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ST HENRY'S MARIST COLLEGE
GRADE 12 TRIALS EXAMINATION: SEPTEMBER 2024

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE: PAPER II

Time: 3 hours

100 marks

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

1. This question paper consists of 9 pages. Please check that your question paper is complete.
 2. Utilise your reading time carefully, ensuring that the selections made showcase your ability to share your response to the texts.
 3. Questions must be answered in **BOTH SECTIONS**. In **SECTION A**, Question 1 is **compulsory** and then answer **ONE** question on the selected novel. In **SECTION B**, Question 6 is **compulsory**, and then answer **either** Question 7 **or** Question 8.
 4. **Begin each QUESTION on a new page.** Do not copy down headings for your answers. Copy down **only** the question numbers, making sure they are accurate.
 5. You may answer the questions in whatever order you wish, but number your answers exactly as the questions are numbered.
 6. **No word count is required for ANY QUESTION.**
 7. You are encouraged to give your own judgements. Attempt to create space in which your **own voice** is evident. The examiners will judge your answers on your understanding of and insight into given texts. They will also assess the competence with which your answers are expressed.
 8. Take care to follow instructions in each question with meticulous care.
 9. Answers must be written in the Answer Book supplied.
 10. It is in your own interest to write legibly and to present your work neatly.
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SECTION A LITERATURE**QUESTION 1****SHAKESPEARE: OTHELLO****THIS QUESTION IS COMPULSORY**

Study the quotations below and then answer the question that follows:

'A famous philosopher Aristotle quotes, "A man cannot become a hero until he can see the root of his own downfall". Aristotle basically states to have a tragic hero you must first start with as a man that is high and noble. Then suddenly this man must fall to a misfortune **not by bad luck or immorality**; however, due to **bad judgement**. After this, the character must continue to fall to misery until his fate is met. Finally, when this character's fate is met, he or she must **realise** what brought them here and **deal with their fate**.'

— Harold Sullivan & Dr Tom Lewis

[Source: <https://www.bartleby.com/essay/Othello-Tragic-Hero-Quotes-2CC96D01773D18A6>]

AND

OTHELLO: I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword.
But why should honour outlive honesty?
Let it go all. (Othello, Act 5, Scene 2)

TOPIC:

Critically discuss to what extent Othello, despite being **virtuous** and **honourable**, falls victim to his own **fatal flaw** of jealousy, thus becoming the 'Tragic Hero' of the play.

Please note:

- Your response must be in the form of a well-structured literary essay.
- The length of your response must be **approximately 600 words**.
- Your knowledge of Shakespeare's text, *Othello*, and your ability to structure and substantiate your stance in order to develop a **tightly constructed argument** will be assessed.
- **Close** and **relevant** reference to the play is **essential**.
- Do **NOT** provide a word count at the end of your essay.

[30]

AND

NOVELS***THE HANDMAID'S TALE OR THE THEORY OF FLIGHT***

Answer **ONE** question on your selected novel.

Answer **EITHER**

Question 2 (*The Handmaid's Tale*)

OR

Question 3 (*The Handmaid's Tale*)

OR

Question 4 (*The Theory of Flight*)

OR

Question 5 (*The Theory of Flight*)

Please note:

- Your response must be in the form of a well-structured literary essay.
- Your essay should be **approximately 600 words** in length.
- Your ability to select detail from the novel to develop a **succinct argument** that is clearly focused and perceptive **will be assessed**.
- **Close** and **relevant** reference to the text is **essential**.
- Do **NOT** provide a word count at the end of your essay.

EITHER

QUESTION 2**THE HANDMAID'S TALE: MARGARET ATWOOD**

Read the following:

"Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to **empower**, and to **humanise**. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also **repair that broken dignity**."

- Chimamande Ngozi Adichie

TOPIC:

Critically discuss to what extent Atwood, in *The Handmaid's Tale*, presents a story which **empowers**, **humanises** and **repairs broken dignity**.

Your response must refer to a minimum of **TWO** characters.

[30]

OR

QUESTION 3**THE HANDMAID'S TALE: MARGARET ATWOOD**

Read the following:

'The force that opposes the tyranny in my book is one in which Orwell (author of *1984*) himself – despite his belief in the need for political organisation to combat oppression – always put great store: ordinary human decency' – Margaret Atwood on *The Handmaid's Tale*.

TOPIC:

Argue to what extent Offred, despite living in an oppressive regime, is able to **preserve** her **identity** as a **human person** through acts of **ordinary human decency**.

[30]

OR

QUESTION 4**THE THEORY OF FLIGHT: SIPHIWE GLORIA NDLOVU**

Read the following:

“Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to **empower**, and to **humanise**. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also **repair that broken dignity**.”

- Chimamande Ngozi Adichie

TOPIC:

Critically discuss to what extent Ndlovu, in *The Theory of Flight*, presents a story which **empowers**, **humanises** and **repairs broken dignity**.

Your response must refer to a minimum of **TWO** characters.

[30]

OR

QUESTION 5**THE THEORY OF FLIGHT: SIPHIWE GLORIA NDLOVU**

Read the following:

“Now, more than ever, the illusions of division threaten our very existence. We all know the truth: more connects us than separates us. But in times of crisis, the wise build bridges while the foolish build barriers. We must find a way to look after one another as if we were one single tribe.”

[Source: T’Challa, fictional superhero and head of state created by Marvel Comics, speaking at the UN in the 2018 film *Black Panther*]

TOPIC:

Critically discuss to what extent Ndlovu’s *The Theory of Flight* presents characters who **build bridges** in **times of crisis** and who focus more on what **connects us** as humans rather than what separates us.

Your response must refer to a minimum of **TWO** characters.

[30]

60 marks

SECTION B TRANSACTIONAL WRITING: SHORT PIECES**Please note:**

- Answer **TWO** of the following questions.
- You must answer **Question 6 (compulsory)** and then answer **either Question 7 or Question 8**.
- The body of your response should be **approximately 250 to 300 words** in length.
- Remember to pay attention to the **register** and **purpose** of your text.
- It is essential that the **appropriate format** is used.

QUESTION 6**THIS QUESTION IS COMPULSORY**

Read the text below and answer the question that follows.

Tackling Social media trolls requires a new approach which focuses on their audiences.

Social media trolls who successfully whip up their followers with hateful propaganda have created communities that will believe everything they say, no matter how untrue their messages are.

The frightening scenes of far-right extremists clashing with police and even rioting in British towns and cities in recent days have many wondering how to stop the spread of the propaganda that encourages racism, violence and misogyny.

The tough truth is that, in seeking to fact check misinformation and force social media companies to remove hateful content, we are doing it wrong. Another message will simply pop up in place of each one that is removed. The people who plant propaganda are far more advanced in their methods than the people trying to stop them. They are not thinking about messages, but about audience. Hate is 'clickbait'. And social media algorithms put it on steroids.

Our working definitions of propaganda are hopelessly outdated because they all focus on message. And message is unimportant because propagandists will say anything to generate clicks, income or power. Factual accuracy is not important – what matters is that those who wield online influence identify and target a power base.

If what they say is taken down, they will simply find a different way to say it to the people they are trying to reach. In the meantime, they can claim to be censored victims of the establishment.

They appeal to emotion rather than rationality, and though their messaging is equal parts ludicrous and disturbing to the rest of us, it wins an audience. Therefore, that audience – rather than the messaging – should be our focus.

The modern propagandist creates what political scientist Benedict Anderson described as “imagined communities”. He argued that states and nations (and mass media) are founded by successfully creating a community with its own foundation myths, symbols and history. This chimes with the work of propagandist theorist Jacques Ellul, who argued that myths were central and necessary to successful propaganda.

As Ellul would have it, “hate is generally its most profitable resource... Hatred is probably the most spontaneous and common sentiment. It consists of attributing one’s misfortunes and sins to ‘another’... Propaganda of agitation succeeds each time it designates someone as the source of all misery, provided that he is not too powerful.”

Add to this mix social media bots and it brews a poison for our democratic public sphere. Fact-checking is not useless, but it doesn’t resolve the central problem. Better to identify the silos, and work with their members.

We could water down the messaging being sent out to the people causing unrest on the streets with other, better sources. We might even block some of the networks that deliver the content.

This is better than playing fake news whack-a-mole. Once we have identified the silos of information, we can target the algorithms that create them, and those being targeted or isolated.

We can then mediate and ameliorate the problem by reaching out to these groups, spending our energies introducing alternative views, new symbols and foundational myths, negating the effects of the algorithm that led them to their silo.

Fact-checking simply convinces the converted that those who don’t share those views have taken the blue pill of blissful ignorance, rather than the red pill of painful knowledge.

But, by thinking about audience first, we can, maybe, find the lost and lead them through the storm.

DM

[Source:<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2024-08-12-tackling-online-propagandists-requires-a-new-approach-that-focuses-on-their-audiences/>] - Article adapted

You are a writer for an online publication. Write a **blog**, in which you express your views about removing ‘hateful propaganda’ from online media. You may either **argue against** the removal of such propaganda **or argue for it** in your response.

[20]

AND

BOTH QUESTION 7 AND QUESTION 8 ARE BASED ON THE EXTRACT BELOW.

Read the text below and then answer **ONE** of the questions that follow on page 9.

Unacceptable: only 18% of women experts' voices heard in media briefing during elections

This percentage is shockingly low and if we don't take action, it may drop lower

To be honest, I can't stand writing about justice for women, equality for women, safety for women, more voice for women. Why? Because these should be normalised by now; we shouldn't have to be shouting about this in the year 2024.

Only 18% of voices during the election period were those of women experts, according to Media Monitoring Africa's (MMA's) research done in July 2024 on the media and the 2024 national election.

"An interesting element of the monitoring was that initial results showed 14% women's voices, which is the lowest percentage of women's voices we have seen in media coverage during elections. It was a positive move that the number increased to 18% overall. However, this is still far below the global average of 24%, and lower than previous election periods, where women's voices usually account for 21% to 22% of sources," said Thandi Smith, head of programmes at MMA.

Read it and weep, or accept the status quo, or act. Accept the conditions we face, in other words, the slow pace of progress, or misrecognise the terms we are subjected to by acting: speaking out or writing. It may not be deliberate that journalists phone male experts. It may be subliminal, or unthinking, or just who they have in their contact books. But all this contributed to not making the world a better place.

It may seem patronising to have a "Women's Month". And, as some sexist reactionaries who wish to maintain the status quo will say: "What about Men's Month"? But aren't they already the default position of power, all the time and everywhere?

A small personal tangent. I remember some years ago, at a "postmortem" at the end of the week, when you discuss the paper that had just been published and the diary for the next week. I was proposing my story ideas and was cut off by a male voice, my politics section head, who then presented exactly what I had been proposing (10 minutes before in the smokers' corner) for the next week's diary.

But in the conference he talked over me, in a louder voice, and got the claps for his great story ideas. Initially, I thought I was imagining it, and then I saw the pattern. Now, I wish I had said: "Excuse me, let me finish." Or: "Actually, you just repeated my idea."

This anti-feminist backlash is happening everywhere, not just in South Africa. The UK general election revealed the same thing.

As journalist Luba Kassova reported: “The analysis of 171,500 online articles from over 2,000 national and local UK news outlets has revealed a decline in coverage that includes key gender-related terms of relevance to women, compared with the previous two general election campaign periods.”

We have to take note, otherwise in our next election, diversity of voice, vis-à-vis women’s voice, may go down from 18% to 9%, or worse still, zero.

DM

[Source: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2024-08-11-poll-axed-only-18-of-women-experts-voices-heard-in-media-during-elections/>] - Article adapted.

Answer **EITHER** Question 7 **OR** Question 8

QUESTION 7

As a concerned matriculant, you wish to respond to the ideas expressed in this article. Write an **open letter** to a newspaper of your choice, in which **you argue for** or **against** the value of a womens’ day and month in light of these statistics contained in the article.

[20]

OR

QUESTION 8

As a student who wishes to study Journalism next year, you have been invited to a University in your area to deliver a **speech** in which you express your ideas about **female representation** in the media. You may argue **for** or **against** the idea that women are underrepresented in this field.

[20]

40 marks

Total: 100 marks