

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086
(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2015– 16)
SUBJECT CODE: 15EL/MC/PR14

B.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2015
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
FIRST SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR – CORE
PAPER : PROSE
TIME : 3 HOURS **MAX. MARKS: 100**

SECTION A

I. Answer any THREE of the following in about 200 words each: (3 × 15 = 45)

1. The Gettysburg Address is considered as the “classic utterances of all time.” Discuss.
2. According to Guha, what salutary lessons can urban intellectuals take from the villagers of Mandya?
3. Comment on the manner in which Dickens conveys the tragic news to his wife.
4. Discuss the connection that Rowling establishes between defeat and imagination.
5. Would you consider George Mikes’ observation of the English in his essay “Tea” as funny or rude?

SECTION B

II. Answer any TWO of the following in about 500 words each: (2 × 20 = 40)

1. Compare and contrast the ways in which Temsula Ao and Maya Angelou narrate their lives.
2. What is travel writing? Comment on its characteristic features citing examples from texts prescribed for study.
3. M.K. Gandhi has been the subject of over dozen biographies. Comment on Rajmohan Gandhi’s attempt to understand the phenomenon that Gandhi is.
4. Comment on the importance of humour in the essays of your choice.

SECTION C

III. Analyse the following passage with reference to context, style, tone and content:

(1 × 15 = 15)

Though I have been intent on distinguishing the marrow of the essay from the marrow of fiction, I confess that I have been trying all along, in a subliminal way, to speak of the essay as if it -- or she -- were a character in a novel or a play: moody, fickle, given to changing her clothes, or the subject, on a whim; sometimes obstinate, with a mind of her own, or hazy and light; never predictable. I mean for her to be dressed -- and addressed -- as we would Becky Sharp, or Ophelia, or Elizabeth Bennet, or Mrs. Ramsay, or Mrs. Wilcox, or even Hester Prynne. Put it that it is pointless to say (as I have done repeatedly, disliking it every time) "the essay," or "an essay." The essay -- an essay -- is not an abstraction; she may have recognizable contours, but she is highly colored and individuated; she is not a type. She is too fluid, too elusive, to be a category. She may be bold, she may be diffident, she may rely on beauty or cleverness, on eros or exotica. Whatever her story, she is the protagonist, the secret self's personification. When we knock on her door, she opens to us; she is a presence in the doorway; she leads us from room to room. Then why should we not call her "she"? She may be privately indifferent to us, but she is anything but unwelcoming. Above all, she is not a hidden principle or a thesis or a construct: she is *there*, a living voice. She takes us in.
