

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE – 27  
Visual Communication – I Semester  
MID-SEMESTER TEST – AUGUST 2018  
VC1318: Narrative Storytelling

17.8.2018

Time: 1 Hour

Max Marks: 30

This question paper has **TWO** printed page and **TWO** parts

(Write the answers clearly, precisely, and to the point. Answers submitted in point form will not be marked.)

1. Below are four quotes by famous writers from around the world. Read the quotes and choose **ONLY TWO** to respond to in about 450 – 500 words. Describe what it means, its significance and relevance in terms of storytelling. (**2 x 10 = 20**)

- a) *Prose is architecture, not interior decoration.* – Ernest Hemingway
- b) *A writer without interest or sympathy for the foibles of his fellow man is not conceivable as a writer.* – Joseph Conrad
- c) *The unread story is not a story; it is little black marks on wood pulp. The reader, reading it, makes it live: a live thing, a story.* – Ursula K. Le Guin
- d) *Tell the readers a story! Because without a story, you are merely using words to prove you can string them together in logical sentences.* – Anne McCaffrey

2. Read the excerpt below from Anita Desai's short story 'The Domestic Maid' and answer any **ONE** of the questions that follow in about 450 - 500 words (**1 x 10 = 10**)

Cities have always been a big draw for skilled or unskilled migrant laborers from neighboring states, even neighboring countries. Men and women migrate to the cities with dreams of better earnings and better living conditions. The men take up work in the industrial sector or join the much-in-demand security services. Women mostly end up as domestic maids. The children join the work force as early as seven or eight years of age.

The guards, ending their twelve hour night shift, are disheveled and anxiously awaiting their relieving staff. One of the guards, yawning and stretching, checks their card one by one and makes an entry in the register.

"How are you Shankar?" asks a woman from the group trying to cheer him up. The guard is in no mood for small talk and dismisses her with a shrug.

Among the group is a frail, medium built, dark complexioned woman, trailing behind with her head bent, looking forlorn and creases of deep worry scaling her small forehead.

"Hey Geeta! Where are you lost; are you dreaming of your husband?" the women giggle and wink at each other. "Show your id card and run to the 702 *waali mem saab* or you'll be late again today."

The women mock Geeta, jolting her out of her reverie. She promptly digs into her little zip pouch for the tattered ID card and displays it to the guard. She gives her friends a vague half smile, pretending to be normal and follows them through the gates. After the initial check, the group disperses and proceeds to their individual work places.

Geeta works in at least 4 houses at a time, doing odd jobs like cleaning and washing. She migrated to the city from her village three years back, along with her husband Prakash, and two children. Their native village, an impoverished little hamlet which could not sustain them with even a decent meal a day. Even with Prakash running a cycle-rickshaw and Geeta taking up work as a daily wage earner in the village quarry, they could not make ends meet and they were living in dire poverty. Like many others in his village, he too was lured by the life in big city and he migrated. He found a shanty of size 10 by 12 feet for his family of four in the shady by-lanes of the glitzy city. Prakash found work as a daily wage worker in a local factory and Geeta found work as a domestic maid in the high rise residential complex.

Geeta works part-time at Asha's house. She rings the doorbell at her apartment no. 702. That is the reason she is commonly addressed as "702 wali mem saab" by all maids.

"You are late again Geeta! What's the matter with you; don't you understand when I ask you to come early?" Asha's voice is shrill with anger as she opens the door. Off late, Geeta has been coming late to work and she is no mood to understand the reason.

"Have you taken up other work on my time? I have to leave for office and I will be late because of you. This time I will cut your salary."

Asha is a burlesque, middle aged woman. Both, Asha and her husband work for an MNC. Their only child, a daughter, is a high school student in an international school nearby. This is a well-educated and well settled family of three with an annual family income of multiple figures.

Questions:

- a) Describe the relationship between Geeta, the maid, and Asha, whom she works for, paying special attention to the class dynamic.
- b) In your own words write what might happen after this short exchange printed above ends.