

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), CHENNAI 600086
(For candidates admitted from the academic year 2023 – 2024 and thereafter)

B.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, APRIL 2026
ENGLISH AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS
SIXTH SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR ELECTIVE
TITLE OF THE COURSE : LITERATURE AND FOOD
COURSE CODE : 23CE/ME/LF45
TIME : 3 HOURS **MAX. MARKS: 100**

SECTION A			
I	Answer any four of the following questions in about 100 words. (4x5=20)	CO	KL
1	Write briefly about Roland Barthes' concept of food as communication.	CO1	K1
2	Define Food Writing and explain its significance.		
3	List the key aspects of Gastrocriticism.		
4	What does Lorca do to stop her mother from sending her to boarding school in <i>Tomorrow There Will Be Apricots?</i>		
5	How does Jhumpa Lahiri use food as a metaphor in "Mrs. Sen's"?		
SECTION B			
II	Answer any two of the following questions in about 200 words. (2x10=20)	CO	KL
6	Explain any two food writing formats.	CO2	K2
7	Explore how food shapes the protagonist's childhood experiences and identity in <i>The Story of a Boy's Hunger</i> .		
8	Discuss how <i>The Great Indian Kitchen</i> uses kitchen routines and food preparation to comment on patriarchy and women's unpaid labour.		
SECTION C			
III	Answer any one of the following questions in about 300 words. (1x20=20)	CO	KL
9	Analyse how "Khaana with Parosi" portrays immigrant experience.	CO3	K3
10	Demonstrate how Esquivel blends magical realism with food.		
SECTION D			
IV	Answer any one of the following questions in about 300 words. (1x20=20)	CO	KL
11	Critically appreciate the significance of the recurring image of chicken soup and ice in <i>Chicken Soup with Rice</i> by Maurice Sendak.	CO4	K4
12	Justify how <i>The Woks of Life</i> employs culinary stories as an expression of resistance and cultural preservation.		

SECTION E			
V	Answer any one of the following questions in about 300 words. (1x20=20)	CO	KL
13	<p style="text-align: center;">Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption - Roland Barthes</p> <p>The inhabitants of the United States consume almost twice as much sugar as the French. Such a fact is usually a concern of economics and politics. But this is by no means all. One needs only to take the step from sugar as merchandise, an abstract item in accounts, to sugar as food, a concrete item that is “eaten” rather than “consumed,” to get an inkling of the (probably unexplored) depth of the phenomenon. For the Americans must do something with all that sugar. And as a matter of fact, anyone who has spent time in the United States knows that sugar permeates a considerable part of American cooking; that it saturates ordinarily sweet foods, such as pastries; makes for a great variety of sweets served, such as ice creams, jellies, syrups; and is used in many dishes that French people do not sweeten, such as meats, fish, salads, and relishes. This is something that would be of interest to scholars in fields other than economics, to the psychosociologist, for example, who will have something to say about the presumably invariable relation between standard of living and sugar consumption. (But is this relation really invariable today? And if so, why?) It could be of interest to the historian also, who might find it worthwhile to study the ways in which the use of sugar evolved as part of American culture (the influence of Dutch and German immigrants who were used to “sweet-salty” cooking?). Nor is this all. Sugar is not just a foodstuff, even when it is used in conjunction with other foods; it is, if you will, an “attitude,” bound to certain usages, certain “protocols,” that have to do with more than food. Serving a sweet relish or drinking a Coca-Cola with a meal are things that are confined to eating habits proper; but to go regularly to a dairy bar, where the absence of alcohol coincides with a great abundance of sweet beverages, means more than to consume sugar; through the sugar, it also means to experience the day, periods of rest, traveling, and leisure in a specific fashion that is certain to have its impact on the American. For who would claim that in France wine is only wine? Sugar or wine, these two superabundant substances are also institutions. And these institutions necessarily imply a set of images, dreams, tastes, choices, and values. I remember an American hit song: Sugar Time. Sugar is a time, a category of the world.</p> <p>a) Examine the contrast the author draws between sugar in the United States and wine in France. (10 marks)</p> <p>b) Evaluate how sugar functions as a cultural “institution” in American society. (10 marks)</p>	CO5 &6	K5 &6

14	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> - Laura Esquivel</p> <p>Tita knew Chenchu sometimes exaggerated and distorted things, so she held her aching heart in check. She would not accept what she had just heard. Feigning calm, she continued cutting the rolls for her sisters and Nancha to fill. It is best to use homemade rolls. Hard rolls can easily be obtained from a bakery, but they should be small, the larger ones are unsuited for this recipe. After filling the rolls, bake for ten minutes and serve hot. For best results, leave the rolls out overnight, wrapped in a cloth, so that the grease from the sausage soaks into the bread.</p> <p>When Tita was finishing wrapping the next day's rolls, Mama Elena came into the kitchen and informed them that she had agreed to Pedro's marriage to Rosaura.</p> <p>Hearing Chenchu's story confirmed, Tita felt her body fill with a wintry chill: in one sharp, quick blast she was so cold and dry her cheeks burned and turned red, red as the apples beside her. That overpowering chill lasted a long time, and she could find no respite, not even when Nancha told her what she had overheard as she escorted don Pascual Muzquiz and his son to the ranch's gate. Nancha followed them, walking as quietly as she could in order to hear the conversation between father and son. Don Pascual and Pedro were walking slowly, speaking in low, controlled, angry voices.</p> <p>(a) How does the passage blend cooking instructions with moments of intense personal drama? (10 marks)</p> <p>(b) Analyse the passage using any of the concepts prescribed for your study. (10 marks)</p>	CO5 &6	K5 &6
----	--	-----------	-------
