



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL
B.A. Programme 5th Semester Examination, 2020

SEC2 (P1)-ENGLISH

Full Marks: 60

ASSIGNMENT

The figures in the margin indicate full marks.

**The question paper contains GROUP-I and GROUP-II.
The candidates are required to answer any *one* from *two* Groups.
Candidates should clearly mention The Group on the Answer Booklet.**

GROUP-I

TEXT COMPREHENSION AND EDITING

Answer any *three* of the following questions

20×3 = 60

1. Attempt a summary of the following passage:

How difficult it is to make a beginning. I speak of essay-writing, an essentially virtuous practice, and not of breaking the Ten Commandments. It is much easier to begin, say, a review or an article than it is to begin an essay, for with the former you attach yourself to something outside yourself, you have an excuse for writing and therefore have more courage. If it is a review that has to be written, well, there, waiting for you, inviting your comment is the book. Similarly with an article, you have your subject, something that everybody is excited about, and thus you know what is expected of you and you can take up your pen with a light heart. But to have nothing to cling hold of, to have no excuse for writing at all, to be compelled to spin everything out of oneself, to stand naked and shivering in the very first sentence one puts down, is clearly a very different matter, and this is the melancholy situation in which the essayist always finds himself. It is true that he need not always be melancholy; if he is full of himself, brimming over with bright talk, in a mood to take the whole world into his confidence, the essayist will find his task a very pleasant one indeed, never to be exchanged for such drudge's work as reviews and articles; and he will step briskly on to the stage and posture in the limelight without a tremor. But such moments are rare, and the essayist at ordinary times, though he would eagerly undertake to defend his craft, cannot quite rid himself of the feeling that there is something both absurd and decidedly impudent in this business of talking about oneself for money; this feeling haunts the back of his mind like some gibbering spectre, and it generally produces one of three effects. According to his temperament, it will prevent him from doing anything at all that particular day or perhaps any other day, or it will allow him to write a few brilliant opening sentences and then shut up, or it will keep him from making a start until the last possible moments. For my own part, I am one of those who find it difficult to begin; I stand on the brink for hours, hesitating to make the plunge; I will do anything but the work in hand. This habit

is certainly a nuisance, but perhaps it is not quite so intolerable as that of some other persons, men of my acquaintance, who fall into the second category mentioned above and always find themselves making dashing openings and then coming to a stop.

2. Attempt a summary of the following passage:

The advantages of living in the twentieth century are clear to anyone who spends time in one of the world's highly developed nations. The disadvantages of modern life, however, are sometimes not so quickly seen. Consider the average man today in contrast with man 200 years ago. Machines now perform for him many of the services that he previously had to do for himself. They cut his grass, wash his car, open and close his doors, walk for him, climb stairs for him, serve him coffee, and both put him to sleep and wake him up to music. In two major areas – transportation and communications – great progress has been made. Mass publishing practices have spread newspapers, magazines, and paperback books around the globe. Relayed across oceans by Telstar satellites, television informs and entertains people in every hemisphere. Mail moves swiftly and efficiently; telephone cables connect all continents. More than any other single invention, the gasoline engine has revolutionized modern life. City streets, clogged with automobile traffic tell us that. More recent discoveries have led to the surge of jet and supersonic plane travel. Even as man darts throughout the world, he is protected from disease as no man before him has been, and he can look forward to living a longer life than his grandfather did. Furthermore, man now commands a more plentiful supply of the world's goods. He may own not only a car and a home but also a stove, a refrigerator, a washing machine, books, phonograph records and cameras. Even his old age is better provided for through pension and retirement plans offered by the government and by industry. Although man has been given the gift of leisure and a longer life, he has become more restless and is often uncomfortable when he is not working. Flooded with goods and gadgets, he finds his appetite for material things increased, not satisfied. Man invented machines to replace his servants. But some current observers feel that man is in danger of becoming the servant of his machines. Mass production lowered the cost of many products, but as prices went down, quality also often decreased. Another distressing aspect of modern life is its depersonalization. In many offices, automation is beginning to replace human workers. Some colleges identify students not by their names, but by their IBM numbers. Computers are winning the prestige that philosophers had in an earlier age. Soon, man may even fall victim to the subtle loss of privacy that threatens him. Even today, he can be watched on closed circuit television screens as he walks in stores and hotels. He may be tracked by radar while driving on the highway or listened to by means of a microphone concealed in his heating system.

3. Write a summary of the following poem:

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message 'He is Dead'.
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song:
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now; put out every one,
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun,
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood;
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

4. Write a summary of the following poem:

In Madurai,
city of temples and poets,
who sang of cities and temples,
every summer
a river dries to a trickle
in the sand,
baring the sand ribs,
straw and women's hair
clogging the watergates
at the rusty bars
under the bridges with patches
of repair all over them
the wet stones glistening like sleepy
crocodiles, the dry ones
shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun
The poets only sang of the floods.

He was there for a day
When they had the floods.
People everywhere talked
of the inches rising,
of the precise number of cobbled steps
run over by the water, rising
on the bathing places,
and the way it carried off three village houses,
one pregnant woman
and a couple of cows
named Gopi and Brinda as usual.

The new poets still quoted
the old poets, but no one spoke
in verse
of the pregnant woman
drowned, with perhaps twins in her,
kicking at blank walls
even before birth.

He said:
the river has water enough
to be poetic
about only once a year
and then
it carries away
in the first half-hour
three village houses,
a couple of cows
named Gopi and Brinda
and one pregnant woman
expecting identical twins
with no moles on their bodies,
with different coloured diapers
to tell them apart.

5. Discuss the stages of editing an academic manuscript. (700-750 words)
6. Write a short essay on the importance of copyediting. (700-750 words)

GROUP-II

CREATIVE WRITING

Answer any *three* of the following questions (within 700-750 words each) 20×3 = 60

1. What are the main challenges of creative writing?
2. What are the differences between autobiography, biography and memoir? Explain with relevant examples.
3. What are the best techniques and tools that one must use for effective social media posts?
4. Does writing a personal diary constitute creative writing? Argue your answer.
5. As a columnist, write a review of a film festival.
6. Prepare the script of a radio play on a contemporary global crisis.

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