

Section C- QUESTIONS

1.

Read the story given below and answer the questions that follow:-

THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

The hare was always laughing at the tortoise because he walked so slowly. “Really I don’t know why you bother to go at all,” she sneered. ‘By the time you get there it will all be over- whatever it is.’

The tortoise laughed. ‘I may be slow.’ He said, ‘but I bet I can get to the end of the field before you can. If you want to race, I’ll prove it to you.’

Expecting an easy victory the hare agreed and she bounced off as fast as she could go. The tortoise plodded steadily after her.

Now it was in the middle of a very hot sunny day and before long, the hare started to feel a little drowsy. I think I’ll just take a short nap under this hedge. ‘She said to herself.’ Even if the tortoise passed by I’ll catch him up in a flash. The hare lay down in the shade and was soon fast asleep. The tortoise plodded on under the midday sun. Much later, the hare awoke. It was later than she had intended but she looked round confidently ‘No sign of old tortoise, I see, even if I did have rather more than forty winks.’

Away she went, running through the short grass and the growing corn, leaping ditches and brambles with ease. In a very short time she turned the last corner and paused for a moment to look at the place where the rope was to end. There, not a yard from the finishing line was the tortoise, plodding steadily on. One foot after another, nearer and nearer to the end of the race.

With a great bounce the hare streaked forward. It was too late. Though she threw herself panting over the line, the tortoise was there before her.

‘Now do you believe me?’ Asked the tortoise. But the hare was too out of breath to reply.

- i) Classify the above narrative
- ii) Why did the hare always laugh at tortoise?
- iii) Why did the hare feel drowsy?
- iv) What made it possible for hare to lose the race?
- v) Try to picture yourself as the story teller charged with the responsibility of narrating this particular story. What story telling devices would you employ?
- vi) Why did the tortoise laugh at Hare’s comment?
- vii) Describe how tortoise’s own words “.... I may be slow but I bet I can get to the end of the fields before you can.....” eventually proved to be true.
- viii) Mention any two moral lessons you can learn from this story

2.

POETRY

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow:-

CRAZY PETER PRATTLES

So what is the mountain deal
about the minister’s ailing son
that he makes boiling news?

How come it was not whispered
when Tina’s hospital bed crawled with maggots
and her eyes **oozed** pus
because the doctors lacked gloves?

What about Kasajja’s only child

who died because the man with the key
to the oxygen room was on leave?

I have seen queues
of **emaciated** mothers clinging to
babies with **translucent** skins
faint in line
and the lioness of a nurse
commanding tersely
“Get up or leave the line”

Didn't I hear it rumoured that
the man with the white mane
and black robes
whose mouth stores the justice of the land
ushered a rape case out of court
because the seven-year-old
failed to testify?

Anyway, I only remember these things
when I drink,
they are indeed tipsy explosion

(*Crazy Peter Prattles*' by Susan Nalugwa Kiguli in *Echoes Across the Valley*: Ed. Arthur I. Luvai and Kwamchetsi Makokha)

- (a) What problems are highlighted in the poem about the state of health care?
- (b) What is the significance of the rhetorical question in the first stanza?
- (c) Pick out any two images in this poem and explain their significance
- (d) (i) Identify the problem that the fifth stanza deals with
(ii) How does this connect with the problems in the previous stanzas?
- (e) Explain the meaning of the following words as they are used in the poem
 - (i) Oozed
 - (ii) Emaciated.....
 - (iii) Translucent ..
- (f) What is the significance of the last stanza?

3. Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

I MET A THIEF

On the beach, on the coast,
Under the idle, whispers coconut towers,
Before the growling, foaming, waves,
I met a thief, who guessed I had
An innocent heart for her to steal.

She took my hand and led me under,
The intimate cashew boughs which shaded
The downy grass and peeping weeds
She jumped and plucked the nuts for me to suck:
She sang and laughed and pressed close

and old plant

There I see her
coiling herself around
tourists and bosses
like a parasitic
climbing plant

There I see her coming
from the back door
like a forged coin
that assumes the high value
yet always hounded by spies

I stand to see her
when the forged coin is found
when the immigration birds
are back in their nests
or when the dog
that it constantly feeds on
is washed with DDT
or when the dog is dead
on a tarmac road
and when the stems are cut
in the dry windy season

- a) Name FOUR things the person referred to as 'her' has been likened to.
- b) What is the main theme of the poem? Explain with suitable examples
- c) What is the attitude of the poet towards the subject of the poem? Illustrate using words or phrase from the poem?
- d) Identify three stylistic devices used in the poem and show their effectiveness in bringing out the poet's message.
- (e) Explain the meaning of the last stanza – what mood does it express?

5.

ORAL LITERATURE

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow:

THE WICKED CHIEF

There lived once a wicked chief. Nobody liked him, because of his wickedness. He was wicked to old men and women. By pretending to be kind he tried to be popular to young men who lived in that country. When the chief won over young men, they all liked him.

One day, the chief called all the young men and told them, "My friends, don't you see?" They asked, "What?" you should kill all of them. Everybody should kill his father."

Ah: (that they should kill their fathers). As a result, everybody whose father was old brought him to be killed. This one went and brought him to be killed. This one went and brought him to be killed, the other went brought his father to be killed. They killed all the old men, leaving one only.

He was a father of a man who said no. "Why should the chief kill all old men and why would I send my father to be killed?" He got down and went to dig a large hole and concealed it nicely. He

sent his father there, where he had dug. He fetched wood and put it across and covered it with soil, making a small hole for air to pass through. At that time, they had finished to kill all the old men.

When the chief finished executing them, he then called all the young men. "My friends we have now finished killing all our old men. This is a cow I am giving to you. I am so happy we have got rid of these old men, so go and kill the cow. When you have killed the cow, cut the best part of its meat and bring it to me. If you don't bring it, you yourself are not safe." (That is all right) eh; The young men rushed out and slaughtered the cow, which is the best part of the meat of a cow? They were worried

They went and cut the liver and sent it to him. He asked whether or not that was the best part of the meat. They answered yes. They added part of the bile. He said that wasn't the best part of the meat and they should go and find it quickly. The people became more worried.

Every night the young man secretly took food to his father. One day he took food to his father, who asked about the news of the town. He said, "My father, now we are suffering. When we killed all the old men, the chief gave us a cow to go and kill. When we killed the cow, he said we must both find the sweetest and the best part of the meat and bring to him, that if we do not bring them, we are not safe ourselves. This is what is worrying us." The old man laughed, but asked him if he knew the sweetest part of the meat. He said no. He again asked if he did not know the bitterest part. He said no. "Then the sweetest and the bitterest is the tongue. When you go, cut the tongue and sent it to him and say that is the sweetest part of the meat and the bitterest."

The man rushed home while all the people sat down, undecided about what to do. If something had not happened they might have thrown the whole meat away and run away. When the boy arrived he said, "My friends take the tongue of the cow in." they cut the tongue for him, and he took it to the chief's palace.

He went and threw it down and said, "Chief, see the sweetest part of the meat and the bitterest part also."

The chief sat down quietly and finally said, "You did not kill your father. Speak the truth. You have not killed your father."

He said, "It is the truth, I didn't kill him. When all the other men were killing their own fathers I went and hid mine."

He said, "You are the son of a wise old man. The sweetest and the bitterest part of a meat is the tongue. As for that all these young men are fools. Why should somebody send his father to be killed? But if you want the sweetest part of the meat, find the tongue, were it not for your tongue, you would not have an enemy: it is also because of your tongue that you will not have a friend."

1. Classify the above narrative
2. State any two characteristics of oral narratives present in the narrative above
3. Identify and discuss any two characteristics traits of the chief and any one character of the young man (who didn't kill the father)
4. Explain any moral lesson that can be learned from this narrative
5. Give one economic activity practices by the community from which this narrative was taken
6. Identify any two styles in the oral narrative
7. Why do you think the chief wanted all the old men to be killed?

6. Read The Poem Blew And Answer The Questions Below:

Would you know my name if I saw you in heaven?

Would it be the same if I saw you in heaven?

I must be strong and carry on, cause I know I don't belong here in heaven.

Would you hold my hand if I saw you in heaven?

Would you help me stand if I saw you in heaven?

I'll find my way through night and day, cause I know I can't just stay here in heaven

Time can bring you down, time can bend your knees
Time can break the heart; have you 'begging' "please" 'begging' "please"
Beyond the door there's peace, I'm sure
And I know there will be no more tears in heaven.
Would you know my name if I saw you in heaven?
Would you be the same if I saw you in heaven?
I must be strong and carry on, cause I know I don't belong here in heaven.
'Cause I know I don't belong here in heaven.

- a) What is the subject matter of this poem? Illustrate your answer
 - b) Identify and illustrate the feature of style evident in stanza three
 - c) Give and illustrate two examples of the persona's statements to illustrate his attitude of admiration
 - d) What is the implication of rhetorical questions beings set in conditional tenses?
 - e) What is the personas imagination of life in heaven? f)
- In note form, give the main item of the last stanza
- g) *Explain the meaning of the following phrases as used in the poem*
 - i) Hold my hand..... -
 - ii) Break the heart.....
 - iii) No more tears.....

7. **Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow:-**

UGU You see that Benz sitting at the rich's end?

Ha! That Motoka is Motoka.
It belongs to the minister for fairness
Who yesterday was loaded with doctorate
At Makerere with whisky and I don't know what
Plus I hear the literate thighs of an undergraduate.

You see those market women gaping their mouths?
The glory of its inside has robbed them of words
I tell you the feathery seats the gold steering
The TV the radio station the gear!
He can converse with all the world presidents
While driving in the back seat with his darly
Between his legs without the driver seeing a thing!
Ha! Ha! Ha!

Look at the driver chasing the children away
They want to see the pistol in the door pocket
Or the button that lets out bullets from the machine
Through the eyes of the car – Sshhhhhhhhh
Lets not talk about it.

But I tell you that Motoka can run
It sails like a lijato, speeds like a swallow
And doesn't know anyone stupid on its way
The other day I heard

But look at its behind, that mother of twins!
A-ah That Motoka is Motoka.

You just wait, I'll tell you more
But let me first sell my tomatoes

(By THEOLUZUKA)

- (a) Who is the persona?
- b) Briefly explain what the poem is all about.
- c) Identify any two stylistic devices used in the poem.
- d) Explain the character of the market women as portrayed in the poem.
- e) Explain the meaning of the following lines as used in the poem.
 - i) Ha! That Motoka is Motoka.
 - ii) The glory of its inside has robbed them of the words.
 - iii) But look at its behind, that mother of twins. *UGU*
- f) Describe the tone of the poem and comment on the persona's attitude towards the minister for fairness.
- g) Identify the economic activity of the people portrayed in this poem.

8. **Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow:-**

AFTER A WAR

The outcome? Conflicting rumours
As to what faction murdered
The one man who, had he survived
Might have ruled us without corruption
Not that it matters now:
We're busy collecting the dead
Counting them, hard though it is
To be sure what side they were on
What's left of their bodies and faces
Tells of no need but for burial
And mutilations was practiced
By right, left and centre alike
As for the children and women
Who knows what they wanted
Apart from the usual things?
Food is scarce now, and men are scarce
Whole villages burnt to the ground
New cities in disrepair
The war is over, somebody must have won
Somebody will have won. When peace is declared

- (a) According to the poem, what are the consequences of war?
- (b) What techniques has the poet employed and what are their effects?
- (c) What is the poet's attitude towards war?
- (d) Explain the meaning of the following lines:-
 - (i) Food is scarce now, men are scarce *KSW*
 - (ii) Whole villages burnt to the ground
- (e) From the poem, why would you say that war is a no win situation?
- (f) What's the mood of the poem?

9. ***Read the oral narrative below and answer the questions that follow:***

Why Zebra has stripped skin

Long ago, man tamed only the dog. Before he started taming any other animal, it was said that the donkey could also be tamed. This story came from one hunter.

One day while hunting, this hunter killed a large animal, which was too heavy for him to carry along. So, as he wondered how to carry his kill he saw a donkey pass nearby and an idea came to his mind. "Why not place this carcass on the donkey so that it can help me?" he wondered. He did not know what would happen if he tried this because the donkey was also a wild animal. Nevertheless he decided to try.

So he followed the donkey and luring it with sweet words and grass, the donkey allowed him to place his load on its back without resistance. He then led the way until they arrived home. After unloading the donkey, he gave it more grass and some water. It ate and drunk and appeared happy. From that day, the donkey never left the hunter's homestead; and he gave the donkey food and drink daily. The donkeys multiplied and there were many donkeys in this homestead, all helping the hunter to carry his loads. Soon, the story went round that somebody had tamed a donkey, which he was using as a beast of burden. Villagers came to see for themselves and they were impressed with the way the hunter's donkeys were working. Having satisfied their curiosity, they also went out into the wild to look for donkeys to tame. The donkey became a famous beast of burden in the whole village and beyond, carrying all the heavy loads that men and women could not even lift with assistance.

As all this was happening, the donkeys which were left in the wild did not know what was going on. They would only see their friends go away with men and women never to return. They came to understand that they had been deserted only after most of their friends had been taken away. The few who were left started to hide deep in the woods to avoid any contact with human beings. But their efforts to hide were all in vain! Human beings had realized that donkeys were very useful animals. So they made every possible effort to catch them even from deep in the forest.

This problem disturbed the wild donkeys. Many of their kind had been captured by human beings. The rumours spreading around were that the captured ones were made to work very hard with only little food, since there was no time to graze, while those left in the wild grazed the whole day and even during the night.

Indeed, this was frightening. The rest of the donkeys decided to act quickly, lest they too be captured. They called a meeting at which they discussed what should be done to stop the movement of donkeys into people's homes. When the meeting came to a stalemate, one donkey suggested that they should seek help from Hare since he was known to be cunning and clever. All agreed to seek advice from Hare.

The next morning, the donkey representative went to Hare. Hare was only too willing to help. Therefore Hare asked him to tell all his friends to come to his compound early the next morning. They agreed. When they arrived, they found Hare with whitewash in a large bucket and a brush in his hand. They were all at a loss as to know how this whitewash was going to help them. When they enquired, Hare attempted to explain but they could not understand.

So Hare asked one of them to volunteer for a demonstration but none wanted to. Then Hare approached one old donkey and whispered in its ear saying, "Once you have been painted, you will not be a donkey any more and human beings will not take you away." The old donkey said, "I will volunteer because if the human beings take me and put loads on my back, I will die." So the Hare quickly started painting stripes of whitewash on this donkey. Soon, the entire body of the donkey was filled with white and grey stripes. When the other donkeys looked at the painted donkey, they admired it and some wanted to be painted. But others came to the painted donkey and it whispered something in their ears. So they rushed and crowded around Hare and although he warned them that they had to be careful with the whitewash, they did not heed his warning. They jostled, pushed, fought and even bit each other in the struggle to be the next one to be painted. It was during this

struggle to be painted that one donkey toppled the bucket containing the whitewash, pouring the entire contents on the grass from where it could not be recovered. The donkeys that had been painted remained in the forest because human beings did not capture them for they looked different from the domesticated ones. The striped donkeys changed their name from donkey to Zebra. All the ones that remained unpainted after the whitewash were captured by the human beings and taken to their homes to labour for them up to this day. And there ends my story.

(Adapted from Kenya Oral Literature Narratives, A selection edited by Kavetsa Adagala and Wanjiku .M. Kabira. East African Educational Publishers.)

- (a) Classify , with reasons, this story
- (b) Identify and illustrate the following:-
 - (i) One economic activity
 - (ii) One social activity.
- (c) Explain the use of personification in this narrative
- (d) What was the agenda of the meeting held by the donkeys?
- (e) What is the attitude of the donkeys towards the Hare?
- (f) What were the consequences of the donkey's struggle to be painted?
- (g) Apart from personification, what other features of oral narratives have been used in this story
- (h) Explain the character of the donkeys in the 2nd last paragraph
- (i) Explain the meaning of the following words and expressions as used in the story
 - (i) Beast of burden.....
 - (ii) Demonstration.....
 - (iii) Toppled.....

10. *Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow*

SYMPTOMS OF LOVE

Love is a universal migraine,
A bright stain on the vision
Blotting out reason.
Symptoms of true love
Are leanness, jealousy,
Laggard dawns;

Are omens and nightmares-
Listening for a knock.
Waiting for a sign:

For a touch of her fingers
In a darkened room,
For a searching look

Take courage, lover!
Could you endure such pain
At any hand but hers?

(Literature: Reading Fiction, Poetry and Drama, McGraw-Hill, 2000)

Questions

- a) Identify the persona in the poem (2 mks)
- b) What is the persona's attitude towards love? (Explain) (3 mks)

- c) Describe the tone of the poem with evidence from it (3 mks)
- d) Identify and explain any **three** figures of speech used in the poem (6 mks)
- e) Describe the mood of the poem citing evidence to support your answer (3 mks)
- f) Explain the rhetorical question at the end of the poem (2 mks)
- g) Explain the meaning of each of the following expressions as used in the poem
 - i) **Migraine**
 - ii) **Laggard dawn's**
 - iii) **Searching look**

11. ***Read the following oral poem and answer the questions that follow:-***

Don't cry baby
 Sleep little baby
 Father will nurse you
 Sleep baby sleep

Little bird flitting away to the forest so fast
 Tell me, little bird, have you seen her
 Have you seen my crying baby's mother?

She went to the river at early dew
 A pot upon her head
 But down the water floats her pot
 And the path from the river is empty

Shall I take him under the palm?
 Where the green shade rests at noon?
 Oh no, no
 For the thorns will prick my baby
 Shall I take him under the giant baobab
 Where the silk cotton plays with the wing?

Oh no, no
 For the termite- eaten bough will break
 And crush my little baby
 My little sleeping baby
 The day is long and the sun grows hot
 So, sleep, my little baby, sleep
 For mother is gone to a far, far land- Alas!
 She is gone beyond the river.

- a) Give four features which prove that the above oral poem is a lullaby
- b) Identify and illustrate the two speakers in the poem
- c) Why is the singer hesitant to take the baby under the shade?
- e) Identify and illustrate any two characteristics of oral poems evident in the above poem
- f) What is the singer's attitude towards the baby?
- g) Comment on social organization of the people in the community where this song was collected

14. Read the following oral poem and answer the questions that come after it:

The earth does not get fat,
It makes an end of those who wear the head plumes,
We shall die on the earth
The earth does not get fat. It makes an
end of those who act swiftly as heroes
Shall we die on the earth?

Listen O earth. We shall mourn because of you,
Listen O earth. We shall die on the earth?

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of chiefs
Shall we all die on the earth?
The earth does not get fat.
It makes an end of the women chiefs
Shall we die on earth?

The earth does not get fat. It makes an end of the royal women
Shall we die on earth?

Listen O earth. We shall mourn because of you.
Listen O earth. We shall die on the earth?

The earth does not get fat. It makes
an end of the beasts.
Shall we die on the earth?

Listen you who are a sleep, who are
left tightly closed in the land.
Listen you who are asleep, who are left tightly closed in the land.
Shall we all sink into the earth?
Listen O earth, the sun is setting tightly.
We shall all enter into the earth

(Source: Akivaga.K and Odaga A.B, Oral Literature: A school certificate course)

- a) Classify this song and give reasons for your classification
- b) What is the subject matter in this song?
- c) Identify and comment on two features of style that are characteristic of songs
- d) Describe the attitude of the singer to the subject he/she is singing about
- e) What social belief is brought out in this song?
- f) Explain the meaning of the following lines :-
 - i) The earth does not get fat
 - ii) We shall all enter into the earth
 - iii)..... who are tightly closed in the land.

13. Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow

I SHALL RETURN

I shall return, I shall return again
To laugh and love and watch with wonder eyes
At garden noon the forest fires burn,
Wafting their blue black smoke to sapphire skies
I shall return to loiter by the streams
That bathe the brown blades of bending grasses,
And realize once more my thousand dreams
Of waters rushing down the mountain passes
I shall return to hear the fiddle and fife
Of village dances, dear delicious tunes
That stir the hidden depths of native life
Stray melodies of the dim-remembered tunes
I shall return, I shall return again
To ease my mind of long, long years of pain

(Claude McKay)

- (a) Explain briefly what the poem is about (3mks)
- (b) In **NOTE** form, identify **four** things which the persona is longing to return to (4mks)
- (c) With illustration from the poem, identify and illustrate any **three** stylistic devices used in the poem (6mks)
- (d) What is the tone of the poem? Illustrate your answer (2mks)
- (e) In what kind of environment is the persona living? Explain your answer (2mks)
- (f) What specific name is given to the poems with one stanza and fourteen lines as one above?
- (g) What is the name given to the last two lines ending in similar sound? (1mk)

14. Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow:

POETRY:- OUT CAST

They met by accident
He proposed the idea
She gave her consent
All the way to the altar.

The casualty was male
And his pigment was pale
Unlike his alleged sire
Who was black with Ire

The recourse was legitimate
He declaimed responsibility
So they had to separate

So they had to separate
The boy remains illegitimate.

Last month not long ago
They both took their go
Coincidentally by accident
Nothing to inherit.

The poor boy is hardly ten
And knows no next of kin
He roams the street of town.
Like a wind sown outcast.

The boy remains illegitimate.

- a) Who is the persona in this poem? (2 mks)
- b) What is the message in the poem? (4 mks)
- c) Comment on any **three** stylistic device used in the poem. (6 mks)
- d) What is the persona's attitude towards the "they?" (2 mks)
- e) Comment on the last stanza. (3 mks)

15. **Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow:**

The inmates
Huddled together,
Cold biting their bones,
Teeth chattering from the chill,
The air oppressive,
The smell offensive
They sit and they reflect.

The room self-contained,
At the corner the gents' invites
With the nice fragrance of ammonia,
And fresh human dung,
The fresh inmates sit thoughtfully.

Vermin perform a guard of honour,
Saluting him with a bite here,
And a bite there,
Welcome to the world' they seem to say.

The steel lock of the door,
The walls insurmountable
And the one torching torturous bulb
Stare vacantly at him.
Slowly he reflects about the consignment
That gave birth to his confinement
Locked in for conduct refinement
The reason they put him in the prison.

The clock ticks
But too slowly
Five years will be a long time
Doomed in the dungeon
In this hell of a cell.

- (a) What is the attitude of the speaker towards the fresh inmate? (4mks)
- (b) Explain the atmosphere created through description in the poem (4mks)
- (c) Why is the fresh 'inmate in prison? (2mks)
- (d) Identify and explain any three stylistic devices in the poem (6mks)
- (e) Explain the mood of the new convict (2mks)
- (f) **Explain the meaning of the following line:**
'Locked in for conduct refinement (2mks)

16. *Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow:*

(20mks)

THE FOOLISH OLD MAN

My father began as a god
Full of heroic tales
Of days when he was young
His laws were as immutable
As if brought down from Sinai
which indeed he thought they were.
He fearlessly lifted me to heaven
By a mere swing to his shoulder
And made me a godling
By seating me astride
Our milk cow's back and too,
Upon the great white gobbler.
of which others went in constant fear.

Strange then how he shrank and shrank
Until by my time of adolescence
He had become a foolish small old man
with silly and outmoded views
of life and morality.

Stranger still
that as I became older
his faults and his intolerances
scattered away into the past
revealing virtues
such as honesty, generosity, integrity.

Strangest of all
how the deeper he recedes into the grave
the more I see myself
as just one more of the little men
who creep through life
no knee – high to this long-dead god.

(Ian Mudie)

- (a) Briefly comment on the theme of the poem (4mks)
(b) Comment on the suitability of the title of the poem (3mks)
(c) What is the attitude of the persona towards his father? (3mks)
(d) Identify and explain any **three** stylistic devices used in the poem (6mks)
(e) What do the following groups of people learn from the poem?
(i) Parents. (ii) Children.....
(f) **Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the poem.** (2mks)
Immutable..... Outmoded.....

17. **ORAL LITERATURE**

Read the story below and then answer the questions which follow:-

When she is the only one at the foot of the mortar-stones the hen only scratches with one paw.
For she has, so she thinks, plenty of time to choose her grains for corn.

Ponda certainly was not the only girl in M'badane, but she had only to appear for the most beautiful, and far from being fastidious and difficult to please as might have been expected, she was only too anxious to find a husband, as she was afraid of growing into an old maid, for she had already turned sixteen. On their side suitors were not lacking: every single day her girl-friends' brothers and fathers, young men and old men from other villages, sent griots and dialis bearing gifts and fine words to ask her hand in marriage.

If it had only depended on herself Ponda would certainly by now have a baby tied on her back, either good, or bad-tempered and crying. But in the matter of marriage, as in all things a girl must submit to her father's will. It is her father who must decide whom she is to belong to: a Prince, a rich dioula or a common badolo who sweats in the field in the sun; it is for her father to say if he wishes to bestow her on a powerful marabout or an insignificant talibe.

Now Mor, the father of Ponda had demanded neither the immense bride-price of a rich man, nor the meager possession of a badolo; still less had he thought of offering his daughter to a marabout or to a marabout's disciple in order to enlarge his place in paradise. Mor simply told all those who come to ask for his daughter, whether for themselves, for their masters, for their sons or for their brothers:

"I will give Ponda without demanding bride-price or gifts, to the man who will kill an ox and send me the meat by the agency of a hyena; but when it arrives not a single morsel of the animal must be missing."

That was more difficult than making the round-cared Narr-the-Moor keep a secret. It was more difficult than entrusting a calabash full of honey to a child and expect him not to even dip his little finger in. You might as well try prevent the sun from leaving his home in the morning or retiring to bed to the end of the day. You might as well forbid the thirsty sand to drink the first drops of the first rains. Entrust meat to Bouki-the-Hyena? You might as well entrust a pot of butter to a burning fire. Entrust meat to Bouk and prevent her from touching it.

But how can you entrust meat; even dried meat to a hyena, and prevent her to touch it? It was an impossible task, so said the griots as they ended their way home to their masters: so said the mothers who had come on their sons' behalf, so said the old men who had come to ask for the beautiful Ponda for themselves.

A day's walk from M'Badane lay the village of N'diour. The inhabitants of N'Diou were by no means ordinary folk; they were, or so they believed, the only men and the only women since earliest times to have tamed the double hyenas, with whom in fact they lived in perfect peace and good understanding. It is true that the people of N'Diour did their share to maintain these good relations.

Every Friday they killed a bull which they offered to Bouki-the-Hyena and her tribe. Of all the young men of N'Diour, Birane was the best at wrestling as well as working in the fields, he was also the most handsome. When his griot brought back presents that Mor had refused, and told him the conditions which Ponda's father had laid down, Birane said to himself: "I shall be the one to win Ponda for my bed," He killed an ox, dried the meat, and put it in a goatskin; the skin was enclosed in a coarse cotton bag and the whole thing placed in the middle of a truss of straw.

On Friday, when Boruki came with her family to partake of the offering given by the people of N'Diou Birane went to her and said, 'My griot, who has no more sense than a babe at the breast and who is as stupid as an ox has brought the fine gifts that I sent to Ponda, the daughter of Mor of N'Badane. I am certain that if you, whose wisdom is great and whose tongue is as honey, took this simple truss of straw to N'Badane to the house of Mor you would only need to say, "Birane asks for your daughter, "for him to grant her to you".'

"I have grown old, Birane, and my back is no longer very strong, but N'Bar, the oldest of my children, is full of vigour and he has inherited a little of my wisdom. He will go to N'Badane for you, and I am sure that he will acquaint himself well of your mission."

M'Bar set off very early in the morning, the truss of straw on his back. When the dew moistened the truss of straw the pleasant Odour of the meat began to float in the air. M'bar-thehyena stopped, lifted his nose sniffed to the right, sniffed to the left, then resumed his way, a little less hurriedly it seemed. The smell grew stronger, the Hyena stopped again, bared his teeth, thrust his nose to the right, to the left, into the air, then turned round and sniffed to the four winds. He resumed his journey, but now hesitating all the time, as if held back by this penetrating, insistent smell which seemed to come from all directions.

Not being able to resist it any longer, M'Bar left the track that led from N'Diour to N'Badane, made huge circling detours in the veld, ferreting to the right, ferreting to the left continually retracing his steps, and took three whole days instead of one to reach N'Badane.

N'Bar was certainly not in the best of tempers when he entered Mor's home. He did not wear the pleasant expressions of a messenger who comes to ask a great favour. This smell of meat that impregnated all the grass and all the bushes of the veld and still impregnated the huts of N'Badane and the courtyard of Mor's home, had made him forget on the 'way from N'Diour all the wisdom that Biouki had instilled into him, and stilled the gracious words that one always expects from a petitioner. M'Bar scarcely even unclenched his teeth to say: Assalamou aleyokoum!" and nobody could even hear his greeting; but as he threw down the truss of straw from his back had bent under its weight, he muttered in a voice that was more than disagreeable, 'Bitane of N'Diour sends you this truss of staw and asks for your daughter. Under the very eyes of M'Bar the Hyena, first astonished, then indignant, then covetous Mor cut the liana ropes that bound the truss of a straw, opened it up and took out the bag of coarse cotton; from the coarse cotton bag of he took out the goat-skin and from the goatskin the pieces of dried meat.

'Go', 'Mor, said to M'Bar-the-hyena, who nearly burst with rage at the sight of all that meat he had unsuspectingly earned for three days, and which was spread out, there without his being able to touch a single bit. (for the folk of N'Badane were not like the inhabitants of N'Diour, and in M'Badane hunting spears were lying all round). 'Go,' said Mor, 'go and tell Birane that I give him my daughter. Tell him that he is not only the most spirited and the strongest of all the young men of N'Diour, but he is also the shrewdest.

He managed to entrust meat to you, hyena, he will be able to keep a sharp watch on his wife and outwit all tricks.'

- a) What type of oral narrative is this?
- b) State one economic activity of the community from which the story is taken.
- c) What two aspects of Birane's character come out in this story?
- d) What moral lesson do we learn from this narrative?
- e) Identify two significant devices used in this narrative and comment on their effectiveness
- f) Identify three aspects of social life in the community from which the oral narrative is set

18. *Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.*

"SYMPATHY"

I know what the caged bird feels, alas !
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opens,
And the faint perfume from its petals steals-

I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back for his perch and cling
When he rather would be on the branch a – swing;
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting –
I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his blossom sore,
When he beats his bars and would be free;
It is not a song of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings –
I know why the caged bird sings !

*(Adapted from the poem by Paul Lawrence Dunbar
In American Negro poetry, edited by Arna Bontemps.
New York: Hill and Wang, 1974)*

- (a) Explain briefly what the poem is about .
- (b) What does the poet focus on in each of the three stanzas? Give your answer in note form.
- (c) How would you describe the persona's feelings towards the caged bird?
- (d) What can we infer about the persona's own experiences?
- (e). Identify a simile in the first stanza and explain why it is used.
- (f). ***Explain the meaning of the following lines:***
 - (i) “And the faint perfume from its petals steals”.
 - (ii) “And they pulse again with a keener sting “