

G.C.E. ADVANCED LEVEL 2020

ENGLISH (73) – PAPER II [Old & New Syllabuses]

Question 1 (Essay)

30 marks

1. Write a composition on **ONE** of the following topics, paying attention to relevant facts and supporting evidence, structure, organization, coherent argument, accurate language and expression.
  - 1) “The digital era has made libraries unnecessary.”
  - 2) “The cultural centre of every town should be its theatre.” Do you agree?
  - 3) “A global pandemic can transform human values.”
  - 4) Write a story that incorporates the idea “I am most alone when I am in the company of friends”.
  - 5) Write a review of a film that addresses ethnic or religious divisions in Sri Lanka.
  - 6) Write a report on deforestation in Sri Lanka.

For topics (1), (2) and (3) – Factual Essay

Content (10)	(8-10)	(6-7)	(4-5)	(2-3)	(0-1)
	Shows thorough knowledge of topic; relevant facts with supportive examples given where needed; has a clear argument and thesis statement.	Good knowledge of topic; facts relevant to topic given with examples; has a fairly clear argument & thesis statement.	Shows fair knowledge of topic and facts relevant to topic; few examples, weak argument, may not have a thesis statement.	Limited knowledge of topic and facts relevant to topic; no examples; lacks a clear argument /thesis statement.	Poor or no knowledge of topic, states one or two random facts only; nothing written.
Organisation (5)	(4 -5)	(3 -3.5)	(2-2.5)	(1-1.5)	(0-0.5)
	Has a clear introduction, body and conclusion/s; main ideas are supported with examples and are developed rationally to support argument; uses	Has a clear introduction, body and conclusion/s but flow is somewhat choppy; not all main ideas are supported with examples; appropriate	Loose organization, lacks logical sequencing of ideas; introduction, body and concluding sections may not be clear; insufficient use	[1.0] A few ideas, haphazard and not linked; incorrect use of discourse markers; one or two paragraphs only:	Lacks coherence; no discourse markers or cohesive devices used.

	appropriate cohesive devices to ensure smooth flow.	discourse markers and linking devices are used between paragraphs.	of discourse markers between & within paragraphs.	[1.5] A few ideas, loosely organized; essay may be lengthy but inadequate paragraph structuring and insufficient use of discourse markers.	
<b>Grammar &amp; Spelling (10)</b>	(8-10)	(6-7)	(4-5)	(2-3)	(0-1)
	Uses complex sentences and subject-verb agreement accurately; no spelling or punctuation errors.	Not many grammatical errors but uses simple sentence constructions; a few errors in spelling and punctuation.	Obvious errors in grammar and spelling; lacks control over even simple sentence structures and tenses.	Many grammar; spelling and punctuation errors which often impede comprehension.	Nothing written, or has grammatical errors in every sentence
<b>Style &amp; diction (5)</b>	(4-5)	(3-3.5)	(2-2.5)	(1-1.5)	(0-0.5)
	Sophisticated range of vocabulary; effective choice of words and idioms, uses appropriate register; shows obvious flair.	Good range of vocabulary, uses appropriate tone and register	Average range of vocabulary; may not use the correct register throughout; little or no idiomatic use.	[1] Very limited vocabulary with obvious examples of incorrect usage.  [1.5] Vocabulary is inadequate to the task; incorrect usage of style and diction present but basic coherence is achieved	Nothing written; or language and expression are incomprehensible.
<b>Maximum</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>

Pass Mark: 12/30

### For topic (4) – Creative Composition

Content (10)	(8-10)	(6-7)	(4-5)	(2-3)	(0-1)
	A composition that uses the given idea in an effective, appropriate and significant manner	A composition that uses the given idea in an appropriate and significant manner to some extent, but does not capture or exploit its full potential.	A composition that uses the given idea tangentially, and shows only limited ability to write imaginatively.	A composition that is not related to the given idea in any perceivable way.	Nothing written; or irrelevant content only.
Organisation (5)	(4 -5)	(3 -3.5)	(2-2.5)	(1-1.5)	(0-0.5)
	Composition has a clear flow and coherence, with appropriate cohesive devices to ensure a smooth transition among elements of the plot.	Flow is somewhat choppy; some ideas are not adequately linked by use of appropriate discourse markers	Lacks logical or creative sequencing of ideas; insufficient use of discourse markers between and within paragraphs	A few ideas, haphazard and not linked; one or two paragraphs only, insufficient to show clear flow/sequencing	Nothing written, or lacks coherence
Grammar & Spelling (10)	(8-10)	(6-7)	(4-5)	(2-3)	(0-1)
	Uses complex sentences with accurate subject-verb agreement; virtually no spelling or punctuation errors.	Not many grammatical errors but uses simple sentence constructions; a few errors in spelling and punctuation.	Obvious errors in grammar and spelling; lacks control over even simple sentence structures and tenses.	Many grammar, spelling and punctuation errors which often impede comprehension	Nothing written, or unintelligible due to grammatical errors in every sentence
Style & diction (5)	(4-5)	(3-3.5)	(2-2.5)	(1-1.5)	(0-0.5)
	Sophisticated range of vocabulary and idiomatic usage, showing ability to use language to express emotion; uses appropriate tone and register and shows obvious flair in writing.	Good range of vocabulary, uses appropriate tone and register, but maybe slightly hyperbolic or exaggerated; idiomatic usage is slight, or inconsistent.	Average range of vocabulary; may not use the correct register; little or no idiomatic use; struggles to strike the correct note appropriate to the content.	[1.0] Very limited vocabulary with obvious incorrect usages. No ability to create suspense or emotion through language use.  [1.5] Vocabulary is inadequate to	Nothing written; or insufficient content to evaluate.

				the task; incorrect usage of style and diction present but basic coherence is achieved	
<b>Maximum</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>

**Pass Mark: 12/30**

Note for Topic No. 4:

If the candidate has not addressed the given idea/theme – i.e., if she/he has written an imaginative composition on an entirely different topic, marks cannot be allocated for content, style or diction. For such a candidate, marks can only be given **out of 10** for **Grammar and Spelling**.

**For Topic No. 5 (Review of a Film)**

<b>Identification (02)</b>	2	1.5	1	0	0
	The title of film, that it is produced/based on Sri Lanka and the nature of the ethnic or religious divide it addresses are clearly given.	The title of film, that it is produced/based on Sri Lanka and the nature of the ethnic or religious divide it addresses are given; the ethnic or religious issues that it addresses may not be clearly defined or expressed	Only the title of the film is given; other information is not provided	No identification of the film is made	
<b>Content (10)</b>	8-10	6-7	4-5	2-3	0-1
	A critical review and analysis of the film with a coherent, nuanced development of ideas dealing with the theme/s and character/s;	Theme(s) and character(s) of the film are discussed with some critical insights/analysis and some attention paid to the religious or ethnic issue discussed; aspects	One or two themes discussed, but not much attention paid to character development or plot; some other aspects of film	Very sketchy treatment of the film with one or two points of plot narration; very generic description of character; no reference to the	Nothing written; or a review of a film that does not conform to the given specifications

	factors in aspects such as musical score, plot, acting style and quality, costuming; main focus of content is the religious or ethnic issue discussed	relevant to film other than character and plot are discussed (e.g. score, acting style and quality, costuming, etc)	may be evident (e.g. score, acting style and quality, costuming, etc); very slight reference to a religious or ethnic issue	religious or ethnic issue discussed	
<b>Evaluation (08)</b>	6-7	4-5	2-3	1	0
	Evaluation clearly given, with reasons and supporting details, focusing on theme/s and central characters with appropriate discussion of a religious or ethnic issue	Evaluation given, with some supporting details and slight reference to the religious or ethnic issue discussed in the film	Inadequate evaluation, with hardly any supporting details, and no reference to the religious or ethnic issue discussed in the film	Sketchy evaluation of the film and no reference to the religious or ethnic issue discussed in the film	No evaluation given, or nothing written
<b>Language/ Mechanics (10)</b>	8-10	6-7	4-5	2-3	0-1
	Uses complex sentences and subject-verb agreement accurately; no spelling or punctuation errors	Not many grammatical errors but uses simple sentence constructions; a few errors in spelling and punctuation	Obvious errors in grammar and spelling; lacks control over even simple sentence structures and tenses	Many grammar; spelling and punctuation errors which often impede comprehension	Nothing written, or grammatical errors in every sentence

**Pass Mark 12/30**

Notes for Topic No. 5:

(1) If a candidate has chosen a film that does not address ethnic or religious divisions or has chosen a film that is not on Sri Lanka, **marks for Location statement, Content and Evaluation cannot be**

**given.** The candidate will therefore be marked **ONLY** for **Language and Mechanics (max 10 marks).**

(2) If the review is merely a summary of the plot of the film, and no evaluation is given, **no marks can be given** for Evaluation.

(3) Television series or documentaries are not acceptable.

**For Topic No 6 (Report)**

<b>Problem statement and content (08)</b>	7-8	5-6	3-4	1-2	0-1
	Shows an extensive knowledge of deforestation, mentioning all important points. Report has sections with appropriate sub-titles and a clear problem-solution structure which covers <b>all</b> aspects of the topic.	Shows a good knowledge of deforestation, one or two points may not be mentioned; Report has sections with appropriate sub-titles and a clear problem-solution structure which covers <b>most</b> aspects of the topic	Shows a limited knowledge of the issue; gaps are obvious. Not all appropriate sections and sub-titles are given.	Very sketchy knowledge of the subject and report format (E.g.: no sub-titles or only one sub-title given).	Irrelevant content, or nothing written.
<b>Measures taken in response (05)</b>	4-5	3	2	1	0
	A comprehensive account of the measures taken to counter the adverse effects of deforestation	Discusses some of the measures taken to counter the adverse effects of deforestation	Does not show an adequate knowledge of measures taken to counter the adverse effects of deforestation; doesn't address/ addresses the issue inadequately	Mentions just one measure	Does not show awareness of measures taken

Solutions / Recommendations for prevention (07)	6-7	4-5	2-3	1	0
	A list of well-thought out recommendations /solutions given and discussed in detail	An acceptable list of solutions and recommendations given, but nothing extraordinary.	One or at most two, solutions or recommendations given.	One recommendation /solution, badly expressed.	No solutions or recommendations given.
Language and mechanics (10)	8-10	6-7	4-5	2-3	0-1
	Near-native control of grammar, spelling and punctuation.	A few errors visible in grammar, spelling and punctuation.	Errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation very evident.	Errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation impede comprehension.	Nothing written or incomprehensible content.

**Pass Mark: 12/30**

Note for Topic No 6:

If the report is written as an essay – i.e., it does not follow the format of a report with appropriate sub-sections, **marks cannot be allocated for problem statement and content, measures taken in response, and recommendations for prevention/ solutions.** For such a candidate, **marks can only be given out of 10** for language and mechanics.

English Literature Sri Lanka

**Content suggestions for Essay topics (1) (2) and (3)**

**1. “The digital era has made libraries unnecessary”**

Best responses will show

- a positioning of the candidate in response to the given statement. This position could be one of agreement, disagreement, or a combination of both
- arguments supporting whatever position is taken
- different functions of a library
- characteristics of the digital era
- (if the candidate agrees with the given statement) provide some major reasons for libraries being unnecessary

- (if the candidate disagrees with the given statement) show main reasons for why libraries are still necessary
- recommendations / solutions (if any) to sustain libraries or use the digital for the same purpose

2. **‘The cultural centre of every town should be its theatre.’ Do you agree?**

Best responses will show

- a discussion of whether culture is central (if they agree) or peripheral (if they disagree) to urban life
- the advantages or disadvantages of having a theatre in the town
- how a theatre would or would not be useful
- a critical consideration of the social life of urban life, who would benefit from it
- any examples that they can provide
- any alternatives they wish to propose

3. **“A global pandemic can transform human values”**

Best responses will show

- a positioning of the candidate in response to the given statement. This position could be one of agreement, disagreement, or a combination of both
- arguments supporting whatever position is taken
- (if the candidate agrees with the given statement) how human values are transformed
- (if the candidate disagrees with the given statement) how values have not been changed by the pandemic
- Critical comments on why such a transformation happens
- Factual or narrative content to support the topic
- specific examples/illustrations of changes

**Notes on the Creative Composition**

4. Write a story that incorporates the idea “I am most alone when I am in the company of friends”.
- The statement “I am most alone when I am in the company of friends” need not be provided in the composition as a quotation or sentence. It is sufficient to include the sense of it.
  - The composition has to be closely related to the idea provided, i.e. loneliness in the midst of friends needs to be a central component of the composition
  - The sequence of events/ideas needs to make sense logically, as appropriate to the composition but does not need to have the linear organization similar to a factual essay

### Notes on the Film Review

5. Write a review of a film that addresses ethnic or religious divisions in Sri Lanka.
- The film does not need to be produced in Sri Lanka, but must be about Sri Lanka
  - The film can be in any language
  - The film can address either ethnic or religious divides; it does not have to be about both.
  - Some examples of such films are: *Saroja*, *Purahanda Kaluwara*, *Me Mage Sandai*, *Ira Mediyama*, *Punchi Suranganavi*

### Content suggestions for Report on Deforestation in Sri Lanka

(1) Introduction with Problem Statement:

- A definition of deforestation should be provided and a specific theme within the broader topic of 'deforestation' may be chosen
- A description of what this means in the Sri Lankan context
- Topics discussed in the body of the report should be identified, i.e. issues related to deforestation
- A better answer should also bring in the link between deforestation and its consequences

(2) Major themes can be the following, but need not be limited to these:

- Reasons/causes for deforestation
- The environmental impact of deforestation
- The impact on the economy and social life.
- Statistics and other data can be given as support

(3) Measures that can be taken in response:

- Any policy or legal changes that can be used to stop deforestation
- A list of steps that can be taken to stop deforestation by the state / civil communities / police

(4) Recommendations for Prevention / Solutions:

The better responses would provide recommendations on policy as well as environmental, socio-economic and cultural aspects

**Question 2**  
**(Reading Comprehension and Précis)**  
**30 marks**

**2. Reading comprehension and précis.**

(a) Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it.

(10 marks)

1. Hardly anyone would deny that human cultures are quite diverse, nor would they deny that this diversity means that humans of different groups experience life differently. However, language structure is not what creates this difference in experience. Culture certainly percolates into language here and there. Why would it not, since people with cultures speak language? However, language *reflects* culture – as vocabulary, naturally, and also through things like honorific levels of pronouns and geographical ways of situating oneself. But pronouns and topographical terms are, themselves, terminology in their own way. They reflect what life is like for a language's speakers.

2. What language does not do is shape thought by itself, for instance, the meaningless gender divisions in German that make forks female, spoons male and knives something in between.... Or in terms of how people see the world's colours, or in terms of whether we think of a cat as a clump of cuteness in the same way as we see a glorious-smelling white glob as a clump of Nivea. Even if you can trick someone into revealing some **queer** little bias in a very clever and studiously artificial experiment, that weensy bias has nothing to do with anything any psychologist, anthropologist or political scientist could show us about how the people in question manage their existence.

3. Make no mistake: languages, like cultures, differ massively, and go far beyond the terminological features that **drift into them** from the cultures. ... The degree of divergence is awesome indeed: languages with only a handful of verbs (many Australian languages), languages with no regular verbs (Navajo), languages where a word's meaning differs according to nine different tones you utter it in (Cantonese), languages with only ten sounds (Piraha), languages with whole sentences that you need only one word to utter (Eskimo), languages with dozens of click sounds, languages with no tense at all (Maybrat in New Guinea), languages with two hundred genders (Nasioi, again in New Guinea), languages where the only ending in the present tense is the third-person singular one (English).

4. But the wonder is how in all of their diversity, these languages convey the same basic humanity. The cultural aspects qualify as scattered decoration. That will sound naïve to many – until they consider what it takes to learn a language, upon which it becomes clear how ancillary the cultural aspect of language is. How much of the Spanish or Russian or Chinese you hacked your way through was “cultural”?

5. If you want to learn about how humans differ, study cultures. However, if you want insight as to what makes all humans worldwide the same, beyond genetics, there are few better places to start than how language works. (Adapted from McWhorter, John H. *The Language Hoax*) (453 words)

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in your answer script against the **number of the relevant question**.

- (1) According to the passage, diversity of human experience is a result of
- differences in language structure.
  - geographical differences.
  - cultural differences.
  - differences in terminology.

- (2) The writer brings in the example of Nivea in order to
- provide a contrast to the example of the cat.
  - show that language is not a deciding factor in thought.
  - use it as an example of a concrete noun in the language.
  - to show that thought is decided by language only.
- (3) The word ‘**queer**’ (paragraph 2) is closest in meaning to
- strange.
  - different.
  - exciting.
  - forbidden.
- (4) By describing experiments related to language, the writer argues that
- they fail to illustrate real-life behavior and thought.
  - human nature as described by psychologists is similar.
  - their main purpose is changing biases in the human mind.
  - anthropologists and political scientists will find these useful.
- (5) The word ‘**them**’ in the phrase ‘drift into them’ (paragraph 3) refers to
- speakers.
  - cultures.
  - terminological features.
  - languages.
- (6) The description of languages in this passage implies that
- Languages are limited in their sound systems
  - German and Nasioi are related to each other
  - New Guinea is highly diverse linguistically
  - People find Russian a difficult language learn
- (7) Which of these is **not** a function of the sentence “How much of the Spanish or Russian or Chinese you hacked your way through was “cultural”?” (paragraph 4)?
- Persuading the reader that cultural aspects are more important.
  - Implying that Spanish, Russian and Chinese are cultural languages.
  - Ending the paragraph with a point that the reader will find convincing.
  - Extending the point that cultural differences are less than linguistic differences.
- (8) The author argues that we all share a basic humanity because
- language and culture are deeply connected.
  - despite cultural diversity all languages are very similar.
  - learning a language is difficult even if we understand its culture
  - all humans worldwide are the same
- (9) Thinking about how we learn languages will show us that
- learning about culture is an authentic part of language learning.
  - learning about culture supports language learning.
  - culture is a secondary aspect of language learning.
  - culture is a significant aspect of language learning.
- (10) The main idea of this passage is that
- human languages are very diverse.
  - culture should be studied to learn about humans.
  - language structures determine how we experience life.
  - language reflects the culture of a speaker.

**Reading Comprehension MCQs (10 marks)**

1. c
2. a
3. a
4. a
5. d
6. d
7. d
8. b
9. b
10. d

**For Précis (20 marks)**

<b>Content (7)</b>	6-7	4-5	2-3	1	0
	All main ideas included	Most main ideas included with some irrelevant / supporting content	Up to 3 main ideas; other content is supporting or irrelevant content	Only one or two main ideas, but other content does not include main ideas	Completely irrelevant content <b>OR</b> Nothing written
<b>Paraphrasing (4)</b>	4	3	1	0	
	Every attempt made to use own words without losing the sense of the passage	Obvious attempt made to use own words but a few phrases may be copied from the text	An attempt has been made to use their own words for at least half the precis.	Most of the precis directly 'lifted' from the text, including complete sentences	Word-for-word from the text <b>OR</b> nothing written
<b>Organization (4)</b>	4	3	2	1	0
	Good sequence and flow of ideas, no unnecessary details	Discernible flow and organization but with some extraneous ideas	Choppy flow, with obvious missing links in the sequence	Organization is disjointed; transitions missing; shows little flow/organization	No discernible organization <b>OR</b> nothing written
<b>Accuracy of language (4)</b>	4	3	2	1	0

	No grammar, spelling or punctuation errors	One or two grammar, spelling or punctuation errors	Errors are mostly in spelling or punctuation; don't impede comprehension; may change the sense of the passage	Errors mostly grammatical; impedes reader comprehension somewhat; changes the sense of the passage	Errors impede reader comprehension <b>OR</b> Nothing written
<b>Length</b> 182 -- 192 words	Length (1 - 0)				
	19-20	14-16	9-10	05	01

**Pass Mark: 08/20**

Note for Précis:

(1) The **paraphrasing mark** impacts marks for other sections:

If the answer is **completely 'lifted'** from the text the précis receives 0 marks for all sections other than length (0-1 marks).

If the précis is **mostly 'lifted'** (i.e. only a few lines are paraphrased), the précis receives 1 mark for paraphrasing, marks for length (0-1 marks) and no other marks.

If the answer contains some 'lifted' (copied) content (i.e., a mark of 1-3), the marks for content, paraphrasing, organization, accuracy of language are to be calculated only for the parts that are **not** plagiarized.

Some keywords are difficult to paraphrase and may appear in the précis as is: e.g. 'diversity', 'culture', 'language'. Some common or widely used words, such as 'different' or 'experience', can be used without penalty.

(2) The précis does **not** need to follow the organization of the original text. However, it should have a smooth 'flow' and internal coherence. The main ideas of the original text are given in boldface to aid the marking.

### SAMPLE PRECIS

People belong to different cultural groups which leads them to experience life differently. Even though communities speak different languages, these different languages do not create the differences amongst people. Rather, since people in different cultures speak different languages, these differences are expressed through different ways of using. There have been attempts to show that differences in language leads to differences in ways of thinking. However, such experiments in thought and language have not been useful in making us understand how people live differently as much as other subjects in the social sciences. Still, languages have significant differences in their structures. Despite these differences, every language is able to express the same things about people. In comparison, the cultural differences that are shown through language are superficial. In summary, studies of culture show differences between social groups, but studying language allows us to understand how humans are similar. (147 words)

Note: This is a sample only, **not** a model answer. English Literature Sri Lanka

Précis Text  
(Main ideas in bold type)

Hardly anyone would deny that **human cultures are quite diverse**, nor would they deny that **this diversity means that humans of different groups experience life differently**. However, **language structure is not what creates this difference in experience**. Culture certainly percolates into language here and there. Why would it not, since people with cultures speak language? **However, language reflects culture** – as vocabulary, naturally, and also through things like honorific levels of pronouns and geographical ways of situating oneself. But pronouns and topographical terms are, themselves, terminology in their own way. They come for free from what life is like for a language's speakers.

**What language does not do is shape thought by itself**, for instance as meaningless gender divisions of the kind that in German makes forks female, spoons male and knives something in between... Or in terms of how people see the world's colours, or in terms of whether we think of a cat as a clump of cuteness in the same way as we see a glorious-smelling white glob as a clump of Nivea. Even if you can, as it were, trick someone into revealing some queer little bias in a very clever and studiously artificial experiment, **that weensy bias has nothing to do with anything any psychologist, anthropologist or political scientist could show us about how the people in question manage their existence**.

Make no mistake: **languages, like cultures, differ massively, and go far beyond the terminological features that drift into them from the cultures**. ... The degree of divergence is awesome indeed: languages with only a handful of verbs (many Australian languages), languages with no regular verbs (Navajo), languages where a word's meaning differs according to nine different tones you utter it on (Cantonese), languages with only ten sounds (Piraha), languages with whole sentences that you need only one word to utter (Eskimo), languages with dozens of click sounds ... languages with no tense at all (Maybrat in New Guinea), languages with two hundred genders (Nasioi, again in New Guinea), languages where the only ending in the present tense is the third-person singular one (English).

But the wonder is how **in all of their diversity, these languages convey the same basic humanity**. **The cultural aspects qualify as scattered decoration**. That will sound naïve to many – until they consider what it takes to learn a language, upon which it becomes clear how ancillary the cultural aspect of language is. How much of the Spanish or Russian or Chinese you hacked your way through was “cultural”?

**If you want to learn about how humans differ, study cultures. However, if you want insight as to what makes all humans worldwide the same, beyond genetics, there are few better places to start than how language works.**

(455 words)

**Question 3 (Unseen prose passage)**  
**(20 arks)**

3. Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible.

**The Track in the Middle of the Forest**

The most ferocious bears live deep in the heart of the taiga.<sup>4</sup>

Not a single one has ever been hunted.

Hunters know they are very dangerous, they say the bears think, like men, and that is why they never go near them, in the heart of the taiga. They are frightened, are aware of the dangers of paths that never end, of tracks that fork time and again until the man who dares penetrate so far finds himself turning in circles, sometimes in spirals, until the time comes when he dares not move until a rescue party reaches him. That is the taiga; no one wants to risk going in, the only way to enter the taiga is by cutting, burning and destroying it. Even so the taiga wins out.

They say that those who get lost in the taiga pray and believe their prayers will save them, but not so. God is great, but the taiga is even greater, and they can pray as fervently as they curse, howl and rage, the taiga is deaf to their words, and that is why hunters can't even agree to go in too deep, they hesitate, argue, curse, but always retreat to the outer fringe of trees. The most ferocious bears are deep inside, men who changed into bears, and that is why they are so vicious, because they are evil like men and think like men, their instinct is not an animal's, is not what an animal is born with, but a mixture of the viciousness of men and the cruelty of animals, they are wild beasts but it is said that when they look at you, it is as if they are thinking hard, and their eyes are glinting.

Once, before they had built the villages that surround the taiga, many, many years ago, there was a party of beaters that went into the taiga to hunt for skins. Everyone knew that what they really wanted were the skins of the bears who live in the centre of the forest, legends abounded about the thickness and value of these skins....

They trekked for days and days. They say the hunters watched their supplies run out, and that day after day, for far too long, they only ate birds they could catch and the mushrooms that grew all around. Weeks went by and the hunters continued their trek further into the forest, penetrating deeper and deeper inside. Their beards were long and their hair matted. They hadn't washed for days and their clothes were filthy from sleeping in the open, from walking through mud and thickets, from the blood of the animals they had killed in order to eat. They stank of forest, of dry leaves and flattened plants, of sweat and of the smoke from the fires they lit each night to keep warm. And they went even further into the taiga, even on days when the mist hid the sun, further in, even though they were lost, and didn't know where they were going. And they kept losing items of clothing and had to wrap up in non-cured skins of animals they were killing with knives, spears and

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<sup>4</sup> **Taiga** is the largest type of forest on the Earth. ... The **word taiga** comes from Turkish and it **means** "coniferous forests." These forests represent the largest, oldest and snowiest type of land territory, covering extremely large areas in northern Russia, mostly Siberia.

bows, because their powder had got wet and they had thrown their guns away, along with the lead ammunition that had weighed too much ...

And finally, to communicate with each other, and because they were afraid of the bears, who couldn't be far away, they mimicked the screech of owls and the hisses of wild cats, and almost stopped speaking. They decided to light no more fires so the animals couldn't detect their presence and ate raw meat.

By the time they finally saw the bears, they were crawling on all fours, wore the skins of other animals, had turned wild, stank and were filthy. The bears sniffed and encircled them but did no harm: there was no difference between them. The hunters didn't recognize each other and thought the bears were other hunters and hunters were bears.

But that is only a fable, because nobody ever emerged from the taiga to say what really happened. That is why men are afraid to enter the taiga, because within every forest there is a track that will lead them inside, into its heart. (764 words)

Adapted from a translation of a short story published in Russian 1922 by Jossef Bergchenko

- (1) What role does the taiga play in this story? Provide examples to support your answer. (04 marks)
- (2) What is the main literary device used to bring out the taiga's fearsome quality? Illustrate this with at least **two** examples. (05 marks)
- (3) How is the passing of time conveyed in this story? Refer to language as well as imagery in your explanation. (03 marks)
- (4) What does the phrase "But that is only a fable" convey to you? Who says these words? (03 marks)
- (5) At the end of the story, are the bears human or the humans bears? What would be the difference? (05 marks)

Answers different to those provided below are acceptable if supported by quotations and illustrations from the passage.

Questions 1 is marked out of 04 marks. Questions 2 and 4 are marked out of 03 marks. Questions 3 and 5 are to be marked out of 05 marks each. Half marks are possible (E.g: 3.5, 2.5, 1.5 etc.)

Q1	Q2 & Q5	Q3 & Q4	
04 marks	05 marks	03 marks	A complete answer which shows a full understanding of the question and addresses every part of the question. 2 or more relevant points written, with supporting details <u>for each</u> from the passage, either as quotations or as direct references (which are appropriate) to the passage
02-03 marks	02-04 marks	02 marks	A moderately good answer which includes 1-2 relevant points in response to the question, with supporting details from the passage
01 mark	01 mark	01 mark	An answer with only 1 or 2 relevant points, and no supporting details
0 marks			No answer or irrelevant answer

**Note 1: No marks should be deducted for language errors.**

Note 2: These answers are guidelines only. All points provided here need not be in the answer. As per the marking scheme, the answer needs to contain only 2 points which may be different to that provided below.

(1) What role does the taiga play in this story? Provide examples to support your answer (04 marks)

- The taiga is the setting but can also be another character in the story
- It is an important part of the plot as the transformation of men to bears happens within the taiga
- The taiga is described as a live being

(2) What is the main literary device used to bring out the taiga's fearsome quality? Illustrate this with at least two main points. (05 marks)

- The taiga is personified: the story describes the taiga as a living thing.
- It actively leads hunters deeper into itself or leads them astray; by doing this, it also transforms the men into bears.
- It is also described as 'greater than God' and in that sense, awesome
- It is shown to be stern or uncaring since 'the taiga is deaf to their [hunters'] words' and leads men into the wilderness and changes their being
- Imagery/phrases that students may use - "heart of the taiga", the "taiga wins out", "greater than God", "the taiga is deaf to their words", "lead them inside", "its heart"

To receive full marks, personification has to be explicitly stated, and two points illustrated with examples.

(3) How is the passing of time conveyed in this story? Refer to language as well as imagery in your explanation. (03 marks)

- It talks of the transformation of the men into wild things. Uses phrases such as "trekked for days and days", "day after day, for far too long", "Weeks went by"
- Describes what the hunters ate after supplies ran out, how their beards grew longer, not washing, lost clothes, and stopped talking.

(4) What does the phrase "But that is only a fable" convey to you, the reader? Who says these words? (03 marks)

- Universal third person narrator – Possibly someone who has lived nearby and has knowledge of the taiga and villages nearby.
- It sheds doubt on the specifics of the story but at the same time, makes you think the story is even more real!

(5) At the end of the story, are the bears human or the humans bears? What would be the difference? (05 marks)

- This is a difficult question and requires an imaginative answer.
- It appears from the penultimate paragraph that the humans and bears are indistinguishable at the end ("there is no difference")
- This would lead us to question whether being a hunter of such magnificent creatures is right
- If we consider being human to mean that we have values and qualities we call 'human', then it can be argued that the roles re-reversed, the bears are more human than the humans, until they too become bears and fear their hunters

#### Question 4 (Unseen Poem)

(20 marks)

#### Question 4 (Unseen Poem)

(20 marks)

4. Read the following poem and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible. (20 marks)

##### Death is not New

Every city is ours  
And all are kin  
Good and evil do not come from others  
Pain and its relief are no different  
Death too is not new  
We do not rejoice when life seems sweet  
Nor do we cry it's bitter when troubled  
For this we know from the discerning:  
As frail craft caught in rivers crashing down rocks  
Swollen with cold rain pouring  
Through skies split by lightning,  
Our lives too  
Are tossed around by the fates.  
We do not therefore praise the mighty for their rise  
Even less do we disdain the lowly.



(Translated from a 2000-year old Tamil poem)

- (1) Why is 'every city ours' and 'all [our] kin'? Support your answer with close reference to the poem. (3 marks)
- (2) What does the poet mean by the following lines: "good and evil do not come from other / Pain and its relief are no different"? (4 marks)
- (3) According to the poet, what insight has been learned from perceptive persons? (3 marks)
- (4) In your view, how effective is the central simile of the poem? (5 marks)
- (5) What, in your view, is the main idea of the poem? (5 marks)

Questions 1 and 3 are marked out of 3 marks. Question 2 is marked out of 04 marks. Questions 4 and 5 are to be marked out of 05 marks each. Half marks are possible (Eg: 3.5, 2.5, 1.5 etc.)

Answers different to the ones given below are acceptable if supported by quotations and illustrations from the poem. English Literature Sri Lanka

Q 1 Q 3	Q2	Q4 & Q5	
03 marks	04 marks	04-05 marks	A complete answer which shows a full understanding of the question and addresses every part of the question. 2 or more relevant points written, with supporting details <u>for each</u> from the poem, either as quotations or as direct references (which are appropriate) to the poem
02 marks	03 marks		A moderately good answer which includes 1-2 relevant points in response to the question, with supporting details from the poem
	02 marks		An answer which includes 1-2 relevant points, but may have no/inadequate supporting details from the poem
0.5 - 1 mark	0.5 - 1 mark		An answer with only 1 relevant point, and no supporting details
0 marks			No answer or irrelevant answer

**Note 1: No marks should be deducted for language errors.**

Note 2: These answers are guidelines only. All points provided here need not be in the answer. As per the marking scheme, the answer needs to contain only 2 points maximum which may be different to that provided below.

(1) Why is 'every city ours' and 'all [our] kin'? Support your answer with close reference to the poem.

(03 marks)

- Every city is ours because death comes to all humans as well as the pain, and suffering and relief that comes to everyone
- In no city can you escape death
- Since every person has this same inheritance (of death and illness, good and bad etc.) everyone is related to each other
- Appropriate imagery to support the answer should be used.

(2) What does the poet mean by the following lines: "good and evil do not come from other / Pain and its relief are no different"?

(04 marks)

- In every person there is a capacity to make good and evil choices
- There is good and evil in each person
- Pain and relief are fruits of the choices we make
- These two pairs of concepts (good-evil & pain-relief) are connected to each other

(3) According to the poet, what insight has been learned from perceptive persons?

(03 marks)

- That it is hard to predict changes that may occur
- People are subject to fate which can bring unforeseen events
- That people different or difficult circumstances have not brought in on themselves
- That we are all the same and not always in control of our lives

(4) In your view, how effective is the central simile of the poem? (05 marks)

- Note: student answers may agree or disagree on the effectiveness of the simile; however, suitable supportive arguments must be made whatever position they take.
- Effective – central simile of a little boat caught in a swollen river shows how insignificant our lives and choices are in the face of time and circumstances.
- Ineffective – central simile only highlights the negative aspects – it does not draw out the joys and relief that is common to all; the simile is dated and not very original.

(5) What, in your view, is the main idea of the poem? (05 marks)

- This is a difficult question and should be marked with some leniency
- That humans are similar and differences in wealth and circumstance do not reflect fundamental differences amongst us
- Given the circumstances of our lives, and the lack of control over our lives, neither blame nor praise of others is useful or justified.
- Both the mighty and the lowly are treated equally by the fates
- For a full answer, students should analyse the imagery, rhythm of the lines

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