

UPC	:	52031204
Name of the course	:	B.Com. Programme (LOCF)
Name of the paper	:	English Language Through Literature
Semester	:	II
Marks	:	75
Time limit	:	3 hrs 30 minutes

The paper contains 3 unseen passages.

Students will attempt any THREE out of FIVE questions in Part A and THREE out of FIVE questions in Part B. Both the parts, A+B have to be answered.

Answers for all questions for subpart A to be written in 200-250 words (10 marks) and for subpart B in 300-350 words (15 marks).

Passage 1:

From the time that I was a small child, I saw people working hard; I grew up amongst such people. At home, my mother and grandmother laboured from sunrise to sunset, without any rest. And to this day, in my village, both men and women can survive only through hard and incessant labour...

More than three quarters of the land in these parts is in the hands of the Naickers. People of our community work for them, each Paraya family attached to a Naicker family, as pannaiyaal, bonded labourers. As far as I have seen, it is only Palla and Paraya communities who work in this way. Other communities don't have to work so hard. The Koravar or gypsies, and leather-working Chakkiliyar would sweep the streets, dredge and clean the drains, and make a living that way. Sometimes they wove winnowing trays, boxes, baskets for carrying paddy, and chicken coops, and earned a few coins that way. Everyone in my community had to work hard for their livelihood. Only a few of the teachers' families lived with any degree of comfort.

Everybody said that my Paatti was a true and proper servant. She worked as a labourer to a Naicker family, but she was also a Kotthaal — she hired labourers for them, brought them to work regularly, supervised them, and made sure they received their wages. Except for Sundays, she went to work every single day. Sometimes, if the Naicker insisted, she would rush through Pusai before daylight on Sunday, and then run to work. She'd rise before cock-crow at two or three in the morning, draw water, see to the household chores, walk a long distance to the Naicker's house, work till sunset and then come home in the dark and cook a little gruel for herself. When I was a bit older, Paatti used to take me to the fields with her. We were not a household with many comforts or conveniences. During the school term, as soon as lessons were over, I'd go and collect such things as the thorns used for fences, or palmyra and coconut-palm stems and fronds for fuel. I would collect fresh cowdung and pat it into flat cakes for burning. Sometimes I would go into the fields and pick up dried cowdung.

During the school holidays, I would go with Paatti or some other woman to work in the fields. Most often I helped to pull up the groundnut crop and to clean and sort the pods. To pull up the groundnut crop and to clean and separate the pods, you had to wake up very early, well before cockcrow, pour some millet porridge into a carrying vessel, and run with it. In the fields, you had

to pull up a heap of groundnut plants, and then sit down to pulling off the pods. At mid-day break, we would drink our *kuuzh* along with a mouthful of fresh nuts. We would separate and clean the pods until sunset time, and then carry them to the Naicker's granaries. There, the Naicker's *pannaiyaal* would measure the cleaned groundnuts by the *marakkaal*, and pay us five or ten paise for each *marakkaal*. However hard you strained yourself, it never came to more than five rupees in all. We'd take what we were given, and come home only at dusk. After we came home, we'd buy a little rice, light the hearth and cook some gruel.

If we were going to glean the last of the groundnut crop that was left over in the fields, we would go somewhat later. We'd go here and there all over the fields where the groundnut crop had been pulled up, and use our shovels at random to hammer into the earth and rake it, so that we could pick up all the stray groundnuts. The Naickers were never happy about this, though. They would chase us, throw stones and pieces of wood at us and drive us away.

Passage 2:

Belle Carpenter had a dark skin, grey eyes and thick lips. She was tall and strong. When black thoughts visited her she grew angry and wished she were a man and could fight someone with her fists. She worked in the millinery shop kept by Mrs. Nate McHugh and during the day sat trimming hats by a window at the rear of the store. She was the daughter of Henry Carpenter, bookkeeper in the First National Bank of Winesburg, Ohio, and lived with him in a gloomy old house far out at the end of Buckeye Street. The house was surrounded by pine trees and there was no grass beneath the trees. A rusty tin eaves-trough had slipped from its fastenings at the back of the house and when the wind blew it beat against the roof of a small shed, making a dismal drumming noise that sometimes persisted all through the night.

When she was a young girl Henry Carpenter made life almost unbearable for his daughter, but as she emerged from girlhood into womanhood he lost his power over her. The bookkeeper's life was made up of innumerable little pettinesses. When he went to the bank in the morning he stepped into a closet and put on a black alpaca coat that had become shabby with age. At night when he returned to his home, he donned another black alpaca coat. Every evening he pressed the clothes worn in the streets. He had invented an arrangement of boards for the purpose. The trousers to his street suit were placed between the boards and the boards were clamped together with heavy screws. In the morning he wiped the boards with a damp cloth and stood them upright behind the dining room door. If they were moved during the day he was speechless with anger and did not recover his equilibrium for a week.

The bank cashier was a little bully and was afraid of his daughter. She, he realized, knew the story of his brutal treatment of the girl's mother and hated him for it. One day she went home at noon and carried a handful of soft mud, taken from the road, into the house. With the mud she smeared the face of the boards used for the pressing of trousers and then went back to her work feeling relieved and happy.

Belle Carpenter occasionally walked out in the evening with George Willard, a reporter on the Winesburg Eagle. Secretly she loved another man, but her love affair, about which no one knew, caused her much anxiety. She was in love with Ed Handby, bartender in Ed Griffith's Saloon,

and went about with the young reporter as a kind of relief to her feelings. She did not think that her station in life would permit her to be seen in the company of the bartender, and she walked about under the trees with George Willard and let him kiss her to relieve a longing that was very insistent in her nature. She felt that she could keep the younger man within bounds. About Ed Handby she was somewhat uncertain.

Passage 3:

The trees are coming into leaf
Like something almost being said;
The recent buds relax and spread,
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again
And we grow old? No, they die too.
Their yearly trick of looking new
Is written down in rings of grain.

Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In fullgrown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

Questions

Part A

Attempt any three questions in 200-250 words each. (3x10=30 marks)

1. Passage I highlights the caste-based discrimination that existed in the village where the writer grew up. Describe the kind of injustices that were experienced by the writer's community.
2. Write a short description of Belle Carpenter's childhood, from Passage 2.
3. Who is Belle Carpenter in love with? Why does she not disclose her love?
4. In Extract 3, the poet writes that "(t)heir greenness is a kind of grief". Whose? How does the poet justify this claim? Give a reasoned answer.
5. Extract 3 ends with exhortations to 'begin afresh' while earlier calling out on the 'yearly trick of looking new'. Critically discuss these contradictory approaches contained in the poem.

Part B

Attempt any three questions in 300-350 words each. (3x15=45 marks)

6. Imagine you are the writer of Passage I, and you have a conversation with your Paati where you ask her how she feels about working for the local Naicker community. Write a dialogue in

300-350 words, and also use descriptions of non-verbal cues/stage directions to draft the conversation.

7. Imagine you are the writer of Passage 1. Drawing on your own childhood experiences as described in the given passage, write an essay (in 300-350 words) on the impact of caste-based discrimination on children.

8. Examine the father-daughter relationship in Passage 2. Discuss how it changes once the daughter grows into a woman.

9. Rewrite Passage 2 from the point of view of Belle's father, keeping in mind his emotions and behaviour as discussed in the passage. You can write a fragment of a short story or in essay form.

10. Passage 3 is a philosophical reflection on life and death. Discuss how it uses poetic devices - rhyme scheme, metaphors, symbolism, etc - to communicate its point.