

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086

(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2009–10)

SUBJECT CODE: EN/FC/EC13

**B.A./ B.Sc./ B.S.W./B.V.A./B.Com. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2009
FIRST SEMESTER**

**COURSE : FOUNDATION CORE
PAPER : ENGLISH CORE
TIME : 2 HOURS**

MAX. MARKS: 50

Number of questions to be answered: 6.

I. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. (10 marks)

Mini's mother is unfortunately very timid. Whenever she hears a noise in the streets, or sees people coming towards the house, she always jumps to the conclusion that they are either thieves, or drunkards, or snakes, or tigers, or malaria, or cockroaches, or caterpillars. Even after all these years of experience, she is not able to overcome her terror. So she was full of doubts about the Cabuliwallah, and used to beg me to keep a watchful eye on him.

If I tried to laugh her fear gently away, she would turn round seriously, and ask me solemn questions:

Were children never kidnapped?

Was it not true that there was slavery in Cabul?

Was it so very absurd that this big man should be able to carry off a tiny child?

(from "The Cabuliwallah")

1. What do we understand of Mini's father's views on Mini's mother from the word "unfortunately"? (2 marks)
2. Give reasons why Mini's mother has doubts about the Cabuliwallah. (3 marks)
3. Pick out the sentence that provides a physical description of Mini and the Cabuliwallah; copy out the sentence on to your answer sheet. (1 mark)
4. Use the following phrases in sentences of your own. Do not copy the sentences in the passage:

Jump/jumps to the conclusion; even after; full of doubts; used to beg me

(4 marks)

II. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. (10 marks)

Returning to the rest house late one evening, I was halfway across the bridge when I saw a figure at the other end, emerging from the mist. Presently I made out a woman, wearing the plain dhoti of the hills; her hair fell loose over her shoulders. She appeared not to see me, and reclined against the railing of the bridge, looking down at the rushing waters far below. And then, to my amazement and horror, she climbed over the railing and threw herself into the river.

I ran forward, calling out, but I reached the railing only to see her fall into the foaming waters below, where she was carried swiftly downstream.

The watchman's cabin stood a little way off. The door was open. The watchman, Ram Singh, was reclining on his bed, smoking a hookah.

'Someone just jumped off the bridge,' I said breathlessly. "She's been swept down the river!"

The watchman was unperturbed. 'Gulabi again,' he said, almost to himself; and then to me, 'Did you see her clearly?'

'Yes, a woman with long loose hair—but I didn't see her face very clearly.'

'It must have been Gulabi. Only a ghost, my dear sir. Nothing to be alarmed about. Every now and then someone sees her throw herself into the river.'

(from "Wilson's Bridge")

1. The narrator uses the words "amazement" and "horror" to describe his reaction when he sees Gulabi throw herself into the river. Why does he react in this manner? (2 marks)
2. Make sentences of your own with the following: Do not copy the sentences in the passage:
emerging from; foaming; reclining against (3 marks)
3. Why do you think the watchman is "unperturbed?" Write your answer in about 50 words. (5 marks)

III. Read the lines and answer the questions that follow. (10 marks)

And immediately I regretted it.

I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!

I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human education.

And I thought of the albatross

And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,

Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,

Now due to be crowned again.

And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords

Of life.

And I have something to expiate:

A pettiness.

(from “The Snake”)

1. Why does the poet refer to human education as accursed? (2 marks)
2. What makes the poet describe the snake as a king in exile? (2 marks)
3. Why is the poet reminded of the albatross? (2 marks)
4. **“And I thought of the albatross**

And I wished he would come back, my snake.”

Read the above lines carefully. What word suggests the close relationship between the snake and the poet? (1 mark)

5. What does the poet feel he must do at the end of the poem? (3 marks)

IV. Write one paragraph on any one of the following: (5 marks)

Ghosts; snakes; peacocks; rivers; mountains

V. Use the following words and phrases to write a paragraph in the present tense.

(5 marks)

watchman; on duty; uniform; to ensure security; patrolling

VI. Fill in the blanks choosing appropriate word/words from the list provided at the end of the passage. (10 marks)

Rewrite the passage having filled in the blanks with appropriate words.

I ____ 1 ____ far from comfortable, but I listened to Ram Singh tell me the tale of Gulabi's suicide. After making me ____ 2 ____ glass of hot ____ 3 ____ tea, he ____ 4 ____ into a long ____ 5 ____ account of how Wilson, a British adventurer seeking his fortune, had been hunting musk deer when he ____ 6 ____ Gulabi on the path from ____ 7 ____ village. The girl's gray-green eyes and ____ 8 ____ complexion enchanted him, and he went ____ 9 ____ to get to know her people. Was he in love with her, or did he simply find her beautiful and desirable? We shall never really know. In the course of his travels and adventures he ____ 10 ____ many women, but Gulabi was different.

launched; had known; was; encountered; out of his way; a; her; sweet; peach-blossom; rambling

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