

The Way to Answer

General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination,

April 2012

English I

2. (a)

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|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| (1) d | (2) d | (3) b | (4) c | (5) c |
| (6) d | (7) c | (8) b | (9) b | (10) b |

(b)

Drama Essentials

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128 words including title

3.

- (1) The Passage is about a clever, cunning, dishonest law officer - a magistrate - who knew how to pursue his ways without getting caught. The setting is apparently Burma during colonial times under British rule.
- (2) U Po Kyin exploited his position as magistrate by taking bribes from both parties in a case, and then giving decisions, threatening people, sharing his 'loot' with loyal supporters of crime and condoning with criminals.
- (3) This means that he could hardly ever be caught for his undershand dealings because his fine judgement of people always made him pick on the correct people for his activities and because he was so experienced in nefarious acts and planning and plotting that he would never make a mistake'
- (4) (a) As a magistrate U Po Kyin showed a strong sense of justice. His judgements were strictly legal but the reason for being so fair was a safety measure for after taking bribes from both parties concerned he acted knowing the result of a wrong judgment.
- (b) As a clever crook he got away with the wrong he did by taking the necessary action well in time supported through his knowledge of human nature and the fact that his colonial superiors, the British, never believed their employees did any wrong.
- (5) The tone of the passage is one of sarcasm. If there is any redeeming feature in U Po Kyin's character it is his impartiality of judgement which was really not a result of any honesty or justice but was the outcome of his cleverness and practicality
- (4) (i) The situation on which the poem is based is the presentation of the feelings and thoughts of a man who managed to escape from a disaster apparently an attack on a village on the hills during a cold season, perhaps winter....
- (2) This phrase means that exhaustion and the reaction to a traumatic experience had taken his mind off what he had seen and undergone
- (3) The owl's cry was sad (melancholy) and ominous.
- (4) To the poet the owl represents a symbolic reminder of his lucky escape from the disaster - perhaps attack - which struck the village at night. It also brings to mind the remembrances of those who were less lucky and were now lying dead.
- (5) The initial emotion felt is a sense of shock which benumbs the senses
 "hungry and yet not starved" This is followed by realization or awareness or physical feeling
 "... how hungry cold and tired was I"
 Next comes the realization of his escape while others had been less fortunate.
 ".....telling me plain what I escaped"
 There is pity for those less fortunate who "..... lay under the stars,
 Soldiers and poor unable to rejoice"
 And overall there is that feeling of sorrow spread out by the owl's cry.
 ".....a most melancholy cry"

01.

- (a) This extract is from Shakespeare's play "Othello." The first four lines - up to sulphur - are from Iago's soliloquy while the remark that follows comes from Othello who has just entered.

On Iago's bidding his wife Emilia has stolen Desdemona's treasured handkerchief - a special gift from Othello - and Emilia wants it back to return to Desdemona if "it is not for some purpose. Iago however dismisses Emilia saying "I have use for it" Iago then soliloquises on "his use for it" and his plan to poison Othello's mind against Desdemona. This is the early stage of Iago's diabolical plan to make Othello suspicious and jealous and to turn him against Desdemona and thus hurt Othello whom in reality he hates.

- (b) In this extract from Shakespeare's Comedy "A Midsummer Nights Dream" we see Theseus, Duke of Athens, listening to Demetrius's explanation of the lovers mix-up that caused so much heart-ache but has now been solved. The reference to "food" is his love for Helena to whom he was betrothed to but from whom he turned away due to a sudden infatuation for Hermia - the "sickness." But the passing fancy is now over and he will be true to Helena "for evermore." The imagery used is light and in keeping with the love tangle that this comedy presents.
- (c) This is an extract from the play "The Seagull" by Anton Chekov. The words are those of Trigorin, a successful writer who is explaining to young Nina what the life of a writer is like. This is part of a long explanation about himself as a writer in reply to Nina's remark "your life is beautiful" He is a successful writer who writes one story after another. He enjoys success. Yet he regrets what he calls his "younger better days" because he is dissatisfied and regretful that he could not enjoy his youth. He is the lover and admirer of the popular actress Arkadina but at the same time he is flattered by the 'hero worship' of young Nina who longs to be an actress.
- (d) This extract is from Garcia Lorca's play "The House of Bernarda Alba" and these impatient words are those of the disgruntled, domineering Bernarda Alba who is speaking to her daughter as though she were a hired hand. The reference is to the breeding stallion which is apparently in heat. Bernarda is trying to build up her herd of horses using her money and going through what she terms a lot of unpleasantness.
- (e) These words are from Samuel Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot" and they are said by Vladimir to Estragon almost at the start of the drama, when Estragon with a supreme effort has managed to pull off his boot which he puts on again after examining the inside. The two tramps are waiting for Godot who hasn't turned up. Suddenly Estragon refers to "the two thieves" The reference is to the two thieves crucified along with Jesus Christ. One is said to have been saved by Christ. Some of the Evangelists were supposed to have been affected. But Estragon sees no purpose in what has been done. He remarks "Nothing can be done" reflecting a theme of human impotence - Nothing done.

02.

- (a) This is an extract from the novel "Great Expectations" by Charles Dickens. The conversation is between Pip and Estella. Pip, much changed from his change of fortune, has returned to his home area in response to a message from Miss Havisham, brought to him by Joe - that Estella is back. Out in the garden Estella refers to Pip's fight with the "pale young gentleman" which she watched secretly and later allowed Pip to kiss her. The pale young gentleman was Herbert Mathew now, Pip's great friend. The words bring out Estella's haughtiness and selfishness and her secret liking for Pip.
- (b) The words spoken here are those of Mrs. Jennings in Jane Austen's novel "Sense and Sensibility." Mrs. Jennings is the motherly, good natured, fun-loving and talkative mother-in-law of Sir John Middleton. She had brought Elionor and Marianne to London where Marion finally realized that Willoughby had let her down completely.

She is utterly devastated and in this extract Mrs. Jennings tries to console her with a glass of wine in her kind heard but bungling way. When Elionor declines the kindness with explanation Mrs. Jennings good-humouredly says "I will drink the wine myself." We see here Jane Austen's subtle humour and her close observation and depiction of people in her society.

- (c) This passage is from Nadine Gordimer's novel "July's People" a novel dealing with the black-white problem during the time when Apartheid was still in force. This incident refers to Bam living in hiding in July's village and attempting to hunt wart-hogs with the gun he kept hidden in the thatch of the hut. The young man - local - wanted to hold the gun. When Bam inquired "Have you ever fired a shot?" the young man Daniel indicates he hasn't making the others laugh because the whites are unaware of present circumstances but black reaction to White injustice is building up.
- (d) This is an extract from Nihal Silva's novel "The Road from Elephant Pass" and it refers to the encounter the captain and Kamala had with poachers in their trek through the jungle. The men were army deserters, desperate men with criminal tendencies. In a touch and go situation Wasantha succeeds in saving Kamala and himself but does not kill the men on Kamala's plea. This incident is one of several that serve to bring the protagonists close together breaking down the barriers of petty communalism and showing the human need for togetherness and corporation
3. These are the final lines of the short story "Action and Reaction" by the Sri Lankan writer Chitra Fernando. The story deals with the ultra-religious Loku Nenda who presents an attitude accepted by the older members of the family circle. Figured in the extract are Loku Nenda in her old age and Kusuma whom she brought up from childhood denying her any education, selfishly stalling her chances of marriage and finally creating a hard pseudo-religious woman in her own image who ruins her or brings her her 'karma'. The story is told by Loku Nenda's educated nephew who sees her hypocrisy for what it is and now sees its results on a visit as an adult.
4. This extract comes from the poem 'Mirror' by Sylvia Plath. The speaker here is the personified mirror that reflects the varied thoughts and emotions of the "Woman" the Poetess - whose anguished mind is in a tussle between what she is with the passing years and what she is reluctant to accept. The woman looks in the mirror searching for what really is, what she sees agitates her and she turns away to "liars" - candles, the moon to see herself in a false light. But there is no satisfaction. This is Confessional Poetry, the style in which Plath wrote.

5. Drama

- (a) **Would you say that Othello was more a victim than an agent of his own tragedy? Justify your point of view by prioritizing the significance of the actions of Othello which finally led to the murder of Desdemona.**

In Shakespeare's tragedy "Othello" Othello the General of the Venetian forces is a brave, able and experienced soldier of Moor descent who is regarded with great respect and admiration by people of all ranks in Venice. He is spoken of as "the warlike Moor" the valiant Moor" "our great captain", "a worthy Governor." Despite his maturity and dark skin he wins the love of and marries Desdemona a young, fair Venetian beauty, kind and loving, "one that excels the quirks of blazoning pens." However his greatness, honesty, good fortune and perhaps his racial position earns him a cunning, vicious enemy, Iago whom he unknowingly loves and trusts and who plots his destruction making him distrust the innocent Desdemona whom he murders - but later discovers the truth and kills himself.

Iago's machinations are cruel, subtle and well-planned. They are meant to succeed. But on the other hand certain weaknesses in Othello which affects his actions - some inherent (in him), some circumstantial (due to circumstances) - contribute to his tragedy. Chief among these are his one-sided experience in life which is limited to war at the neglect of social life. Added to this is the fact that he belongs to another culture and that his lack of social experience in Venice makes him ignorant of Venetian society life, especially among the ladies. He falls in love and marries at a mature age and Desdemona is innocent, obedient and almost child-like.

But even more important is the fact that there is an element of jealousy and trustfulness in Othello along with a weakness in understanding people's real characters. This makes him misunderstand Desdemona and Cassio and makes him blind to the villainy of Iago until it is too late.

Thus we see that Othello is more an agent of his own tragedy rather than a victim of outside machinations.

- (b) **"The fantasy in A Midsummer Night's Dream is made acceptable against the background of real human actions and emotions." Discuss.**

Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is a comedy, incorporating four different story lines which intertwine to present a fantasy-reality drama set-up. These story lines are the story of the two pairs of lovers the story of Theseus, Duke of Athens and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, Oberon and Titania and their fairy retainers and the play-within-the-play actors of Pyramus and Thisbe.

The love tangle of Hermia and Lysander and Helena and Demetrius and the story involving Theseus and Hippolyta are charged with real human emotions of love, jealousy, anger, misunderstanding. The Theseus- Hippolyta story too has strong human emotional strains that give a sense of reality to the story or play.

The Oberon - Titania plot though involving fairies brings in similar emotions of love, jealousy, anger hate, revenge and all this merges with the human problems with Puck creating more human - fairy tangles. Into this tangle is also woven in the Pyramus - Thisbe play with its actors, as for instance Titania being infatuated with the donkey-headed Bottom. Music, songs and dances enhance the pleasant fairy-tale-like atmosphere and the lovers quarrels and emotional reactions balance against these. Finally everything is sorted out and everybody is satisfied.

This balance of fantasy and reality makes the fairy - tale like setup acceptable making the drama a pleasant

- (b) "The adults in *Sense and Sensibility* are irresponsible, temperamental, and incapable of giving any guidance to young people" Analyse the statement with reference to the text.

Jane Austen's novel "*Sense and Sensibility*" revolves round the Dashwood family in particular and the Middleton family in general. The story is also closely connected to love and marriage matters with these families. These characters can be further categorized as the young and the older generation. The former includes the Dashwood sisters Elinor and Marianne the Steele sisters and Willoughby while the latter group includes Mrs. Dashwood the girls' mother Sir John and Mrs. Jennings, among others.

The focus of attention is the affair between Willoughby and Marianne which gets off to a start very romantically when Marianne twists her foot in a fall and Willoughby, who is hunting, carries her home. Marianne's feelings are "no moderation" and from the start her feelings for Willoughby were extreme. Willoughby too seemed to share all their feelings with a warmth that left her no inclination for checking their excessive display of them. "Sir John and Mrs. Jennings enjoyed the situation teasing, joking, and encouraging them. Marianne's excesses worried Elinor and warned her mother to make sure about an engagement but Mrs. Dashwood chided Elinor for doubting. Finally when in London Willoughby avoids and ignores Marianne and denies any engagement Marianne is devastated. None of the adults advice or caution the young people. Elinor who is wise finds no one to turn to in her own problem regarding Edward but has to manage on her own. All the adults fall into the same category with the exception of Colonel Brandon.

Thus the outcome of the lack of adult advice and understanding is that the young have to suffer like Marianne or think intelligently and keep control over feelings like Elinor.

- (c) For whom does Gordimer have more sympathy Maureen or July? Justify your opinion with reference to the text.

Nadine Gordimer's novel "*July's people*" deals with South Africa when Apartheid still existed. It deals with the White - Black issue. The black South African majority sidelined and suffering under White leadership have started attacking the whites. There is killing and destruction on both sides and July the loyal 'boy' of the Smales takes them - Mrs. Smales (Bam and Maureen) and their three children to the safety of his village. Life there is primitive and the Smales who have got away in their yellow bakkie leaving home, goods and savings behind, are given July's mother-law's hut and begin living like the other villagers.

For fifteen years July had been the faithful servant in the city, treated with a sort of patronizing kindness. Here in his own village July's position changes. He has his family; his people look up to him; his masters are now dependent on his protection and help. Their roles and attitudes change. In his own domain July is the head of the family and a man looked up to in his community.

The changes in attitudes are mostly brought out through July and Maureen in their relationships. In the city July had nothing to gain beyond money.... "In the beggarly denominations a servant knows." Here he had dignity, self-respect and responsibility. In the city Maureen was the mistress. "July had to do what he was told by this woman."

But here her authority diminishes. She and her family are completely dependent on July. Yet the earlier white authoritarian attitude surfaces for instance regarding the bakkie keys, or the missing gun. Gradually the emergence of the Blacks as people in their own right is seen through the actions and speech of July till finally we see a foreshadowing of the rising of the native people and the action of Maureen running away in panic.

Thus we see Gordimer's understanding of the Black - White issue with its negative and positive aspects. But overall her sympathies seem to be more with July - kept as the 'good boy' for fifteen years - rather than with Maureen whose White arrogance surfaces even under her new circumstances.

(c) Would you say that Joyce's "The Boarding House" is everywhere? Give reasons.

The Short story "The Boarding House" by James Joyce is one of the fifteen short stories contained in "Dubliners". Taken together these stories present a cross-section of life in Ireland or as the writer, himself has said, "it gives into the 'moral history' of the Irish. Along with this he referred to the 'paralysis' he saw especially in the 'moral paralysis' he sees in society is vacillation and indecision. This is seen in all the stories in 'Dubliners' of different ages. For instance in Evelyn, a young woman yearning to get away from an unhappy home with her father, who cannot make up her mind to go away with her lover, a sailor. At the last moment she goes back to her mundane life. In "Araby" it is an adolescent and in "The Boarding House" it is Mr. Doran.

Mrs. Mooney who runs the rather low-grade boarding house is typical of women running such places at that level of society. She is hard and cunning. She is also typical of mothers planning to get the best 'catch' for their daughter and Polly too is like numbers of other girls in such families knowing exactly how to get the best that comes. Their story is that of millions of others the world over working hand in glove for survival.

People of Mr. Doran's type exist in plenty. Faced with a personal problem they begin to see various issues. Doran, for instance, had been enticed by the shrewd Polly who then played the poor outraged innocent mother's blessings. Doran thought of his job, his reputation, could Polly with her questionable family - be acceptable to his family, his religion, his conscience Half his mind told him he was in an unsound situation but unable to make up his mind he fell into the trap. This again is a common human situation.

Thus Joyce's The Boarding House is the universal and ubiquitous.

Poetry

(a) What characteristics of a lyric justify Song (Go and catch a falling star) or To a Skylark called 'lyrical'?

A lyric is a song, a verse-presentation which can be sung. Lyrics include various, hymns, dirges..... which have a musical quality or musicality.

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When we consider Donne's "Go and catch a falling Star" and Shelley's "To a Skylark" we find their contents to be very different. Donne's poem is Metaphysical with the features of Metaphysical poetry while Shelley's poem written in the Romantic tradition lays emphasis on emotions or extreme feelings. Yet both poems show a musicality of their own.

The three verses of Donne's poem are alike in structure being nine lines each with the seventh and eighth short yet matching.

"And finde

What wmdē"

The lines also show a definite rhyme pattern

"It thou findest one, let mee know , - a

such a pilgrimage were sweet; - a

yet do not, I would not goe, - a

Though at next door wee might -b

The language too is simple and clear enhancing the musicality.

In Shelley's 'Skylark' too we see these same qualities of rhythm and musicality which create the effect of the bird rising higher and higher. This poem too is dramatic and musical with a similar type of language and rhyme.

Thus both poem could be considered to be lyrical although they belong to different periods and have been written following a different poetic tradition

The question requires a write -up on one of the poems. Hence either poem can be answered on the above lines.

b) Show how Frost makes great poetry out of an ordinary event in "Mending Wall"

Robert Frost is a poet hailing from the farming area of New England and his poems usually start off with an everyday activity in his area but end with a universal significance. This is so in "Mending Wall" too.

The narrator and his neighbour meet on an appointed day to repair the rough stone wall that separates their properties as some of the stones ("boulders") have fallen off during the winter. The speaker regards this as an unnecessary task as

"He is all pine and I am apple orchard"

but the neighbour sticks to an old outdated idea

"Good fences make good neighbours"

Through this task of mending a wall, which is really to no purpose, Frost puts across the idea of unity and the tendency to keep to old outdated ideas just because they have been handed down from generation to generation. He (the neighbour) moves in darkness" for he just accepts a time - worn tradition because "He will not go behind his father's saying" The need for people to be together, united, and not separate themselves and also practicality in action is another issue presented.