Register Number:

Date:

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE - 27
BA/BCom/BSW/Bsc: II SEMESTER - APRIL 2018
GENERAL ENGLISH (GE 214)

Time: 2 ½ Hours **Max. Marks: 70**

INSTRUCTIONS

This paper consists of **ELEVEN** printed sides

This booklet contains **THREE THEMES** over 11 printed sides

You are allowed to use a dictionary

Stick to the word limit

You may answer **ANY ONE THEME**

Answer all sections under the theme you have chosen. **Do not chose sections at random from different themes.**

You WILL lose marks for lifting from the passage.

Please indicate your stream (CS1/2/3) clearly on your answer booklet.

Theme -1

I. Read The following article by Amanda Brickell Bellows in the *New Yorker*. 'No Language Like Song' published on 16th September 2011

Frederick Douglass spent much of his life speaking about the hardships of slavery — but even he, at times, realized that words were not enough. Instead, he turned to music: "The mere hearing of [slave] songs," he said, revealed the "physical cruelties of the slave system; for the heart has no language like song." Today, spirituals like "Go Down, Moses" and "God's Going to Trouble the Water" continue to convey American slaves' anguish, frustration and hope.

Less familiar to Americans, however, is the music of Russia's serfs, who were emancipated in 1861, on the eve of President Lincoln's inauguration. Although the slaves and serfs were separated by vast distances and significant historical experiences, each group endured years of bondage by turning to song. Likening the songs of Russian serfs to those of American slaves, early 20th-century actor and slave descendent Paul Robeson observed that both groups had "an instinctive flair for music … [a] faculty born in sorrow." But their musical traditions have striking differences, too — differences that help us understand the contrasts between the two systems.

Common types of American slaves' songs include work songs, sacred spirituals and social songs, a category comprised of narratives, ballads and dance songs. Pre-20th-century Russian folk songs consist of ritual songs, which relate to changing seasons or holidays, and family ceremonial songs, sung during weddings or funerals. Serfs also sang non-ritual songs, which included all other types of folk music, like historical epics, dance songs and work songs.

Both groups sang work songs as they labored in the fields; for both, such songs moderated the pace of labor. When African-American slaves hoed corn, for example, they sang songs like “Shock Along John” and “Round the Corn Sally.” These tunes, found in the 1867 volume “Slave Songs of the United States,” contain only two lines per verse and are repetitive and cadenced. In the hayfields, Russian serfs sang rhythmic pokos, or hay-making songs, to regulate the movement of their scythes.

The synchronization of action through song was crucial for physically challenging tasks. In Russia, groups of 50 to 125 serfs were harnessed to boats and forced to pull them upriver. A brutal job, barge-hauling was despised by all. Serfs endured this work by singing a song known as the “Song of the Volga Boatmen,” or “Hey, Ukhnem.” “Ukhnem” translates to the English equivalent of “heave-ho,” and comes from the “ukh” sound that serfs made with each collective tug. As the serfs pulled in unison, this song coordinated their efforts.

American slaves employed song in a parallel way as they rowed together. In early-19th-century Savannah, the observer John Lambert recorded that four slaves rowed “to a boat-song of their own composing. The words were given out by one of them, and the rest joined the chorus. … The tune of this ditty was rather monotonous, but had a pleasing effect, as they kept time with it at every stroke of their oars.”

Such songs were an integral part of the serfs’ and slaves’ daily lives. Music served both a practical and a creative purpose as it helped slaves labor in unison and entertained them during, as one serf described it, the “heavy, monotonous work [that] much dulled [the] mind.” Nineteenth-century observers noted the exceptional musical talent of both groups when they sang, danced or played musical instruments. The serfs and slaves each performed solo and group songs, employed forms of call and response, and danced as they sang.

Differences in sound were marked, however: American slaves created songs with complex overlapping rhythms that were enhanced by vocal performances of swooping, moaning and shouting, while Russian folk music was characterized by its dissonant heterophony and deep, resonant sound.

The content differed as well. Both groups drew strength from their Christian faith in times of anguish and joy. The lyrics and style of Protestant hymns were well-known to slaves, who sometimes attended church with their masters or participated in camp meetings. Blending African and Western musical traditions, however, American slaves created wholly original songs – spirituals – that are filled with religious language, symbols and ideas.

Rephrasing stories from the Old Testament in spirituals like “Go Down, Moses,” slaves linked their bondage to that of the Israelites in Egypt. Inspired by New Testament stories as well, slaves sang spirituals like “Run to Jesus,” “I am Bound for the Promised Land” and “Steal Away,” which brought slaves hope of salvation in the mortal world and the divine.

Barely concealed messages lay embedded within the lines of these songs. In “Go Down, Moses,” slaves sang: “No more shall they in bondage toil,/Let my people go;/Let them come out with Egypt’s spoil,/Let my people go.” Other spirituals like “Steal Away” functioned as direct invitations to flee. Phrases like “I hain’t got long to stay here./Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus” served as a signal for potential runaway slaves. Christianity helped American slaves create a body of music that was both spiritually elevating and powerfully subversive, offering hope of heavenly peace or earthly escape.

The serfs' ritual songs, on the other hand, anticipated the occurrence of events or marked holidays and seasonal changes. For example, folk songs sung during Maslenitsa, or Shrovetide, the week-long period preceding Lent, contain themes of nature and fertility. In the song "We're Waiting for Maslenitsa," serfs sang: "We're waiting for Maslenitsa,/We're waiting, my dear, we're waiting./We'll treat ourselves with cheese and butter,/we'll treat, my dear, we'll treat./On the hill stands a green oak tree,/A green oak tree, my dear, a green oak tree." During their celebration, serfs feasted on special foods as they prayed for the swift arrival of spring, with its green oaks and abundant flowers.

One fascinating difference between slaves' spirituals and serfs' sacred folk songs is that while American slaves often sang about escape or emancipation, Russian serfs rarely did. According to the Russian scholar V. Ja. Propp, the number of songs that addressed the travails of serfdom was almost negligible when compared to the vast array of other types of folk songs.

What accounts for this surprising difference? Surely serfs did not prefer to remain enslaved? For one thing, serfs may have been hesitant to share subversive music with transcribers, or tsarist censorship might have prevented the publication of such music.

A more convincing answer is that a "free North" did not exist for the 23 million serfs who composed 40 percent of the Russian nation in 1860. Serfdom was concentrated in Russia's central and western provinces but was legal throughout. Deterrents to serfs who considered flight included both the great distance from central Russia to its borderlands, where serfdom was less common, and the threat of capture once there. The Yale scholar John MacKay argues that an absence of sectionalism in Russia accounts for a general lack of an idea of a "land of liberty" in serf consciousness. Perhaps serfs viewed acts of insubordination or rebellion as more viable alternatives to escape; the existence of several Russian folk songs praising serf uprisings supports this theory.

By contrast, slaves comprised approximately 13 percent of the American population in 1860, where slavery was legal in only about half the country. Viewing the free Northern states and Canada as viable safe havens, slaves sang more frequently about escape than insurrection, revealing their abiding desire to "steal away" to a concrete destination where other blacks lived freely under the protection of law.

Each group's musical heritage was as unique as its conditions of bondage. Although Russian serfs and American slaves employed work songs in comparable ways, American slaves were singularly inspired to sing of their desire for earthly and heavenly escape. But for both groups, music ultimately served as a shared outlet of expression. Their songs were, in the words of Douglass, "like tears … a relief to aching hearts."

Answer the following questions in about 200 words each: (4x15= 60)

1. What do you find appealing about the way this narrative is structured? Do you share a special relationship with a certain form of narrative – such as, say folk-tales, ballads, autobiographies etc.? What makes your chosen form effective? Answer with suitable examples.

2. What are the similarities and differences that you can identify between the slave and serf songs described in the article? Explain their significance.

3. What role does religious belief play in the American slave and Russian serf songs? Which of the two forms of music are more explicitly religious? Give reasons for your response.

4. Have you come across songs made in the present that question traditional ideas or beliefs? Give examples.

II. "*Imagine*" is a song written and performed by English musician John Lennon. The best-selling single of his solo career, released on 11th Oct 1971.

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people living for today

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people living life in peace, you

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope some day you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people sharing all the world, you

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope some day you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Answer the following question in about 150 words: (1 x 10 = 10)

1. In the previous article by Bellows we saw how the American slaves used songs to convey a message to the masses. Do you see John Lennon's 'Imagine' a fitting response to all oppressed communities of the world**?** Elaborate.

Theme 2

I. Extracts from “The story of an American Kiwi”

‘Home’ is a complicated word for many people whose lives and hearts are stretched across different continents. Let me take you back a few months to December 2015. I’ve just finished putting the final touches on our Christmas tree with the help of my mom and my two lovely daughters, aged two and a half and six months. It’s not the ‘all is calm, all is bright’ scene. It’s a picture of chaos – paper wrappings for ornaments cover the floor, the Christmas tree lights are a total jumble, and my eldest keeps giving extra ‘cuddles’ (or rather, body slams) to my baby, who falls to the floor crying – again! Sigh. It’s been a full year, I’m tired, and it’s just the beginning of the Christmas season.

The Christmas season is stressful – buying presents, trying to get our Christmas cards out on time (this never happens), and getting ready for our annual Christmas party. The stress I can handle – it’s the season itself that has me flustered. The weather feels strange and foreign to me – it’s turning warm outside. Like hot and humid. Like middle-of-summertime hot and humid. And even though I’ve been in this beautiful country for five years already, I still can’t figure out why it is hot during Christmas! And then I remember that I’m not from here, not from this place that I now call home…)

Rewind five years. In the space of three months, I married my lovely Kiwi husband in Vancouver, Canada, road-tripped across the USA to Atlanta, Georgia, packed up my belongings, said goodbye to my family home, my mom, and my friends and arrived in the land of the long white cloud. For our first Christmas here, we had no furniture and none of our things. They were all in a big container somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean. We had a ‘Charlie Brown’ Christmas tree which was 1. Fake, 2. Spindly, and 3. About half a metre tall. We also had no ornaments. And it was warm outside. So I did what any girl would do on Christmas Day in a foreign country, with her family on the other side of the world – I fought back tears all day.

Over the next few months I found myself doing this a lot – fighting back tears, then panic attacks. The cloud of sadness that I thought would last just a few days, lasted for a few weeks, a few months, and then stretched to about a year. I kept telling myself different things that I thought would help – “I’ll eat more healthily. No more sugar!” Or, “I just need some more exercise.” Or, “I’ll treat myself to a nice pedicure and that will cheer me up, or a nice dinner out, or a new dress.” But nothing was working. I had to accept that I was sad, really sad. Depressed even. And on my worst days, I was suicidal.

I burst into tears at my doctor’s office. I thought it was normal to fantasize about walking out of my marriage and my new life. I dreamt of getting on a plane and going anywhere and just not coming back. Ever. My doctor suggested that this was, in fact, ‘not normal’. So I started some medication for depression and talked to a few people that have a bit of experience with these feelings. I was depressed, but for me it was something more particular – it’s called culture shock, and it can be a real beast.

Culture shock is specific to each person, but its effects can range from a couple of months to a few years. Such shock is very common for people who have just experienced a significant move, or other life-changing events like a marriage or a death in the family. Within a year I had experienced all three. The effects of culture shock can often show up in mundane tasks, like grocery shopping or trying to understand what someone is saying to you in a crowded bar. Let me explain what I mean.

Going to the grocery store is a simple event that everyone must do at some point or another. However, for someone experiencing culture shock, it can take a very long time. For me, buying a few items often took up to three hours because the brands were completely new, and the food options were totally foreign. For example, I wanted to recreate my mom's yummy spaghetti Bolognese. I shopped for ages and bought 'tomato sauce' – what I thought was simply canned tomatoes with herbs. I added this to the mixture and ended up with a sickly sweet mess that was inedible. 'Tomato sauce' was actually 'ketchup', or what you put on fries or a hamburger. Ah. Right.

Culture shock can also mean missing the people, country, culture, and traditions that you are used to. For me, it was missing home – but not the home that I remember, or even the one that exists anymore. It was the home that had been created in my memory with a compilation of all my favourite holidays and traditions and memories piled into one …)

Fortunately, my brilliant sister-in-law who is a very good clinical psychologist, came up with a plan for my depression and culture shock after a lot of listening…)

And that's just it. I've realized that I have changed. I'm no longer the American girl who married the Kiwi guy with the cute accent.

At the time, this seemed incredibly difficult and sounded like a lot of work. But I started small, and I did the tasks – even on the hardest days – to help me slowly get back to normal. I started putting all the pieces together and it felt like the plan was working. I also had some friends send me flowers, encourage me, and even pray for me. And then, on my 35th birthday, the day after we bought a house, and two weeks into my medication, my husband and I found out that I was pregnant. This was a bit of a surprise, although we had planned to start a family. Despite the positive pregnancy test, I didn't 'feel' pregnant and was so utterly sad. I wondered how life could begin to grow inside my body and felt like new life was allergic to me.

But it wasn't. The baby grew and with the passing of each week and month, I began to feel stronger and more myself again. I felt positive about my life for about five seconds a day, and then that grew too. It was like coming out of a thick fog. I could breathe again, I relaxed a bit and I began to enjoy things and laugh again. Our first daughter was born in April and by the time of her birth I was really myself. The arrival of a new, thriving little life gave me hope. In fact, my pregnancy was an incubation period not just for my daughter, but for me too…)

But the question still remained about how to really be myself in the middle of a country that was not my own – how to call New Zealand home. What did I need to help my daughter understand her beautiful New Zealand birthplace, but also where her mother came from on the other side of the world? I promised myself I would tell her about my grandmother (who had died two years previously), the 'Southern Steel Magnolia' who could love anything and everything into existence, who loved art and people and gardens and parties. Who made you feel right at home and immediately got a drink in your hand with a, "Come right in!" as soon as you stepped through her front door. I would tell her about chasing fireflies at twilight in the middle of a humid summer, smelling the fragrance of white magnolia blossoms, and the overwhelming kindness of southern hospitality.

The effects of culture shock can often show up in mundane tasks, like grocery shopping or trying to understand what someone is saying to you in a crowded bar.

I would also tell her about manners, about welcoming people into our home, and about the importance of looking people in the eye and saying, "Hello, nice to meet you." I would tell her about the beauty of gardens and flowers, of feeding good food to people you love, and about sending thank you notes. I would give her a sense of confidence to speak up when things aren't right, and show her the art of slowing down and paying attention to the beauty of creation –

finding joy in simple things. Every day. I promised to tell her all these things and more, but mostly I would try and share with her a piece of who I am, even if after a few years I've changed a bit. And that's just it. I've realized that I have changed. I'm no longer the American girl who married the Kiwi guy with the cute accent.

Now, I'm the American girl and the Kiwi girl. I love fish and chips and fried green tomatoes. I love African-American culture and I'm also falling in love with some Māori and Pasifika friends who I'm getting to know…)

When my girls are old enough to understand, I will explain to them, that while Christmas is a lovely holiday and reminds us of a God who has come to be with us, it isn't really supposed to be in the summertime. It's supposed to be in the wintertime. Even if it's nice to go to the beach after Christmas, it's just wrong. It's definitely not how it's supposed to be. And then they'll look at me and ask, "Why, Mommy?" And I'll sigh and say with a smile, "Well, it's complicated, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

Answer the following questions in about 150 words: (4 x 10 =40)

1. Stories have the ability of influencing their readers in the most powerful ways. Has Rachel's story struck a chord with your feelings from certain aspects of her story?

2. Rachel was able to document the transitional period of her life so vividly. Does her written narrative offer us any insights? Explain

3. Every story is fed with a nice dollop of 'experience'. What kind of experiences does Rachel chose to pass on to her children. What values do you find underlying her decision to do so?

4. Rachel's narrative highlights her battle with a new environment and a new culture. In what way do you find her reflections useful for people that aspire to move from their birthplace to foreign lands?

II. Read the poem 'To My Mother' by Edgar Allan Poe and answer the following questions in 200 words each.

Because I feel that, in the Heavens above
The angels, whispering to one another
Can find, among their burning terms of love
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore, by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus, are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life

Answer the following in about 200 words each: (2 x 15 =30)

1. What do you learn from the comparison the poet makes between heavenly beings and humans?. Do you agree with his view?

2. Do you see any changes in the way present day media depict mothers as opposed to their depiction in narratives from the past? Answer using suitable examples.

<u>Theme -3</u>

I. *'Doomsday narratives about climate change don't work. But here's what does'* by Victoria Herrmann

We've labeled Shishmaref, Alaska, a community that voted to relocate because of climate change impacts last August, a "tragedy of a village built on ice". We've marketed Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana, the first US town to receive federal funding to relocate, as climate change refugees watching their town slip into the sea. And we ask "Should the United States Save Tangier Island From Oblivion?" on the Chesapeake Bay island's future.

Each of these follows a recognizable storyline: a vanishing island, a culture slipping away and an ensemble of characters unsure of what their future holds. Each piece tells a cookie-cutter version of a vulnerable village in fear of rising tides and residents as victims on the frontline of climate change.

Shishmaref could stand in for Isle de Jean Charles, which could stand in for Tangier Island. In none of these stories does the community hold agency over their future, empowerment or resiliency.

These doomsday narratives are wrong, and they are dangerous.

Telling and sharing stories, from the scientific to the personal, is one the most important tools we have to survive climate change.

Stories help us to share facts, knowledge and experiences about the causes and effects of a warming world. But more than just educational tools, stories are how we make sense of the world we live in. The story you read in the newspaper or the documentary you watch on Netflix holds the immense ability to shape what we see and don't see. Those visibilities and invisibilities shift our perspectives. And it's those perceptions upon which we base our actions.

I'm going to repeat that, because it's really important. The narratives we read, hear and see informs how we understand climate change, and that understanding dictates whether we act or don't.

When we constantly see stories about communities in crisis as sea levels rise and extreme storms become more frequent, we come away with preconceived notions that all communities living on the frontline of climate change are victims in need of saving. On America's eroding edges, there is no hope – the future is presented as an ominously uncertain but seemingly inevitable defeat.

Feeling hopeless about a situation is cognitively associated with inaction and predicts decreased goal-directed behavior. That means when we present humanity as a hopeless victim of climate change, we are less likely to act because the ending seems inevitable. Climate change adaptation only works when we are hopeful for the future and believe that environmentally vulnerable communities have the agency to act.

Something simple and concrete that each of us can do? Tell different stories.

Instead of presenting narratives of helpless victims and an inevitable future of defeat, we should instead report on the climate change heroes who are doing everything they can to avoid that doomsday scenario. When people see strength in communities, we can overcome limiting labels such as climate change victim and begin to dismantle our prejudices against people in need of resources.

We've already begun to change the narrative for cities and climate change mitigation. In the aftermath of Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris agreement, city leaders publicly committed to limit their greenhouse gas emissions. Their determination provided the foundation for an optimistic conversation about climate change solutions despite national inaction. Let's extend that climate of hope to communities along America's eroding edges by highlighting examples of local solutions.

The fight against climate change: four cities leading the way in the Trump era Communities are championing the adaptation solutions that must complement the mitigation triumphs in cities. There are hundreds of stories of America's sea level rise warriors across red and blue states – I know because I've seen them firsthand.

Over the past year and a half, my research partner and I have traveled across the US and its territories to interview hundreds of Americans, from Alaska to Alabama to American Samoa. Funded by National Geographic and partnered with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, our aim was to find America's climate change story.

What we found was a story of hope.

In American Samoa, community advocate Andra Samoa is restoring the mangroves in her home village of Lenoe to stop shoreline erosion and bring back a healthy ecosystem. In Miami Beach, Florida, Elizabeth Wheaton is installing pumps and raising streets to protect neighborhoods and historic buildings intact. And in the Native village of Shaktoolik, Alaska, Mayor Eugene Asicksik has led the community in building a gravel berm to stave off rising tides. As nonpartisan efforts, community adaptations like these can bind us together as a country and spur national support for action on climate change.

I'm the first to admit that hope in the US is hard to come by these days. With the country now ready to pull out of the Paris agreement, it's hard not to feel like America has entered a four- or eight-year period of stagnation. But hope is a future-oriented emotion. And while it's predisposed to today's tragedies, hope is based on the belief that the future can be better than today. It's possible to be hopeful for tomorrow even when things seem hopeless now.

We are at a point today where every decision we make counts in deciding what America's climate change story will be – including the fundamental decision of how we tell climate change stories.

Let's start telling stories of hope and heroes.

Answer ANY 4 of the following in 200 words each: (4x15 =60)

1. Doomsday narratives seem to be quite sensational in our day and age. Have you come across any Doomsday predictions? What were your immediate reactions to these narratives?

2. Do you remember watching films that centered around the 'Doomsday Theme'. Discuss any one of those and look at the way it portrays the end of life on earth.

3. Do you agree with the concluding opinion of Hermann's article. Do you see in her conclusion an evasion of reality? Give reasons for your answer.

4. Victoria Hermann gives examples of people from different parts of America that are doing their bit to save the environment. Would you be able to contribute to her narrative by giving stories of hope from India?

5. It is interesting to see what different religions have to say about the end of the world. Can you pick any one religion and describe what it has to say about the end of the world. What do you think about its description of 'Doomsday'?

II. Here are extracts of two songs, '*Circle of Life*' by Elton John and '*Bad Moon Rising*' by Creedence Clearwater Revival

Circle Of Life- Elton John

From the day we arrive on the planet
And blinking, step into the Sun
There's more to be seen than can ever be seen
More to do than can ever be done
Some say eat or be eaten
Some say live and let live
But all are agreed as they join the stampede
You should never take more than you give
In the circle of life
It's the wheel of fortune
It's the leap of faith
It's the band of hope
Till we find our place
On the path unwinding
In the circle, the circle of life…)

Bad Moon Rising- Creedence Clearwater Revival

I see a bad moon a-rising
I see trouble on the way
I see earthquakes and lightnin'
I see bad times today
Don't go 'round tonight
It's bound to take your life
There's a bad moon on the rise
I hear hurricanes a-blowing
I know the end is coming soon
I fear rivers over flowing
I hear the voice of rage and ruin
Don't go 'round tonight

It's bound to take your life
There's a bad moon on the rise…)

Answer the following questions in 8-9 lines: (2 x 5 =10)

1. Do you see a difference in the meanings you derive from both the songs. Which of the two songs do you find better connected to the central ideas of Victoria Herrmann's 'Doomsday' Article? Give reason for your choice?

2. From the two songs given above, which one is clearly apocalyptic? Give reasons for your choice.