

English Literature Question Paper

2005

General Instructions

1. Attempt **five** questions in all.
2. You must attempt **one** question from each of the Sections **A**, **B** and **C** and any **two** other questions.
3. The intended marks for questions or parts of questions are given in brackets [].

SECTION A - DRAMA *Shakespeare: Julius Caesar*

Question 1

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:-[16]

Portia:

Is Brutus sick, - and is it physical

To walk unbraced, and suck up the humours

Of the dank morning? What, is Brutus sick, -

And will he steal out of his wholesome bed,

To dare the vile contagion of the night,

And tempt the rheumy and unpurged air

To add unto his sickness? No, my Brutus;

You have some sick offence within your mind,

Which, by the right and virtue of my place,

I ought to know of;

- i. State the reasons given by Portia before this extract which make her conclude that Brutus has some sick offence within his mind.

- ii. Mention the three things that Portia points out to prove that she can keep her husband's secrets.
- iii. Explain the meaning of 'And will he steal out of his wholesome bed to dare the vile contagion of the night, and tempt the rheumy and unpurged air to add unto his sickness'. What was the Elizabethan belief about the night air?
- iv. Earlier in the same scene, what reasons does Brutus give for not wanting Antony killed?
- v. Of the two women characters in the play, Portia and Calphurnia, who impresses you more? Justify your answer.

Question 2

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:-

Antony :

Villains! you did not so, when your vile daggers

Hack'd one another in the sides of Caesar:

You show'd your teeth like apes, and fawn'd like hounds,

And bow'd like bondmen, kissing Caesar's feet;

Whilst damned Casca, like a cur, behind

Struck Caesar on the neck. O you flatterers!

1. Who are referred to as *villains*? How does one of the *villains* react to being called a flatterer?
2. Explain the reference to Hybla bees made by Cassius and Brutus just before the above extract. [3]
3. Later Cassius says, 'You know that I held Epicurus strong, and his opinion; now I change my mind, and partly credit things that do presage.' What does Cassius mean by this? Why does he change his mind and *partly credit things that do presage*? [3]
4. Towards the end of this scene, Cassius says to Brutus, 'Then, if we lose this battle, you are contented to be led in triumph through the streets of Rome?' What is Brutus' response to this? [3]
5. Citing examples from the play, briefly contrast the characters of Brutus and Antony. [4]

The Winslow Boy : Terrence Rattigan

Question 3

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

Sir Robert : (*leaning forward and glaring at Ronnie with the utmost venom*):

I suggest, that the time has at last come for you to undo some of the misery you have caused, by confessing to us all now you are a forger, a liar and a thief!

Ronnie : (*in tears*): I'm not! I'm not! I'm not! I didn't do it- Grace has flown to his side and now envelops him.

Arthur : This is outrageous, sir-

1. Who is Sir Robert? Account for his presence here. What reason does he give for being in a hurry to leave the Winslow house? [3]
2. What are the three hardships that the Winslow family will have to face as a result of Ronnie's activity?[3]
3. What advice has Sir Robert just given Ronnie regarding this? How does Ronnie react to the advice? What is Sir Robert's unexpected statement before he takes leave of the Winslow family?[3]
4. Briefly discuss the three possibilities that Sir Robert has suggested in connection with what Ronnie has done at the Naval College.[3]
5. What is Kate's opinion about Sir Robert as expressed to her father when she learns that Sir Robert has been approached by him? How does her attitude change later?[4]

Question 4

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

Desmond I trust you do not object to employing this rather furtive entry. The crowds at the front door are most alarming-

Arthur Come in, Desmond. Why have you left the Court?

Desmond : My partner will be holding the fort. He is perfectly competent, I promise you.

Arthur : I'm glad to hear it.

Desmond : I wonder if I might see Catherine alone. I have a matter of

some urgency to communicate to her-

- i. Who is Desmond? What is the *furtive entry* that he has employed? Which 'matter of some urgency' has Desmond come to communicate to Catherine?[3]
- ii. Give a brief account of the conversation Desmond has with Catherine? [3]
- iii. Why are the crowds there at the front door? What does he eventually tell them?
- iv. What does Desmond say about Sir Robert a little later? Mention the sacrifice Sir Robert has made.
- v. State your opinion of Desmond as seen in the play. Contrast his character with that of John Watherstone. [4]

SECTION – B
(Poetry - Wings of Poesy)

Question 5

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:-

Unknown, yet well-known to the eye of faith!
Ah, I have heard that wail far, far away
In distant lands, by many a sheltered bay,
When slumbered in his cave the water-wraith
And the waves gently kissed the classic shore
Of France or Italy, beneath the moon
When earth lay tranced in a dreamless swoon:
And every time the music rose, – before
Mine inner vision rose a form sublime,
Thy form, O Tree, as in my happy prime
I saw thee, in my own loved native clime.

(Our Casuarina Tree by Toru Dutt)

- i. Explain in your own words the first line of the extract. What is the 'Wail' that can be heard? Where is it coming from?[3]
- ii. Give a detailed account of what the poet sees when her casement is thrown *wide open at dawn*. [3]
- iii. Describe the trees as mentioned in the beginning of the poem. [3]
- iv. Why is the tree very precious to the poet? (3)
- v. At the end of the poem, the poet expresses her wish to honour the tree. How does she hope to do this? What does she hope to achieve by this action of hers? State two aspects of the poem that have appealed to you.(4)

Question 6

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:-

"Mother dear, we cannot stay."
The wild white horses foam and fret.
"Margaret ! Margaret !"
Come, dear children, come away down.
Call no more.
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore.
Then come down.
She will not come though you call all day.
Come away, come away.

(The Forsaken Merman by Matthew Arnold.)

- i. Who is Margaret? Where is she? What has made her leave her family? (3)
- ii. Who is addressing the children? Why does the speaker hope that children's calling might make Margaret return? (3)
- iii. Explain 'The wild white horses foam and fret.' Give two other reasons why the speaker wants the children to come away. (3)
- iv. Describe the word that the speaker inhabits. (3)
- v. State the significance of the *white walled town* and *the little grey church on the windy shore*. At the end of the poem, why does the speaker lose hope and tell the children to call no more? Comment on the element of sadness in the poem. (4)

SECTION – C (Prose) (A Miscellany of Short Stories)

Question 7

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:-

While the tank was being brought the stranger looked about him.
"Thinking better of it?" said the manager.
"No, Sir," the man replied. "I was thinking I should want some bathing trunks."
"We can soon fix you up with those," the manager said.
"I'll show you where to change."
Leaving the stranger somewhere out of sight, he came back to his wife.
"Do you think we ought to let him do it ?" she asked.
"Well, it's his funeral. You wanted us to have a dangerous act, and now we've got it."
"Yes, I know, but _____."

- i. Who is the stranger? How has he been described in the story?

- ii. What is the dangerous act that the stranger is going to perform? Why is it considered dangerous? Name a dangerous act which has been mentioned earlier in the story. [3]
- iii. Give reasons why the Manager's wife wants a dangerous act performed. [3]
- iv. Explain the preparations made for the dangerous act. [3]
- v. "Well, it's his funeral." Why does the Manager say so? What does it reveal about his attitude? Comment on the way the story ends. [4]

Question 8

Rama Rao felt very happy as he reflected that in less than ten minutes the train from Trichinopoly would be arriving.' With vivid detail, trace the events, following the collapse of gramophone company, that lead Rama Rao to the situation described in the above lines. [16]