



WEST BENGAL STATE UNIVERSITY

B.A./B.Com. Programme 3rd Semester Supplementary Examination, 2021

ENGMCOR01T-ALTERNATIVE ENGLISH (MIL)

Time Allotted: 2 Hours

Full Marks: 50

*The figures in the margin indicate full marks.
Candidates should answer in their own words and adhere to the word limit as practicable.*

1. Comprehension:

I was ten years old. My grandmother sat on the string bed, under the mango tree. It was late summer and there were sunflowers in the garden and a warm wind in the trees. My grandmother was knitting a woollen scarf for the winter months. She was very old, dressed in a plain white sari; her eyes were not very strong now, but her fingers moved quickly with the needles, and the needles kept clicking all afternoon. Grandmother had white hair, but there were very few wrinkles on her skin.

I had come home after playing cricket on the maidan. I had taken my meal, and now I was rummaging in a box of old books and family heirlooms that had just that day been brought out of the attic by my mother. Nothing in the box interested me very much, except for a book with colourful pictures of birds and butterflies. I was going through the book, looking at the pictures, when I found a small photograph between the pages. It was a faded picture, a little yellow and foggy; it was a picture of a girl standing against a wall, and behind the wall there was nothing but sky; but from the other side a pair of hands reached up, as though someone was going to climb the wall. There were flowers growing near the girl, but I couldn't tell what they were; there was a creeper too, but it was just a creeper.

I ran out into the garden. 'Granny!' I shouted. 'Look at this picture! I found it in the box of old things. Whose picture is it?'

I jumped on the bed beside my grandmother, and she walloped me on the bottom and said, 'Now I've lost count of my stitches, and the next time you do that I'll make you finish the scarf yourself.'

Granny was always threatening to teach me how to knit, which I thought was a disgraceful thing for a boy to do; it was a good deterrent for keeping me out of mischief. Once I had torn the drawing room curtains, and Granny had put a needle and thread in my hand and made me stitch the curtain together, even though I make long, two-inch stitches, which had to be taken out by my mother and done again.

She took the photograph from my hand, and we both stared at it for quite a long time. The girl had long, loose hair, and she wore a long dress that nearly covered her ankles, and sleeves that reached her wrists, and there were a lot of bangles on her hands; but, despite all this drapery, the girl appeared to be full of freedom and movement; she stood with her legs apart and her hands on her hips, and she had a wide, almost devilish smile on her face.

- (a) What was the narrator looking for and how did he find it? 3
- (b) Why did the narrator feel troubled for his grandmother? 3
- (c) Find words in the passage that mean: 5
- (i) Blurry (ii) Detect (iii) Rumble (iv) Mischievous
- (v) Beat
- (d) Mention the antonym for *foggy*. 1
- (e) What is the verb form of *photograph*? 1
- (f) Write the noun form of *threatening*. 1
- (g) Make a sentence of your own with the word *despite*. 1
2. Write a letter to the editor of a daily newspaper reflecting upon the indiscipline of following the covid norms in everyday life and how it can be improved with proper caution. 15
3. Write a precis of the passage given below and add a suitable title: 10
- Philosophy and literature are embattled adversaries. The eyes of philosophers see through the opaqueness of the world, eliminate the flesh of it, reduce the variety of existing things to a spider's web of relationships between general ideas, and fix the rules according to which a finite number of pawns moving on a chessboard exhaust a number of combinations that may even be infinite. Along come the writers and replace the abstract chessmen with kings and queens, knights and castles, all with a name, a particular shape, and a series of attributes royal, equine, or ecclesiastical; instead of a chessboard they roll out great dusty battlefields or stormy seas.

So at this point, the rules of the game are turned topsy-turvy, revealing an order of things quite different from that of the philosophers. Or, rather, the people who discover these new rules of the game are once again the philosophers, who dash back to demonstrate that this operation wrought by the writers can be reduced to the terms of one of their own operations, and that the particular castles and bishops were nothing but general ideas in disguise.

And so the wrangle goes on, with each side confident of having taken a step ahead in the conquest of truth, or at least of a truth, and at the same time perfectly well aware that the raw material of its own constructions is the same as that of the opposition: words. But words, like crystals, have facets and axes of rotation with different properties, and light is refracted differently according to how these word crystals are placed, and how the polarizing surfaces are cut and superimposed. The clash between philosophy and literature does not need to be resolved. On the contrary, only if we think of it as permanent but ever new does it guarantee us that the sclerosis of words will not close over us like a sheet of ice.

4. (a) Write a short story entitled "Hope." 10

OR

(b) Write a newspaper report on the major effects of Amphan cyclone in the coastal area of West Bengal. 10

N.B. : *Students have to complete submission of their Answer Scripts through E-mail / Whatsapp to their own respective colleges on the same day / date of examination within 1 hour after end of exam. University / College authorities will not be held responsible for wrong submission (at in proper address). Students are strongly advised not to submit multiple copies of the same answer script.*

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