

Jadavpur University
BA Sociology
Entrance Examination 2022

Time: 2 hours

Full Marks: 50

Answer can be written in English or Bengali

Answer both question no. 1 & 2

2x25=50

1. Has the Covid-19 Pandemic changed your way of looking at the world? (Write in not more than 300 words) 25 Marks

2. Read the following passage and answer the questions

25 Marks

The Parrot's Tale

Once there was a bird. It was an utterly foolish bird. It sang songs, but did not read the scriptures. It flew, it jumped, but did not have the faintest sense of etiquette [code of polite behaviour]. The King said, "Such birds! They are of no use at all. They only eat the fruits in the orchards and the royal fruit-market runs a deficit." He called the minister, and commanded, "Educate it."

The King's nephew was given the responsibility of educating the bird. The scholars held long discussions, the subject being -- "What is the reason behind the foolishness of this creature?" The conclusion was: much learning could not be stored in the tiny nest that the bird could make with just chips and twigs. So, first of all, it was necessary to build a good cage for it. The scholars got amply rewarded and went home merrily.

The goldsmith started building the cage. The cage turned out to be so exquisite [unusually beautifully made] that everyone under the sun rushed to see it. Some said, "Education indeed!" Others said, "Education or no education, at least the bird has got the cage! What a lucky bird!" The goldsmith got a bagful of rewards. He set out for home cheerfully.

The pundit came to teach the bird. He took a pinch of snuff and said, "A few books won't do." The nephew summoned the scribes [writers]. They copied from the books and copied from those copies and made an enormous mound [heap] of such things. Whoever saw it, said, "Bravo! Learning is going to overflow!" The scribes got cartful of rewards. At once they rushed home. None of their descendants [successors] faced any poverty ever since.

[Turn over

The nephew was always busy, doing endless number of things regarding the surveillance [watchful supervision] of the precious cage. Repairs were quite frequent. Apart from that, there was the washing and the cleaning and the polishing of the cage. Everyone admitted, "Sure signs of improvement."

The King wished to see for himself the lightening speed at which education was proceeding. So, one day he came to the education center with his entire entourage [a group of people surrounding an important person] of friends, companions and courtiers. And he saw it. Very pleasing indeed. The method was so overwhelming compared to the bird that one could hardly notice the bird. It seemed it was rather irrelevant to look at the bird. The King understood that the arrangements were faultless. There was no corn in the cage, no water either. Only heaps of pages had been torn out from heaps of books; and with the tip of a pen, those pages were being stuffed into the bird's mouth. There was no room in the mouth for the bird to squeeze out a cry, let alone a tune. It was really a terribly pleasing sight.

In a rather respectable and predictable way, the bird became half-dead as the days passed. The guardians understood that the situation was hopeful. But still -- as its bad habits were -- the bird looked at the morning sun and flapped [moving up and down] its wings in a very objectionable manner. Some days it was even found to make an attempt to break the rods of the cage with its sickly beak.

The administrator said, "What audacity!"

Immediately, the blacksmith came to the education department. An iron chain was manufactured and the wings of the bird were cut off.

The King's relatives shook their heads gravely and said, "In this land, you see, the birds are not only stupid, but ungrateful as well."

The bird died --- no one knew when. The infamous fault-finder spread the news, "The bird has died."

The King called the nephew and asked, "Dear nephew, what is this that I hear?"

The nephew said, "Your Majesty, the bird's education is now complete." The King asked, "Does it still jump?" The nephew said, "God forbid."

"Does it still fly?"

"No."

“Does it sing any more?”

“No.”

“Does it scream if it doesn't get food?”

“No.”

The King said, “Bring the bird in. I would like to see it.”

The bird was brought in. With it came the administrator, the guards, the horsemen. The King felt the bird. It didn't open its mouth and didn't utter a word. Only the pages of books, stuffed inside its stomach, raised a ruffling [beating or rustling] sound.

Questions:

- a. What idea of education does the piece ‘Parrot’s Tale’ convey? 5
- b. Do you find any resemblance between the present education system and the education that the king recommended for the parrot? Elaborate in your own words. 10
- c. Does the above piece enlighten you about the possibility of an alternative education? In this connection do you think employing technology in classrooms can transform education and learning for children? Give reasons for your answer. 10

5+10+10=25