



BRAINWARE UNIVERSITY

Term End Examination 2023-2024

Programme – M.A.(ENG)-2021/M.A.(ENG)-2022/M.A.(ENG)-2023

Course Name – Literature of 20th Century II

Course Code - MELS204

(Semester II)

Full Marks : 60

Time : 2:30 Hours

[The figure in the margin indicates full marks. Candidates are required to give their answers in their own words as far as practicable.]

Group-A

(Multiple Choice Type Question)

1 x 15=15

1. Choose the correct alternative from the following :

(i) The playwrights of the absurd theatre consider all human actions to be _____.
Select the correct alternative.

- a) Futile
c) Meaningful
- b) Purposeful
d) Rational

(ii) Recall the possible factors/influences that had been significant in the development of the absurd theatre.

- a) Jarry's Ubu Roi
c) Picasso's Les Demoiselles d'Avignon
- b) Apollinaire's The Breasts of Tiresias
d) All of the above

(iii) In The Birthday Party the broken drum that symbolises mental instability represents _____. Examine the situation and infer the correct option.

- a) Goldberg
c) Stanley
- b) Lulu
d) Meg

(iv) I: Pinter is mostly pre-occupied with the relationship between the society and the individual, particularly the conventional pressures of the former that threaten the freedom and dignity of the latter. II: Goldberg and McCann symbolise the oppressive forces of conformism that have a dehumanising effect on the individual. Analyze the statements and deduce the correct combination.

- a) I is right but II is wrong
c) Both I and II are right
- b) II is right but I is wrong
d) Both I and II are wrong

(v) Infer where Stanley is taken to at the end of The Birthday Party.

- a) To his mother
c) To Monty for treatment
- b) To an asylum
d) To his grave

- (vi) Assess which of the following can be regarded as features of modern poetry: I: Alienation; II: Fragmented images; III: Flowery language; IV: Pessimistic and symbolic;
- a) I, II and IV
b) II, III and IV
c) I, II and III
d) II and III
- (vii) Select which of the following are not features of Samuel Beckett's literary and theatrical works.
- a) Bleak impersonal tragi-comic experiences of life
b) Black comedy and nonsense
c) Minimal stage setups
d) Aesthetic and linguistic traditionalism
- (viii) Indicate which of the following is not a significance of the opening lines of Endgame where Clov claims that something has finished.
- a) The play starts with an ending and its continued deferral since Clov claims it was finished and then rectifies his statement with a timid assurance of it being nearly finished
b) This craving for an end and a fear of it marks the lives of the characters in the play who struggle against their unending fixity at the same time are unable to let go of it completely
c) It talks about the end of the relationship between Hamm and Clov as Hamm decides to replace Clov with another little boy
d) It talks about how the lives of the characters in the play had been reduced to a meaningless, endless wait for their torturous existence to end.
- (ix) Identify in 'Endgame' it seems apparent that the characters endlessly go through the same conversations and scenarios again and again, what is the significance of this proposition on the narrative of the play.
- a) It proves the benevolence of the creator who gives humans ample chances to fix their mistakes
b) It proves that Hamm and Clov are mirroring each other and having fun with the meaninglessness of their lives
c) It shows the desolation face by the characters where their life had turned into a meaningless performance, an endless spiral of pain that centres in on itself and yet goes nowhere and a suffering haunted by loss of meaning
d) It shows that the characters are remembering the happy days one last time before they kill themselves by enacting all the pivotal moments in their relationships
- (x) Indicate which of the following is a coping mechanism of Nell and Nagg in the face of their son's cruelty in 'Endgame'.
- a) The cry and whine for food
b) They plead Hamm to forgive them and let them go
c) They try to seek refuge in their shared memories of a happy past but this is ephemeral and their vision is shattered by Hamm's cruel words reminding them that what has been lost cannot be recovered
d) They kiss and make love and huddle for warmth together reminding us of the perseverance of love in the face of all difficulties
- (xi) Establish, Hamm's insistence to be placed at the exact centre of the room each time Clov moves the wheelchair is symptomatic of which of the following.
- a) His helpless dependence on Clov for simple daily tasks as his own body betrays him
b) This belief and search for a lost centre, an origin of life-giving meaning is a futile search in a world where the centre has long been lost along with the promise for redemption
c) He believes that trapped as in this nowhere land between the sea and the mountains he would stay in the centre and ensure his own
d) He believes that he can keep an eye on everything from the centre of the room and prevent Clov and his parents from escaping

survival should the world one day come to an end

- (xii) Choose why according to Baudelaire the artist rarely moves in intellectual circles.
- a) Art is not intellectual
b) The artist does not have the ability to be intellectual
c) The artist prioritises experience of the world over plain intellectualising
d) The artist does not believe in having discussions with others
- (xiii) Deduce the reason why the opening lines of 'Une Chargone' appear so jarring.
- a) It begins with the speaker assaulting his partner
b) It starts off in the tone of a conventional love poem and then devolves into the macabre as the poet introduces his beloved to a dead body on the road
c) The speaker directly refers to the reader
d) The lines are fragmented and disjointed and create a sense of doom
- (xiv) Evaluate the reason why the speaker in 'Au Lecteur' compares humans to beggars nourishing their vermin.
- a) Humans love all kinds of animals
b) Humans are hopeless and they are dirty
c) Humans rear sins within themselves just as indulgently as beggars feed the vermin that torment them
d) Humans have no consideration for the animal world
- (xv) Select which of the following is a reflection of the speaker's truest desire for sailing to Byzantium.
- a) The speaker wanted to meet the friends he had left behind
b) The speaker wanted to transcend the limits of his degrading body and become one with the eternal beauty of the artifice
c) The speaker wanted to enjoy the music of Byzantium
d) The speaker wanted to loot the gold mosaics of Byzantium

Group-B

(Short Answer Type Questions)

3 x 5=15

2. Infer the thematic significance of the closing episode of *The Birthday Party*. (3)
3. Explain the historical context of the composition of T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*. (3)
4. Analyse the way in which Baudelaire's 'Au Lecteur' presents the modern city as a pandemonium fit for Satan's legions. (3)
5. Construct a short note on the importance of the story of the tailor that Nagg recounts in Beckett's 'Endgame'. (3)
6. Critique the relevance of the *Spiritus Mundi* in Yeats' 'The Second Coming'. (3)
- OR**
- Assess the grail quest in *The Wasteland*. (3)

Group-C

(Long Answer Type Questions)

5 x 6=30

7. Explain the significance of decadence and excess within the poems of Baudelaire. (5)
8. Write about the way in which the motif of quest is set up in Yeats' 'Sailing to Byzantium'. (5)

9. Assess the central thematic concerns of Eliot in *The Wasteland*. (5)

10. Illustrate how Yeats 'The Second Coming' plays with the idea of perpetual deferment of meaning and the concept of waiting beyond hope. (5)

11. Dissect the significance of the story of the madman that Hamm recounts in 'Endgame'. (5)

12. Compose a critical account of the use of symbolism in Yeats' 'The Second Coming'. (5)

OR

What do you infer from the role played by Goldberg and McCann in *The Birthday Party*. (5)
