

MODERN PROSE AND DRAMA

I SEMESTER

**COMMON COURSE IN ENGLISH
FOR**

BA/B Sc/B Com/BBA

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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STUDY MATERIAL

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<u>CONTENTS</u>		<u>PAGE</u> <u>NO.</u>
MODULE 1 PROSE	AS SCHOOLMASTER	5
	ADDRESS TO THE WOMEN'S SECTION OF THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE, SINGAPORE	9
	MARTIN LUTHER KING AND AFRICA	12
	THE SPEECH DETAILING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA	16
	WHY I WANT A WIFE	21
	IN SEARCH OF SWEET PEAS	25
MODULE 2 DRAMA	THE NEVER-NEVER NEST	28
	THE REFUND	31

	SOUL GONE HOME	34
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MODULE I – PROSE
AS SCHOOLMASTER
M.K. Gandhi

‘As Schoolmaster’ is an extract from Gandhi’s autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. This chapter gives us Gandhi’s views on education. Gandhi, while he was in South Africa, had established a settlement in Johannesburg called ‘Tolstoy Farm’. It was a cooperative colony and was inspired by the Tolstoyean ideas. The present chapter is about Gandhi’s attempts to provide a better education to the inmates of the farm, which becomes an enunciation of Gandhi’s educational philosophy.

People belonging to different religions lived in the Tolstoy Farm. They lived together like one family and Gandhi occupied the place of the father in the family. So he found it his responsibility to give education to the children of the farm. Gandhi was not satisfied with the current system of education there as that was giving children only three ‘R’s which included reading, ‘riting’ and ‘rithmetic’. So he decided to find out a comprehensive system of education that would provide the children an all round development. Gandhi found this a difficult task as the children were brought up in different conditions and environments and they belonged to different religions.

Gandhi strongly believed that moral training should be given to all children alike. He regarded character building as the proper foundation of their education and once this foundation was laid, they could learn all the other things themselves or with the assistance of friends.

For giving the literary training, Gandhi got the help of Mr. Kallenbach and Sjt. Pragji Desai, the close associates of Gandhi in South Africa. Gandhi gave importance to the building of the body also. All the works in the farm, from cooking down to scavenging, were done by the inmates. Some engaged in gardening also. All these works gave the students much delight and ample exercise. Thus the children were able to build up a fine physique and therefore the instances of illness were very rare in the Farm. Gandhi always ensured good air, water and regular hours of food for the inmates of the Farm.

Gandhi gave importance to the vocational training also. They made children trained in shoe making, carpentry, cooking and the like. It was a system in Tolstoy Farm that youngsters were not asked to do anything which was not done by the teachers. Teachers were working with the students and they became role models for them and thus students learned cheerfully.

Short Answer Questions

- 1) Who were the inmates of the Tolstoy Farm?

The inmates of the Farm were the Indians living in South Africa and they were the people belonging to different religions also.

- 2) Why was Gandhi not able to appoint special teachers for Indian students?

Gandhi was not able to appoint special teachers for the Indian students as the qualified teachers were very rare and they were not ready to work for a small salary.

- 3) Who were Kallenbach and Sjt. Pragji Desai?

Kallenbach and Sjt. Pragji Desai were the close associates of Gandhi in South Africa who helped Gandhi to establish and run the Tolstoy Farm.

- 4) What training was compulsorily given to people belonging to all ages in the farm?

Gandhi compulsorily gave moral training, training in character building and building a fine physique to people belonging to all ages in the Farm.

- 5) What were the things all the inmates of Tolstoy Farm needed to do?

All the inmates of the farm needed to do some jobs within the kitchen or jobs related with gardening.

- 6) How did the inmates at the Farm get enough exercise?

The inmates at the Farm got enough exercise from their work in the garden like digging pits, felling timber and lifting loads.

- 7) Why were diseases very rare in the Farm?

Diseases were very rare in the Farm as children were able to build up a healthy mind and healthy body. Gandhi ensured good air and water and regular hours of food for the inmates.

- 8) Who introduced shoe-making in the Farm?

Mr. Kallenbach introduced shoe-making in the Farm. He learnt it from a Trappist Monastery.

- 9) What made learning a cheerful experience for children in the Farm?

In the Farm, children learned with their teachers and they were cooperating and working with them. They were not asked to do anything which was not done by teachers. Thus the youngsters learnt cheerfully.

Paragraph Questions

1) What are the real aims of education?

Gandhi's views on education are comprehensive and that aims at the all-round development of the child. Gandhi, while he was in South Africa, was not satisfied with the prevalent system of education there which provided training in only three 'R's which means 'reading', 'riting' and 'rithmetic'. Gandhi envisaged a different system of education that gave ample training in character building, moral education, intellectual and physical growth and vocational training. In Tolstoy Farm, Gandhi put all these ideas into practice. Gandhi took character building and moral training as the proper foundation of education. He gave enough importance to literary training also. The children in the Farm were also inspired to work in the kitchen and garden as that would help them to develop a service mind and also to develop a healthy physique. Vocational training is another area which Gandhi gave greater importance. All these views of Gandhi regarding education helped the children to lead a better healthy life and to build a better nation.

2) Role of teachers in proper education.

In Tolstoy Farm, Gandhi put his ideas on education into practice. He conceptualized a very comprehensive system of education that aimed at the all-round development of a child. Teachers have a big role to perform in Gandhi's thoughts on education. They are not simply considered as the disseminators of knowledge. They, while disseminating the academic knowledge, become the ideal role models for the students and they embody great values and ideals. In Tolstoy Farm, children were not asked to do anything which was not done by the teachers. As teachers worked and learned with the students, students were able to learn very cheerfully. A teacher's duties and responsibilities and their greater role in the building of a nation were recognized by Gandhi even while he was in South Africa itself.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words.

- Discuss Gandhi's views on education.

The extract 'As Schoolmaster' from Gandhi's autobiography '*The Story of My Experiments with Truth*' gives us Gandhi's views on education. As a great visionary leader, Gandhi had great ideas regarding education. His views were very comprehensive and were aimed at the all-round development of a child like moral training, character building, physical training and the intellectual growth of the child. Gandhi, while he was in South Africa, had established a settlement in Johannesburg called 'Tolstoy Farm'. It was a cooperative colony and was inspired by the Tolstoyean ideas. The present chapter 'As a Schoolmaster' records Gandhi's experiences while putting his great principles on education into practice in the Farm in Johannesburg.

People belonging to different religions lived in the Tolstoy Farm. They lived together like one family and Gandhi occupied the place of the father in the family. So he found it his responsibility to give education to the children of the farm. Gandhi was not satisfied with the current system of education there as that was giving children only three 'R's which included reading, 'riting' and 'rithmetic'. So he decided to find out a comprehensive system of education that would provide the children an all round development. Gandhi found this a difficult task as the children were brought up in different conditions and environments and they belonged to different religions.

Gandhi strongly believed that moral training should be given to all children alike. He regarded character building as the proper foundation of their education and once this foundation was laid, they could learn all the other things themselves or with the assistance of friends.

For giving the literary training, Gandhi got the help of Mr. Kallenbach and Sjt. Pragji Desai, the close associates of Gandhi in South Africa. Gandhi gave importance to the building of the body also. All the works in the farm, from cooking down to scavenging, were done by the inmates. Some engaged in gardening also. All these works gave the students much delight and ample exercise. Thus the children were able to build up a fine physique and therefore the instances of illness were very rare in the Farm. Gandhi always ensured good air, water and regular hours of food for the inmates of the Farm.

Gandhi gave importance to the vocational training also. They made children trained in shoe making, carpentry, cooking and the like. It was a system in Tolstoy Farm that youngsters were not asked to do anything which was not done by the teachers. Teachers were working with the students and they became role models for them and thus students learned cheerfully.

The great ideas Gandhi successfully implemented in the 'Tolstoy Farm' made Gandhi a champion of the right kind of education and gave him a moral strength and a clear vision. This helped Gandhi later while he was leading the great struggle for independence and building a better India.

ADDRESS TO THE WOMEN'S SECTION OF THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE, SINGAPORE

S.C. BOSE

The address delivered by S.C. Bose in the Women's section of the Indian Independent League, Singapore is a clear enunciation of his vision regarding women's rights, duties and their status as citizens of free India. As a true leader, Bose was able to identify the dedication of Indian women towards the cause of winning freedom. In his speech, Bose advocates for an all India political organization for women in the Army and a separate women's department in free India.

Bose begins his speech by extolling the bravery and enthusiasm shown by Indian women towards the cause of winning freedom. He has a high appreciation for those who have been rendering in the national movement for the past twenty years. They participate in all different forms of strikes, struggles and different forms of processions under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He praises the heroic deeds of Indian women in spite of the ban of the Government. Bose praises the heroic women of India by mentioning their capabilities to struggle, suffer and sacrifice for the nation.

Bose, in his speech, inspires the Indian women to dedicate themselves for the launching of the final campaign to liberate the Country. He expresses his hope that the time has now come for the exit of the British Imperialism from the World and it will very soon disappear from India also. Bose, citing the example of Singapore, exhorts the Indians to unite in their struggle against British Empire.

Bose, citing the instances of the world politics, attempts to awaken the consciousness of the women of India regarding the importance of bringing liberation to the Country from British Empire. He identifies the common enemy of both Indians and the Axis powers. He then speaks about the relevance of winning freedom through suffering and sacrifice and asks the sisters who

gathered there to make their share in the struggle for freedom. He believes that the women can render their help in this great struggle in various forms like serving in the hospitals, helping in the recruitment of soldiers and collection of funds and supplies.

Bose, citing the example of Rani ki Jhansi during the First War of Independence in 1857, exhorts the Indian women to take up arms and guns and thus to fight like men for winning freedom. Women can provide the spiritual force for the freedom struggle. Bose says that time has come for every Indian men and women, boys and girls to come forward and make great sacrifices for liberating India. They should stand together and start the final struggle and thus to quicken the day of India's deliverance.

Bose concludes his speech by expressing his gratitude for the enthusiastic welcome given to him and their eager participation in that public meeting on that day.

Short Answer Questions

- 1) Where was the mammoth meeting held?

The mammoth meeting was The Indian Independence League held at Singapore. Bose was addressing the women's section of this meeting.

- 2) What aspect of the audience thrilled S.C Bose?

Bose was thrilled by the enthusiastic participation of women in that meeting and the warm welcome rendered to him by them.

- 3) Who was particularly responsible for regenerating Congress in 1921?

In 1921, Congress was regenerated mainly by the leadership of M.K. Gandhi.

- 4) What was the final campaign, according to Bose?

According to Bose, the final campaign is the final struggle against the British imperialism.

- 5) When would the British be compelled to quit India, according to Bose?

According to Bose, when the whole Indians are united irrespective of their age, gender and social class against British Imperialism, they would be compelled to quit India.

Paragraph Questions

- 1) Duties of Indian women, according to S.C.Bose

In his address to the women's section of the Indian Independence League held at Singapore, Bose clearly envisages the duties of Indian women in winning India's freedom. Bose held a high appreciation for the courage and dedication already shown by the Indian women towards this great cause. According to Bose, Indian women have spread the message of our national struggle to every home and they took an active part in the secret revolutionary activities. Bose exhorts the Indian women to do their role in the final campaign for independence. They can render their duties like

serving in hospitals, helping in recruiting of soldiers and collection of funds and supplies and the like. Bose also asks the Indian women to take up arms like the Rani ki Jhansi. Bose makes a strong appeal to the Indian women to suffer and sacrifice for winning freedom.

2) Why was Netaji, in his speech, optimistic about India's winning of freedom?

In his speech, Bose expresses his hope that India's winning of freedom is imminent. He cites the example of Singapore. They took only seven days to win their freedom when they stood united to fight against the British Empire. By citing a book written by Meredith Conrad, Bose says that once Indians are united in the great struggle against the British Empire, we would easily win our freedom too. In his speech, Netaji expresses his hope that India can easily win its freedom from the imperialists as the whole Indians have a great mind to suffer and sacrifice. Bose, by citing the instances of World politics, makes a strong appeal to the women of India regarding the importance of bringing liberation to the Country from the British Empire. He identifies the common enemy of both Indians and the Axis powers. He then speaks about the relevance of winning freedom through suffering and sacrifice and asks the sisters who gathered there to make their share in the struggle for freedom. Women can render their help in this great struggle in various forms like serving in the hospitals, helping in the recruitment of soldiers and collection of funds and supplies.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words.

- Discuss the role of women in the Indian war of independence.

S.C. Bose, as an Indian national leader, was known for his defiant patriotism and revolutionary ideals. His great speeches and writings gave a great inspiration to the whole Indians to join the national struggle for freedom. The speech he delivered at the women's section of the Indian Independence League, Singapore was a fine example of the oratorical skills of the iconic leader. The speech instilled the passion of patriotism in the minds of Indians especially the women of India.

Bose begins his speech by extolling the bravery and enthusiasm shown by Indian women towards the cause of winning freedom. He has a high appreciation for those who have been rendering in the national movement for the past twenty years. They participate in all different forms of strikes, struggles and different forms of processions under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He praises the heroic deeds of Indian women in spite of the ban of the Government. Bose praises the heroic women of India by mentioning their capabilities to struggle, suffer and sacrifice for the nation.

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Bose, citing the instances of the world politics, attempts to awaken the consciousness of the women of India regarding the importance of bringing liberation to the Country from British

Empire. He identifies the common enemy of both Indians and the Axis powers. He then speaks about the relevance of winning freedom through suffering and sacrifice and asks the sisters who gathered there to make their share in the struggle for freedom. He believes that the women can render their help in this great struggle in various forms like serving in the hospitals, helping in the recruitment of soldiers and collection of funds and supplies.

Bose, citing the example of Rani ki Jhansi during the First War of Independence in 1857, exhorts the Indian women to take up arms and guns and thus to fight like men for winning freedom. Women can provide the spiritual force for the freedom struggle. Bose says that time has come for every Indian men and women, boys and girls to come forward and make great sacrifices for liberating India. They should stand together and start the final struggle and thus to quicken the day of India's deliverance.

Bose concludes his speech by expressing his gratitude for the enthusiastic welcome given to him and their eager participation in that public meeting on that day.

MARTIN LUTHER KING AND AFRICA

CHINUA ACHEBE

Chinua Achebe, known as the father of modern African writing, is a novelist, poet and critic of high repute. He constantly makes use of traditional African proverbs and his writing epitomizes the value of folk songs and dances in African culture and African life. In his essay "Martin Luther King and Africa", Achebe pays huge tributes to the leadership Martin Luther King has given to Afro-Americans and his sympathetic attitude towards the problems and sufferings of Africans. In doing so Achebe deals with the history of transatlantic slave trade, the subsequent sufferings of the Africans, and other serious issues faced by the people of African continent. Though Achebe didn't get an opportunity to meet King, he made lasting impact in his mind through his work, thought and death. Unlike many other Afro-Americans, Dr King has incorporated the problems of Africa and its people in his life as an activist and leader of the oppressed. At a very young age itself, Dr King had cultivated strong and strategic relationship with almost all the progressive leaders of Africa. He has raised his voice against apartheid in South Africa and even demanded for economic sanctions against the same country to put an end to the practice. Achebe questions the accepted notions regarding the slave trade in Africa in which the victim is blamed for the crime; either the so called inferiority of the Africans or his participation. Many noted European historians and scholars spread the myth that it was Africans who captured their own people and handed over them to the traders. Later Achebe celebrates the contributions of Gandhi and Dr. King to humanity and unlike Mahatma Gandhi, King has achieved greatness at a very young age as he was assassinated when he was thirty nine. According to the writer, King is worthy of honour and celebration because of two things: for his personal achievement as a leader and activist and for instilling hope in all people who fight for freedom and justice.

Short Answer Questions

- 1) What left a strong impression in Achebe's mind?

Martin Luther King's works, thoughts, and death made a strong impression in Achebe's mind.

- 2) What was King's vision of America?

Martin Luther King dreamed of an America where structures of racism can be challenged and brought down by sheer moral force of the people thereby ensuring same rights and freedom for the Blacks and Whites.

- 3) In 1962, Martin Luther King sponsored with Albert Luthuli, an early call for sanctions against South Africa. What is it called?

Martin Luther King along with South African Anti-apartheid leader Albert Luthuli called for economic sanctions against South Africa titled "Appeal for Action Against Apartheid"

- 4) What are the two destructive emotions according to Achebe?

Fear and hatred are the two most destructive and limiting human emotions according to Chinua Achebe and Martin Luther King has quite successfully conquered these two emotions.

- 5) Who did conclude that the memory of Blacks was inferior to the memory of Whites?

It was Thomas Jefferson, the third president of America, who believed that the memory of Blacks was inferior to the memory of Whites.

- 6) Why is it appropriate to celebrate Martin Luther King?

It is appropriate to celebrate Martin Luther King because he struggled and fought so valiantly to restore humanity to the oppressed and the oppressor.

- 7) What did James Baldwin mean by 'the African conundrum'?

It refers to the awkwardness Africans and Afro-Americans feel in each other's presence since immemorial times.

Paragraph Questions

- 1) How did Martin Luther King relate with Africa?

In his essay "Martin Luther King and Africa", Achebe pays huge tributes to the leadership Martin Luther King has given to Afro-Americans and his sympathetic attitude towards the problems and sufferings of Africans. Though Achebe didn't get an opportunity to meet King, his works, thoughts and death left a strong impression that he belonged to Africa in a very special way. This feeling does not simply arise from the fact that his ancestors were brought to America from Africa but unlike many other Afro-Americans, Dr King has incorporated and embraced the pain and problems of Africa and its people in his life as an activist and leader of

the oppressed. His vision was to put an end to the ideology of racism and as a part of that he cultivated many friendships and personal relationships with African students in America. He had established strong and strategic relationship with almost all the progressive leaders of Africa. When he was 28, King and his wife travelled to Ghana to participate in its independence celebrations and in the same year he has urged the international community to protest against apartheid in South Africa. In 1962, King and Albert Luthuli of South Africa sponsored an “Appeal for Action Against Apartheid” which demanded economic sanctions against the country. All these shows that King himself wanted to relate with Africa.

2) Transatlantic slave trade and history

Achebe exposes the prejudiced perceptions of certain scholars as well as Europeans about the transatlantic slave trade. Achebe in the essay invokes a heated TV discussion on multiculturalism and curriculum content in which a professor of history from prestigious American university argued that it was Africans who captured their own people and handed over them to the white slave traders. According to the writer such conventional notions are like fairy tales and he asks to resume search for truth in unbiased manner. The search for truth should start not only from excellent schools and scholars because that can be so disappointing. Though there are plenty of records but unfortunately they are European records. Most of these records are coloured with myths and prejudices and just like the history professor they often blame the victim for the crime: either for his inferiority or his participation in it. Achebe is quite confident that truth is not completely lost and there are entries even in European records which can lead interested people in a more hopeful and rational directions.

3) ‘A human is a human because of other humans’. Explain

Achebe thinks that King might have learned many of his humanitarian values from Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi through his life has taught King that human beings have a fundamental duty to respect the life even in the midst of a struggle. If people engaged in a just struggle forget and violate this basic principle, it is equal to cheapen their own lives and their own humanity. Achebe assumes that these thoughts could have come to King from the famous Bantu proverb “A human is human because of other humans”. People can’t trample upon the humanity of others without devaluing their own and this message also echoes in the Igbo proverb “He who will hold another down in the mud must stay in the mud to keep him down”. These proverbs and the humanitarian values of Gandhi and King prove the significance of mutual understanding and harmonious existence irrespective of the differences in skin colour and ideology.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words

- Why is Martin Luther King worthy of being remembered?

Chinua Achebe, known as the father of modern African writing, is a novelist, poet and critic of high repute. He constantly makes use of traditional African proverbs and his writing epitomizes the value of folk songs and dances command in African culture and African life. In his essay “Martin Luther King and Africa”, Achebe pays huge tributes to the leadership Martin

Luther King has given to Afro-Americans in their struggle to end the racial segregation and his sympathetic attitude towards the problems and sufferings of Africans.

Though Achebe didn't get an opportunity to meet King, his works, thoughts and death left a strong impression that he belonged to Africa in a very special way. This feeling does not simply arise from the fact that his ancestors were brought to America from Africa but unlike many other Afro-Americans, Dr King has incorporated and embraced the pain and problems of Africa and its people in his life as an activist and leader of the oppressed. His vision was to put an end to the ideology of racism and as a part of that he cultivated many friendships and personal relationships with African students in America.

King had established strong and strategic relationship with almost all the progressive leaders of Africa. When he was 28, King and his wife travelled to Ghana to participate in its independence celebrations and in the same year he has urged the international community to protest against apartheid in South Africa. In 1962, King and Albert Luthuli of South Africa sponsored an "Appeal for Action Against Apartheid" which demanded economic sanctions against the country. Achebe says that King was free from the ambivalent attitude which many Afro-Americans show towards Africa. Even James Baldwin, uncompromisingly brilliant and clear-eyed, in defining the problems of Blacks was not free from this ambivalence which he calls "the African conundrum". He once criticized the African ancestors for doing nothing against the slave trade.

Achebe thinks that King might have learned many of his humanitarian values from Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi through his life has taught King that human beings have a fundamental duty to respect the life even in the midst of a struggle. If people engaged in a just struggle forget and violate this basic principle, it is equal to cheapen their own lives and their own humanity. Achebe assumes that these thoughts could also have come to King from the famous Bantu proverb "A human is human because of other humans". People can't trample upon the humanity of others without devaluing their own.

Martin Luther attracted so many people, Blacks and Whites alike, through his charismatic leadership. People came in thousands to listen to his speeches because of the inspiration and hope he inculcated through his matchless eloquence and oratorical skill. He was able to give a sense of direction to all those who struggle for freedom and equality all over the world. In his short span of life, he travelled far and wide and extended his support to all progressive leaders who campaigned against racial discrimination. He was assassinated in 1968 by a white racist and he was just thirty nine at that time.

THE SPEECH DETAILING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA

DR B. R. AMBEDKAR.

Addressing the President of India, Dr. Ambedkar (1891 -1956) delivered this speech at the houses of Parliament on 25 Nov 1949. In the speech, he elaborates the accomplishments of the constituent Assembly.

In the first part of the speech, Ambedkar describes the time taken by the Constituent Assembly and how the Assembly consumed it. He states that it took two years, 11 months and 17 days to finish its task. Within this period the Assembly had 11 sessions, out of which six sessions were used to pass the objective resolutions, and to consider the reports of committees on fundamental Rights, Union constitution, Union Powers, Provincial constitution, Minorities, and scheduled Areas and scheduled tribes. The last five sessions were used to draft the constitution. The Drafting committee was elected by the constituent Assembly on 29 August 1947. The Drafting committee developed the rough draft prepared by the Constitution Advisor Benegal Narsing Rau. The final draft constitution had 395 Articles and 8 Schedules.

After introducing the Constituent Assembly and its works, Dr, Ambedkar answers criticisms raised against the Constituent Assembly and the Draft Constitution. First of all, many criticized the long period of time used by the Constituent Assembly. In order to answer this allegation, Ambedkar compares the time taken by the Constituent Assembly with that of the constitution makers of other nations. According to him, American and South African Constitution makers were faster as they took four months and one year respectively to draft the constitution. But the makers of Canadian Constitution took as much time as that of Indian makers and the constituent

Assembly is faster than Australian Constitution makers as they took nine years to finish the task. Comparing the time periods taken by different Constitution makers, Ambedkar says that the allegation of dilatoriness is baseless. Besides, Indian constitution makers allowed 2,473 Amendments whereas other nations did not allow it.

In this part of the speech, Ambedkar turns on the allegations made by Naziruddin Ahmed who condemned it out right. Mr. Ahmed described the Drafting Committee as 'Drifting Committee'. Ambedkar claims that he has taken the term as a compliment because the Drafting committee 'drifted' as it wants to design a constitution that is good, competent and suitable for India. Ambedkar is pleased to see that though Mr. Naziruddin Ahmed found the Draft Constitution worthless, everyone else in the parliament appreciated it. He also thanked the houses of parliament for bestowing the responsibility of drafting a constitution upon him and his colleagues.

In the next part of the speech, Ambedkar appreciates the members of the Constituent Assembly on tolerance and their ability to accommodate different points of views. He credits Sir. BN Rau, the constituent Adviser for preparing the rough draft. He also congratulates SN Mukherjee who was the chief draftsman and the Congress party for disciplining the Assembly. Though Ambedkar did not accept the Ideological views of rebels in the house such as Mr. Kamath, Dr. P.S. Deshmukh, Mr. Sidhva, Prof. K.T.Shah, Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, he acknowledged their role in enlivening the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly.

According to Ambedkar, two primary sources of criticism against the draft constitution are the Communist Party and the socialist party. The Communist Party finds the parliamentary democratic system accepted by the constituent Assembly elitist. They prefer dictatorship of the proletariat. The socialist party, on the other hand demands the right to nationalize all private property without paying compensation. They also seek to make fundamental Rights absolute, so that they can overthrow the state. Ambedkar says that the members of constituent Assembly find these ideas irrelevant in Indian context and they follow parliamentary democracy. Ambedkar argues that if the socialists / communists succeed to win two / third majority in the parliament, they are free to amend the constitution. If they fail then it is not an idea of the public.

The Draft Constitution was vehemently attacked on its focus on centralization of all powers and the states have been reduced to municipalities. Ambedkar states that this is a baseless argument as the basic feature of federal constitution is to share the legislative and Executive powers between the centre and the state. This is guaranteed by the constitution itself, and the states and the centre are co-equals in Indian constitution. Another criticism made against the Draft constitution is that it has given power to the centre to override states. Though it is true, this power is entitled to the centre only in times of emergencies. State must consider their local interests and opinions and interests of the nation. Ambedkar supports the idea that ultimate loyalty of a citizen must be directed to the centre.

This part of the speech is focused on Ambedkar's anxiety over the future of India. As he is aware that a good constitution will not guarantee a good nation, he says the future of India depends on her people and their political parties. Drawing examples from Indian history, Ambedkar mentions that with every fall of India, the infidelity and treachery of her own people were exposed;

Ambedkar says that future of India depends on our ability to put the nation above their creeds. Ambedkar also shares his anxiety over the future of a democratic constitution. Of course Indians have a long tradition of practicing democracy. It is a herculean task to keep the democracy in form and fact. Ambedkar suggests two ways to keep democracy at work. First one is to keep constitutional methods of achieving economic and social objectives. Second is not to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man. Ambedkar warns Indians of falling into the religious Bhakthi tradition which is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship.

As a champion of the down trodden castes, Ambedkar urges Indians to strive for social democracy. We must make Liberty, Equality and Fraternity as a way of living. He stresses the need of Annihilating caste and letting the people to share power.

Short Answer Questions

1) How many years did the constituent Assembly take to submit Draft Constitution?

2 years, 11 months, and 17 days

2) How many Articles and Schedules were there in the rough draft of constitution prepared by Constitution Advisor?

243 Articles, 13 schedules

3) Who were described as rebels in Ambedkar's speech?

Mr. Kamath

Dr. P.S. Deshmukh

Mr. Sidhva

Prof. K.T. Shah

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru.

4) Why did the communists criticize the constitution?

According to Ambedkar, the communists criticised the constitution because it adapted parliamentary democracy and rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat.

5) How can Indian constitution be amended?

By winning 2/3 majority in both houses of the parliament.

6) Which are the two methods to keep democracy in form and fact?

1. Keeping constitutional methods of achieving economic and social objectives.

2. By not giving up one's freedom at the feet of somebody.

7) What is social democracy?

By social democracy, Ambedkar means a society which practice liberty, equality and fraternity as a way of living.

Paragraph Questions

1. What was the charge raised by socialist party and Communist Party against the constitution?

The communist party wanted to practice dictatorship of the proletariat than the parliamentary democratic system suggested by the constituent Assembly. Socialists on the other hand, wanted the constitution to enable them to nationalize all private property without paying compensation. Besides they argued that Fundamental Rights must be made absolute. This may lead to the overthrowing of the state regime.

2. How did Ambedkar justify the long time period taken by the constituent Assembly?

In order to support the claim of the constituent Assembly, Ambedkar compared the time period taken by constituent Assembly of India with that of other nations. According to him, the time used by constituent Assembly is as long as Canadian convention and is less than Australian constitution which took nine years to finish the task. He also added that constitutions of other nations did not allow any Amendments whereas Indian Constitution makers allowed 2,473 amendments to move in the houses. It is also to be noted that Indian constitution is bigger than any of the constitutions mentioned.

3. Whom did Ambedkar thank for the successful completion of the Draft Constitution?

Ambedkar thanked the house for bestowing the responsibility of drafting the constitution on the drafting committee. He also mentioned Sir B.N.Rau constitution Advisor, who prepared the rough draft. He also remembered S.N.Mukharjee on service as a chief draft man of the constitution. He appreciated the well disciplined structure of congress and a few rebels who made the proceedings of drafting committee enlivened.

4. How does Ambedkar counter the charge of centralization in the draft constitution?

Ambedkar argues that the Draft Constitution has upheld the basic principles of federalism. i.e., the proposed constitution supports sharing of legislative and executive powers between the state and the centre. According to him the charge of centralization is baseless as state and centre are co-equals in Indian federal system. Though residuary powers are entrusted with the centre, it is not a strong feature of federalism.

5. How does Ambedkar defend the centre's power to over ride the states?

Ambedkar states that this power is effective only when the nation faces an emergency. He also suggested that states must consider their local interests and opinions and interests of the nation. He also believed that the ultimate loyalty of the citizen is to be directed at the centre.

6. Ambedkar's concept of future India?

Ambedkar is doubtful about the future of India. Drawing examples from Indian history, he states that the role of Indians in conquering India is critical. He brings out the case of Jaichand who

invited Mohammed Gohri to India to defeat Prithvi Raj. Citing the example of king's man of the king of Dahar, who accepted bribes from Mohammed-Bin- Kasim, at every fall of India, the infidelity and treachery of her own people are exposed. He also doubts the ability of Indians to put the nation above their creed. As India is torn into different castes, creeds, and political parties it will not be easy for Indians to work as a nation.

7. Ambedkar's concern of the future of a democratic constitution in India?

Ambedkar finds parliamentary democracy as a suitable system of governance for India. He quotes the study of Buddhist Bhikshir Sanghas which practiced parliamentary procedures. In order to keep the democracy of the constitution in form and fact, he suggests two methods. First of them, is to keep constitutional methods of achieving economic and social objectives. The second is not to give up the liberties at the feet of anybody. Indians have to shy away from hero worship as it may lead to dictatorship.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words.

- Ambedkar's vision on the future of India

In his speech, Ambedkar has elaborated his concept of future India. He says that the Draft Constitution has accepted parliamentary democratic system as a system of governance. He is doubtful about the commitment of Indians in safeguarding the future of India. Drawing plenty of examples from Indian history, Ambedkar rightly observes that Indians have helped the conquerors of the nation. At every fall of India, the infidelity and treachery of Indians were exposed. Narrating the history of the military commanders of the king Dahar, he says that the king's men had accepted bribes from Mohamed –Bin-Kasim. In a similar incident, Jaichand of ancient India had invited Mohamed Gohri to fight against Prithvi Raj. All these examples cast a shadow on the future of India as Indians themselves were plotting against the nation. If this tradition continues, India cannot fulfill the dreams of a democratic nation.

In a democratic system, people and political parties play a crucial role in fashioning the future of the country. He hopes that Indians will prefer the interest of the nation to their creeds. He warns Indians of jeopardizing the independence of the nation.

Ambedkar also shares the future of a democratic constitution in India. As Indian society was polarized on the basis of caste, creed, language etc..., he feels that following democratic system will not be easy for India. He acknowledges the democratic practices of ancient India, but the nation has lost those traditions. If people of India fail to follow democratic means, then the democratic system will give way to dictatorship.

Ambedkar also urges Indians to follow those methods suggested in the constitution to achieve their social and economic objectives. He cautions Indians not to lay their liberty at the feet of anybody. Giving up freedom is a way of losing democratic rights. In this respect, Ambedkar warns Indians not to follow blindly the religious traditions of Bhakti traditions. The Bhakti tradition may jeopardize the freedom of the people and leads to degeneration.

Ambedkar views an India equipped not only with political democracy but also with social democracy. According to Ambedkar, democracy is meaningful only when we are able to practice equality, liberty and fraternity as a way of living. He also opines that political democracy without social democracy is worthless. He urges Indians to annihilate caste system and keep democracy in form and fact. According to him, the new nation cannot be contented with itself until it realizes the need of social democracy.

In short, Ambedkar views an India which is both politically and socially democratic. He also feels that every citizen needed to uphold the freedom the nation has bestowed on him/her.

WHY I WANT A WIFE

JUDY BRADY

Judy Brady, writer, activist and leader of the second wave feminist movement, delivered “Why I want a Wife” in San Francisco on August 26, 1970 in a rally to celebrate the 50th anniversary of women’s right to vote in the USA obtained in 1920. The article, later published in *Ms. Magazine* in the following year, illustrates the conventional attitude of patriarchal society towards women. At the beginning itself Brady introduces herself as a person whose role she later dissects one by one. Being a wife means a never ending list of chores and expectations, and she separates the duties of a wife as maternal, domestic, social, sexual, etc. The writer exposes the distinct difference and inequality between the roles of men and women in a patriarchal set up. A woman is portrayed as someone who has to give birth, support and look after her husband and children, earn livelihood, prepare the menu, clean the house, wash the dress, entertain the guests and carry out a lot of other duties. Brady makes use of rhetorical features such as irony, paradox and sarcasm to bring her points home. She mocks the attitude of men who treat wife as replaceable whenever they feel so and ends the article with a rhetorical question “My God, who wouldn’t want a wife?” Even a wife like Brady may wish for a wife because wives carry that much burden in the family life making husbands free from all responsibilities.

Short Answer Questions

- 1) What household duties did the wife have to accomplish?

The wife had to clean the house, look after the children, wash, iron and mend the clothes, plan the menu, do the necessary grocery shopping and prepare the meals. She had to serve the food to husband and guests in a pleasant manner and support the husband in job related matters.

2) What economic duties did the wife have to fulfil?

The wife had to work and send the husband to school, pay for the care of the children and support those dependent upon him.

3) What are the external supports expected from a wife according Judy Brady?

According to Judy Brady a wife has to keep track of children's appointment with the doctor and husband's too. She has to make all arrangements for children's schooling, provide an adequate social life with their peers, take them to the park and zoo and accompany the husband and children during vacation.

4) According to the author, how can a wife help the husband in his social life?

A wife has to help her husband's social life in many ways. She should take care of baby -sitting arrangements when they are invited by his friends and act as a perfect hostess when her husband invites his friends to the home by cleaning the house properly, preparing and serving a special meal and giving them enough freedom to talk without interrupting at any point of time.

Paragraph Questions

1) "Why I Want a Wife" and its contemporary relevance.

The essay "Why I Want a Wife" addresses the issues surrounding the second wave of feminism which became popular in the United States in the late 1960s and 70s. The activists and writers of this movement fought for equality in all walks of life: domestic, social, political and economic. While addressing the women of her own kind, she brings forth the way women are treated in a patriarchal society. Herself a wife and mother, the author talks about the conventional roles of woman as a wife and mother. She portrays the pain and sufferings of women community in general while they carry out and fulfill the responsibilities and expectations as a wife and mother. With stark irony and sarcasm she exposes the indifferent attitude of men and patriarchal society towards women. The author lists multiple jobs and responsibilities a woman has to bear as wife and mother in different domains. She has to take care of the emotional and physical needs of her husband and children at every stage of their life through financial support, preparing food and serving it at the proper time, washing and ironing the dress etc. Though feminism has gone a long way since the publication of this article and succeeded in many of its goals, many issues addressed by Judy Brady are still relevant even today. There are still issues and problems women of the contemporary world struggle with even if they enjoy equality in different domains comparing with the society of the author.

2) Comment on the style of Judy Brady

The style Judy Brady employs in her landmark essay "Why I Want a Wife" is equally significant as its theme. In order to depict the stark reality and the sufferings of women in society, the writer makes use of simple and lucid language which attracted her supporters and critics alike. The essay is notable for its constant use of irony, paradox, sarcasm and humour

and she does not use complex vocabulary and ideas to delineate the issue. Though the writer belongs to the classification of people known as wives, the desire to have a wife came to her mind on one evening when she thought about her male friend who divorced recently and looking for a new wife. Though her male friend had one child, he is with his ex-wife because looking after the child is conceived as the responsibility of the mother in a patriarchal society. In ironic and sarcastic way, Brady asks herself why does she want a wife and provides answers as if she were a man. Throughout the essay she repeats “I want a wife” and this hooks the readers to it and persuades the reader to agree with the evidence given by an actual house wife of the 70s. She satirizes the indifferent attitude of men and society to the pain and sufferings of women in their multiple roles and the irony reaches its height when the husband seeks the support of the present wife to marry again. Through the distinctive style and tone, Brady has succeeded in her attempt to make the readers-both male and female- understand the message clearly and specifically. By reading it women will be happy that someone has spoken on their behalf and men can approach women and their issues with a broad perspective.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words.

- Discuss the essay “Why I Want a Wife” with a feminist perspective.

Judy Brady in her well known essay “Why I Want a Wife” deals with the plight and sufferings of women in society. Women have been victims of different sorts of discrimination from time immemorial and the author addresses and vehemently criticizes the attitude of men who treat women as objects to satisfy their needs and pleasures. Feminism as a theory and movement examines the patriarchal structure of society all over the world and the unequal and unjust treatment of women in all spheres of life. Feminist scholars hold the view that gender and gender based differences are social and culturally constructed to treat women as inferior and the movement aims to eradicate the inferior status of women by bringing equality in all social spheres: political, economic and educational.

Judy Brady has become famous through her writings and active involvement in the second wave of Feminist Movement that hit the United States of America in the 1960s and 70s. The article, packed with irony and sarcasm, satirizes the attitude of society in general and men in particular towards women. Brady begins her essay by saying that she belongs to the classification of group known as wives- mothers too- and throughout the piece she goes on to enumerate the multiple duties and responsibilities women are entitled to carry out as wife and mother. In ironic manner the writer says that she too would like to have a wife because wife sacrifices all her desires and aspirations for the sake of marriage and family thereby relieving husband from all such responsibilities.

The men and society expect women to perform so many duties as wives and mothers. At home the wife has to carry out all the domestic works such as cleaning the house, washing the clothes of husband and children, ironing and mending the dress and the husband expects his

personal things to be kept in the proper place. As a good cook, she has to plan the menu, do the necessary grocery shopping, prepare tasty meals and serve them pleasantly. She has to make her husband economically independent so that he can go to school and she should support him and those who dependent upon him providing economic assistance.

As a mother the wife has to take care of the children and make sure that they eat properly and are kept clean. As a good nurturing attendant she should take all necessary steps for the children's schooling and provide them required time and space for social life by taking them to the park and zoo etc. Judy Brady says that the husband doesn't want to miss his own things even when the children are sick as his wife supposed to give special care for them at such situations. She should accompany when the family takes a vacation so that she should take care of the husband and the children when they needed a rest and a change of scene.

Judy Brady makes fun of husband's attitude towards their wife to perform as a social being and she has to give him enough freedom whenever they get invitation from his friends for a party. At such situations she should make baby-sitting arrangements so as to give him ample opportunity to converse with his friends. When he invites his friends to the home, there too she should prepare special meals and serve them pleasantly. Apart from all this wife should be sensitive enough to satisfy his sexual needs even if he is not ready to give her back the same when she is in need of it. If the man finds another suitable woman, he should be given enough freedom to discard her and children to lead a fresh marital life with the new woman. He assumes that the wife will take care of the children and be solely responsible for their well being because he expects a fresh, new life. Paradoxically, Brady ends her essay with the comment "My God, who wouldn't want a wife" so as to convince women of their plight and men to realize the way they treat the women folk.

The author uses different sorts of rhetorical features throughout the essay to depict the pain and sufferings of women as wives and mothers. Patriarchal society often attributes all negative significations and images to women so as to continue the domination over them and Brady as vocal feminist portrays immemorial grievances of women through clear and unambiguous language.

IN SEARCH OF SWEET PEAS

RUSKIN BOND

Ruskin Bond begins his write up by narrating the effect of flowers on his senses. He says that the fragrance, scent, colour, and the lively design of the flowers keep him enchanted. As winter falls on the Himalayas, the plants have been dried up, the petals withered and all sign of life is lost. The narrator feels life without flowers dull and worthless. He thought of visiting gardens at the valley town of Dehra. The thought of Dehra made him nostalgic. He remembered his grandmothers' house in Dehra with full of sweet- peas in blossom.

Following the directions given by Prem, who had been to the valley town Dehra, the narrator sets out. He dreamt of glorious gardens and landed at Dehra. He walked into the school where Prem had told him of seeing full blossomed sweet - peas. The gateman refused to admit him to the school garden. Desperate, he walked through the streets of Dehra and found a garden with full of blossomed Californian poppies (please google Californian poppies and see the flowers, beautiful). He was excited to see the strong yellow petals of the flower. He was circled by the colour, fragrance of the little flower.

The narrator thinks of trees and says that trees make one feel younger. He remembers passing beneath an old tamarind tree standing in the middle of Dehra's busiest street crossing. The city has changed a lot but the tamarind has managed to survive. The writer feels that as long as the roots of the tree clinging on Dehra's rich soil, his roots will also be embedded in the old valley town.

The narrator recollects the old Indian villages with their banyan trees. Under the generous shade of the tree, school teachers conducted open air classes and village elders discussed matters of the moment. It hosted all kinds of creatures. As villages grow into cities, these banyan trees are gradually disappearing. Mangrove is also a good place to stroll or an afternoon siesta. During the ripening season, there is a festival in the grove.

Himalayan foothill cannot nourish banyan or mango tree. On the other hand, they support deodar (tree of God). According to the author, they resemble the cedars of Lebanon. The hills covered with deodar are an impressive sight.

The narrator recounts pictures of different trees including the oldest tree in California. He adds that the saints of ancient India found suitable trees to meditate under it. Buddha preferred banyan tree and Hindu ascetics selected peepal trees. The author confesses that though he loves to spend time under trees, he cannot meditate as the commotion of the birds and animals distract him. He wonders how sages managed to concentrate while the birds chirp and flit.

Short Answer Questions

- 1) How did winter affect the life of the Himalayas?

During the winter season, trees shed leaves, flowers get withered and gardens are forlorn.

- 2) How did the gate keeper welcome the author?

Attracted by the lovely fragrance and colour of the Sweet -peas, the author goes to the gate, asks permission to enter which the gate keeper denies. The narrator's appeal that he is a former student of the school is not accepted.

- 3) Why does not the author meditate under the trees?

Though ancient saints found meditation under the trees comfortable, the author feels that he is attracted to the chirping sounds of birds.

Paragraph Questions

1. How did the author establish his strong roots in Dehra soil?

The author recollects an old tamarind tree standing in the middle of the city Dehra. The author feels that old trees make people young. He also consoles himself that as long as the tree is rooted in the rich root of Dehra, his roots are also be embedded in it.

2. Discuss Indian villages and their strong bond with trees?

The author writes that banyan trees are a part of Indian villages. Beneath the rich shade of the banyan tree, elders of the village met to discuss matters of the moment and teachers conducted open air classes under the tree. Since trees were favourite place for meditation, many trees were haunted by wandering sages. The narrator muses that some of the Indian villages have got banyan trees even today.

3. What was the response of the author when he saw the Californian poppies?

Disconsolate by the experience he had at the school gate, the author strolled into the park and found blossomed Californian poppies. He was excited to see the strong yellow petals of the flower, and was deeply moved. He felt that those flowers were waiting for his arrival.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words.

- Consider 'In Search of Sweet-peas' as a recollection of childhood memories.

Ruskin Bond is a well known writer of children's literature in India. His stories are filled with children and their world. Most of his stories are located in the villages/towns on the foothills of the Himalayas. Bond attempts to recapture the lost childhood in his stories. His child heroes are endowed with their curiosity and innocence catches the imagination of children and adults alike.

In this essay bond narrates the need of flowers even in winter. It seems that he cannot think of living without flowers around him. The child in him is out when he sets out in search of sweet peas in Dehra. Do an adult of today go in search of blossomed sweet-peas? It is this childish, innocent aspect of childhood which Bond weaves in his stories. The moment Bond thinks about Dehra, he remembers his grandmother's house with a garden full of flowers. He feels sad that the grandmother who loved him so much is no more and hopes that he can see some other gardens in the city.

It is interesting to see how Bond gets delighted when he sees the lovely, blossomed Californian poppies! He compares himself with Alice in wonderland. The excitement, joy and rapture of Bond are as fascinating as that of a child looking at a butterfly. It is childlike sensitivity of the writer that makes the write up impressive.

In the second section of the essay, he talks about trees. The presence of a tamarind tree in the middle of the valley town Dehra reminds him of childhood days when he sat on the railings that circled the tree. Whatever the narrator sees around him evokes childhood memories in him. It seems that the writer has turned into a grown up child. When he describes the mango groves, he imagines children who are waiting to evade the watchman to enter the grove. It reveals a secret that old trees make human beings feel younger. The writer remarks that the older the trees, the younger one feel. The author is delighted to say that as long as the tamarind tree is rooted in the soil of Dehra, his roots are firm in the valley town. In short, the narrator has succeeded to recapture the fragrance of his lost childhood by describing those flowers and trees that he loved. The sight of blossomed flowers and trees has rejuvenated the writer.

The author has expressed his musings on flowers, trees and childhood in this essay. Though it never explicitly comments on environment, he explains the intimate relationship human beings had with nature. The narrative is so striking that it helps us to fashion our attitude towards the environment. It enables us to listen to the cry of nature and to recapture our lost innocence.

MODULE 2 - DRAMA
THE NEVER-NEVER NEST
CEDRIC MOUNT

'*The Never-Never Nest*' is a one-act play written by Cedric Mount. The play makes a harsh criticism of the popular practice of modern human beings living through a system of paying in installments. Jane, Jack's aunt visits the couple at their villa in New Hampstead. Jack and his wife Jill lead her to look around the house and the lounge to show things that they have acquired. Aunt Jane is so surprised to see the things like a radiogram, a piano, a refrigerator and a cosy sofa set. At first, she couldn't understand how the couple was able to buy all those things. But they tell her that they bought all those products through the hire purchasing system. She is equally shocked to hear that they give much more than what they actually earn every month towards the payment of the installment. In order to find the additional money they needed, they took another loan from a financial institution. Before she makes her leave, she hands over a cheque of ten pounds to the couple. Jill quickly sends the cheque to Dr. Martin towards the payment of the hospital bill in connection with their child's birth.

The play *The Never-Never Nest* makes a scathing attack on the modern consumerist culture. The tendency of the people to accumulate the different products from the market without thinking of their need and relevance or financial liabilities is strongly criticized by the playwright. This habit ruins many families. Jack and Jill have bought everything they wanted but they may not be happy because of the burden of debt. Aunt Jane has been presented as a character quite opposite to Jack

and Jill, who leads a simple life, and she is happy and gives happiness to the lives of others also. She, instead of being selfish and buying the unwanted products from the market, finds happiness in helping others in their hour of need.

Short Answer Questions

- 1) What are the things in Jill's house that surprise Aunt Jane?

Aunt Jane is surprised to see the things like radiogram, piano, refrigerator, a cosy sofa set and the like.

- 2) What made Aunt Jane worry about her cheque?

Aunt Jane did not understand how the couple was able to buy different things. She even thought that whether she had mistakenly put two thousand instead of two hundred in the cheque she gave them as a wedding gift. This was her worry about her cheque.

- 3) Why did Aunt Jane finally refuse to sit on the furniture?

Aunt Jane refused to sit on the furniture as the couple was not the real owners of those things.

- 4) What are the arguments that Jack gives in defense of the installment scheme?

Jack argued that instead of being called as 'Mr. Tenant', they would be called as 'Mr. Owner'. He also thinks that it's very uneconomic to pay rent year after year without owning anything.

- 5) Who is 'Mr. Tenant'?

According to Jack, Mr. Tenant is a person who pays rent year after year without being the owner of anything.

- 6) How much do the entire installments Jack and Jane pay come to?

They pay seven pounds eight and eight pence a week as installment.

- 7) How much do they earn?

They earn only six pounds.

- 8) How does the couple find the money for the balance amount of installment?

They borrow the balance amount of money for the payment from Thrift and Providence Trust Corporation.

- 9) What did Jill do with the ten pounds Aunt Jane present them?

By that money Jane immediately settles the doctors' bill so that they would 'own' their child.

- 10) How do they pay back the borrowed loan from Thrift and Providence Trust Corporation?

They pay back that loan too in installments.

Paragraph Questions

- 1) The advantages and disadvantages of the installment scheme.

The play *The Never-Never Nest* written by Cedric Mount explores the advantages and disadvantages of the hire purchasing system that has gripped so strongly the modern consumerist society. Jack and Jill own all the modern equipments and products including their car and home through the installment payment scheme. The great advantage of this system is that very easily people become the owners of those products without giving the full price. They become the 'owners' rather than being the 'tenant'. Jack believes that paying rent every month year after year and losing the product at the end is very uneconomical. The disadvantage of this system is the burden of debt. Jack and Jill are not able to enjoy a happy life because of the burden of their debt. They lead their life worrying about the ways of finding money for the next installment payment as they owe more than what they earn. This system also makes people possess the things and products without thinking of their need, relevance and financial obligations.

- 2) The character of Aunt Jane.

Aunt Jane has been presented in the play *The Never-Never Nest* as an ideal character. She leads a happy life. She finds happiness in leading a simple life and giving others very liberally. She is presented as a character opposite to the nature of Jack and Jill, a character who loves others and helps others in their crisis situations. She is loving and generous. She is never tempted by the consumerist culture. She even presented Jack and Jill a wedding gift of two hundred pounds and later she presents them ten pounds too when she found that the couple does not have sufficient amount of money with them to pay the installment amount. Aunt Jane is not even willing to sit on the sofa in the couple's home or travel in their car as Jack and Jill are not the real owners of them. Aunt Jane is presented as a character leading a simple life with ideal principles to make the readers aware of the impact of the consumer culture deep rooted in the modern society.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words.

- Substantiate the argument that *The Never-Never Nest* is a critique on modern lifestyle where it is important to own certain things.

The plays of Cedric Mount are noted for their modern perspectives on some of the pressing realities of human society and their sense of humor. His plays are remarkably famous and universally read and enjoyed. The play *The Never-Never Nest* gives us a realistic picture of modern human society. The play satirizes the modern lifestyle and consumerist culture and it centers on the popular practice of the hire-purchase system.

Jane, Jack's aunt visits the couple at their villa in New Hampstead. Jack and his wife Jill lead her to look around the house and the lounge to show things that they have acquired. Aunt Jane is so surprised to see the things like a radiogram, a piano, a refrigerator and a cosy sofa set. At first, she couldn't understand how the couple was able to buy all those things. But they tell her that they bought all those products through the hire purchasing system. She is equally shocked to hear that they give much more than what they actually earn every month towards the payment of the installment. In order to find the additional money they needed, they took another loan from a financial institution. Before she makes her leave, she hands over a cheque of ten pounds to the couple. Jill quickly sends the cheque to Dr. Martin towards the payment of the hospital bill in connection with their child's birth.

The play makes a harsh criticism of the materialistic culture that prevails in our society, where happiness and peace of mind are seriously compromised for the materialistic gains of life. Aunt Jane and the couple Jack and Jill are given as characters holding antithetical views regarding life. Aunt Jane prefers happiness and peace of mind by leading a simple life within her means whereas Jack and Jill find happiness in acquiring the various products in the market through the hire-purchasing system. Their peace of mind is seriously compromised and they live worrying of paying back the debts. Thus the play gives us great lessons about the negative aspects of the consumerist culture in our society. The play *The Never-Never Nest* is written in a simple yet elegant style and it is noted for its irony, simplicity, colloquialism and a universal tone.

THE REFUND

FRITZ KARINTHY

The play 'Refund' begins with the appearance of a former student of a school. His name is Wasserkopf. He demands his tuition fee back as he complains that education has made him an incompetent ass. The principal of the school is shocked to see the arrival of a student who had studied in the school eighteen years ago. The student demands a refund of all the money he paid as tuition fee because he has not been benefited by the education provided by the institution. In order to test his failure, he informs his willingness to be re-examined. The principal arranges a staff meeting and the re-examination is conducted. Since failure of the student requires tuition fees refunded, all teachers make their student succeed. Even the most impolite behaviour is described as polite. At the end of the exam, the mathematics master makes him eat a humble pie. The short drama comes to an end when the principal declares that in the future, a pupil simply cannot fail in this school.

Employing a short funny plot, the drama underscores the prevailing educational system with all its drawbacks. The drama portrays the inefficiency of contemporary education and how it keeps learners disconnected. The drama conveys the inability of education to impart social or life skills. It teaches strange things which learners never get identified with it. Instead of realizing the potential of every learner, present day curriculum imparts knowledge which is not a part of learners' environment. This creates incompetent people who struggle to lead their life meaningfully. It can also be noted that students assess quality of education based on its practical use in real life, rather than the value of education in improving themselves.

The writer satirizes the behaviour of the teachers as they are the laughing stock in most of the drama. Though the teachers managed the situation, it is a question how far they managed to win their pupil. The drama also laughs at institution which imparts knowledge but fails to equip the learners to reach their destinations. Instead they keep the statistics going.

In a nutshell, the drama can be considered as a satire on education which is not rooted in the learner's experience, educational institution which cannot afford future of the students and teachers who repeat what they have learned than facilitating what learners needed to learn.

Short Answer Questions

1. What does Wasserkopf demand from the school?

Wasserkopf demands to get his tuition fees refunded because he believed that the education imparted by the school was not useful.

2. Why does Wasserkopf rebuke the teachers?

Wasserkopf wants to make sure that teachers grade him as a failure. In order to provoke them, he rebuked the teachers.

3. What was the final statement made by the principal on Wasserkopf?

The principal has declared that he has passed with flying colours.

4. Who is Wasserkopf?

Wasserkopf was a former student of the school. He comes to the school to get his tuition fee refunded.

Paragraph Questions

1. Why does Wasserkopf want his money back?

Wasserkopf was a student of the school eighteen years ago. He comes to the school to collect his tuition fee back because he feels that the education imparted by the school is inefficient. He is not able to keep any job he has got. He also says that the school is liable to pay the money as they have certified him educated but he is not educated.

2. Why do the teachers and principal pass him in the exam?

The teachers and principal are afraid of paying him the tuition fee back as more and more students may come and demand refund. This shows that the school authorities are doubtful about the quality of education they impart. The amount of money paid by the students is the source of income of the teachers. As a result they are bound to make the student pass the exams. It also throws light at the ways institutions run on student money.

3. How does the play criticize contemporary educational system?

The play criticizes contemporary educational system on three levels. First of all, it questions the kind of education given to students. In most of the cases, modern systems of

education fail to impart the necessary social / life skills needed for the learners to survive. Instead it clings on the age - old traditions. Secondly, educational institutions run on students' payment need to address their demands. Since present day generation evaluate everything on the basis of its practical merit, schools have to adjust with the changing times and make sure that no student is failed. In a competitive educational scenario, failure of a student is a financial matter; as a result institutions corrupt the evaluation system. Thirdly, teachers of the play seem to be clever stage managers who trap the learners than equipping them to live better.

Answer the following question in not more than 300 words

- How does the play 'The Refund' criticize the contemporary systems of education?

The arrival of Wasserkopf demanding his tuition fee has surprised the school authorities. The principal says that such an incident never happened in his career as a teacher. It marks the beginning of students questioning the kind of education imparted at the schools. Though the play comically presented the re-examination, we have to analyze the kind of education provided at school.

The complaint posed by Wasserkopf is that he is not able to keep any job he got and the schooling has not helped him to survive. This is to be considered as education has to help people to live better. In that case his complaint is serious as he charges the school of providing nothing significant. We have to consider that Wasserkopf rushed to the school after meeting leaderer. Leaderer was making huge profit at the foreign exchange and he asks Wasserkopf to get his tuition fee back if he didn't learn business at school. Wassekopf is financially broken, and he feels that is a good idea. But, employability alone cannot be considered as a criterion of efficiency of schooling. So the play puts the questions at the relevance of curriculum and also the way modern society evaluate quality of education. When it comes to the way educational institutions are functioning, the vulnerability of the principal is worth considering. When Wasserkopf complaints of the inefficiency of education, he does not consider it as a matter of concern. The school authority looks at it as a financial matter than a question pertaining to education process. This happens because the institution is run on students' tuition fee and the authority knows that their schooling is not competent enough to meet the demand of the time. In a highly commercialized society, education itself becomes a business activity and the learners are turned into consumers who ask for refunding. The play exposes the process behind all successful institution which is keen to keep the statistics than providing quality education.

In the examination process we understand that teachers have become sales executives who trap the customer. At one end, they deal with the age-old traditions of educating process. On the other hand, they act as clever stage managers who trap learners and help the institution to keep its status quo. Teachers of the play never realize the futility of the process. Just like the student who came for refund, the teachers are also business like in their re-examination. As a whole, the play satirizes the entire process of education.

SOUL GONE HOME

LANGSTON HUGHES

Langston Hughes, well known Afro-American novelist, social activist and columnist, was one of the earliest writers to introduce the new literary form called jazz poetry in the literary domain. He has best known for his leadership and contribution to Harlem Renaissance, the revival of distinct Afro-American literature. He was very proud of his Afro-American identity and asserted the racial consciousness and cultural nationalism. Through his writings Hughes celebrates folk culture and black aesthetics. Joys and struggles of working class Afro-Americans appear as major themes of his writings. His one-act play portrays the pathetic story of an Afro-American family in a society dominated by Whites. The penniless mother turns into a prostitute to meet her livelihood and her son dies due to undernourishment and in a surrealistic manner the dead son speaks to the mother and blames her for not having enough money to provide him food. Langston Hughes plays with language and colour to give figurative meaning to the play.

Short Answer Questions

- 1) Why does the mother say that Ronnie was of no use to her?

The mother says that her son Ronnie was so weak and sickly and could earn nothing by selling papers. Hence he was of no use to her.

- 2) What was the first thing that Ronnie says to the mother after 'coming back from the dead'?

“I wish I wasn’t dead, so I could speak to you. You been a hell of a mama”. This is what Ronnie says to his mother after coming back from the world of dead.

- 3) What do you mean by the phrase ‘I said you a hell of a mama’?

Ronnie means that his mother was very bad and cruel and she did not properly care for him.

- 4) What was the real name of the son and what was his weight at the time of his birth?

The real name of Ronnie is Randolph and his weight was ten pounds at the time of his birth.

- 5) What was the response of the son when the mother said that she cried when she gave birth to him?

Though his mother cried at the time of his birth, Ronnie says that it was he who cried afterwards because she did not look after him properly and failed to provide food even when he was sick

Paragraph Questions

- 1) Why does the son think that his mother hasn’t done anything for him?

The one act play *Soul Gone Home* portrays the difficulties and hardships an African-American single mother encounters to look after her only son in a white dominated background. The son dies suffering from undernourishment and TB and he blames his mother for her negligence and failure to provide him food. The dead body speaks to her before he is taken away by the people for burial and criticizes her for being a bad mother to him. She becomes quite emotional and hysterical when he said so and asks him to justify his arguments. He came to the world as hungry but she didn’t feed him properly and this undernourishment turned him sick and contracted TB. Though the doctor prescribed to give him milk and eggs for proper nourishment, she gave him neither milk nor eggs saying she had no money. More than that even while he could not walk properly mother sent him out in the early morning to sell papers and this turned things worse. He was brought to this world hungry and went away from this world quite hungry. The mother explains her difficulties to bringing him up after her husband abandoned her. Though she had the prospects of marrying again, she didn’t go for that to take her of him. She turned into prostitute to make both ends meet and still she was unable to draw enough money. She blames him for haunting her even after his death and the concluding statement of the mother carries all the agony and pain of a penniless mother; “Tomorrow, Ronnie, I’ll buy you some flowers-if I can pick up a dollar tonight” provided she finds some customers in the night.

Write an essay in not more than 300 words

- Discuss the portrayal of Afro-American life and the dramatic techniques used in the play *Soul Gone Home*.

Langston Hughes, well known Afro-American novelist, social activist and columnist, was one of the earliest writers to introduce the new literary form called jazz poetry in the literary domain. He has best known for his leadership and contribution to Harlem Renaissance, the revival of distinct Afro-American art and literature. He was very proud of his Afro-American identity and asserted the racial consciousness and cultural nationalism. Through his writings Hughes celebrates folk culture and black aesthetics. Joys and struggles of working class Afro-Americans appear as major themes of his writings.

The one act play *Soul Gone Home* portrays the kind of life Afro-Americans lead in the USA. They are seriously discriminated against by the white people and they seldom enjoy freedom and financial security. They are forced to live in slums with unhealthy and unhygienic background. Hughes depicts the wretched condition of such a family consists of a single mother and her son. The father of the child abandoned his family and divorced his mother. She turned into prostitution to look after her son and herself in their white dominated area. Now her lone son has died and he started blaming her in a surrealistic manner. The son blames her for not giving him proper food; “ You never did feed me good, that’s what I mean! Who wants to come into the world hungry and go out the same way?” the son retorts to her. He became weak and sick. He suffers from undernourishment and TB and the doctor told his mother to give him milk and eggs.

The mother did not follow the doctor’s prescriptions because she had no money. She gave him only beans and sent him out to sell papers in the cold though he could not walk properly. Due to this constant suffering, poverty and diseases he died before his time and soon after he comes back from the spirit world, he says to his mother; “You been a bad mother to me”. But she tells her pathetic state as an Afro-American single mother and the hardships she faced to look after him since her husband abandoned her. She doesn’t understand the logic of haunting her even after his death. The pathos reaches its peak when we see the mother applying powder and getting ready to go out looking for customers soon after the dead body is taken away. At the end of the drama mother says; “Tomorrow, Ronnie, I’ll buy you some flowers if I can pick up a dollar tonight”.

The dialogue between the mother and her dead son brings out human relationship in a class conscious society. When the play begins the son is already dead and the dead body lies on the cot and weeping intensely and loudly the mother asks God why did He take away her only hope and possession, her son. She touches the head of the dead body and urges him to speak at least a word to her and surprisingly enough, the dead body starts speaking. Langston Hughes makes use of typical colloquial language of the Afro-American in the dialogues between the mother and the son. Non-standard abbreviations, multiple negative expressions, ungrammatical sentences etc are frequently seen in the play. The setting of the play in bare, ugly, and dirty tenement room with an electric-light bulb in the background projects the dark mood of the play and the poverty of the family too. The expressions like ‘dark boy in a torn white shirt’, ‘big white eyes’ of the dead boy, ‘the men in the white coats’, etc. carries symbolic meaning in the play. They are connotative of a white society in which the Afro-American underdogs are victimized.

So the dramatic techniques and the dialogues used by the playwright bring out the bleak and wretched conditions of the Afro-Americans.

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