

Kanoria PG Mahila Mahavidyalaya
Department of English
BA Hons Part III
Question Bank

Paper XI: World Literatures in English

Short Questions:

1. What is the central theme of Kalidasa's *Meghdoot*?
2. Who are *yakshas*?
3. Briefly discuss *Meghdoot* as a messenger poem or *sandesa kavya*?
4. Name the two parts into which Kalidasa's *Meghdoot* is divided?
5. *Meghdoot* is a lyric poem. Explain.
6. Why is the Yaksha expelled?
7. What is the route the cloud takes in Kalidasa's *Meghdoot*?
8. What is the message that the cloud delivers?
9. Who is 'kami-kul-guru'?
10. Briefly discuss the importance of Kalidasa's *Meghdoot* in Indian literature.
11. How does Oedipus save Thebes before becoming its king?
12. What is the relationship between Creon and Oedipus?
13. The Sphinx poses a riddle to Oedipus. What is it?
14. Define 'chorus' and its importance in a Greek play.
15. Who are the three gods to which Chorus prays in *Oedipus Rex*?
16. What message does the Oracle give to Creon?
17. What is the primary tragedy of *Oedipus Rex*?
18. How do you justify the fall of Oedipus in *Oedipus Rex*?
19. Why does Oedipus blind himself?

20. What is the moral of *Oedipus Rex*?
21. In Act I of *Ghosts*, how is Regina representative of mobility between the classes?
22. What role does Engstrand fill in the plot in Act I of *Ghosts*?
23. How does Pastor Manders's treatment of Regina change over the course of the play?
24. What is the significance of the story of Oswald Alving smoking his father's pipe?
25. Why does Mrs. Helen Alving chastise Pastor Manders for the way he has spoken to her?
26. In what ways does the revelation of Regina Engstrand's parentage affect the plot?
27. How does Engstrand's marriage to Joanna contribute to the characterisation of Pastor Manders in Ibsen's *Ghosts*?
28. Mrs. Helen Alving observes that law and order are "the root of all our miseries on Earth." Comment.
29. Why is Oswald Alving devastated when he exclaims, "It's my mind that's broken down!"?
30. What is the significance of Oswald Alving's last words "the sun" in Ibsen's *Ghosts*?
31. In *Madame Bovary* what role does illness play?
32. How does Flaubert indicate that Emma has not changed by the end of the novel *Madame Bovary*?
33. What role does Charles' mother play in the novel *Madame Bovary*?
34. What does the color blue come to represent in *Madame Bovary*?
35. What role does language and communication play in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*?

36. In what ways does Flaubert imply that fiction can be dangerous in *Madame Bovary*?
37. How do the locations of Tostes, Yonville, and Rouen play a significant role in *Madame Bovary*?
38. Who or what does Flaubert insinuate is responsible for Emma's unhappiness in *Madame Bovary*?
39. In *Madame Bovary*, the narrator says that "her existence was little more than a tissue of lies". What does he mean by that?
40. What are the fundamental differences between Charles and Emma Bovary?
41. At the funeral, what is the real reason Preskovya wants to speak to Peter privately in the story *Death of Ivan Ilych*?
42. What is the event which makes married life for Ivan unpleasant?
43. What makes Ivan take a leave of absence from work and move?
44. How does Ivan learn the extent of his physical degeneration?
45. Who is Gerasim in Tolstoy's *Death of Ivan Ilych*?
46. Where do Preskovya, Lisa, and Lisa's fiance decide to go and why?
47. What is the significance of Ivan's dream in the story *Death of Ivan Ilych*?
48. What realisation occurs when Ivan catches sight of light in the story *Death of Ivan Ilych*?
49. Comment on the significance of the title of the story *Death of Ivan Ilych*.
50. Briefly discuss the underlying message of Leo Tolstoy's story *Death of Ivan Ilych*.
51. What is the basic premise of Rama Mehta's *Inside The Haveli*?
52. What is the practice Mehta comments upon through the story *Inside The Haveli*?
53. What are the shocks that Geeta receives when she relocates?

54. Briefly comment upon the relationship that Geeta shares with her parents-in-law.
55. Who comes across as the biggest support for Geeta and her reforms?
56. Does Geeta find success in bringing reforms to the culture system of the haveli?
57. Comment on the concept of identity as discussed in Rama Mehta's *Inside the Haveli*.
58. How does culture become a powerful trope in Mehta's *Inside the Haveli*?
59. How is the Haveli significant in Rama Mehta's story *Inside The Haveli*?
60. What are the subtle ways in which Mehta challenges patriarchy prevalent in Indian society?
61. What is the prophecy made on the birth of Mr. Biswas?
62. What are the consequences of the love letter which Mr. Biswas writes to Shama?
63. What role does writing play in determining Mr. Biswas's fate?
64. Why do the characters in *A House for Mr. Biswas* switch between Hindi and broken English?
65. Why do the Tulsis find Mr. Biswas unbearable in Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*?
66. Why does Mr. Biswas feel trapped by his wife and family?
67. In what ways is Mr. Biswas a rebel in *A House for Mr. Biswas*?
68. What are the two professions that Mr. Biswas practices and how do they contribute to his growth as a character?
69. Which country is the novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* set in and how does this geographical location become significant for the plot?
70. Does Mr. Biswas manage to get the eponymous house? Discuss briefly.

71. What is the significance of Emma's desire to have a boy rather than a girl in *Madame Bovary*?
72. Is Geeta a representative of the quintessential modern woman in Rama Mehta's *Inside The Haveli*? Discuss briefly.
73. What is the significance of Engstrand's aside to Regina about Pastor Manders in Ibsen's *Ghosts*?
74. What was happening in Thebes which forced the people to reach out to Oedipus in *Oedipus Rex*?
75. What is 'authentic life' according to Tolstoy's *Death of Ivan Ilych*?

Long Questions:

1. Discuss in detail the portrayal of nature in Kalidasa's *Meghdoot*?
2. *Meghdoot* is an exploration of Indian landscape and geography. Elucidate.
3. Explore the elements of romance in Kalidasa's *Meghdoot*.
4. *Meghdoot* is a poetic rendition of the mind of *Yaksha* through metaphors such as myth, legends and tales. Discuss.
5. Explore the themes of fate and free will in Sophocles' *Oedipus, The King*?
6. Analyze *Oedipus, The King* as an Aristotelian tragedy.
7. Discuss the role of prophecies in the narrative of Sophocles' *Oedipus, The King*?
8. Discuss *Ghosts* as a scathing commentary on the nineteenth century morality?
9. Critically analyze *Ghosts* as a 'modern tragedy'.
10. Discuss the elements of realist theatre in Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts*?
11. Contextualize Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* as a nineteenth century European realist novel.

12. Explore the themes of adultery and female autonomy in *Madame Bovary*.
13. Discuss the theme of love and romance in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. How do Emma's unrealized dreams of passionate romance contribute to her unhappiness?
14. How does Tolstoy address the complications of mortality in *The Death of Ivan Ilych*?
15. Analyze the aspects of psychological realism in *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.
16. Rama Mehta's novel *Inside the Haveli* portrays the conflict between tradition and modernity. Discuss.
17. Explore the dialectics of the inside and the outside in Rama Mehta's *Inside the Haveli*.
18. Describe in detail, V.S. Naipaul's portrayal of the Hindu-Indo Trinidadian Community in his novel *A House for Mr. Biswas*.
19. Discuss the themes of identity and alienation in V.S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*.
20. Examine the extensive use of dramatic irony by V.S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*.
21. Trace the contrast of fantasy and reality as shown in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* through the perspectives of Emma and Charles.
22. What is the significance of Western Literature in Trinidadian society? Answer on the basis of your reading of *A House for Mr. Biswas*.
23. In what ways does Ibsen portray his female characters in *Ghosts*?
24. Explain the significance of 'ghosts' in Ibsen's *Ghosts*.
25. Is *Oedipus Rex* a private or a public play? Discuss in detail.