



Register Number:

DATE:

**ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE-27**  
**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2019**  
**BA VISUAL COMMUNICATION – I SEMESTER**  
**VC 1418: WRITING SKILLS**

**Time – 2 1/2 hrs**

**Max Marks-70 Marks**

**This paper contains THREE printed pages and FIVE parts**

**I. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate articles (1x5 = 5)**

1. He is telling \_\_\_ lie.
2. She is \_\_\_ honest child.
3. They bought \_\_\_ car.
4. Is this \_\_\_ story she wrote?
5. The Hindu is \_\_\_ English-language daily news paper.

**II. Answer all FIVE (1x5=5)**

6. The past participle of wet is \_\_\_
7. The simple present tense of spoken is \_\_\_
8. The past participle of run is \_\_\_
9. The present continuous form of swim is \_\_\_
10. The past tense of camouflage is \_\_\_

**III. Identify mistakes if any in the following sentences and correct them. (2X10=20)**

11. The captain and coach of the team have been sacked.
12. My friend and his mother is in town.
13. Everybody love a good draught.
14. She wore the hat on her head, which she bought yesterday.
15. The chicken is ready to eat.
16. We read that James was married in his last letter.
17. Please reply back to the letter, will you!
18. Would you please repeat again what you said.
19. The new innovations were startling?
20. The number of soldiers at the border is large.

**IV. Read the following passage and answer the questions in not more than 150 words each. (4x5 = 40)**

The Great American Novelist – By Ross Douthat

Toni Morrison, dead this week at 88, was a great American novelist who was also a Great American Novelist. This means she had a special form of celebrity, an oracular status, and also that she was embraced by the tradition that regards novels as keys to interpreting

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America — insisting that you must read Morrison (and Ellison and Wright and Hurston) to understand the black experience, just as you must read Hawthorne and Melville to understand the legacy of Puritanism, or Faulkner or Cather to understand the South or West, and so on down the high-school English list.

So her passing raises the question: Is she the last of the species? The last American novelist who made novels seem essential to an educated person's understanding of her country?

That question won't be answerable for decades — the time it took to exhume, for instance, "Moby-Dick" and "The Great Gatsby" from their temporary graves. We can't know how Morrison's reputation will change, or the reputations of her peers or the status of their art form. The American novel was supposed to be eclipsed long ago by movies and television ... and yet it proved resilient enough that, coming of age long after TV, I was still imprinted with the idea that novels were essential cultural ground, as important as Spielberg or "The Sopranos."

But something has changed in the cultural status of the novel in the time I've been a reader, the years between Morrison's canonization and her passing — and maybe especially the years since social media and the iPhone first arrived.

Part of that change is measurable. Sales of adult fiction have slumped by 16 percent just since 2013, with almost a billion dollars in vanished sales. In both the United States and the United Kingdom, novelists find it harder to earn a living, while pop franchises and young-adult sales increasingly keep the industry afloat.

The change in the discourse has been less quantifiable but no less real. The humanities were a crucial zone of cultural debate in the 1980s and 1990s, when canons were understood to matter and were contested by right and left accordingly. Today technocracy is crushing the English department and the equivalent debates are often about representation in Marvel movies.

Likewise, controversies about the novel *qua* novel attracted substantial attention 20 years ago — Tom Wolfe's feuds, Jonathan Franzen's Oprah anxieties, the judgments passed on the State of the Novel in *The Atlantic* or *The New Republic*, the criticism wars waged over James Wood or *The Believer*. Today you get that kind of attention only when a fiction touches some raw culture-war nerve, as with the *New Yorker* story "Cat Person" or the Margaret Atwood revival. Otherwise, the book media feels dominated, as Christian Lorentzen wrote recently in *Harper's*, by "a consumerist mode of engagement with the arts," in which the only point is to recommend and "like."

Do these trends reflect the philistinism of late liberalism or capitalism? The tyranny of the political? The absence of traditional constraints that used to lend dramatic tension to social and domestic novels? The migration of literary talent to shows like "Girls" and "Atlanta," the novel-equivalents of the Millennial age?

Probably all of the above. But in my own life it's the internet that's killing novel-reading. And specifically the social media/iPhone combination, whose distracting effect is the enemy of the novel more than of other forms of art.

You cannot jump in and out of serious novel-reading, and a book doesn't claim your gaze the way the movies and television do. You have to enter and remain, undistracted and immersed. I used to be able to do that easily; now I only achieve immersion with high-end genre fiction, relying on murders and dragons to pull me away from the online. (I have a similar experience with another lost love, baseball, where now I only watch the playoffs.)

This is not the fault of contemporary novelists. Like Wood and others (but less intelligently) I had theories about What Was Wrong With the Novel back when I read lots of novels. But I'm pretty sure it's my relationship to media and technology, not those theories, that are the reason I read so many fewer now. And although some of my favourite 1930s authors developed a more cinematic style in the shadow of the talkies, I wouldn't want to read a novel adapted to the Twitter age.

What I want instead is the experience of my early-adulthood canon dives and quests for new books that might one day be canonical; the feeling of losing yourself in a story while also participating in a tradition.

That loss of depth and memory means that if the decline of the novel is not the internet's more troubling influence, it might be one of the more telling.

For now there's only one way to resist. I've got the new Sally Rooney novel, "Normal People," on my dresser. Is she the Great Irish-Millennial Novelist — or at least as good a writer as her reviews suggest? The only way to know is the old one: Take and read.

21. Are novels essential to an educated person's understanding of her country?
22. How is the 'consumerist mode of engagement with the arts' affecting the publishing industry?
23. What is the impact of technocracy on young readers?
24. How do you think social media has impacted the way you read and think?

**V. Answer any two of the following in not less than 250 words each.**

**(2x10 = 20)**

25. Write a news story in the inverted pyramid style about the recent floods in South India.
26. Review any recent movie that you watched.
27. Write a travelogue based on any recent trip you made.
28. "Democracy should ensure space for dissent." Elucidate.