

2016

General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination
August 2016

English I

Part A

01.

- (a) This extract is from the play "Othello" by William Shakespeare. The words are those of Othello and they are addressed to the Duke and the Senators. Othello, the General of the Venitian army, is urgently, required to go to Cyprus as a Turkish fleet is said to be heading there to attack the island. Othello has married Desdemona in a run away marriage just a while earlier but he immediately accepts the assignment. His only request is for suitable accommodation for Desdemona. The outcome of this is that Desdemona also goes with Othello to Cyprus; the planned Ottomite attack is a fiasco but in Cyprus the stage is set for Iago to carry out his plans which lead to the final tragedy.
- (b) This extract is from Shakespeare's comedy "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and the words are those of Lysander addressed, to the Duke. Theseus in the presence of Hermia's father Egeus. Lysander is the lover of Hermia but the fathers choice for her is Demetrius who up to recent times was the lover of Hermia's friend Helena. Egeus angered by his daughter's refusal to marry Demetrius comes to the Duke for judgement. In this extract Lysander explains to the Duke his stand regarding the issue. He compares himself to Demetrius in wealth and status and also tries to explain the sincerity of his feelings for Hemia and Demetrius's fickleness to Helena. This is the start of a situation that leads to various complications in this comedy.
- (c) These words are spoken by Trigorin a popular writer, to the well known actress Arkadina in the play "The Seagull" by the Russian playwright, Anton Chekhov. Arkadina is self-centred and spoilt by the great popularity she enjoys. Trigorin is her lover. This conversation takes place in the garden of Arkadina's brother, Sorin's, house. Trigorin is attracted by Nina a pretty young girl who wants to become an actress and be popular like Arkadina. This angers and upsets Arkadina who brings in various arguments about being, old ugly etc and finally feels that she has won Trigorin back as her admirer.
- (d) In this extract from the play "The House of Bernarda Alba" by The Spanish playwright Garcia Lorca, Bernarda Alba who has just returned home after the funeral of her husband Antonio Benavides, says this to the maid who has been cleaning up the place for the return of the mourners. Bernarda, the authoritarian, autocratic mother of five girls, makes her initial appearance on the stage with the lines given in the extract. It reveals her hard despotic nature and her attitude to people of lower rank together with her narrow attitude to women in general.
- (e) This is an extract from Samuel Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot" and this angry out-burst comes from Pozzo who is exasperated by Vladimir's endless question. The line are particularly important as they reflect the theme associated with Pozzo throughout the play – hopelessness and monotony of life. Thus is brought out by the repetition of 'One day'. One day is like the other from birth to death.

2.

- (a) The extract given here is from Charles Dickens's novel "Great Expectations" and it refers to Pip's thoughts and state of mind after he discovered that the benefactor who financed him to be educated as a 'gentleman' was none other than Magwitch the convict he helped when he was a child. Magwitch who had been in Australia had

suddenly come to Pip's rooms in London. The money he made as a sheep farmer was what he had sent to the lawyer Jaggers to spend on Pip though Pip thought his benefactor was Miss Havisham and that her motive was to make him a suitable husband for Estella. He now realized that the money came from Magwitch whom he abhorred. The extract given shows his reaction to the shocking discovery.

- (b) In this extract is from Jane Austen's novel "Sense and Sensibility." John Dashwood, the half – brother of the Dashwood girls, speaks to his step – sister Elinor. He refers to Marian and her illness and the marriage prospects of the two elder girls. Fanny, whom he quoths is the proud sister – in – law of the girls and John's wife. Marriage is one of the chief themes of the novel and John speak about the prospects of the girls in this field in his own blunt, selfish money – minded way. and his snobbery.
- (c) This extract is from the novel "July's People" by Nadine Gordimer. The white woman referred to is Maureen who along with her husband Bam Samale and their children have been brought by July to the safety of his village during a black uprising against the whites. Maureen tries to do as the village women do working in the fields etc. but there is antagonism towards her. They occupy Julys mother's hut and July's mother sees danger in their being here. This extract. exposes the antagonism and the lack of understanding that exists between blacks and whites..
- (d) This extract given here is from the novel "The Road from Elephant Pass" by Nihal de Silva. It is the very last part of the story proper and sums up what the Sinhalese Captain and the former LTTE cadre, Kamala experienced and ultimately realized. The 'mine field is symbolic of the dangers they went through and factors of separation that still existed keeping the two parties apart. The statement 'Still she was safe' reflects the humane attitude, sense of mutual understanding and feeling of satisfaction that had resulted from their experiences.
3. This extract is from the short story "The Boarding House" by James Joyce one of fifteen short stories from "The Dubliners" which give coverage to various aspects of lower middle - class society in Dublin, the extract is the very end of the story which deals with schemes of a mother and daughter to secure a suitable husband for the daughter Polly who has played her part in the game perfectly and is waiting happily for the call from her mother Mrs. Mooney who has finally confronted Mr. Doran the young man they had targetted and settled the issue, of Polly's marriage to Doran – another result of the moral paralysis of Irish society which is a theme Joyce presents, in his short stories.
4. This is an extract from the poem "Ode to a Nightingale" by John Keats. The poem deals with the effect that the birds song, heard from a distance, has on the poet the narrator who was suffering from tuberculosis and was in constant pain. The bird's song has a soothing, mesmerizing effect on him, taking his mind away from himself so that he feels it would be easy and good to die in the state of ecstasy. But at the same time he realizes that if he were to die now he would no longer enjoy the effect of the bird – song "To thy high requiem become a sod." This focuses on the poet's awareness and enjoyment of the sensual, the extreme feelings, at the same time it shows the writers' balance of feeling and thought

Drama

- (a) Even though the romantic focus of Shakespeare's 'Othello' has made the play popular, some critics have found the plot to be strained, its characters improbable and its tale of marital jealousy too trivial. Do you agree?.

The play "Othello" is regarded as one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies, but it differs from the others in that it is a domestic tragedy. In the statement given plot, characters and the theme of marital jealousy have been criticised.

Taking the plot into consideration we see that it is straight forward and easy to follow with no subplots. The story develops fast starting after the elopement and marriage of Desdemona and ending with Othello realizing the truth and killing himself. Othello's marriage is immediately followed by the summons to Cyprus where Iago's plotting continues enmeshing the leading characters in a web of evil which leads them to a tragic end. Though the action moves from Venice to Cyprus and seems spread over a fairly long period the duration of the action is about 36 hours. Events follow one after the other in quick succession with no side actions interfering so that the plot continues smoothly and is not really strained.

It has also been said that the characters are 'improbable'. Desdemona is apparently very young, inexperienced, trusting and almost childish. For instance we see the childish way in which she presses Othello to take back Cassio, when he has already agreed to do so.

Desdemona : "Good love, call him back."

Othello : "Not now some other time"

Desdemona : But shall it be shortly?

Othello : "That sooner sweet for you

Desdemona : Shall it be tonight at supper?

Othello : "No not tonight"

Desdemona : "Tomorrow dinner then?"

Othello too has had wide and varied experience in warfare but in the social sphere he is completely inexperienced and this makes him an easy prey for Iago with his cunning, cleverness and seeming affection and loyalty. Jealousy may be an inborn trait in Othello's character but hitherto it had not played any role in his life as he had apparently never been in love before. Iago is a blend of everything evil cleverly covered with a show of everything good. Thus, since their backgrounds and experience or lack of it, has made them what they are (including the less important ones) The characters cannot be said to be "improbable".

Coming to the question of 'marital jealousy' being too trivial, we do see that Othello acts on what Iago tells him in his own subtle cunning way. At the same time he substantiates what he says by creating the necessary evidence. For instance what Cassio says about Bianca is made to appear like derogatory remarks about Desdemona, to Othello who through Iago's arrangements is made to overhear them. Othello with his one-sided development knows hardly anything about women. Now he loves Desdemona dearly; he trusts Iago fully and Iago handles him very cleverly. Desdemona, on the other hand, is childish in her handling of the situation created by Iago and as a result of all these factors tragedy follows. Thus the presentation of marital jealousy cannot be said to be trivial for it leads to an unnecessary tragedy.

Hence, the criticism made cannot be accepted.

(c) "July's People" carries on its first page the following quotation by Antonio Gramsci : The old is dying and the new cannot be born : in this interregnum there arises a great diversity of morbid symptoms "How useful is this description in understanding Gordimer's novel? .

The novel "July's People" by Nadine Gordimer is set in South Africa, in the background of Apartheid. It deals with an uprising of the indigenous coloured people of South Africa against the white rulers and its repercussion are presented through the experiences of a more enlightened white family, the Smales, and their servant July who has been treated better than most coloured employees and who brings them to the comparative safety of his village during the uprising. July's village is in reality just "a habitation of mud huts occupied only by members of his extended family." The Smales family comprised Bam and Maureen and their three children and they were given July's mother – in – law's hut.

The Smales, especially Maureen, try to fit into this new set – up and at the start July, knowing how they lived in their own home, tries to make things easy for them. The children however fit in easily making friends with the coloured children, learning their ways. This could be symbolic of the future – a future free from Apartheid. Bam is easy going and manages without much difficulty but Maureen's attempts to fit – in create problems for herself while the coloured women – folk too find acceptance difficult. Further there is fear regarding the discovery that they are shielding white folk.

July's position and attitudes too change. In town he was the faithful servant but among his own people he is a leader, the head of a community, looked up to and treated with respect. The servile attitude reduces. He has his own rights; his people look up to him. The white people are no longer his masters. We see how he takes the keys of the bakki; how he goes off with it on his own.

Thus, in keeping with the quotation given "the old is dying" But still the indigenous coloured people have a long way to go to regain supremacy; to stand up as a nation on their own. In short "the new cannot be born" just yet. In the interim there is "a great diversity of morbid symptoms" to be overcome. However the way the children coloured, and white merge and interact presents the ultimate goal.

(d) Nihal de Silva's "The Road from Elephant Pass" has been celebrated for "its convincing demonstration that resolution of conflict and reconciliation of difference are feasible through mutual experience and regard" Do you agree?.

Nihal de Silva's novel "The Road from Elephant Pass" centres on an unexpected situation that arose in the course of the ethnic confrontation and resulted in a captain of the Sri lankan Army, a Sinhalese from the South and a female LTTE cadre from the North making a hazardous trek through dangerous jungle areas and enemy – held land, depending on one another for help, from Jaffna to Colombo.

Captain Wasantha Ratnayake, Stationed at Elephant Pass is assigned to take a senior female LTTE cadre, Kamaka Velaithan who says she has some very important information which she will only divulge to the army high command in Colombo in return for a deal and the reason for doing this was the execution of her brother by the LTTE. A delayed start and Velaithan's knowledge of an impending attack which calls for a detour creates a dangerous situation

"There will be a major attack on Elephant Pass tonight. The camp is already surrounded"

Suddenly they are caught in gunfire and only the Captain and Velaithan escape. The attitude of each to the other familiar the captain has now to depend on the woman for escape.

... of Tamil and the area is allowed to

the master of the house. They are people of a low caste. In contrast to these cruel feudal customs we see the response of the boy's father and others present who object to the actions of the Master. Sincerity of universal cultural norms are also presented through the grandson who arrives from Malaya.

Similarly in "A Temporary Affair" we seen the response of two young people of Indian origin but now living in America, to the loss of their first child who was still – born. Shoba has lived in America much longer than Shukumar who is still a student. Six months have passed but the loss which affected them so much has caused a rift in their relationship. A temporary power cut draws them closer and they while away the dark hours in a sort of game – relating untold personal secrets. But the cause of the original rift a situation that people of the western country would have accepted and overlooked, is not to be forgotten. Shukumar expects a return to normality but Shoba has made arrangements to move out.

Thus tensions between their own cultural norms and the more recently acquired universal ones lead to a breakup in their relations.

(c) Using detailed examples from at least three short stories in your syllabus describe how narrative structure enhances the impacts of these stories.

Three short stories with different narrative structures are Saki's "The Open Window" Chitra Fernando's "Action and Reaction" and "The Boarding House" by James Joyce.

Saki's 'The Open Window' is an amusing episode of a quick – witted, intelligent girl of fifteen with a talent for 'romance at short notice', making a quick 'sizing up' of a nervous stranger who has come to introduce himself to her aunt, constructing a hilarious episode at his expense and then building a second equally hilarious episode to explain the terrified visitor's hurried departure. The story is fast – moving and highly amusing but does not have much depth. As such the narrative style too is highly dramatic, quick moving and full of humour and irony.

Just a question or two and Vera says "Then you know practically nothing about my aunt?" Then follows the dramatic story of "the tragedy" "Out through that window three years ago to a day...."

The second example, Chitra Fernando's 'Action and Reaction' is a different type of story dealing with social and religious hypocrisy. It has far more depth than "The Open Window"; the characters are drawn with much greater depth and sarcasm and have a close likeness to people we come across in our society. For instance Piyadasa has asked Loku Nenda for permission to marry Kusuma. The narrator Mahinda and his sister are happy about this but the very religious Loku Nenda who does not want to lose her servant bursts out in anger "Tanha, tanha, tanha, they're all filled with tanha (greed or desire). When I think of what I've done for that girl! She was like a wild animal when she came to me"

Mahinda points out that Piyadasa has done nothing wrong. Loku Nenda responds with "Mahinda, what do you know about these things! After you went to that University, your head is stuffed full of useless foreign ideas. Who is this Freud, ah? Who is this Marx"

The narrative style here is realistic and hard – hitting and brings out the selfishness and hypocrisy in the social set up.

The third example James Joyce's "The Boarding House" deals with one aspect of life in Dublin's middle class society (The other aspects are dealt with in the other short stories in "The Dubliners") Here we see the vacillation, diffidence, inability to come to a firm decision which the author saw in society – what he termed 'moral paralysis'

The Way to AnswerGeneral Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination,
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2. (a)

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

(b) **Languages**

Over	800	different	languages	including
many	endangered	ones	are	spoken
daily	in	New	York	City
because	of	its	large	racially
diverse	population.	Presently	6500	exist
in	the	world	but	linguists
expect	this	to	be	almost
halved	by	the	turn	of
the	century.	In	the	Andaman
Islands	there	were	10	languages
Valued	for	their	antiquity	and
the	light	they	shed	on
culture	history	and	ecology.	Of
these	the	Bo	language	was
used	for	research	at	Jawahllal
Nehru	University	with	the	assistance
of	its	last	fluent	speaker.
Similarly	research	at	Nepal's	Tribhuvan
University	resulted	in	the	first
grammatical	description	and	documentation	of
Kasunda	one	of	130	indigenous
languages,	though	its	real	background
is	lost.	Today	much	is
done	in	various	modern	ways
to	protect	languages	but	indigenous
languages	transmit	cultural	traditional	environmental
medical	knowledge	easily	lost	when

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3.

- (1) In the passage we see the differences in living, hopes, attitudes, values in village life and town life. The hustle and bustle of town life with everything done to time contrast with the quiet of the village. Similarly there is the difference in values brought out by the value set on education and the senior school Certificate which to the mother in the village is an entrance to a high social level whereas in the town its hardly enough for a small job. There is a difference in attitudes – the free attitude of the boys in the bus to the school teacher contrasts with the girl from the walauwe and the Kachcheri clerk and having tasted town life, to Ruwan “The Village was a nuisance.”
- (2) Ruwan’s mother was proud to see her son as a “little Mahattaya” in trousers and shoes. She expected him to get a job as a Kachcheri clerk and to marry a “Walauiwa girl”, the walauiwa being apparently the highest social level the highest social level in the village
- Her hopes are based on her son being ‘senior qualified’ which to her is a high level of education.
- (3) Ruwan was not really happy with his job as a bus conductor but he realized that he was lucky to get even a job like this when the S.S.C. qualified were mostly without jobs and had even formed a Union to get what they could. He also lied to his mother as he knew what he had got would disappoint her.
- (4) Ruwan told his mother he was a clerk in the Kachchri because his mother was under the impression that his education – passing the S.S.C. – was a great qualification and would put him in a high social level. He could not possibly disappoint her.
- (5) The theme of the story is the wide gap or discrepancies that exist between the urban and rural areas and the outlook of the people in These social backgrounds. The phrase “one ring to stop two rings to start” indicate clear cut methodical organization – the same for everybody but the line “People ring the bell as if it were a carillon and the bus staggers and stalls” shows the set – up in the social order as it really is and the results of such a situation.
- (6) The story brings out the hopes, effort, hardships and expectations of people through Ruwan and his mother and show what happens due to the existing social order. The bus, its expected bell – ringing and the actual way the bell is rung is skillfully used to reflect the theme.

4.

- (1) The relationship between the writer’s parents was a passive, cold one. There was no hostility or dislike but at the same time there was no warmth or expression of feelings. They just led their own lives. Yet the situation according to the writer affected the mother who was a warmer character
- “I think it bore more hardly on my mother
Who had more generous feelings to express”
- (2) The mother was a more out – going person than the father but perhaps had learnt to keep her feelings in check due to the father’s ways
- “..... my mother
... had more generous feelings to express”
- But the father had apparently, deliberately
- “..... dammed up his Irish blood
..... And stiffened into stone and creaking wood”
- The mother felt the stiffness and lack of expressiveness
- “I think it bore more hardly on my mother”

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- The father shunned all expressions of affection and appeared to have just "Curt embarrassment" a weakness which reflected on everyone
- (3) In his childhood the writer wanted his father to show affection a father fathers did. But when he wanted to be kidded the response was "curt embarrassment" It hurt terrible. He says
- "The rebuff still stuns" It "cut like a saw" and the child kept his affection henceforth "in check"
- "My tenderness thenceforth escaped detection"
- It's later that he understood the father's weakness and realized he was good
- "..... they were good people
- They cared for us and loved us" .
- (4) The lesson he learnt was to keep his feelings in check and to understand the other person..
- (5) People have various limitations especially where expression of feelings is concerned. Yet they, especially parents, do the best they can by their children, and one should be understanding and grateful. People should be appreciated for what they are, Judging them by other standards is ingratitude.