

BITS, PILANI-DUBAI
Dubai International Academic City, U.A.E.
Year I-Semester I 2009-2010
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS (CLOSED BOOK)

Course No: ENGL C123

Course Title: English Language Skills

Date: 29.12.09

Time: 3 hrs

Maximum Marks: 120

Weightage: 120

Note:

- 1. There are three parts of the question paper: Part A, Part B and Part C. Answer questions of Part A, Part B and Part C in the separate sheets provided for this purpose.**
 - 2. Answer questions in the sequential order.**
 - 3. Answer all questions.**
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PART A

- I. Answer the questions below based on the information in the following passages.**
(13 marks)

The controversy over the authorship of Shakespeare's plays began in the 18th century and continues to this day. Here, the author of passage 1 embraces the proposal that Francis Bacon actually wrote the plays, while the author of passage 2 defends the traditional attribution to Shakespeare himself.

Passage 1

- Anyone with more than a superficial knowledge of Shakespeare's plays must necessarily entertain some doubt concerning their true authorship. Can scholars honestly accept the idea that such masterworks were written by a shadowy actor with limited formal education and a social position that can most charitably be called "humble"? Obviously,
- (5) the author of the plays must have traveled widely, yet there is no record that Shakespeare ever left his native England. Even more obviously, the real author had to have intimate knowledge of life within royal courts and palaces, yet Shakespeare was a commoner, with little firsthand experience of the aristocracy. No, common sense tells us that the plays must have been written by someone with substantial expertise in the law,
- (10) the sciences, classics, foreign languages, and the fine arts- someone, in other words, like Shakespeare's eminent contemporary, Sir Francis Bacon.
- The first person to suggest that Bacon was the actual author of the plays was Reverend James Wilmot. Writing in 1785, Wilmot argued that someone of Shakespeare's educational background could hardly have produced works of such erudition and insight.
- (15) But a figure like Bacon, a scientist and polymath* of legendary stature, would certainly have known about, for instance, the circulation of the blood as alluded to in *Coriolanus*. And as an aristocrat, Bacon would have possessed the familiarity with court life required to produce a *Love's Labour's Lost*.
- Delia Bacon (no relation to Sir Francis) was next to make the case for Francis Bacon's

- (20) authorship. In 1856, in collaboration with Nathaniel Hawthorne, she insisted that it was ridiculous to look for the creator of *Hamlet* among “that dirty, doggish group of players, who come into the scene (of the play *Hamlet*) summoned like a pack of hound to his service.” Ultimately, she concluded that the plays were actually composed by a committee consisting of Bacon, Edmund Spencer, Walter Raleigh, and several others.
- (25) Still, some might wonder why Bacon, if indeed the plays were wholly or partly his work, would not put his own name on them. But consider the political climate of England in Elizabethan times. Given that it would have been politically and personally damaging for a man of Bacon’s position to associate himself with such controversial plays, it is quite understandable that Bacon would hire a lowly actor to take the credit-and the
- (30) consequences.
But perhaps the most convincing evidence of all comes from the postscript of a 1624 letter sent to Bacon by Sir Tobie Mathew. “The most prodigious wit that I ever knew...is your lordship’s name,” Mathew wrote, “though he be known by another.” That name, of course, was William Shakespeare.
- *Polymath- a person of wide and varied learning.

Passage 2

- (35) Over the years, there have been an astonishing number of persons put forth as the “true author” of Shakespeare’s plays. Some critics have even gone so far as to claim that only a “committee” could have possessed the abundance of talent and energy necessary to produce Shakespeare’s thirty-seven plays. Among the individual figures most seriously promoted as “the real Shakespeare” is Sir Francis Bacon. Apparently, the fact that Bacon
- (40) wrote most of his own work in academic Latin does nothing to deter those who would crown him the premier stylist in the English language.

- Although the entire controversy reeks of scholarly games playing, the issue underlying it is worth considering: how could an uneducated actor create such exquisite works? But the answer to that is easy. Shakespeare’s dramatic gifts had little to do with
- (45) encyclopedic knowledge, complex ideas, or a fluency with great systems of thought. Rather, Shakespeare’s genius was one of common sense and perceptive intuition- a genius that grows not out of book-learning, but out of a deep understanding of human nature and a keen grasp of basic emotions, passions, and jealousies.

- One of the most common arguments advanced by skeptics is that the degree of
- (50) familiarity with the law exhibited in a *Hamlet* or a *Merchant of Venice* can only have been achieved by a lawyer or other man of affairs. The grasp of law evidenced in these plays, however, is not a detailed knowledge of formal law, but a more general understanding of so called “country law”. Shakespeare was a landowner-an extraordinary achievement in itself for an ill-paid Elizabethan actor-and so would have been
- (55) knowledgeable about legal matters related to the buying, selling and renting of real estate. Evidence of such a common understanding of land regulations can be found, for instance in the gravedigging scene of *Hamlet*.
- So no elaborate theories of intrigue and secret identity are necessary to explain the accomplishment of William Shakespeare. Scholars who have made a career of ferreting

(60) out “alternative bards” may be reluctant to admit it, but literary genius can flower in any socioeconomic bracket. Shakespeare, in short, was Shakespeare—an observation that one would have thought was obvious to everyone.

1. In line 2, *entertain* most nearly means
 - A. amuse
 - B. harbor
 - C. occupy
 - D. cherish
2. In passage 1, the author draws attention to Shakespeare’s social standing as a “commoner” (line 8) in order to cast doubt about the Elizabethan actor’s
 - A. Aptitude for writing poetically
 - B. Knowledge of foreign places and habits
 - C. Ability to support himself by playwriting
 - D. Familiarity with life among persons of high rank
3. *Coriolanus* and *Love’s Labour’s Lost* are mentioned in lines 17-18 as examples of works that
 - A. Only Francis Bacon could have written
 - B. Exhibit a deep understanding of human nature
 - C. Reveal expertise more likely held by Bacon than Shakespeare
 - D. Resemble works written by Francis Bacon under his own name
4. In passage 1, the quotation from Delia Bacon (lines 21-23) conveys a sense of
 - A. Disdain for disreputable vulgarity of Elizabethan actors
 - B. Resentment at the way Shakespeare’s characters were portrayed
 - C. Regret that conditions for Elizabethan actors were not better
 - D. Doubt that Shakespeare could actually have created such unsavory characters
5. The author of passage 1 maintains that Bacon did not put his own name on the plays attributed to Shakespeare because he
 - A. Regarded writing as an unsuitable occupation for an aristocrat
 - B. Wished to protect himself from the effects of controversy
 - C. Preferred being known as a scientist and politician rather than a writer
 - D. Did not want to associate himself with lowly actors.
6. In the first paragraph of passage 2, the author calls into question Bacon’s likely ability to
 - A. Write in a language with which he was unfamiliar
 - B. Make the transition between scientific writing and playwriting
 - C. Produce the poetic language evident in the plays
 - D. Cooperate with other members of a committee
7. The word *premier* in line 41, most nearly means
 - A. Earliest
 - B. Influential
 - C. Inaugural
 - D. Greatest
8. In line 45, the word *encyclopedic* most nearly means
 - A. Technical
 - B. Comprehensive

- C. Abridged
 - D. Disciplined
9. The author of passage 2 cites Shakespeare's status as a landowner in order to
- A. Account for Shakespeare's apparent knowledge of the law
 - B. Prove that Shakespeare was a success as a playwright
 - C. Refute the claim that Shakespeare had little knowledge of aristocratic life
 - D. Prove that Shakespeare didn't depend solely on acting for his living
10. In lines 59-61, the author maintains that literary genius
- A. Is not dependent on a writer's external circumstances
 - B. Must be based on an inborn comprehension of human nature
 - C. Is enhanced by the suffering that poverty brings
 - D. Frequently goes unrecognized among those of modest means and position
11. The author of passage 2 would probably responded to the speculation in the fourth paragraph of passage 1 by pointing out that
- A. Shakespeare's plays would not have seemed particularly controversial to Elizabethan audiences
 - B. The extent and range of Bacon's learning has been generally exaggerated
 - C. Such scenarios are farfetched and unnecessary if one correctly understands Shakespeare's genius
 - D. Bacon would not have had the knowledge of the lower classes required to produce the plays.
12. The author of passage 1 would probably respond to the skepticism expressed in lines 39-41 by making which of the following statements?
- A. The similarities between English and Latin make it plausible that one person could write well in both languages.
 - B. Plays written in Latin would not have been likely to attract a wide audience in Elizabethan England.
 - C. The premier stylist in English language is more likely to have been an eminent scholar than an uneducated actor
 - D. Writing the plays in Latin would have shielded Bacon from much of the political damage he wanted to avoid.
13. In line 61, "observation" most nearly means
- A. Inspection
 - B. Measurement
 - C. Research
 - D. Comment

II Use the following pair of words in separate sentences, clearly bringing out the meaning of each word.

(12 marks)

- 1. eminent and imminent
- 2. momentary and momentous
- 3. officious and official

III. Rectify the grammatical error in the following sentences so as to make them grammatically more effective.

(15 marks)

1. Gestures, which are a means of communication, are important for everyone, they are essential for the hearing-impaired.
2. Why should we spend money on expensive space explorations we have enough underfunded programs here on earth.
3. The patient should try to if possible avoid going up and down the stairs.
4. Though only sixteen, UCLA accepted Martha's application.
5. It is easier to speak in abstractions than grounding one's thoughts in reality.
6. The geologists were interested in visiting the Seychelles. The only midocean islands in the world that are formed of granite.
7. There was no way I could fight the current and win. Just as I was losing hope, a stranger jumps off a passing boat and swims towards me.

PART B

- I.** As the Sales Manager of a software firm, write a sales letter to promote the sales of a newly made software for educational institutes to facilitate smooth administration in their organization.
Its special features include lesser paper work and reduction of man-power.
(20 marks)

- II. Match the following words with appropriate meanings:**
(12 marks)

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Pugnacious | belief in one God |
| 2. Mortify | related to mysterious powers |
| 3. Contingent | song of praise |
| 4. Malapropism | free |
| 5. Destitute | underprivileged |
| 6. Occult | good judgment |
| 7. Complimentary | delusions of grandeur |
| 8. Paean | wishing to fight |
| 9. Megalomania | embarrassed |
| 10. Dilatory | a group of military force |
| 11. Judicious | misusing words ridiculously |

12. Monotheism

procrastinate

**III. Which of the following words are simple, compound or complex?
(8 marks)**

1. whatsoever
2. marginalization
3. obvious
4. housemaid
5. shoemaker
6. characteristics
7. profession
8. indulge

PART C

I. Use the following pairs of *phrasal verbs* in your own sentences that bring out their meanings clearly. Both the phrasal verbs of each pair should be incorporated in *one sentence*. You may change the order of the phrasal verbs of a pair in the sentence.

(16 marks)

1. call for and call forth
2. set down and bring out
3. make for and make off
4. go through and live through
5. do out and do with
6. look over and look to
7. put back and put out
8. take to and turn away

II. Phonetically transcribe the following words using IPA.

(9 marks)

1. multiple
2. rectangle
3. airman
4. conquer
5. extinguish
6. assumption
7. laboratory
8. coarse
9. turned

III. Arrange the following sentences in the right order so as to form a coherent paragraph and also identify the topic sentence. You are not required to rewrite the sentences; just write the sentence numbers in the correct order.

(15 marks)

1. However, it is the first impression that really counts because it cannot be made twice.
2. The low-volume syndrome attacks due to the nervous anxiety you may feel at the beginning of your speech.
3. Moreover, the rapport that the speaker seeks to establish with the audience is possible if the speaker starts the speech confidently and pleasantly in a volume that is audible even to the man farthest from the podium.
4. Sometimes, it is not owing to the speaker's diffidence that his volume dips.
5. A speaker whose pleasantries like *Good Morning, Ladies and Gentlemen, Hello Friends, Good Evening Everybody* are not audible will be viewed as lacking comfort and his vulnerability would be evident to everyone in the audience.
6. We agree it is not always, however, possible to check the devices before your turn comes to speak.
7. Remember that though you may not be responsible for a mechanical fault or failure in the mike, you still hold the responsibility of letting the audience hear what you have to say.
8. Otherwise, an almost inaudible and diffident speaker will cut a sorry figure even with the most considerate crowd around him.
9. Even a mike can play a spoilsport despite the fact that you as a speaker might be feeling quite excited to even bludgeon your audience with a splendid display of your speech-making skills.
10. They are rational enough to blame the mike system only when they are convinced that the speaker otherwise had enough spirit and passion in him to ignite their imagination.
11. It is quite possible to confront such snags.
12. In case it is not up to the mark, just try maintaining a volume that reaches the audience.
13. That is why, if possible, it is always advisable to check these mechanical gadgets so that they don't conspire to let your wings of creativity down at the eleventh hour!
14. For example, just as you utter your first words, you realize that the microphone makes a screeching sound or is not simply functioning.
15. In that case, it is suggested that before you begin your speech, check the mike.

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Year I-Semester I 2009-2010
TEST II (OPEN BOOK)

Course No: ENGL C123

Course Title: English Language Skills I

Date: 17.12.09

Time: 50 minutes

Maximum Marks: 60

Weightage: 60

Note: Answer all questions.

- I. As the Purchase Manager of a company, you had ordered 5 dozen chinaware potteries examining the samples available at Zumo Potteries Ltd. When the consignment arrived you realized neither in size nor in color do the potteries conform to the samples you had approved. Write a claim letter demanding suitable compensation. Invent the necessary details.**

(30 marks)

- II. Write a paragraph in about 200 words beginning with the following sentence. Indicate the number of words written at the end of the paragraph.**

In recent times sites like 'face book' have become an important means of social, cultural and artistic expression for youngsters.

(30 marks)

TEST I (CLOSED BOOK)

Weightage:75

Marks will be deducted if the sequence is not maintained.

1. multimillionaire
2. telemarketing
3. impressionable
4. demographic
5. enamel
6. interpret
7. reprehensible
8. hypersensitive
9. diameter
10. overflow

IV. Rewrite the following sentences so as to make them grammatically correct and more effective. (14 marks)

1. At Lincoln High school, vandalism can result in suspension or even being expelled from school.
2. The show begins at 7:30 make sure you are there before 7:15.
3. The man of knowledge must not only be able to love his enemies but also hate his friends.
4. The panther lay quite motionless behind the rock waiting silently for its prey.
5. The timber wolf looks much like a German Shepherd, however, the wolf has longer legs, larger feet and wider tail.
6. Upon entering the doctor's office, a skeleton caught my attention.
7. Either Bruce or Tom should receive first prize for their poem.

V. Match the following. (11 marks)

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. bellicose | A) archaic |
| 2. urge | B) contravene |
| 3. indigent | C) exasperate |
| 4. humiliated | D) dilatory |
| 5. obsolescent | E) pugnacious |
| 6. procrastination | F) careful |
| 7. egregious | G) wily |
| 8. flout | H) exhort |
| 9. incense | I) destitute |
| 10. circumspect | J) flagrant |
| 11. insidious | K) mortified |