

English Literature [Official]
CISCE
ISC
Academic Year: 2023-2024
Date & Time: 13th February 2024, 2:00 pm

Duration: 3h

Marks: 80

1. Candidates are allowed an additional 15 minutes for only reading the paper.
2. They must NOT start writing during this time.
3. Answer all questions in Section A and Section B.
4. The intended marks for questions or parts of questions are given in brackets [].

SECTION A - 20 MARKS

Q1. Choose the correct options for the following questions.

1.1.

Antonio:	(Aside to Sebastian) Let it be tonight; For now they are oppress'd with travail, they Will not nor cannot use such vigilance As when they are fresh.
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What does Antonio refer to when he says "Let it be tonight..." in Act III, Scene iii of the play, The Tempest?

- 1. The murder of Alonso and Gonzalo.**
2. The murder of Ferdinand.
3. Sebastian and Antonio's escape from the island.
4. Sebastian and Antonio's plan to steal Stephano's liquor.

Solution

The murder of Alonso and Gonzalo.

1.2. What role does Ariel play in Act IV of the play, The Tempest?

1. He helps the conspirators to plot against Prospero.
2. He assists Prospero in presenting the "vanity" of his art.
3. He guides Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio towards self-realisation.
4. He protects Ferdinand and Miranda.

Solution

He assists Prospero in presenting the "vanity" of his art.

1.3.

Caliban:	No noise, and enter Do that good mischief which may make this island Thine own forever, and 1, thy Caliban, For aye thy foot-licker.
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In the above lines taken from Act IV Scene i of the play, The Tempest, what does Caliban refer to by the phrase "good mischief"?

1. The act of chasing the strange sounds.
2. The act of killing Prospero.
3. The act of marrying Miranda.
4. The act of stealing the gaudy clothes.

Solution

The act of killing Prospero.

1.4. How does Prospero ask to be released from his "bands" in the Epilogue of the play, The Tempest?

1. With the audience clapping their hands.
2. With laughter from the audience.
3. With a universal shout from the audience.
4. With praises for the play from the audience.

Solution

With the audience clapping their hands.

1.5. "When the doctors came, they said she had died of heart disease - of joy that kills."

Which one of the following explains why the short story, The Story of an Hour ends with the phrase "...of joy that kills"?

- I. To convey a sense of irony.
- II. To make the readers judge Mrs. Mallard.
- III. To convey Mrs. Mallard's sheer sense of shock.
- IV. To explain Brently Mallard's shock at the incident.

- 1. Only (I) and (IV)
- 2. Only (I) and (II)
- 3. Only (I) and (III)
- 4. Only (II) and (IV)

Solution

Only (I) and (IV)

1.6. In the short story, Fritz, what had happened to Fritz according to Jayanta?

- 1. Jayanato had misplaced him in the garden.
- 2. The dogs had torn him apart.
- 3. Fritz had disappeared near the Deodar tree.
- 4. Fritz had died of old age.

Solution

The dogs had torn him apart.

1.7. In the short story, Quality, what causes the death of the younger Gessler brother?

- 1. Slow starvation, rigid work schedule and dwindling customers.
- 2. Fever and cold due to bad weather.

3. Rude customers.
4. Inability to clear loans.

Solution

Slow starvation, rigid work schedule and dwindling customers.

1.8. "So was I once myself a swinger of birches."

What mood of the poet is captured in the above lines taken from the poem, Birches?

1. Boredom
2. Nostalgia
3. Amusement
4. Loneliness

Solution

Nostalgia

1.9. What is the central idea of the poem, John Brown?

1. The love of a mother for her son.
2. Wars are necessary.
3. The illusion that war is glorious.
4. The heroism of soldiers.

Solution

The illusion that war is glorious.

1.10. What is the phrase 'The Century's corpse outleant' in the poem, The Darkling Thrush, a metaphor for?

1. The passing of time and the end of an era.
2. The glory of nature.
3. The funeral of the thrush.
4. The end of poet's life.

Solution

The passing of time and the end of an era.

Q2. Complete the following sentences by providing a reason for each in brief. Do not write the question.

2.1. In Act V, Scene I of the play, The Tempest, Ariel reminds Prospero that it was the sixth hour because _____.

Solution

In Act V, Scene I of the play, The Tempest, Ariel reminds Prospero that it was the sixth hour because ariel must remind Prospero of the passage of time so that his reconciliation and resolution plans can be carried out on time.

2.2. At the end of the Masque in Act IV, Scene i of the play, The Tempest, Ferdinand feels that Prospero's behaviour is unusual because _____.

Solution

At the end of the Masque in Act IV, Scene i of the play, The Tempest, Ferdinand feels that Prospero's behaviour is unusual because prospero quickly interrupts the cheerful celebration and the masque, implying that his objectives are more serious and significant.

2.3. In Act III Scene ii of the play, The Tempest, upon hearing the music of Ariel, Stephanis says that the island will prove to be a "brave kingdom" to him because _____.

Solution

In Act III Scene ii of the play, The Tempest, upon hearing the music of Ariel, Stephanis says that the island will prove to be a "brave kingdom" to him because stephano is easily affected by Ariel's music, which creates a beautiful and enticing ambiance, causing him to assume that the island will provide him with power and fortune.

2.4. In Act V Scene i of the play, The Tempest, the Boatswain does not remember how he arrived at Prospero's cell because _____.

Solution

In Act V Scene i of the play, The Tempest, the Boatswain does not remember how he arrived at Prospero's cell because he has been influenced by Prospero's enchantments, which may have led him to forget some events or information.

2.5. In the short story, B. Wordsworth, when the narrator's mother refuses to buy B. Wordsworth's poem, B. Wordsworth remarks 'It is the poet's tragedy' because _____.

Solution

In the short story, B. Wordsworth, when the narrator's mother refuses to buy B. Wordsworth's poem, B. Wordsworth remarks, 'It is the poet's tragedy' because Wordsworth feels rejected and undervalued, highlighting a frequent struggle among poets whose works are neither respected nor understood by society.

2.6. In the short story, The Story of an Hour, it is Josephine who breaks the tragic news of Brently Mallard's death to Mrs Mallard because _____.

Solution

In the short story, The Story of an Hour, it is Josephine who breaks the tragic news of Brently Mallard's death to Mrs Mallard because the family chose Josephine to deliver the news with sensitivity, believing she could console Mrs Mallard and help her cope with the shock.

2.7. In the short story, Fritz, Jayanto was told by his uncle to address the doll as Fritz because _____.

Solution

In the short story, Fritz, Jayanto was told by his uncle to address the doll as Fritz because Jayanto's uncle wants him to believe that the doll is alive and capable of responding to him, which encourages Jayanto's creativity and emotional bond to the doll.

2.8. In the poem, John Brown, John Brown drops his medals into his mother's hands because _____.

Solution

In the poem, John Brown, John Brown drops his medals into his mother's hands because he realizes the futility and emptiness of war honours and seeks solace and comfort in his mother's love and understanding.

2.9. In the poem, The Darkling Thrush, the poet uses the words "evensong" and "carolling" to describe the thrush's song because _____.

Solution

In the poem, The Darkling Thrush, the poet uses the words "evensong" and "carolling" to describe the thrush's song because these words evoke religious and festive imagery, emphasizing the contrast between the bleakness of the winter landscape and the hopeful, celebratory nature of the thrush's song.

2.10. In the poem "Birches," the poet observes that the birches are bent because _____.

Solution

In the poem "Birches," the poet observes that the birches are bent because they've been weighted down by ice storms or even by lads swinging on them, causing them to bend gracefully back to their original posture.

SECTION B - 60 MARKS : The Tempest: William Shakespeare

Q3.

3.1. With close reference to Act III, describe Alonso's response to the perceived loss of his son, Ferdinand. Write your answer in a short paragraph of about 100-150 words.

Solution

In Act III of Shakespeare's "The Tempest," Alonso, the King of Naples, is overwhelmed with grief and despair over the perceived loss of his son, Ferdinand, whom he believes has drowned. This sorrow is evident when he expresses a profound sense of guilt and remorse, suggesting that the loss of his son is a divine punishment for his past wrongdoings, particularly his involvement in the usurpation of Prospero's dukedom. He becomes so despondent that he loses interest in his surroundings and his royal power, showing no care even for his own safety. Alonso's grief is compounded by the harsh conditions of the island and the mysterious spirits that further disorient him, making his mental state even more fragile. His profound sadness renders him passive and resigned, accepting his suffering as atonement for his sins, which is starkly contrasted with the attitudes of the other characters who continue to plot and scheme for power and escape.

3.2. How do Prospero, Ferdinand and Caliban perceive Miranda? Give one example of each of their perceptions, from the Acts studied, to support your answer. Write your answer in a short paragraph of about 100-150 words.

Solution

In "The Tempest," Miranda is perceived differently by Prospero, Ferdinand, and Caliban, reflecting their relationships with her. Prospero, her father, views Miranda as precious and vulnerable, needing his protection. He carefully orchestrates her meeting with Ferdinand, aiming to secure her future. This protective attitude is evident when he uses his magic to control who she meets and how, as seen in Act I when he tells her the story of their arrival on the island, subtly preparing her for what is to come. Ferdinand, on the other hand, sees Miranda as an angel or goddess when they first meet in Act I, Scene II, immediately falling in love with her purity and beauty, exclaiming, "Most sure, the goddess on whom these airs attend!" Lastly, Caliban perceives her as the embodiment of the kindness and education he once received and later as a symbol of his own loss and subjugation under Prospero's rule, hinting at his complex feelings towards her in his initial interactions in Act I.

3.3. (a) Despite being a half monster and half human, Caliban comes across as superior to Stephano and Trinculo. Justify the statement with supporting evidence from the Acts studied in 200-250 words.

Solution

In "The Tempest," Caliban, despite his supposed monster nature, frequently displays features that suggest he is more analytical and observant than Stephano and Trinculo, who are purportedly 'civilised' men. This disparity is prominently reflected in their interactions and plans on the island.

First and foremost, Caliban understands the island better than Stephano and Trinculo. He possesses an intuitive understanding of the island's natural resources and geography, which he uses to navigate and survive. For example, in Act II, Scene II, he appropriately explains the island's characteristics and resources to Stephano, offering to show him "the best springs" and promising to take him to "clustering filberts." This practical understanding demonstrates his adaptability and survival instincts, which Stephano and Trinculo lack as they navigate their surroundings.

Furthermore, Caliban's attempt to overthrow Prospero exhibits a level of sophistication and strategic thinking that Stephano and Trinculo lack. Caliban persuades Stephano to assassinate Prospero in Act III, Scene II, presenting a thorough plot to catch him sleeping and grab his magical books. Caliban is the mastermind here, demonstrating his ability to influence and lead action to achieve his intended

outcome, as opposed to Stephano and Trinculo's intoxicated folly and lack of foresight.

Furthermore, Caliban's knowledge of his own captivity and longing for liberation demonstrate a depth of character and grasp of his surroundings that Stephano and Trinculo lack. He sees Prospero's power as oppressive and desires release, expressing deep feelings about his situation in various monologues that reflect on his sense of self and individuality.

Caliban's superior knowledge of the island, strategic scheming, and reflective comprehension of his own predicament all point to a higher level of character depth and competence than Stephano and Trinculo's more superficial, self-serving, and buffoonish behaviour. These parts of his character call into question traditional notions of 'monstrosity' and 'humanity', presenting him as a shockingly superior figure in many ways.

OR

3.3. (b) Referring closely to any two instances from the Acts studied, show how music is used to influence the course of events/action in the play, Write your answer in a short paragraph of about 200-250 words.

Solution

In Shakespeare's "The Tempest," music influences events and shapes the narrative, nearly acting as a character in and of itself. Its magical properties are critical in orchestrating the characters' actions and emotions throughout the play.

One notable example of music influencing the course of events is in Act I, Scene II, when Ariel, working under Prospero's instructions, uses music to captivate Ferdinand. Ariel's song, "Full Fathom Five Thy Father Lies," brings Ferdinand to Miranda, facilitating their first meeting and the immediate romantic affinity that develops between them. This song, with its haunting melody about death and rebirth, captivates Ferdinand and leads him beyond his sadness to a new, transformational love. The music in this scene acts as a magical force, bringing the characters' fates together and advancing Prospero's goal to secure Miranda's prosperous union.

Another significant use of music is in Act III, Scene III, when Ariel plays gloomy music to lull Alonso, Antonio, and Sebastian into guilt-ridden meditation. As the three men hear the "strange and several noises" of the island, they are overcome by the weight of their past transgressions, particularly the usurpation of Prospero's dukedom. The

music conjures up an enchanted banquet, which then evaporates, causing these characters to become more aware and remorseful. This manipulation through Ariel's music emphasises their weakness and helps Prospero achieve his larger goal of moral and societal repair.

In both cases, music surpasses its usual role, becoming a dynamic force that deeply influences the characters' psychological and emotional landscapes, propelling the play's fundamental themes of reconciliation and restoration. Prospero wields music to control the island's mystical aspects, arranging a resolution that reflects his ideals for justice and familial harmony.

ECHOES: PROSE

Q4.

4.1. Describe the event that led the narrator, Shankar, to suggest digging the ground under the Deodar tree in the short story, Fritz. Write your answer in a short paragraph of about 100-150 words.

Solution

In Satyajit Ray's short story "Fritz," the narrator, Shankar, suggests digging the ground under the Deodar tree following a peculiar set of events involving a toy cat named Fritz. Fritz, once owned by the narrator's friend Jayanto, had been buried under the same Deodar tree twenty-five years earlier during Jayanto's childhood stay at a rest house in Bundi. The memory of Fritz resurfaces as Jayanto feels increasingly troubled and haunted by a spot under the Deodar tree during their current visit to the same rest house. Jayanto, disturbed by dreams and an inexplicable sense of unease centred around that specific location, confides in Shankar about the exact place where Fritz was buried. Observing Jayanto's distressed state and the intense connection to the buried toy, Shankar suggests digging up the spot to potentially uncover and thus resolve the source of Jayanto's anxiety, hoping it would bring some peace to his friend.

4.2. Based on the short story, The Story of an Hour, discuss what can be inferred about the significance of the open window in Mrs. Mallard's room. Write your answer in a short paragraph of 100-150 words.

Solution

In Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour," the open window in Mrs. Mallard's room

serves as a powerful symbol of freedom and the possibilities of life beyond the confines of her oppressive marriage. As Mrs. Mallard sits before it, the window provides a view of the outside world, which is vibrant and alive with the signs of spring. The descriptions of the "delicious breath of rain," the "notes of a distant song," and the "countless sparrows twittering in the eaves" suggest a world teeming with renewal and continuity. For Mrs. Mallard, who has just received news of her husband's death, the open window represents the new and unrestricted life that she can now lead. It stands as a portal to this new existence, contrasting starkly with the closed, stifling environment of her married life. The fresh, open air coming through the window symbolizes the freedom she has longed for, which is now tantalizingly within reach. This imagery supports the theme of liberation, highlighting the contrast between the confinement of her past and the boundless opportunities of her future.

4.3. (a) With reference to the short story *Quality*, trace the journey of the Gessler Brothers from "Old is an Art!" to the bitter realization of "Dey dake it away from us, who lofe our boods....bresently i haf no work." Write your answer in about 200-250 words.

Solution

In John Galsworthy's short story "Quality," the Gessler Brothers' journey encapsulates a fierce struggle against the changing tides of commerce and modernity, finally leading to their tragic demise. The story depicts the Gesslers as committed artisans, shoemakers who see their work as an art form, with each pair of boots produced with unrivalled dedication and expertise. Initially, their attitude of "old is an art" reflects their dedication to quality and dislike for mass-produced goods. Their boots are built to last and fit flawlessly, setting them apart from the inexpensive, low-quality items on the market.

However, as the novel progresses, this dedication to workmanship becomes both a source of pride and weakness. The advent of larger boot-making enterprises that prioritise quantity over quality, combined with a shift in consumer behaviour towards more trendy, readily available footwear, begins to undermine their customer base. The narrator, a long-term customer, observes fewer orders and the rising strain on the Gesslers' money and emotions.

The elder Mr. Gessler's lament, "Dey dake it away from us, who lofe our boods," reflects the anguish of seeing their life's work devalued and undercut by commercial behemoths. This comment demonstrates their impotence in a market that no longer

values the handcrafted nature of their boots. The loss in business not only impacts their livelihood but also deteriorates their health, which is exacerbated by hard hours and financial insecurity.

The story culminates in the elder Gessler's terrible death from overwork and starvation, exacerbated by the despair of seeing his beloved art become useless. The younger brother's heartbreaking admission, "Bresently I haf no work," is a harsh acknowledgement of their defeat at the hands of industrial development and customer disinterest. Thus, the Gessler Brothers' path from pride in their art to the painful realisation of its irrelevance provides a compelling portrayal of the cost of industrialization and the extinction of traditional craftsmanship in the face of unrelenting modernization.

OR

4.3. (b) Miss Meadows' need for societal acceptance makes her overlook Basil's insensitivity and shortcomings. Discuss with reference to the short story. The Singing Lesson is about 200-250 words.

Solution

In Katherine Mansfield's short story "The Singing Lesson," Miss Meadows, a music teacher dealing with the emotional pain of a broken engagement, demonstrates how the need for societal acceptance can cause someone to ignore substantial personal failures and relational defects. This issue is sensitively handled through her connection with Basil, her fiancé, who initially sends her a letter cancelling their engagement, citing financial insecurity. This letter drives Miss Meadows into a deep state of depression, which has a significant impact on her interactions with her students and outlook on life.

Despite Basil's obvious contempt for her sentiments and the suddenness of his decision, Miss Meadows' reaction demonstrates her sensitivity and need on this connection for social standing and personal affirmation. An unmarried woman, particularly a teacher, was frequently considered with pity and disgust. Miss Meadows' work adds another degree of complexity because her emotional stability is supposed to remain consistent despite personal difficulties.

Later in the novel, Basil sends a telegram withdrawing the morning message and briefly resuming their engagement. This fast transition from despair to a veneer of joy prevents any meaningful settlement of the underlying concerns. Miss Meadows soon

forgets her prior anguish and accepts the reconciliation without addressing the emotional harm Basil's actions caused. Her fast return to planning and looking forward to their wedding reveals that her need for societal acceptance and the fear of being alone override her awareness of Basil's insensitivity and the possible instability of their future marriage.

This behaviour serves as a poignant critique of society expectations and the personal sacrifices required to adapt to them, which are frequently at the expense of genuine happiness and emotional well-being. Miss Meadows' willingness to overlook Basil's flaws exemplifies the complicated interplay between society conventions and personal fulfilment.

REVERIE : POETRY

Q5.

5.1. What do you think prompts the poet's desire for a temporary escape in the poem, Birches? Why does he wish to come back to Earth? Write your answer in a short paragraph of about 100-150 words.

Solution

In Robert Frost's poem "Birches," the poet's yearning for brief escape is motivated by the weariness and regularity of daily existence. He finds comfort in the picture of swinging on birches, which signifies a brief escape from the world's difficulties into a state of youthful freedom and unburdened delight. The poet nostalgically recalls the pure delight of climbing and hanging on birch trees, utilising it as a metaphor for escaping the earth's gravitational pull—both literally and figuratively.

However, Frost recognises the significance of returning to reality and taking a balanced attitude to life's obstacles. He says he'd like to climb a birch tree "Towards heaven," but he eventually wants to return to earth because it's the best location for love. This demonstrates his grasp that, despite its difficulties, life contains significant relationships and experiences rooted in truth. The earth, for all of its flaws, is where human relationships thrive, and so, despite the appeal of escapism, he recognises the worth and necessity of returning to fully participate with life.

5.2. What leads Mathew Arnold to tell his beloved, "Ah, love, let us be true", in the last stanza of the poem, The Dover Beach? Write your answer in a short paragraph of 100-150 words.

Solution

In Matthew Arnold's poem "Dover Beach," the urging of "Ah, love, let us be true" in the final stanza arises from a profound sense of uncertainty and disillusionment with the modern world. The poem describes a night by the Dover coast, where the tranquil and beautiful seascape sharply contrasts with the poet's internal turmoil and melancholy.

This sorrow is due to his realization of the retreating "Sea of Faith," a metaphor for the waning of religious belief and the erosion of spiritual certainty in the Victorian era. As Arnold contemplates the ebbing tide, he reflects on the loss of this faith, which once encircled the world like a protective girdle. In response to this growing emptiness and the harsh reality of a world characterized by conflict and human misery ("where ignorant armies clash by night"), Arnold turns to his beloved.

He seeks solace in personal truth and steadfast love as the only remaining sources of comfort and fidelity in an otherwise bleak and uncertain existence. Thus, his plea to be true underscores a desire for enduring human connections amid the widespread desolation of faith and stability.

5.3.

5.3. (a) Show how Carol Ann Duffy presents a disturbing picture of confinement and exploitation in the poem, *The Dolphins*. Write your answer in about 200-250 words.

Solution

In Carol Ann Duffy's poem "The Dolphins," the theme of confinement and exploitation is poignantly depicted through the lives of dolphins in captivity. The poem presents a deeply disturbing portrayal of the psychological and physical limitations imposed on these creatures, using the dolphins' perspective to heighten the impact of their suffering.

The poem begins by highlighting the artificial nature of the dolphins' environment: "World is what you swim in, or dance, it is simple." This line captures the totality of their world now reduced to the confines of a pool, a stark contrast to the vastness and complexity of the ocean, their natural habitat. Duffy uses the word "element" to emphasize that the pool water is not their natural element, underscoring their displacement and alienation.

The dolphins' awareness of their captivity is vividly expressed through lines like, "There is a constant flowing guilt," suggesting that they feel a pervasive sense of being out of place, trapped in a scenario for which they bear no responsibility yet suffer the consequences. They recognize the unnaturalness of their performances and routines, "We have found no truth in these waters," Duffy writes, indicating their disillusionment and the lack of authenticity in their new life.

The exploitation aspect is further explored through the motif of the "man" who controls their food and directs their performances. The dolphins are at the mercy of his whims, illustrating a clear dynamic of power and subjugation: "He is in charge of the world of our performances." This line points to the control he holds over their world, dictating their actions and survival, encapsulating the exploitation commercialized entities impose on natural beings for entertainment.

Lastly, the closing lines of the poem, "I am happy," reflect a tragic and forced acceptance, possibly a learned helplessness or a resigned facade. It conveys the deep psychological impact of their captivity, where asserting happiness becomes a necessary delusion to cope with the lack of freedom and self-determination.

Through "The Dolphins," Duffy effectively portrays a chilling narrative of how captivity and human exploitation strip sentient beings of their dignity and freedom, leaving them to exist in a world that echoes their physical and spiritual confinement.

OR

5.3. (b) How does John Brown convey his firsthand experience of war to his mother and evoke a deep emotional response in the readers? Justify your answer in about 200-250 words with supporting details from the poem, by John Brown.

Solution

John Brown's poetry effectively depicts the raw emotions and cruel realities of battle, drawing readers in with his personal description and emotional rawness. He begins by addressing his mother directly, establishing a personal and intimate tone that brings readers into the family dynamic, which is universally relevant. This direct communication not only connects readers emotionally, but also creates a moving contrast between the loving warmth of a mother's presence and the destructive chaos of the battlefield.

Brown portrays the conflict scenario with vivid imagery, including "bullets chirp," "bombs sing," and "death lays eggs." The use of personification and vivid, almost surreal imagery communicates the strange and terrifying character of the battlefield, transforming everyday sounds into dangerous dangers. Such descriptions not only demonstrate the continual danger and unpredictability of combat, but also conjure the fear and worry that troops feel, drawing the reader into the sensory reality of his environment.

He emphasises the sensory experiences of combat, enhancing the poem's power to elicit a strong emotional response. The sounds of gunfire, the image of a comrade lying motionless, and the tactile sensation of cold are all vividly depicted, making the tragedy of battle apparent. Brown's reference of personal loss, witnessing friends transformed to "meat for maggots," humanises the war and emphasises the awful waste of life, heightening the emotional depth and pathos of his story.

Furthermore, the striking contrast between his wartime experiences and his memories of home, where his mother's care once kept him safe, heightens the emotional impact. The juxtaposition of former stability and present peril emphasises the tremendous alienation and transformation that soldiers face, eliciting pity and regret in the reader.

John Brown's poem effectively conveys his firsthand experience of war and elicits strong emotional responses by combining vivid imagery, personal anecdotes, and a direct, conversational tone that bridges the gap between the battlefield and the home, making the terror and tragedy of war feel immediate and real.