

UPC : 52031104

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

Name of the paper : English Language Through Literature

Semester : I

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.

Students will attempt any FOUR out of SIX questions.

All questions carry equal marks (18.75 Marks x 4 = 75 Marks)

Answers for all questions for subpart A to be written in 250-300 words and for subpart B in 300-350 words.

Questions 1 and 2 are based on

Passage/Extract 1

Questions 3 and 4 are based on Passage/Extract 2

Questions 5 and 6 are based on Passage/Extract 3

Passage/Extract 1:

My room-mate Raji was the only daughter of a wealthy medical practitioner and a pampered child. It was for some lessons in discipline that she was sent by her parents to the boarding school. But she believed in teaching the nuns a lesson and somehow punishing them for ‘their holier than thou’ attitude.

The assistant boarding mistress scolded Raji whenever an opportunity presented itself, which was as often as twice a day. Raji sulked nearly all the time...

My room-mates nicknamed me Ulba and began to pamper me with little gifts of sweets and ice-cream. They wanted me to get for myself better clothes and forced me to write to my father in Calcutta asking for a silk frock for my tenth birthday.

They did not know how it hurt my pride to do such a thing. I knew well that I would fall in my father's esteem by revealing desire for fancy clothes. They came from a background very different from mine. They thought it normal for children to wear good clothes and tie satin ribbons in their hair. They wanted to see me look as pretty as their sisters and cousins who were of my age.

My grandmother used to send someone or other once in two months to bring me to Nalapat for a week-end. When after one of those short stays I left home, my escort was my grand-uncle's youngest brother-in-law. My grandmother wanted him to get for me from the city bazaar some cloth for the frock which I was to wear for my birthday.

...The salesman pulled down on the counter, bales and bales of beautiful poplins with prints of flowers and animals. Is there nothing cheaper, asked my uncle in a loud, carrying voice and the people walking along the road, slowed down to see what was going on. I want for this child something really cheap, shouted the uncle. I felt humiliated. I wanted like Sita to disappear into the bowels of the earth. Finally some printed mill-khaddar was brought out which suited our pockets. A blue on white design which cost us two and a half rupees.

When it was shown to my room-mates they hated its coarseness. Poor little Ulba, they said. But I comforted them by telling them that the frock from Calcutta would anyway be reaching me before the birthday. On the eve of my birthday they took me out for shopping, saying that Sarada needed to get some gift for her cousin Satyavati. Then to my utter amazement I saw the loveliest fabrics laid out on the counters, and my eyes took in with a wild greed the flamboyance of the colours, and the gleam of the midday sun on the silks and taffetas.

If you were Satyavati which would you choose for a dress, asked Sarada. After a long pause during which I touched the softness and the cool of the silks, I spoke: this one in heliotrope of course. It had clusters of small white flowers. Sarada bought it, and, then exhausted by the day's rounds, we returned to the school. When I woke up on my tenth birthday my roommates sang the Happy Birthday song to me and presented me with the beautiful cloth I had chosen for Satyavati. Then the tears came, and I wept hiding my face in Sarada's hair. You will look so pretty in this violet-coloured frock, said Meenakshi.

The Mother Superior had sent for me, and the message frightened me, because I had arranged for some ice-cream to be smuggled into the school over the wall that evening. But when I went up to her room; she only handed me a packet of embroidered handkerchiefs and wished me many happy returns of the day.

The Calcutta frock arrived a month late and as it was chosen by my busy father's secretary it turned out to be terribly oversized. I put it away in my black box under the towels and the bed-sheets.

Q1. This question has two subparts, A+B. Both have to be answered.

A. Who do you think cares most deeply about the narrator and her feelings – her grandmother, her father, or her friends? Give a reasoned answer (in about 250-300 words) with reference to Passage 1. (8.75 marks)

B. Imagine you are the writer of Passage I, and you decide to have a heart-to-heart conversation with your grandmother about how you felt humiliated by the behaviour of your uncle at the cloth shop. Draft a conversation in about 300-350 words, comprising dialogues, stage directions/non-verbal cues. (10 marks)

Q2. This question has two subparts, A+B. Both have to be answered.

A. In Passage I, study the narrator's descriptions of Raji, and write a short essay (in about 200-250 words) outlining the narrator's attitude towards Raji, and what that reveals about the narrator's own personality. (8.75 marks)

B. Imagine you are Raji, in Passage I. In a short descriptive passage (in about 300-350 words), describe your experiences at boarding school. (10 marks)

Passage/Extract 2:

What's a guy like you doing here?
Are you plotting a crime?
Did you get it in your head to go into that house
silently, forcing open a window
or via the kitchen door?
You're not the king of parks and gardens anymore,
And your face is in the police archives
and just pushing a button on the computer spits out
A photo of you, front
and profile.

You are not the king of parks anymore, listen up, a button
And you fall between the teeth of the machine, your mug
in the eyes of the world, sergeants of criminal and
forensic squads, nurses and photographers, expert medical

examiners and broad shoulders guarding
the gates of paradise:
twilight shadows
that will try to avert a new fall. Shadows that say:
stay out of trouble, sonofabitch, keep walking straight under
the floodlights
and don't look back.

Q3. This question has two subparts, A and B. Both have to be answered.

A. In Extract 2, the poet employing a particular style assumes the voice and tone of authority. Do you think that the poet agrees with the authority or questions the power of authority? Give a reasoned answer. (250-300 words) (8.75 marks)

B. Imagine you are the person addressed by the poem. Write a short essay of 300-350 words about how you feel if you were the recipient of the commands given in the poem. (10 marks)

Q4. This question has two subparts, A and B. Both have to be answered.

A. Extract 2 ends with a command "keep walking straight under the floodlights and don't look back." What is the significance of the command? Discuss in 250-300 words. (8.75 marks)

B. In Extract 2, the poet successfully challenges the commonsense and general assumptions regarding the homeless by showing how the homeless are pushed around by others. Imagine you are a homeless person. Write a piece of 300-350 words (as a part of an essay or narrative fragment of a story) describing how your daily life is. (10 marks)

Passage/Extract 3 (486 words):

When Elizabeth was a beautiful princess, she lived in a castle and had expensive princess clothes. She was going to marry a prince named Ronald. Unfortunately, a dragon smashed her castle, burned all her clothes with his fiery breath, and carried off Prince Ronald. Elizabeth decided to chase the dragon and get Ronald back. She looked all over for something to wear but the only thing she could find that was not burnt was a paper bag. So, she put on the paper bag and followed the dragon. He was easy to follow because he left a trail of burnt forests and horses' bones. Finally, Elizabeth came to a cave with a large door that had a huge knocker on it. She took hold of the knocker and banged on the door. The dragon stuck his nose out the door and said, 'Well a princess! I love to eat princesses but I have already eaten a whole castle today. I am

a very busy dragon. Come back tomorrow.’ He slammed the door so fast that Elizabeth almost got her nose caught. ‘Is it true’, said Elizabeth, ‘That you can burn up ten forests with your fiery breath?’ ‘Oh yes’, said the dragon and he took a huge deep breath and breathed out so much fire that he burnt up fifty forests. ‘Fantastic’, said Elizabeth and the dragon took another huge breath and breathed out so much fire that he burnt up one hundred forests. ‘Magnificent’, said Elizabeth and the dragon took another huge breath but this time nothing came out. The dragon didn’t even have enough fire left to cook a meatball. Elizabeth said, ‘Dragon is it true that you can fly around the world in just ten seconds?’ ‘Why yes’, said the dragon and jumped up and flew all the way around the world in just ten seconds. He was very tired when he got back but Elizabeth shouted, ‘Fantastic do it again!’ So the dragon jumped up and flew around the whole world in just twenty seconds. When he got back, he was too tired to talk and he lay down and went right to sleep. Elizabeth whispered very softly, ‘Hey dragon.’ The dragon didn’t move at all. She lifted up the dragon’s ear and put her head right inside. She shouted as loud as she could, ‘Hey dragon!’ The dragon was so tired he didn’t even move. Elizabeth walked right over the dragon and opened the door to the cave. There was Prince Ronald. He looked at her and said, ‘Boy, are you a mess! You smell like ashes; your hair is all tangled and you are wearing a dirty old paper bag. Come back when you’re dressed like a real princess.’ ‘Ronald’, said Elizabeth, ‘your clothes are really pretty and your hair is all neat. You look like a real prince but you are a bum.’ They didn’t get married after all.

Q5. This question has two subparts, A and B. Both have to be answered.

A. What kind of story is this? Can you identify the genre? Is this story different from other stories of this kind? How? Discuss in 250-300 words. (8.75 marks)

B. Imagine you are Ronald. Continue the conversation between Ronald and Elizabeth from where the extract ends. Write it in any form of your choice in 300-350 words. (10 marks)

Q6. This question has two subparts, A and B. Both have to be answered.

A. How does Elizabeth defeat the dragon? What kinds of weapons does she use? Comment critically. (250-300 words) (8.75 marks)

B. Elizabeth rescues Ronald, and he does not show any gratitude, commenting instead on her appearance. Imagine Ronald was actually grateful for her help, and write a short paragraph detailing his thoughts and reactions once rescued, in 300-350 words. (10 marks).