

**STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086**  
**(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2012– 13 & thereafter)**

**SUBJECT CODE: 11EL/FC/LS13**

**B.A. / B.Sc. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2014**

**FIRST SEMESTER**

**COURSE : FOUNDATION COURSE - ENGLISH**

**PAPER : LANGUAGE AND STUDY SKILLS**

**TIME : 3 HOURS**

**MAX. MARKS: 100**

**I. Expand any ONE of the following ideas into a paragraph of about 150 – 200 words: (10)**

- (a) A poor man's home is his castle
- (b) The pen is mightier than the sword
- (c) Of all the senses that a human being possesses, a sense of humour is the most important

**II. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow: (15)**

The pioneers of the teaching of science imagined that its introduction into education would remove the conventionality, artificiality, and backward-lookingness which were characteristic of classical studies, but they were gravely disappointed. So too in their time had the humanists thought that the study of the classical authors in the original would banish at once the dull pedantry and superstition of mediaeval scholasticism. The professional schoolmaster was a match for both of them, and has almost managed to make the understanding of chemical reactions as dull and as dogmatic an affair as the reading of Virgil's epic *Aeneid*.

The chief claim for the use of science in education is that it teaches a child something about the actual universe in which he is living, in making him acquainted with the results of scientific discovery, and at the same time teaches him how to think logically and inductively by studying scientific method. A certain limited success has been reached in the first of these aims, but practically none at all in the second. Those privileged members of the community who have been through a secondary or public school education may be expected to know something about the elementary physics and chemistry of a hundred years ago, but they probably know hardly more than any bright boy can pick up from an interest in wireless or scientific hobbies out of school hours.

As to the learning of scientific method, the whole thing is palpably a farce. Actually, for the convenience of teachers and the requirements of the examination system, it is necessary that the pupils not only do not learn scientific method but learn precisely the reverse, that is, to believe exactly what they are told and to reproduce it when asked, whether

it seems nonsense to them or not. The way in which educated people respond to such quackeries as spiritualism or astrology, not to say more dangerous ones such as racial theories or currency myths, shows that fifty years of education in the method of science in Britain or Germany has produced no visible effect whatever. The only way of learning the method of science is the long and bitter way of personal experience, and, until the educational or social systems are altered to make this possible, the best we can expect is the production of a minority of people who are able to acquire some of the techniques of science and a still smaller minority who are able to use and develop them.

Adapted from: *The Social Function of Science*, John D Bernal (1939)

1. The author implies that the professional schoolmaster he speaks about in the sentence “The professional schoolmaster was a match for both of them, and has almost managed to make the understanding of chemical reactions as dull and as dogmatic an affair as the reading of Virgil's epic *Aeneid*” (paragraph 1) has (1)
  - a. no interest in teaching science
  - b. thwarted attempts to enliven education
  - c. aided true learning
  - d. been a pioneer in both science and humanities
2. From the given passage, what do you understand by the term ‘humanists?’ (2)
3. What does the writer believe are the ideal goals of a scientific education? How far does he think they have been achieved? (4)
4. Which two of the following do you think would qualify as ‘scientific method’ in the way the term is used in the passage? (2)
  - a. Believing that a black cat crossing one’s path would bring bad luck because such a thing has happened at least twice in your life
  - b. Not believing that the boiling point of water is 100<sup>0</sup>F unless one proves it oneself.
  - c. Sending a chain mail to twelve contacts for fear of ill-luck if one fails to do so
  - d. Keeping an open mind on the existence of extra terrestrial life for lack of conclusive proof.

5. Which of the following words best describes the author's attitude to secondary education? (2)
- a. Ambivalent
  - b. Satiric
  - c. Supportive
  - d. Neutral
6. Which of the following comes closest in meaning to the word 'farce' as it is used in the last paragraph in the sentence "As to the learning of scientific method, the whole thing is palpably a farce." (2)
- a. Something that evokes fear
  - b. A comedy characterised by satire
  - c. Slapstick comedy
  - d. Something that does not deliver what it promises
7. From your experience, do you think that the Indian educational system(s) have inculcated the scientific method in students? (2)

III Given below is a graph depicting the land leased by the government of India to farmers in various Indian states in 1971, 1981 and 1991. The lease was given in a bid to decrease dependence of the farmers on rich landowners and to thereby improve the economic self-sufficiency of the farmers. Answer the questions that follow based on your reading and analysis of the graph. The x-axis depicts the various states at the all-India level whereas the y-axis depicts the land leased in hundred hectares. (10)

.4

1. In each of the three years, name the state (3)
- a. which has leased the maximum land
  - b. which has leased least land
2. How would you describe the change in the amount of land leased at the all-India level between 1971 and 1981? (1)
- a. Steep rise
  - b. Marginal rise
  - c. Steep fall
  - d. Marginal fall
3. In which state have the farmers showed most dependency upon rich landowners in 1971? Give reasons for your answer (2)

4. The farmers of which state do you think are economically most independent in 1991? Give reasons for your answer. (2)
5. To what extent do you think the government's plan to lease out land has achieved its objectives? (2)

**IV. Given detailed instructions for any ONE of the following: (5)**

- a. Searching for a book in the catalogue in Stella Maris College library  
b. Checking your college attendance percentage on the intranet

**V. Describe any FIVE of the following in about one or two sentences each: (5x2=10)**

- a. blurb b. endnote c. bibliography d. footnote e. preface f. index  
g. contents

**VI. Given below is a list of books used for writing a research paper. Compile a bibliography using the information given. Unless otherwise mentioned, you may assume that the material is in the print medium (10)**

A novel by Indra Sinha titled Animal's People, published by the London office of Simon and Schuster in 2007.

A book titled The Postcolonial Exotic by Graham Huggan published in 2004 by Penguin, New York.

A book titled Anatomy of Criticism by Northrop Frye published by the London Office of Routledge in 1965

..5

/5/

11EL/FC/LS13

Representations of the Intellectual, a book by Edward W Said, published in 1994 by Vintage in London. The book is subtitled the Reith Lectures.

A book titled Hymns for the Drowning written by A K Ramanujan, published by Penguin Classics, New Delhi in 1981.

- VII. Write a note to be put up on the Dramatics Club notice board informing the students about a theatre workshop on 12<sup>th</sup> of December to be conducted by noted playwright Girish Karnad. The workshop will be from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm in M 0-1 and a maximum of 25 students will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis. A register will be kept available at the reception for this. A fee of Rs. 50 will be charged.**

(5)

**VIII. Read the following passage and make notes on it: (10)**

A river is a natural flow of running water that follows a well-defined, permanent path, usually within a valley. A stream (also called a brook or a creek) is a natural flow of water that follows a more temporary path that is usually not in a valley. The term stream is often used to mean any natural flow of water, including rivers. Although some rivers are larger than some streams, size is not a distinguishing factor.

The origin of a river or stream is called its source. If its source consists of many smaller streams coming from the same region, they are called headwaters. Its channel is the path along which it flows, and its banks are its boundaries, the sloping land along each edge between which the water flows. The point where a stream or river empties into a lake, a larger river, or an ocean, is its mouth. When one stream or river flows into another, usually larger, stream or river, and adds its flow, it is considered a tributary of the larger river. Many tributaries make up a river system.

Rivers and streams are part of Earth's hydrologic cycle. The hydrologic cycle describes the manner in which molecules of water evaporate, condense and form clouds, and return to Earth as precipitation (rain, sleet, or snow). Rivers pass through several stages of development.

Rivers and streams owe their existence to precipitation, lakes, and groundwater, combined with gravity and a sloping terrain. When rain falls on the land, often the soil cannot absorb it all. Much of rain runs off and travels downhill with the aid of gravity, creating rills (tiny gullies). Many of these rills may meet at some point and their waters run together to

**..6**

**/6/**

**11EL/FC/LS13**

form bigger gullies until all this water reaches a valley or gouges out its own large channel. When enough water is available to maintain a steady ongoing flow, a stream or river results. Gravity and the pressure of the flowing water cause the river to travel until it is either blocked, in which case the water backs up and forms a lake, or empties into an existing lake or ocean.

Most of the precipitation that feeds streams and rivers comes from runoff. Precipitation may also be stored as ice in glaciers in arctic regions or on mountain tops. As the glaciers melt, they nourish streams, and the streams feed rivers. The Rhine River in Germany, for example, obtains much of its water from the Rheinwaldhorn Glacier in the Swiss Alps. A lake can be a source of river water. If the land slopes away from the lake at some point and the water level is high enough for it to overflow, a river or stream may form.

Another source of river water is groundwater. Groundwater is water that has seeped beneath the Earth's surface where it becomes trapped in layers of rock called aquifers. The Ogallala Aquifer, the largest aquifer in North America, under the Great Plains in the United States is an example. When an aquifer is full, its water escapes to the surface, either by seeping directly into a river or stream bed or by forming a spring (an outpouring of water), which may then become a river's source. As much as 30 percent of the world's freshwater comes from groundwater. It is estimated that groundwater supplies about half of the water in the Mississippi River. In contrast, river water may seep into the ground and fill an aquifer, as the Colorado River does as it travels through Arizona, Nevada, and California.

**IX. Summarise the above passage, bringing down the word length to about one third. (10)**

**X.**

**a. Fill in the blanks choosing the appropriate word from those given in the brackets. (1/2x20=10)**

A grassland is a biome in which the dominant plants are grasses 1 (rather than / other than) trees or tall shrubs. Often described as "seas of grass," grasslands cover about one fourth of 2 (Earth's / earth's) surface. They are usually found in the 3 (interiors / internal areas) of every continent except Antarctica. Although grasslands 4 (differ / vary) in climate and the type of plant and animal life they support, most have several things in common. They are covered with grasses, which may be of different 5 (lengths / heights) and varieties. They are usually windy and

..7

/7/

11EL/FC/LS13

6 (dried / dry) for part of the year. They occur primarily on flat land or gently rolling hills, but a few are found 7 (in / on) mountains where the environment is suitable. Grasslands are considered transition zones between deserts, which receive little rain, and forests, which get a lot of rain. Grasslands develop as a result of changes in climate, changes in plant communities, and fires.

Grasslands first appeared millions of years ago after mountains formed and caused climates 8 (to / into) change. In North America, for example, the Rocky Mountains blocked moist air travelling 9 (in / across) the continent from the Pacific Ocean, making the middle part of the continent drier. This caused trees to die and 10 (be / to be) replaced by grasses, which could adapt to the drier climate. The same process happened 11 (to / on) other continents, allowing grasslands to form

\_\_\_12\_\_\_ (over / in) places such as central Asia and South America. Grasslands throughout the world were fairly well established about 5 million years ago, covering more than 40 percent of Earth's surface.

Grasslands also develop \_\_\_13\_\_\_ (through / via) a process called succession, a slow sequence of changes \_\_\_14\_\_\_ (to / in) a plant community. In dry areas, the growth of mosses and lichens may be followed \_\_\_15\_\_\_ (with / by) the growth of leafy, non-woody plants. Gradually, the grasses, which are \_\_\_16\_\_\_ (hardier / more hardy) plants, begin to take over and become the major form of plant life in the area.

In ponds or other areas of still or slow-moving water, submerged plants like pondweed grow beneath the water. Dead stems and leaves \_\_\_17\_\_\_ (of / from) these plants make the water \_\_\_18\_\_\_ (thick / viscous), shallow, and slow moving. This dead matter forms a thick layer of organic material in which plants that must be anchored in soil, such as reeds and grasses, begin to grow. As this process \_\_\_19\_\_\_ (continues / goes on), the pond \_\_\_20\_\_\_ (is filled with / fills with) decaying plants until the water is gone and a grassland has developed.

.8

/8/

11EL/FC/LS13

**b. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences selecting the most appropriate idiom from the ones given in brackets. (5x1=5)**

- i. The little boy in my street is a \_\_\_\_\_ (cat on a hot tin roof / dog in the manger / an ant in the hole); he does not read the comic book he has and neither does he allow his sister to read it.
- ii. The kho-kho team worked very hard and won a number of state-level tournaments. When they won the national championship it was \_\_\_\_\_ (another feather in their cap / a cap on their heads / a crown on their heads).
- iii. The audience here is very well-versed in its subject; to recap the basics would be \_\_\_\_\_ (eating your hat / carrying coal to Newcastle / showing a lamp to the sun).

- iv. I realised that the candidates who seemed most proud of their knowledge were the ones who knew very little; the ones who really knew their stuff were very humble. Truly, \_\_\_\_\_ (half a pot of water splashes water all around / empty vessels make more noise / pride goes before a fall).
- v. I had told my brother to keep our plans for my parents' silver wedding anniversary a secret, but he just couldn't and \_\_\_\_\_ (spilt the beans / cut the bag / caught the cat).

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