

B. A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, APRIL 2019
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
SIXTH SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR – CORE
PAPER : AMERICAN LITERATURE
TIME : 3 HOURS

MAX. MARKS: 100

SECTION – A

I. Write short essays for any three of the following questions in about 350 words each.
(3 x 15 = 45)

1. How does Frost describe the extremes of fire and ice in his poem?
2. Discuss “next to of course god America” as a satire on nationalism.
3. Bring out the significance of the river in “The Negro Speaks of Rivers.”
4. What is the conflict in *Death of a Salesman*?
5. How does Mark Twain use a child protagonist to critique social norms?
6. Comment on the aptness of the title “Two Kinds.”

SECTION – B

II. Answer any two questions from the following in about 600 words each. (2 x 20 = 40)

7. Discuss the philosophy of Frost as expressed in “Birches.”
8. Hemingway's novel *The Old Man and the Sea* represents the conflict between civilization and the 'natural life'. Elaborate.
9. What does the caged bird symbolise?
10. Arthur Miller's play is primarily a tale of man vs. society. Elucidate.

SECTION – C

III. Analyse any one of the following passages in detail. (1x15=15)

- a) LINDA: Are they any worse than his sons? When he brought them business, when he was young, they were glad to see him. But now his old friends, the old buyers that loved him so and always found some order to hand him in a pinch — they're all dead, retired. He used to be able to make six, seven calls a day in Boston. Now he takes his valises out of the car and puts them back and takes them out again and he's exhausted. Instead of walking he talks now. He drives seven hundred miles, and when he gets there no one knows him any more, no one welcomes him. And what goes through a man's mind, driving seven hundred miles home without having earned a cent? Why shouldn't he talk to himself? Why? When he has to go to Charley and borrow fifty dollars a week and pretend to me that it's

his pay? How long can that go on? How long? You see what I'm sitting here and waiting for? And you tell me he has no character? The man who never worked a day but for your benefit?

When does he get the medal for that? Is this his reward — to turn around at the age of sixty-three and find his sons, who he loved better than his life, one a philandering bum...

HAPPY: Mom!

LINDA: That's all you are, my baby! (To Biff.) And you! What happened to the love you had for him? You were such pals! How you used to talk to him on the phone every night! How lonely he was till he could come home to you!

BIFF: All right, Mom. I'll live here in my room, and I'll get a job. I'll keep away from him, that's all.

LINDA: No, Biff. You can't stay here and fight all the time.

BIFF: He threw me out of this house, remember that.

LINDA: Why did he do that? I never knew why.

BIFF: Because I know he's a fake and he doesn't like anybody around who knows!

LINDA: Why a fake? In what way? What do you mean?

Discuss the theme and dramatic techniques employed.

(OR)

Elizabeth Bishop's "The Fish"

- b) A green line, frayed at the end
 where he broke it, two heavier lines,
 and a fine black thread
 still crimped from the strain and snap
 when it broke and he got away.
 Like medals with their ribbons
 frayed and wavering,
 a five-haired beard of wisdom
 trailing from his aching jaw.
 I stared and stared
 and victory filled up
 the little rented boat,
 from the pool of bilge
 where oil had spread a rainbow
 around the rusted engine
 to the bailer rusted orange,
 the sun-cracked thwarts,
 the oarlocks on their strings,
 the gunnels—until everything
 was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!
 And I let the fish go.

Discuss the theme and poetic techniques employed.
