

The Cathedral and John Connon School
English Literature Preliminary Examination

Std. X
Date: 15th January, 2019

Marks: 80
Time: 2 hours

Answers to this Paper must be written on the paper provided separately

The first ten minutes are to be spent reading the question paper.

The time given at the head of this paper is the time allowed for writing the answers

Attempt five questions in all

You must attempt at least one question from each of the Sections A, B and C and not more than two other questions.

The intended marks for questions or parts of questions are given in brackets []

THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF 3 PRINTED SIDES

SECTION A: DRAMA

The Merchant of Venice: Shakespeare

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Question I

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

Arragon: *O, that estates, degrees and offices
Were not derived corruptly! And that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!*

- i) Explain, 'O, that estates, degrees and offices; Were not derived corruptly'. State any two instances quoted by him to support his view [3]
- ii) Why does Arragon not choose the gold casket? How are his words ironic? [3]
- iii) What lesson lies for Arragon within the silver casket? [3]
- iv) Which oath does Arragon almost break when he opens the wrong casket? What is Portia's reaction to it? [3]
- v) State and explain the figure of speech used by Portia after Arragon's departure. How does the end of the scene reveal the humorous side of Portia's character? [4]

Question 2

[16]

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

*Portia: Now he goes, with no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit*

- i) When does Portia say this? What can one conclude about her state of mind at this point in time? [3]
- ii) Explain how the reference to Hercules and the sea-monster is appropriate for the situation. [3]
- iii) Why does Portia order music to be played while Bassanio makes his choice? [3]
- iv) Why does Bassanio reject the gold casket? Give any two examples used by Bassanio that are related to beauty and bravery. [3]
- v) Discuss two character traits of Portia that are revealed in this scene. How does her treatment of Bassanio contrast with that of Morocco and Arragon when they made their choice of caskets? [4]

Question 3

[16]

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

Shylock

*Nay, take my life and pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.*

Portia

What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

- i) How does Portia cleverly turn Shylock's 'plea for justice' in Antonio's favour? [3]
- ii) What do the laws of Venice state with regard to aliens? [3]
- iii) Gratiano is particularly harsh towards Shylock in this part of the scene. Justify this statement. [3]
- iv) Why does Antonio say a little earlier in the scene that Fortune has been kind to him? [3]
- v) What 'justice' is rendered by Antonio? With reference to the lines in the extract, why does Shylock prefer death to pardon? [4]

Section B: Poetry

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Poetry (A Collection of Poems)

Question 4:

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

[16]

*About ben Adhem (May his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich like a lily in bloom.....*

- i) Who was About Ben Adhem? Explain the meaning of the words "May his tribe increase." Why is it put in parenthesis? [3]
- ii) What did About discover in his room? Which other words are used to describe the entity? How is the phrase 'like a lily in bloom' a suitable description? [3]
- iii) How did About react on learning that his name was not in the book of gold? What was his request to the angel? [3]
- iv) Why do you feel About became bold? Discuss the relevance of the theme in the present religious climate in our country. [3]
- v) How can we say that this poem has a universal appeal? Comment on the tone and the mood of the poem. If an angel appeared before you, how would you ask to be remembered? [4]

Question 5:

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

*They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.*

- i) Who is the speaker? Who is he speaking to? Where are they? [3]
- ii) Bring out the irony in Kaspar's words. [3]
- iii) Write any two messages the poem conveys to the reader supported by evidence from the text. [3]
- iv) State clearly how the poet created an atmosphere of devastation caused by war in the poem. [3]
- v) Who were the people responsible for the victory? How does the poem refer to them? Do you feel Kaspar's attitude would have been different if he had pursued a different profession? Justify your answer. [4]

Question 6

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

*Thus I entered, and thus I go!
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
Paid by the world, "What dost thou owe
me?"— God may question; now instead,
'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.*

- i) Name and explain the figure of speech in the first line of this extract. [3]
- ii) Describe the manner in which the speaker was welcomed in the opening lines of the poem and why. [3]
- iii) What is the form of the poem? Mention two characteristics peculiar to this form. [3]
- iv) What are his thoughts as he uttered the quoted lines and why do they make him feel safe? Why is this ironic? [3]
- v) Comment on the concept of 'crowd mentality' that one sees in this poem. [4]

SECTION C: PROSE

A Collection of ICSE Poems and Short Stories

Question 7

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

The world ground to a standstill. The silence was so immense and unbelievable that you felt your ears had been stuffed or you had lost your hearing altogether. The children put their hands to their ears.

- i) What had just happened? What is the analogy used by author to describe it? [3]
- ii) Write any three ways in which the children enjoy the two hours of sunshine. [3]
- iii) Give two reasons why the other children resented Margot. What did they do to her? [3]
- iv) What is the term used by the author for the children in the school? State one way each in which these children were exactly the same and completely different from the children on earth. [3]
- v) What is the genre of this short story? Mention any two themes that emerge from the story and give suitable justifications for each. Suggest an alternative title for the story. [4]

