

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086
(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2010–11)

SUBJECT CODE: EL/FC/EC13

B.A./ B.Sc./ B.S.W./B.V.A./B.Com. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2010
FIRST SEMESTER

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

MAX. MARKS: 50

I. Read the following passage and answer the questions given below:(10 marks)

It was Aunt Beryl's voice. They turned round. At the back door stood Aunt Beryl, staring as if she couldn't believe what she saw.

"How dare you ask the little Kelveys into the courtyard?" said her cold, furious voice. "You know as well as I do, you're not allowed to talk to them. Run away, children, run away at once. And don't come back again," said Aunt Beryl. And she stepped into the yard and shooed them out as if they were chickens.

"Off you go immediately!" she called, cold and proud.

They did not need telling twice. Burning with shame, shrinking together, Lil huddling along like her mother, our Else dazed, somehow they crossed the big courtyard and squeezed through the white gate.

"Wicked, disobedient little girl!" said Aunt Beryl bitterly to Kezia, and she slammed the doll's house to.

The afternoon had been awful. A letter had come from Willie Brent, a terrifying threatening letter, saying if she did not meet him that evening in Pulman's Bush, he'd come to the front door and ask the reason why! But now that she had frightened those little rats of Kelveys and given Kezia a good scolding, her heart felt lighter. That ghastly pressure was gone. She went back to the house humming.

When the Kelveys were well out of sight of Burnells', they sat down to rest on a big red drain-pipe by the side of the road. Lil's cheeks were still burning; she took off the hat with the quill and held it on her knee. Dreamily they looked over the hay paddocks, past the creek, to the group of wattles where Logan's cows stood waiting to be milked. What were their thoughts?

Presently our Else nudged up close to her sister. But now she had forgotten the cross lady. She put out a finger and stroked her sister's quill; she smiled her rare smile.

"I seen the little lamp," she said, softly.

Then both were silent once more.

- 1) Pick out any word from the passage which describes Aunt Beryl's tone of voice on seeing the Kelveys children in the courtyard. (1 mark)
- 2) Aunt Beryl compares the Kelveys to "chickens" and "little rats". Why do you think she does so? (2 marks)

- 3) How do Lil and our Else react to Aunt Beryl's insulting treatment? (4 marks)
- 4) Make sentences with any 3 of the following words. Make sure you bring out their meaning in the context of the passage given: (3 marks)
dazed, ghastly, huddling, believe, frightened

II. Read the following excerpt and answer the questions given below: (10 marks)

What's the second candle for, I asked
my wife that Friday night. Wait, she said,
till they are lit and the prayer is over.
Then she turned to me with a cunning smile:
The first candle is for God's daily blessings,
Just the usual things, you know,
Life itself, food and drink, love, children,
Friends, relatives, books, flowers,
Freedom from misfortunes,
All the plain prose of daily breath
which, for me, is poetry. She paused,
wanting me to repeat the question.
What's the second candle for? I didn't repeat it, patiently silent . . .

- 1) What does the speaker in the poem ask his wife? (1 mark)
- 2) What does the wife pray for while lighting the first candle? Mention any two. (2 marks)
- 3) Why do you think the husband does not repeat the question? (4 marks)
- 4) Make sentences of your own using any three of the following words. The meaning in the excerpt must be clearly brought out. (3 marks)
blessings, poetry, misfortunes, breath, daily

III. Read the following passage and answer the questions given below:(10 marks)

'Tell me something about the robin.'
This is almost the first time my daughter is appealing to me for help. And I cannot help her. I frown in my turn, perplexed and worried. What shall I say?
'I don't know,' I say at last. 'I know nothing about it. Except that it's a pretty bird. With a red breast . . . ? And it comes in winter . . . ? Children feed it bread crumbs . . . ?'
The words come out haltingly, hesitantly; I feel like I did when I was a child, answering questions I was not very sure of. Her expectant look unnerves me even more. She is looking at me, head held on one side, almost like a bird herself. But not one that will let me ruffle its feathers. Not one that will come and peck from my hands.
As I stop, she bursts out, 'Oh! Is that all! What's the use of that? I'm supposed to do a two-page composition on the robin and you tell me two words. You can't help me, you're no use at all.' I'm conscious that I've failed her, I try to make amends. 'Why don't you write about a peacock? That's a beautiful bird.'

‘Teacher said no ex-o-tic birds.’ She pronounces the new word carefully and with pride.

‘But a peacock isn’t exotic. It belongs here. In some places it’s quite common.’

‘You don’t understand,’ she says scornfully, looking down at me. Already at twelve, she seems taller than me. Already at her age, she knows more than I do. There is no awkwardness in her; she holds herself with a grace and poise I have never achieved. ‘We can’t choose the subject ourselves. You don’t understand. You don’t know anything.’

- 1) Which bird is considered exotic by the daughter? (1 mark)
- 2) Does the daughter appear stubborn in this passage? Why? (2 marks)
- 3) Discuss the relationship between the mother and the daughter. (4 marks)
- 4) Use any 3 of the following words in sentences of your own: (3 marks)
Awkwardness, pride, ruffle, conscious, choose

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

- 1) The relationship between Mini and the Cabuliwallah
- 2) Mother-daughter relationships
- 3) A crowded market place in Chennai

V. Use at least five of the following words and phrases to write a coherent paragraph. You may use the past or present tense. (5 marks)

City buses, badly maintained, crowded, noisy, pedestrians, cross, careless drivers, heat and dust, honking of vehicles, passengers, footboard-travel, friendly conductor/s, patience

VI. Fill in the blanks choosing appropriate words from the list provided at the end of the passage: (1 x 10 = 10 marks)

That evening I decided to take one last _____ across the bridge to enjoy the _____ breeze of a summer’s night _____ the mountains. The moon hadn’t come up, and it was really quite dark, _____ there were lamps at _____ end of the bridge providing sufficient light _____ those who wished to cross over.

I was standing in the _____ of the bridge, in the darkest part, listening _____ the river thundering down the _____, when I saw the sari-draped figure _____ from the lamplight and making towards the railings.

Middle, to, although, stroll, for, cool, emerging, gorge, in, either
