALI (hitting back at first). Ai! Don't touch me!

The other inmates scream with pleasure as they beat up Anarkali.

Aaagh! Aaaagh!

UMA (her voice almost drowned by the anarchy). Stop! Stop it!

Fade out. Interior. The bedroom of Suresh and Uma.

A Hindi movie fight scene blaring from a TV set in the next room.

SURESH. That is just the sort of name a hijra would fancy. (Chuckles.) Anarkali!

UMA. Why do they put her in a male prison?

SURESH. They are as strong as horses. Wear the purple one.

UMA. I wore that last night.

SURESH. Again.

Silence. Uma opens the wardrobe.

Good.

UMA. She is being beaten up by all the male prisoners.

SURESH. How do you know?

UMA. She told me. (Takes a nightie off a hanger.)

Munswamy brought her into your office, just as you instructed.

SURESH (gets up). Good. (Goes towards the bathroom.) Don't believe a word of anything it says. They are all liars. (Opens the bathroom door and steps in.)

3. This question has two subparts, A+B. Both have to be answered:

A. In Passage 2, what are the different attitudes to the character of Anarkali? Would you say the class/gender of the various characters makes them respond differently? Frame your answer (in 250-300 words) quoting words, phrases or statements from the passage that allow you to draw your conclusions. (10 marks)

B. Imagine you are Uma from the dramatic extract in Passage 2. Write an entry for your research journal (in 350-500 words) recording your observations and comments about the conditions in prison for inmates. Keep in mind that a research journal should use a formal register. (15 marks)

4. This question has two subparts, A+B. Both have to be answered:

A. In the dramatic extract (Passage 2), Uma is seen in two different contexts and spaces (the prison and the bedroom). Describe her behaviour in each of these spaces and the differences you observe. Analyse how the other characters respond to Uma. Answer in 250-300 words. (10 marks)

B. Continue the dramatic extract in Passage 2 further (350-500 words), imagining that Uma has been able to manage a short interview with Anarkali for her research. Keep in mind the

existing characterisation and the conflict in the plot. Use dialogue and stage directions to develop the plot further. (15 marks)

Passage 3 [748 words]:

—What do you mean not enough rooms? I said to Arijit Banerjee, the lobby manager of the Goa Marriott.

—See, what I am trying to explain is... Arijit began in his modulated, courteous voice when mom cut him off.

—It's my daughter's wedding. Are you going to shame us? she said, her volume loud enough to startle the rest of the reception staff.

—No, ma'am. Just a shortage of twenty rooms. You booked a hundred. We promised eighty then. We hoped to give more but the chief minister had a function and...

—What do we tell our guests who have come all the way from America? Mom said.

—If I may suggest, there is another hotel two kilometers away, Arijit said.

—We have to be together. You are going to ruin my daughter's wedding for some sarkaari function? my mother said, bosom high, breath heavy – classic warning signs of an upcoming storm.

—Mom, go sit with Dad, please. I will sort this out, I said. Mom glared at me. How could I, the bride, be doing all this in the first place? I should be worried about my facials, not room allocations.

—The boy's side arrives in less than three hours. I can't believe this, she muttered, walking to the sofa at the center of the lobby. My father sat there along with Kamla bua, his elder sister. Other uncles and aunts occupied the remaining couches in the lobby – in a Mehta takeover of the Marriott. My mother looked at my father, a level two glare. It signified: 'Will you ever take initiative in life?'

My father shifted in his seat. I re-focused on the lobby manager.

—What can be done now, Arijit? I said. —My family is all here.

We had come on the morning flight from Delhi. The Gulatis, or the boy's side, would take off from Mumbai at three p.m. and land in Goa at four p.m. Twenty hired Innovas would bring them to the hotel by five. I checked the time. 2:30 p.m.