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இலங்கைப் பரீட்சைத் திணைக்களம்
Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka

අධ්‍යයන පොදු කல்‍යාන පත්‍ර (උසස් පෙළ) විභාගය, 2026
கல்விப் பொதுத் தராதரப் பத்திர (உயர் தர)ப் பரீட்சை, 2026
General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination, 2026

සිංහල I
ஆங்கிலம் I
English I

73 E I

පැය තුනයි
மூன்று மணித்தர்ப்பாலைம்
Three hours

අමතර කියවීමේ කාලය - මිනිත්තු 10
மேலதிக வாசிப்பு நேரம் - 10 நிமிடங்கள்
Additional Reading Time - 10 minutes

Use the additional reading time to go through the question paper, select the questions you will answer, and decide which of them you will prioritise.

Instructions:

- * Answer all the questions in Part A and Part B.
- * The texts you choose to answer questions from Part A must not be the same as those you answer from Part B.
- * Write the number and letter of each question clearly.

Part A

[This part carries 32 marks. Each question carries 08 marks.]

1. Comment briefly on any **one** of the following passages, explaining its significance to the **play**, from which it is taken.

- (a) But release me from my bands
With the help of your good hands.
Gentle breath of yours my sails
Must fill, or else my project fails,
Which was to please. Now I want
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant;
And my ending is despair,
Unless I be relieved by prayer,
Which pierces so that it assaults
Mercy itself, and frees all faults.
As you from crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free.

The only way to find out about those things is to make discreet inquiries at the proper moment. When I was a girl in Blue Mountain and it was suspected that a young man drank, the girl whose attentions he had been receiving, if any girl was, would sometimes speak to the minister of his church, or rather her father would if her father was living, and sort of feel him out on the young man's character. That is the way such things are discreetly handled to keep a young woman from making a tragic mistake!

- (c) If there was just me ... I mean, if I was alone, if I didn't have anyone to worry about or look after except myself ... maybe then I'd be prepared to pay some sort of price for a little pride. But if I had a wife and four children wasting away their one and only life in the dust and poverty ... If I had four children waiting for me, their father, to do something about their lives ...

- (d) Now, by heaven,
My blood begins my safer guides to rule
And passion, having my best judgement collied,
Assays to lead the way. Zounds, if I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on,
And he that is approved in this offence,
Though he had twinned with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me.

We send him up all we've got and he's not satisfied. No, honest, it's enough to make the cat laugh. Why did you send him up all that stuff? (Thoughtfully.) Why did I send it up?

Pause.

Who knows what he's got upstairs? He's probably got a salad bowl. They must have something up there. They won't get much from down here. You notice they didn't ask for any salads? They've probably got a salad bowl up there. Cold meat, radishes, cucumbers. Watercress. Roll mops.

Pause.

Hardboiled eggs.

Pause.

The lot.

2. Comment briefly on any **one** of the following passages, explaining its significance to the (novel) from which it is taken.

(a) I'll be honest about it. It is not atheists who get stuck in my craw, but agnostics. Doubt is useful for a while. We must all pass through the garden of Gethsemane. If Christ played with doubt, so must we. If Christ spent an anguished night in prayer, if He burst out from the Cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" then surely we are also permitted doubt. But we must move on. To choose doubt as a philosophy of life is akin to choosing immobility as a means of transportation.

(b) Upon the cornice of the tower a tall staff was fixed. Their eyes were riveted on it. A few minutes after the hour had struck something moved slowly up the staff, and extended itself upon the breeze. It was a black flag.

(c) She has folded the half-sewn shorts carefully, the habit of respecting the tidiness of cupboards, and hesitating when she enters the hut, places them on the bed. Apparently not satisfied with the shorts' appearance, her palm smooths them in a forgotten caress. Then she stands for a moment while fear climbs her hand-over-hand to throttle, hold her.

(d) The memories of that night are hard and bright within me like a diamond, and the fires that flash from it have strange powers. Some are blue and wrap me gently in their glow; or green and soothing like oxen eyes in the night; but there are others, yellow and red, that sear me with their intensity. When this happens I call to the mists and they come, like clouds that cover the sun. But the fires themselves are always there, they will never be extinguished until my life itself is done.

(e) Nevertheless, my duty in this instance was quite clear, and as I saw it, there was nothing to be gained at all in irresponsibly displaying such personal doubts. It was a difficult task, but as such, one that demanded to be carried out with dignity. And so it was that when I finally raised the matter towards the end of our conversation that evening, I did so in as concise and businesslike a way as possible.

3. Comment briefly on the following passage, explaining its significance to the short story from which it is taken.

Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the air strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. She remembered the last night of her mother's illness; she was again in the close dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy air of Italy.

Eveline
by James Joyce

4. Comment briefly on the following extract, explaining its significance to the poem from which it is taken.

You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and pray you'll never know
The hell where youth and laughter go.

Suicide in the trenches

Siegfried Sassoon

Part B

[This part carries 68 marks. Each question carries 17 marks.]

5. Drama

Answer any **one** of the following questions. Do **not** answer the question which is based on the text you selected in question 1 of Part A above.

- (a) Write a critical introduction to Athol Fugard et al's *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*, paying special attention to the overall socioeconomic context which it seeks to dramatise.
- (b) "*The Tempest* presents a superficial resolution to complex political and ethical issues, and, therefore, the play itself no longer has any deep relevance to the contemporary world." Discuss.
- (c) In *The Glass Menagerie* the characters, while seeking freedom, are trapped by a society that demands conformity and condemns the weak." Analyse Tennessee Williams' play in light of this comment.
- (d) "The plot of *Othello* is flimsy and far-fetched, devaluing both Othello's ethnicity and Desdemona's gender in order to make the play credible." How useful is this statement in understanding Shakespeare's play?
- (e) "Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* has been described as a powerful critique of authoritarianism and unquestioning compliance." Do you agree?

6. Novel

Answer any **one** of the following questions. Do **not** answer the question which is based on the text you selected in question 2 of Part A above.

- (a) Write a critical introduction to Nadine Gordimer's *July's People*, emphasising how considerations of race and class overlap in this novel.
- (b) "In Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* the real story is that of a man destroyed by the ideals upon which he has built his life." Assess Ishiguro's novel on the basis of this insight.

- (c) "In *Nectar in a Sieve* Markandaya strips the novel of all concrete markers such as specific geographic location and caste dynamics in order to universalise rural suffering for Western publishers, rather than reflecting the highly stratified reality of a South Indian village. In doing so, she also focuses on tragedy alone, ignoring the villagers' coping mechanisms and resistance." Is this an adequate and fair description of Kamala Markandaya's novel?
- (d) In Thomas Hardy's novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* how does the character of Tess Durbeyfield embody the intersections of class and gender, and how do these factors influence her tragic fate?
- (e) To what extent is accepting the storyline as credible or real, important in appreciating Martel's *The Life of Pi*?

7. Short Story

- (a) Discuss how male and female roles and responsibilities within the family unit are treated in three short stories in your syllabus, focusing specifically on how these roles and responsibilities affect the plot.

OR

- (b) Examine how hierarchical social structures are preserved and reinforced in two short stories in your syllabus that focus on characters who are from different social strata and contexts. Identify and analyse the differences, if any, in the manner in which their respective social structures are preserved and reinforced.

OR

- (c) Identify the short story that, in your view, provides the best critical analysis of dominant cultural beliefs and practices, and write a short introduction to the story highlighting this aspect. Note that you first need to justify your selection through a brief comparison with the other stories in your syllabus.

James Joyce - Eveline
Action and Reaction - Chaitanya

8. Poetry

- (a) Examine how poets critically engage with untimely death, providing detailed examples from at least three poems.

OR

- (b) Critically examine at least three poems from your syllabus, demonstrating how they directly relate to your experience and have influenced the formation of your values.

OR

- (c) Critically analyse one of the following:

- Descriptions of the working class, including those that are antagonistic, in at least three prescribed poems.
- Analysis of moments of contentment, joy and happiness in two poems in your syllabus, by considering one written by a woman and the other by a man.
- Differences and similarities in the treatment of political violence in the two poems "Animal Crackers" by Richard de Zoysa and "Explosion" by Vivimarie Vanderpoorten.

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