

[This question paper contains 16 printed pages.]

Your Roll No.....

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A

Unique Paper Code : 52031901

Name of the Paper : English Language Through Literature

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

Semester : IV

Duration : 3 hours and 30 minutes Maximum Marks : 75

Instructions for Candidates

1. Write your Roll No. on the top immediately on receipt of this question paper.
2. The paper contains 3 unseen passages and questions based on them.
3. The questions are in two parts, A and B, both of which are compulsory. Students will attempt any **THREE** of the questions from each part.

Passage 1 (750 words)

I was walking home from school one day, an old bag hanging from my shoulder. It was actually possible to

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walk the distance in ten minutes. But usually it would take me thirty minutes at the very least to reach home. It would take me from half an hour to an hour to dawdle along, watching all the fun and games that were going on, all the entertaining novelties and oddities in the streets, the shops and the bazaar. At times, people from various political parties would arrive, put up a stage and harangue us through their mikes. Then there might be a street play, or a puppet show, or a "no magic, no miracle" stunt performance. All these would happen from time to time. But almost certainly there would be some entertainment or other going on... Even otherwise, there were the coffee clubs in the bazaar: the way each waiter cooled the coffee, lifting a tumbler high up and pouring its contents into a tumbler held in his other hand. Or the way some people sat in front of the shops chopping up onion, their eyes turned elsewhere so that they would not smart. Or the almond tree growing there and its fruit which was occasionally blown down by the wind. All these sights taken together would tether my legs and stop me from going home...

Gazing at all this, one day, I crossed the street of the Pallas and came to my street, the street of the Parayas, that is, my bag slung over my shoulder. At the opposite corner, though, a threshing floor had been set up, and the Naicker watched the proceedings, seated on a piece of sacking spread over a stone ledge. Our people were hard at work, driving cattle in pairs, round and round, to tread out the grain from the straw. The animals were muzzled so that they wouldn't help themselves to the straw. I stood for a while there, watching the fun.

Just then, an elder of our street came along from the direction of the bazaar. The manner in which he was walking along made me want to double up. I wanted to shriek with laughter at the sight of such a big man carrying a small packet in that fashion. I guessed there was something like vadai or green banana bhajji in the packet, because the wrapping paper was stained with oil. He came along, holding out the packet by its string, without touching it. I stood there thinking to myself, if he holds it like that, won't the package come undone, and the vadais fall out? The elder went

straight up to the Naicker, bowed low and extended the packet towards him, cupping the hand that held the string with his other hand. Naicker opened the parcel and began to eat the vadais.

After I had watched all this, at last I went home. My elder brother was there. I told him the story in all its comic detail. I fell about with laughter at the memory of a big man, and an elder at that, making such a game out of carrying the parcel. But Annan was not amused: Annan told me the man wasn't being funny when he carried the package like that. He said everybody believed that Naickers were upper caste, and therefore must not touch Parayas. If they did, they would be polluted. That's why he had to carry the package by its string.

When I heard this, I didn't want to laugh any more, and I felt terribly sad. How could they believe that it was disgusting if a Paraya held that package in his hands, even though the vadai had been wrapped first in a banana leaf, and then parcelled in paper? I felt so provoked and angry that I wanted to go and touch those wretched vadais myself, straightaway.

Why should we have to fetch and carry for these people, I wondered. Such an important elder of ours goes off meekly to the shops to fetch snacks and hands them over reverently, bowing and shrinking, to this fellow who just sits there and stuffs them into his mouth. The thought of it infuriated me.

How was it that these fellows thought so much of themselves? Because they had scraped four coins together, did that mean they must lose all human feelings? ... Our people should never run these petty errands for these fellows. We should work in their fields, take home our wages, and leave it at that.

Passage 2 (692 words)

She: Why do you pretend to fuss about lamps and such things when you are simply jealous? I call that hypocritical. I wish it were possible for a man to play fair. But what you want is to censor and control me, while you feel perfectly free to amuse yourself in every possible way.

He: I am never jealous without cause, and you are. You object to my friendly and physical intimacies and then expect me not to be jealous of your soul's infidelities, when you lose all feeling for me. I am tired of it. It is a fundamental misunderstanding, and we ought to separate at once!

She: Oh, very well, if you're so keen on it. But remember, you suggest it. I never said I wanted to separate from you—if I had, I wouldn't be here now.

He: No, because I've given all I had to you. I have nourished you with my love. You have harassed and destroyed me. I am no good because of you. You have made me work over you to the degree that I have no real life. You have enslaved me, and your method is cool aloofness. You want to keep on being cruel. You are the devil, who never really meant any harm, but who sneers at desires and never wants to satisfy. Let us separate—you are my only enemy!

She: Well, you know we are told to love our enemies.

He: I have done my full duty in that respect. People we love are the only ones who can hurt us. They are our enemies, unless they love us in return.

She: "A man's enemies are those of his own household"—yes, especially if they love. You, on account of your love for me, have tyrannized over me, bothered me, badgered me, nagged me, for fifteen years. You have interfered with me, taken my time and strength, and prevented me from accomplishing great works for the good of humanity. You have crushed my soul, which longs for serenity and peace, with your perpetual complaining!

He: Too bad. [Indignantly], Perpetual complaining!

She: Yes, of course. But you see, my dear, I am more philosophical than you, and I recognize all this as necessity. Men and women are natural enemies, like cat and dog—only more so. They

are forced to live together for a time, or this wonderful race couldn't go on. In addition, in order to have the best children, men and women of totally opposite temperaments must live together. The shock and flame of two hostile temperaments meeting is what produces fine children. Well, we have fulfilled our fate and produced our children, and they are good ones. But really—to expect also to live in peace together—we as different as fire and water, or sea and land—that's too much!

He: If your philosophy is correct, that is another argument for separation. If we have done our job together, let's go on our ways and try to do something else separately.

She: Perfectly logical. Perhaps it will be best. But no divorce—that's so commonplace.

He: Almost as commonplace as your conventional attitude toward husbands—that they are necessarily uninteresting. I find divorce no more commonplace than real infidelity.

She: Both are matters of every day. But I see no reason for divorce unless one of the spouses wants to marry again. I shall never divorce you. But men can always have children, and so they are perpetually under the sway of the great illusion. If you want to marry again, you can divorce me.

He: As usual, you want to see me as a brute. I don't accept your philosophy. Children are the results of love, not because of it, and love should go on. It does go on, if once there have been the right relations. It is not re-marrying or the unconscious desire for further propagation that moves me—but the eternal need of that peculiar sympathy which has never been satisfied—to die without that is failure of what most appeals to the imagination of human beings.

She: But that is precisely the great illusion. That is the unattainable that lures us on.

Passage 3 (666 words)

On the morning of October 31, the day of Mrs. Gandhi's death, I caught a bus to Delhi University, as usual, at about half past nine. From where I lived, it took an hour and half; a long commute, but not an exceptional one for New Delhi. The assassination had occurred shortly before, just a few miles away, but I had no knowledge of this when I boarded the bus. Nor did I notice anything untoward at any point during the ninety-minute journey. But the news, traveling by word of mouth, raced my bus to the university.

When I walked into the grounds, I saw not the usual boisterous, Frisbee-throwing crowd of students but a small group of people standing intently around transistor radio. A young man detached himself from one of the huddles and approached me, his mouth twisted into the tight-lipped, knowing smile that seems always to accompany the gambit "Have you heard...?"

The campus was humming, he said. No one knew for sure, but it was being said that Mrs. Gandhi had been shot. The word was that she had been assassinated by two Sikh bodyguards, in revenge for her having sent troops to raid the Sikhs' Golden Temple in Amritsar earlier that year.

Just before stepping into the lecture room, I heard a report on All India Radio, the national network: Mrs. Gandhi had been rushed to hospital after her attempted assassinations.

I was not an uncritical admirer of Mrs. Gandhi. Her brief period of semi-dictatorial rule in the mid-seventies was still alive in my memory. But the ghastliness of her sudden murder was a reminder of the very real qualities that had been taken for granted: her fortitude, her dignity, her physical courage, her endurance.

The first reliable report of Mrs. Gandhi's death was broadcast from Karachi, by Pakistan, at around 1:30 PM. On All India Radio regular broadcast had been replaced by music.

I left the university in the late afternoon with a friend, Hari Sen, who lived at the other end of the city. I needed to make a long-distance call, and he had offered to let me use his family telephone.

Our next bus was not quite full, which was unusual. Just as it was pulling out, a man ran out of the office and jumped on. He was middle-aged and dressed in shirt and trousers, evidently an employee in one of the government buildings. He was a Sikh, but I scarcely noticed this at the time.

He probably jumped on without giving the matter any thought, this being his regular, daily bus. But, as it happened, on this day no choice could have been more unfortunate, for the route of the bus went past the hospital where Indira Gandhi's body then lay. Certain loyalists in her party had begun inciting the crowds gathered there to seek revenge. The motorcade of Giani Zail Singh, the President of the Republic, a Sikh, had already been attacked by a mob.

As we drew nearer, it became evident that a large number of people had gathered there. But this was no ordinary crowd: it seemed to consist of red-eyed young men in half-buttoned shirts. It was now that I noticed that my Sikh fellow-passenger was showing signs of anxiety, sometimes standing up to look out, sometimes glancing out the door. It was too late to get off the bus; thugs were everywhere.

The bands of young men grew more and more menacing as we approached the hospital. There was a watchfulness about them; some were armed with steel rods and bicycle chains; others had fanned out across the busy road and were stopping cars and buses.

A stout woman in a sari sitting across the aisle from me was the first to understand what was going on. Rising to her feet, she gestured urgently at the Sikh, who was sitting hunched in his seat. She hissed at him in Hindi, telling him to get down and keep out of sight.

QUESTIONS**Part A**

Answer **any 3** of the following : (3×10=30)

Questions 1 and 2 are based on passage 1;

Questions 3 and 4 are based on passage 2;

Question 5 is based on passage 3.

1. The narrator of **Passage 1** is an intelligent, observant girl. Do you agree? Give a reasoned answer in 200-250 words.
2. In **Passage 1**, why did the narrator want to go back to the market and touch those wretched vadais? Give a reasoned answer in 200-250 words.
3. What impression of She do you form from your study of the dramatic extract? Give a reasoned answer in 200-250 words using words, phrases or statements from the passage.
4. Attempt a critical examination of the reasons given by both She and He, in the exchange that occurs in the dramatic extract. Also offer an understanding of the 'philosophy' that has been referred to in the extract. Frame your answer in 200-250 words.

5. Describe the narrator's feelings during the bus ride in which a possible victim of the riot is saved by fellow passengers.

Part B

Answer any 3 of the following : (3×15=45)

Questions 6 and 7 are based on passage 1;

Question 8 is based on passage 2;

Questions 9 and 10 are based on passage 3.

6. Write a dramatic extract, in about 300-350 words, depicting the conversation that took place between the narrator and her brother in **Passage 1**. Use dialogues and descriptions of non-verbal cues/stage directions to draft the conversation.
7. Imagine that you are the writer of **Passage 1**, and write a diary entry (in about 300-350 words) describing a day that you spent at the local bazaar.
8. Imagine you are the He in the dramatic extract in **Passage 2**. Prepare a research journal (in 300-350 words), using formal register, delineating important men's issues and their expectations from marriage as given in this specific context.

9. Write a letter in 300-350 words to your father stating that you have been stranded in the city due to a riot in your area. Explain that you would not be able to return to your hometown during the break.
10. Imagine that you get a chance to conduct a conversation with a female riot survivor. Conduct the conversation either as a dialogue or as a narrative in a story, in 300-350 words.