

[This question paper contains 16 printed pages.] -

Your Roll No.....

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Sr. No. of Question Paper : 598

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

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

Passage 1 (732 words):

I had crossed the age of sixteen, as good as reached the end of my life according to J. P. Shrivastava. Not

P.T.O.

J. P. Shrivastava alone, but all our neighbours in the village thought the same. I remember Pandit Ramgulam speaking to my father: 'His voice has cracked. There's a moustache on his lip. Hair has sprouted under his armpits. It's time to perform the bride-fetching ceremony and bring his wife home. Gets into fights, too, I hear.' 'Yes,' my father said and lapsed into thought.

In the same way, when we went to fetch my bride—she was thirteen—there was a puja going on knotting us together symbolically—I don't think it was a puja to the god of love—her grandmother said to her mother, 'Our daughter is of age. The son-in-law is of age. If they have come to take her away, let her go.'

So we brought my bride home.

But the plague was raging in our village. What were we to do? The custom was to abandon one's house during the plague and encamp in orchards. The day we travelled from Bengal was the day villagers were abandoning their houses...

On the fifth day, my father-in-law came to take his daughter back for the ceremonial return to her house. He did not want to drink water from our wells and he

wanted to leave before nightfall. My father was offended. My father had not travelled from Bengal to welcome the bride to our ancestral village for a paltry five days. He expected the daughter-in-law to stay longer. Father-in-law arrived in the morning. I had been up late the previous night and was asleep at the time. I heard about his visit from a friend in the village. By the time I awoke, Father-in-law had left with my wife. He didn't want her exposed to the plague.

Father was livid. 'Weren't you worried about my son being exposed? If this is how much you care, we can find a new bride for our son.' Father's threat might have had its desired effect if Father-in-law had not been hard of hearing. Father-in-law kept up a parallel flow of muttering of his own while he oversaw preparations for his departure. But Father-in-law's daughter was all ears. One can guess how the talk between her father and father-in-law about a second bride might have struck her...

The barber from Dalmau came the next day, bearing a lengthy letter from Father-in-law. The word 'apology' was sprinkled liberally over its pages. Father-in-law's hearing was going. He had been unable to

ascertain Father's wishes. He invited us to come and fetch the bride for the gavani move to her husband's home. Pleading...

Father softened. 'You can go to your in-laws,' he said to me. 'But make sure you eat three times as much as you eat here.'

'I will ask for three times the usual quantity of ghee and almonds. I would ask for pomegranate juice every morning if pomegranates grew there.'

'Insist on a perfume oil massage every day. That should stagger them back to their senses.'

Father-in-law objected when I asked for perfumed oil the following day. 'Perfumed oil can't be used daily.

We are ordinary people. We barely manage ghee for food at a rupee a pound; perfumed oil runs at eighty rupees. Mustard oil will have to do.' 'There goes the plan to take my wife home,' I thought. The pull towards her was strong. I may have mumbled verses about the ephemerality of pleasures in her hearing, but she never found me holding back as far as she was concerned. Nor was I accomplished in arts and letters as she had imagined. She felt deceived.

My money was gone. Father-in-law guessed rightly that I had no more than travel expenses and that I couldn't send for perfumed oil on my own. He knew that even the children of the rich don't receive daily massages of perfumed oil.

I was trapped. I wanted to be like Father and say I was ready to remarry. But like Kulli, I would lose heart. I might recite 'Who is wife to you? Who son?' by day, but the truth was I couldn't bear to be away from my wife a single night. I was a modem lover. I had declared my love to her in countless words. She knew my remarrying was out of the question.

Passage 2 (595 words):

Lydia What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

Mrs. Malaprop Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it.—But tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

Lydia Madam, I must tell you plainly, that had I no preferment for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. Malaprop What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a blackamoor—and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made!—and when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed!—But suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lydia Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. Malaprop Take yourself to your room. You are fit company for nothing but your own ill-humors.

Lydia Willingly, ma'am—I cannot change for the worse. [Exit]

Mrs. Malaprop There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir Anthony It is not to be wondered at, ma'am: all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. Had I a thousand daughters, by heaven I'd as soon have them taught the black art as their alphabet!

Mrs. Malaprop Nay, nay, Sir Anthony: you are an absolute misanthropy.

Sir Anthony In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library! She had a book in each hand; they were half-bound volumes with marble covers! From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. Malaprop Those are vile places indeed!

Sir Anthony Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge,—it blossoms through the year! And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves will long for the fruit at last.

MRS. Malaprop Fy, fy, Sir Anthony! you surely speak laconically.

Sir Anthony Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. Malaprop Observe me, Sir Anthony. I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman; for instance, I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments.—But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts;—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not mis-spell, and mis-pronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of

what she is saying. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Passage 3 (774 words):

The hotelkeeper was at the door. He was blind in one eye, a glum and reticent man, sitting there in a rush chair, smoking a cigarette, with his eyes half closed.

He peered at me with his good eye. 'Where are you going, Sir?' he asked in a hoarse voice.

'To take a walk. It's too hot to stay in my room.'

'But everything's closed up by now. And we don't have any streetlights here. You'd better stay in.'

I shrugged my shoulders, mumbled, 'I'll be right back,' and went out into the darkness. At first I couldn't see anything at all. I groped my way along the stone-paved street. I lit a cigarette.

Suddenly the moon came out from behind a black cloud, lighting up a weather-beaten white wall. I

stopped in my tracks, blinded by that whiteness. A faint breeze stirred the air and I could smell the fragrance of the tamarind trees. The night was murmurous with the sounds of leaves and insects. The crickets had retired among the tall weeds. I raised my eyes: up there the stars were also camping out. I thought the whole universe was a grand system of signals, a conversation among enormous beings. My own actions, the creak of a cricket, the blinking of a star, were merely pauses and syllables, odd fragments of that dialogue. I was only one syllable, of only one word. But what was that word? Who was uttering it? And to whom? I tossed my cigarette onto the sidewalk. It fell in a glowing arc, giving off sparks like a miniature comet.

I walked on, slowly, for a long while, in contemplation. I felt safe and free and happy. Then when I was crossing a street I could tell that someone had come out of a doorway. I turned around but couldn't see anything. I began to walk faster. A moment later I could hear the scuff of heavy sandals on the warm stone. I didn't want to look back, even though I knew

the shadow was catching up with me. I tried to run. I couldn't. Then I stopped short. And before I could defend myself I felt the point of a knife against my back, and a soft voice said, 'Don't move, Sir, or you're dead.'

Without turning my head I asked, 'What do you want?'

'Your eyes, Sir.' His voice was strangely gentle, almost embarrassed.

'My eyes? What are you going to do with my eyes? Look, I've got a little money on me. Not much, but it's something. I'll give you everything I've got if you'll let me go. Don't kill me.'

'You shouldn't be scared, Sir. I'm not going to kill you. I just want your eyes.'

'But what do you want them for?'

'It's my sweetheart's idea. She'd like to have a bouquet of blue eyes. There aren't many people around here that have them.'

'Mine won't do you any good. They aren't blue, they're light brown.'

'No, Sir. Don't try to fool me. I know they're blue.'

'Please! You can't just gouge my eyes out. I'll give you everything I've got on me.'

'Don't be squeamish.' His voice was harsh now. 'Turn around.'

I turned around. He was short and slight, and he had a long machete in his right hand. It glittered in the moonlight.

'Hold a match to your face.'

I lit a match and held it up in front of my face. The flame made me close my eyes and he pried my lids with his fingers. He couldn't see well enough, so he stood on tiptoes and stared at me. The match burned my fingers and I threw it away. He was silent for a moment.

'Aren't you sure now? They aren't blue.'

'You're very clever, he said. 'Light another match.'

I lit another and held it close to my eyes. He tugged at my sleeve. 'Kneel down.'

I knelt. He grabbed my hair and bent my head back. Then he leaned over me, gazing intently, and the machete came closer and closer till it touched my eyelids. I shut my eyes.

'Open them up,' he told me. 'Wide.'

I opened my eyes again. The match-flame singed my lashes.

Suddenly he let go. 'No. they're not blue. Excuse me.' And he disappeared.

I huddled against the wall with my hands over my face. Later I got up and ran through the deserted streets for almost an hour. When I finally stumbled into the plaza I saw the hotelkeeper still sitting at the door. I went in without speaking to him. The next day I got out of that village.

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Questions:Part A

Attempt any **three** questions in 200-250 words :

(3×10=30)

1. In Passage 1, why does the narrator's father say: 'Insist on a perfume oil massage every day. That should stagger them back to their senses'? What does this tell us about his father's attitude towards the position and worth of men and women in society? Write a reasoned answer.
2. In Passage 1, would you describe the narrator as having a patriarchal attitude? Write a reasoned answer.
3. From the exchange given in Passage 2, what can you infer about the views of Sir Anthony about women's education?
4. Provide a description of the narrator's feelings during the encounter between him and the man on the street in Passage 3.
5. What prompted the man on the street to initiate the particular action described in Passage 3? Give a reasoned answer.

Part B

Attempt any **three** questions in 300-350 words :

(3×15=45)

6. Imagine you are the narrator of Passage 1. Write a diary entry reflecting on how your views about marriage changed after your own wedding.
7. Write a dramatic extract depicting a conversation between the narrator and his wife, about his father's insulting words to his wife and her father in Passage 1. The conversation takes place as soon as the narrator first arrives at his wife's house. Use dialogues and descriptions of non-verbal cues/stage directions to draft the conversation.
8. Imagine you are Lydia in Passage 2 and you are distressed at the prospect of your education being discontinued. Prepare a research journal, using formal register, delineating important women's issues, education being one aspect that should be encouraged in the present times.
9. Imagine the hotelkeeper meets the narrator of Passage 3 when he returns to the hotel. Imagine the conversation the two men have about the incident that took place earlier with the narrator.

10. Write the story from the point of view of the man in the street and his girlfriend. Write a short fragment or essay where they converse about having a bouquet of blue eyes. Why would they want such a thing? Did the narrator understand their motivations correctly?