

B.A. (Honours) Examination 2016
(Semester – I)
English
Course: H-1 (Core)
(Reading & Writing Practices I) (Regular)
(Reading Practices) (Back)

(For Regular and Back Candidates)

Time: Three Hours

Full Marks: 40

Questions are of value or as indicated in the margin

1. a) Read the poem given below and attempt the questions that follow.

I could never have dreamt that there were such goings-on
in the world between the covers of books,
such sandstorms and ice blasts of words...
such staggering peace, such enormous laughter,
such and so many blinding bright lights...
splashing all over the pages
in a million bits and pieces
all of which were words, words, words,
and each of which were alive forever
in its own delight and glory and oddity and light.

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|---|---|
| i) What is the identity of the speaker? Why do you think so? | 6 |
| ii) What does the speaker mean by 'sandstorms and ice blasts of words'? | 5 |
| iii) What does the passage tell you about the art of poetry? | 4 |
| iv) Why does the speaker describe each of the words as 'alive forever in its own delight and glory and oddity and light'? | 5 |

OR

- b) Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow.

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down what seemed to be a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her, and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything: then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and bookshelves: here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed; it was labeled "ORANGE MARMALADE," but to her great disappointment it was empty: she did not like to drop the jar for fear of killing somebody underneath, so managed to put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past it.

"Well!" thought Alice to herself, "after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs! How brave they'll all think me to home! Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!" (Which was very likely true.)

Down, down, down. Would the fall *never* come to an end? "I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?" she said aloud. "I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think—" (for, you see,

P.T.O.

Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the schoolroom, and though this was not a *very* good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over) “—yes, that’s about the right distance—but then I wonder what Latitude or Longitude I’ve got to?” (Alice had not the slightest idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but she thought they were nice grand words to say.)

Presently she began again. “I wonder if I shall fall right *through* the earth! How funny it’ll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downwards! The Antipathies, I think—” (she was rather glad there *was* no one listening, this time, as it didn’t sound at all the right word) “—but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please Ma’am, is this New Zealand or Australia?” (and she tried to curtsy as she spoke—fancy *curtseying* as you’re falling through the air! Do you think you could manage it?) “And what an ignorant little girl she’ll think me for asking! No, it’ll never do to ask: perhaps I shall see it written up somewhere.”

- a) How does the author use ‘fantasy’ in this passage? 7
- b) Comment on the tone of ‘wonder and surprise’ in Alice as she travels down the rabbit hole? 7
- c) Do you think that the passage is an example of children’s literature? Justify your response. 6
2. a) Literature does not ‘reflect’ society in a straightforward manner. How far would you agree? Discuss critically. 10
- Or**
- b) The author is not the only creator of meaning of a text. How far do you agree? 10
- Or**
- c) How do you think a work of art is related to the contexts of its production and reception? 10
3. Critically comment on **any one** of the following: 10
- a) The Short Story
- b) The Novel as a middle class genre
- c) The Lyric
- d) Classical Tragedy
- e) The Epic.
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