



Date: 22/10/2019

Register No.

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BENGALURU - 27
ADDITIONAL ENGLISH B.A/ B. Sc/ B.Com/ B.S.W/ BVC - III SEMESTER
END-SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2019
AE 314 - ADDITIONAL ENGLISH

Time: 2 ½ Hours

.Max. Marks: 70

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. You are allowed to use a dictionary.
2. This paper contains **THREE** printed pages.
3. You will lose marks for exceeding the word limit.

I. Answer ANY FOUR of the following questions in about 150 words each: (4x10=40)

1. In the play *Medea* by Euripides, what role do her children play? How do they contribute to the tragic progress of events?

2. The leaders of the Greek army consider the aristocratic female prisoners 'prestigious spoils of war' to be divided amongst themselves. Comment on the above phrase from the play *Trojan Women* by Euripides. How does it explain the anxiety of the Trojan women in the play?

3. Who, among the three Indian writers in English (R. K. Narayan, Salman Rushdie and Chetan Bhagat) you have read, best represent conflicts such as clash of generations and family values of the Indian society? Elaborate your answer by providing evidence from the texts you read this semester.

4. *The Painter of Signs* is a novel teeming with clashes between tradition and modernity. Which of these clashes do you find yourself able to relate to?

5. Chetan Bhagat in an interview published by *The Hindu* says, "All my fiction novels are about national issues actually. In *Five Point Someone*, for instance, I didn't intend to write about an issue but luckily I'd touched upon a big issue: education... *2 States* was on the North-South divide..."

What does Chetan Bhagat mean by fiction novel? Are you convinced that the author is addressing national issues in his novels? Justify your position with evidence from the texts you read this semester.

II. Read the following excerpt from an article titled ‘In a time of conflict, children have every right to know dark truths’ by Pankaja Srinivasan, published in *The Hindu*.

Unknown words don’t stop the child, a boring story will” — Issac Bashevis Singer. Several sessions at The Hindu Lit Fest were devoted to what exactly makes a story for a young person exciting, thought-provoking and ‘not boring’.

One of the first was between Shailaja Menon (who leads an Early Literacy Initiative at Tata Institute of Social Sciences) and children’s publishers Radhika Menon and Sandhya Rao. They discussed *Reimagining Stereotypes: How Representative are Books for Children?*

Menon of Tulika Books worried that while children’s publishing in India was growing at a scorching pace, there was the real fear that one was not thinking enough about what kind of stories were being written.

Were children’s books inclusive? Did they address disabilities, physical and social? Not adequately, according to Rao.

“The industry is afraid to experiment and it is business more than real content that rules,” rued children’s writer Malavika Nataraj as she and animator/ illustrator Chetan Sharma spoke on *Walking the Tightrope: How Imaginative are Children’s Writers and Illustrators?* Sharma felt that the trick lay not just in the character and plot that can fire a child’s imagination, but also in the telling. She also acknowledged that irreverent retellings of popular tales, stories laced with dark humour and those which deal with controversial issues are still reluctant topics for children’s publishers to engage with.

Referring to today’s children as “the Strawberry generation — easily bruised”, Nataraj felt that children needed to hear hard truths. “Imagination, fantasy and reality can co-exist in the same narrative,” she said.

But what role does political correctness play in narratives. Paro Anand, Anushka Ravishankar and John Boyne spoke about their individual experiences of writing ‘difficult books’ for young readers. Anand faced considerable flak for her book *No Guns at My Son’s Funeral* because it was the story of a young Kashmiri boy who turns to militancy. Still, thousands of copies of that book got sold. “Don’t ban books, start conversations about the issue instead,” urged Anand.

Boyne’s *The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas* about a friendship during the Holocaust between two children on opposite sides of the fence, literally and metaphorically, sold nine million copies. The truth, however inconvenient, should not be messed with, he said.

All the authors were unanimous on the point that if indeed we are living in a time of intolerance, conflict and devastation, children had every right to know about that dark side of their world. “But, no matter how dark the matter of my story is, I always end on an upswing,” said Anand.

II. A. Answer the following questions based on your reading of the above passage in about 5 sentences. (3x5=15)

1. Why do you think irreverent retellings of popular tales, stories laced with dark humour, and those which deal with controversial issues are still topics that children's publishers are reluctant to engage with in India? Give reasons.
2. Malavika Nataraj points out how in children's fiction, imagination, fantasy and reality can co-exist in the same narrative. How does Salman Rushdie in his novel *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* master this sort of a narrative?
3. Do children have the right to read what they want? Why do the authors insist on the right for children to know about the dark side of their world?

II. B. Answer the question based on your reading of the above passage in about 200 words. (1x15=15)

4. What kinds of stories were censored by adults around you in your childhood? What was your reaction when you later discovered the truth behind the censored stories? How has that shaped your understanding of the world around you?