Elective Course in English
UNDERSTANDING PROSE (BEGE – 105)
Based on Blocks 1-7

Maximum Marks: 100
Programme: BDP

Answer All Questions

1. Comment on the dominant variety of prose (narrative, expository or descriptive) present in each of the following passages. Write a brief critical appreciation of each passage in about 250 words each:

a) The most embarrassing moment of my sophomore year was how I earned my nickname, Crash. It all started right after school when I turned on to the busiest street by the school. First I pulled up right behind this truck at a stop sign. After a second, a fellow older student told me that I was really close and that I was going to hit the truck in front of me. At the moment I was trying to tell the kid whom I was giving a ride to, to get back in the car because he was hanging out of the window. Since I was distracted, I thought the long line of traffic had started to move, but it hadn’t. In the blink of an eye I hit the back of the truck in front of me. The devastation sunk in. I was so worried that I damaged the truck, but all that I did was scratch his bumper. Lucky for him! Then it was time to look at my car. My car was ruined. The hood was buckled, the front end was pushed back, and my headlights were broken. Humiliated and scared, I still had to drive my bashed -up car home. During School that year, I never did hear the end of what had happened that day.

b) How strange is the lot of us mortals! Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he know not, though he sometimes thinks he senses it. But without deeper reflection one knows from daily life that one exists for other people- first of all for those upon whose smiles and well-being our own happiness is wholly dependent and then for the many, unknown to us, to whose destinies we are bound by the ties of sympathy. A hundred times everyday I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labours of other men living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving.

c) Gregory is my beautiful gray Persian cat. He walks with pride and grace, performing a dance of disdain as he slowly lifts and lowers each paw with the delicacy of a ballet dancer. His pride, however, does not extend to his appearance, for he spends most of his time indoors watching television and growing fat. He enjoys TV commercials, especially those for Meow Mix and 9 Lives. His familiarity with cat food commercials has led him to reject generic brands of cat food in favor of only the most expensive brands. Gregory is as finicky about visitors as he is about what he eats, befriending some and repelling others. He may snuggle up against your ankles, begging to be petted, or he may imitate a skunk and stain your favorite trousers. Gregory does not do this to establish his territory, as many cat experts think, but to humiliate me because he is jealous of my friends. After my guests have fled, I look at the old fleabag snoozing and smiling to himself in front of the television set, and I have to forgive him for his obnoxious, but endearing, habits.

(10x3=30)
2. Elaborate on the plot of the story “The Legacy” by Virginia Woolf. (10)

3. Would you say that *The Binding Vine* is an appropriate title for the novel? Give reasons for your answer. (10)

4. Analyse “The Quest of Men” in terms of its theme and prose style. (10)

5. Anne Frank’s diary is a commentary on war and its terrible impact on human life. Discuss. (10)

6. Discuss the main features of Margaret Laurence’s speech. (10)

7. Critically analyse Gandhi’s art and craft of autobiography based on your study of the excerpts from *My Experiments with Truth*. (10)

8. Analyse the three varieties of prose that you have read in your course. Substantiate your answer with examples. (10)
Q. 1. Comment on the dominant variety of prose (narrative, expository or descriptive) present in each of
the following passages. Write a brief critical appreciation of each passage in about (250 words each:)

(a) The most embarrassing moment of my sophomore year was how I earned my nick name, Crash. It all
started right after school when I turned on to the busiest street by the school. First I pulled up right behind this
truck at a stop sign. After a second, a fellow older student told me that I was really close and that I was going
to hit the truck in front of me. At the moment I was trying to tell the kid whom I was giving a ride to, to get
back in the car because he was hanging out of the window. Since I was distracted, I thought the long line of
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was pushed back, and my headlights were broken. Humiliated and scared, I still had to drive my bashed-up
car home. During School that year, I never did hear the end of what had happened that day.

Ans. Discussion
(1) The Quarrel: In the opening of the extract we find the husband and wife quarrelling bitterly. The issue is
Margot’s act of unfaithfulness. She had quietly slipped into Wilson’s large bed the previous night, Macomber had
obviously got wind of it. However, Margot turns the tables on him as she insists that he should ignore the incident. In
case he does not do so she would leave him. Macomber surrenders as he realizes that she was the stronger of the two.

(2) Author’s point of view: This part of the narrative is apparently from the author’s / the assumed central
observer’s point of view.

(3) Points of view: Then the point of view shifts to Wilson:

(i) Some of the events are presented in the form of dialogues or conversations between the characters.

(ii) Some others are reported.

(iii) Some of the thoughts and reactions of the characters, mainly Wilson’s and Macomber’s are reported from
the authorial angle. No comments or any kind of involvement is made.

(4) Form of Description: (i) Wilson’s point of view is more extensively and intimately presented.

(ii) Macomber’s private thoughts are only indicated in passing.

(iii) Macomber’s humiliation at the hands of Margot is hardly reflected in the narrative.

(iv) Wilson’s reported thoughts let us learn about Macomber’s plight.

(5) Wilson a Professional Hunter: Wilson is a professional hunter. He is extremely competent in dealing with the
safari. He had planned every move and provided for every contingency. The lives of his hosts were secure in his hands.
He was prepared for any crisis that might develop at any stage. He also took his pleasures as they came. He had no
serious moral scruples. However he paid due respect to the rules of the game. He earned the praise of his clients whom he gave complete satisfaction by his expert knowledge of animals and of the hazards faced by him. Wilson could locate the best game, prepared the ground well. This is the reason why those who hired him always felt that they had their money’s worth.

(6) Narration: The hunt is narrated in two ways:
   (i) It is partly in the form of dialogues and
   (ii) It is partly by recreating the exhilaration of participating in the ensuing action.

(7) Dramatic Element: The narrative is made dramatic as under:
   (i) With the help of some of the cinematographic effects like close-up.
   (ii) By recording the rapid breathless succession of events.

(8) Breathless Recording: The narrative captures the immediacy of the events following each other, quickly as though flashed on the screen. Some illustrations are as under:
   (i) The steady gallop of the bulls.
   (ii) The swaying motion of the speeding car on an uneven terrain.
   (iii) The perceptions and reactions of Macomber as they gradually drew up close to the buffaloes.
   (iv) The rude directions of Wilson not to shoot from the car.
   (v) Macomber’s own sharply rising anger and hatred towards Wilson.
   (vi) The sudden braking of the car and his feet hitting the ‘still speeding-by of the earth.

The above events are vividly conveyed by the narrative in a memorable fashion, Hemingway, with great skill, recreates, the illusion of the wild energy and frantic movements of the chase and the shooting down of the fierce bulls. This part of the action is narrated from the point of view of Macomber.

(9) Style: The style of the passage is remarkable. The normal logical order of the syntax is dislocated knowingly. It is done so with a view to present the events in psychologically and physically completed units not in the form of separate sentences. Macomber’s attention shifts from the speeding of the car to the physical details of the galloping bulls as they draw closer. Soon the leading bull is within the range of the rifle.

(10) Picturesque Description: The author sketches before us the hairy body, ‘the sparsely haired hide and ‘the wide boss of horn’. He presents the laboured breathing of the bull indicating the ‘outstretched, wide-nostrilled muzzle’, as the bull vainly attempted to escape from the speeding car and the determined pursuers:
   (i) Action: The first part of the action was complete only with the fall of the first bull.
   (ii) The last bull was chased and shot down in much less time. However the whole process again is narrated in a similar fashion of a completed unit of action instead of narrating in the form of logically constructed, grammatically complete sentences.

(11) Expressions: There are unusual expressions such as:
   (i) Long heaviness
   (ii) Plunging hugeness of the bull,
   (iii) Still speeding-by of the earth’,
   (iv) Straight moving gallop’.

(b) How strange is the lot of us mortals! Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he know not, though he sometimes thinks he senses it. But without deeper reflection one knows from daily life that one exists for other people- first of all for those upon whose smiles and well-being our own happiness is wholly dependent and then for the many, unknown to us, to whose destines we are bound by the ties of sympathy. A hundred times everyday I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labours of other men living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving.

Ans. These lines are spoken by the eminent scholar Albert Einstein. It is a descriptive prose. It has been said that scholars of the first rank jeopardize their reputation the moment they divert their gaze and speak openly and uninhibitedly about social and political problems. “We honor your brilliance in your chosen field,” the leery declaim, “but in these other areas you enjoy no special expertise. Leave the matter of war to the generals. Leave politics to the politicians. Let the experts toil away at intractable social problems.”
This view has little to recommend it. It is as easy to imagine a genius not losing an ounce of his perspicacity and judgement when addressing a social issue as it is to expect a gross faux pas or sudden mental lapse. Unlike the careerist, the scholar in his humanitarian role has no turf to defend; unlike the bureaucrat, he has no incentive to privilege the needs of his agency; and unlike the businessman, he is disinclined to see the world merely in terms of profit and loss. The military man nowadays appears as a schoolmarm on television, pointing his ruler at some area on a map, explaining unfeelingly how the Air Force can efficiently bomb away at umpteen targets and leave thousands of innocents buried in craters of rubble and blood.

(c) Gregory is my beautiful gray Persian cat. He walks with pride and grace, performing a dance of disdain as he slowly lifts and lowers each paw with the delicacy of a ballet dancer. His pride, however, does not extend to his appearance, for he spends most of his time indoors watching television and growing fat. He enjoys TV commercials, especially those for Meow Mix and 9 Lives. His familiarity with cat food commercials has led him to reject generic brands of cat food in favour of only the most expensive brands. Gregory is as finicky about visitors as he is about what he eats, befriending some and repelling others. He may snuggle up against your ankles, begging to be petted, or he may imitate a skunk and stain your favorite trousers. Gregory does not do this to establish his territory, as many cat experts think, but to humiliate me because he is jealous of my friends. After my guests have fled, I look at the old fleabag snoozing and smiling to himself in front of the television set, and I have to forgive him for his obnoxious, but endearing, habits.

Ans. This is a descriptive prose taken from the famous story named “Gregory” written by the famous scholar Barbara Carter. Here is description of his favourite pet named Gregory. He wonder fully describe the beauty of cat. He also describe the wonderful qualities of his cat. The cat has some endearing habits as well. The writer named him as a persian cat. In the whole passage he is writing about the various qualities of the cat.

Q. 2. Elaborate on the plot of the story “The Legacy” by Virginia Woolf.

Ans. Style and Technique.

The few critics who have written about “The Legacy” also hold this view that Gilbert received his at the end by realizing what had actually been going on. Robert Kiely writes, “The crux of the tale is the husband’s realization that his wife—the one person he supposedly knows through and through, a woman he thinks belongs to him—is capable of a life. . . that he cannot share”. Jean Guiguet writes that “The Legacy” begins as a “riddle” and ends with a “solution,” crediting this particular story with “more firmness and clarity of outline than any of Woolf’s other short stories. Rudolf Villgradter believes that Woolf uses the notions of illusion and reality to structure “The Legacy,” arguing that illusion is eventually stripped away, thereby exposing reality at the end of the story. Even Selma Meyerowitz believes Gilbert arrives at a “final understanding of the illusions he maintained about his wife and his marriage”.

Gilbert’s realization at the end is a mock realization, and that instead of bringing the story to closure, it points out how little we really know. Throughout the story, we have seen Gilbert repeatedly stereotype others has never met is not exempt; in reference to B.M., Gilbert claims he “knew the type, and had no liking for this particular specimen, whoever B. M. might be.” We also have ample evidence that Gilbert makes assumptions which later turn out to be false. He blithely assumes his wife’s death is not premeditated; he assumes that because he is remembering Angela and Sissy working together “no doubt Miss Miller was thinking of that, too”; and after Sissy confirms that B. M. was her brother, he assumes he now knows the truth. Even when Sissy asks if he would like an explanation, Gilbert refuses. By the end of the story, we should mistrust Gilbert enough to be suspicious when he claims that he has the truth, that “she had stepped off the kerb to rejoin her lover.” Instead of figuring out the riddle of Angela, Gilbert only sees a woman who prefers another man sexually. Instead of enlightening him as to what has really been going on, Gilbert’s final “realization” will probably only confirm his stereotypes about women. Angela remains, despite Gilbert’s claim of knowledge, basically unknown. “The Legacy” does not just make the connection between class and gender; it makes the connection among class, gender, and traditional fiction—Gilbert is husband, politician, and narrator. His authoritative voice presents reality as “a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged,” and even in a moment of crisis and in the face of contradictory evidence, he adheres strictly to his myopic depiction of it. Not only is this rendition of reality false, according to Woolf, it is, like class and gender, a form of oppression which at times can be deadly.

Q. 3. Would you say that The Binding Vine is an appropriate title for the novel? Give reasons for your answer.
Ans. The Binding Vine shows the suffering and pain of different women’s lives. It portrays human relationship and their strength to bind us together. The title of the novel points out that how all of us are bound by the bonds of love, affection and understanding. Just like Vine, love and affection bound our lives with one another.

The novel goes back and forth in time. Sometimes the movement is so frequent that one loses the idea of things and character. But still the author achieves the unity of time and action by ending the novel in a way that we realize that where the novel ends is after where the novel begin. So at the beginning of the novel we see that Urmi is grieved, and at the end of the novel we see that he has got over her grief and has come back to her normal life. By the end of the novel, readers are aware that action has moved ahead along with the time. Though the complexity of time is present in the novel but towards the end the complexity has been resolved and thus giving the readers a sense of completeness.

The ending of the novel is undoubtedly optimistic. Finally, towards the end we see that Urmi gets over her grief. She realizes that she needs to get back to her normal life. And she does come back to her normal day-to-day life. She understand that despite all the odds and troubles of the life the life must go on and that it is the small things like love, affection and understanding which bind our lives together and give meaning to our lives. She realizes Inni’s helplessness and feels sorry for her, she empathizes with Shakutai, start thinking positively of Kishore, and thus her life becomes full of what all of us search for the ‘spring of life’.

The Binding Vine is first published in 1993. Chronologically it is the sixth published novel by Shashi Deshpande considering her two short novels If I die Today and Come up and be Dead. Both of these novels are considered as a crime/detective fiction is usually considered for young adults. The Bonding Vine is a novel which merges three stories in to one to give a sense of cohesive whole. The setting of the novel in a sense is limited to the experience of women. Some of the important questions that author seems to ask is— “should women break their silence?” if yes then how? Who will take the lead? Someone must come forward to take the lead and this is the responsibility given to the writer. The idea of the writer is to transcend the personal identity in order to create something which can be generalized and can stand for everyone, and not say that the author has quite successfully achieved this. Thus in the process the individual creates something new which is different from the creator. The epitaph of the novel quite aptly suggests this, which says, “What was the use of my creation, if I were entirely contained here?” Not to say the line has been taken from Emily Bronte’s “Wuthering Heights”, which suggests that creativity is beyond time and place. According to the author the process of writing is such in which one has to exclude certain experience while at the same time elevate the others. What we see here is an immense power in the words of the author who has the ability to reveal the hidden selves by eliminating some experiences and communicating others.

The narrative of the novel is multi-dimensional, which talks about the family bond, human relationships, women’s right to their body, and the need to speak out to correct what is wrong.

Though the novel maintains a grim environ of pain and loss one can still see a strong undercurrent of love, hope and understanding.

The beginning of the novel presents us with a psychological complexity which one may hope to encounter throughout the novel. The novel begins with the line, “We all of us grow up with an idea of ourselves, an image rather, and spent rest of our lives trying to live up to it”. Without any doubt this line has a psychological relevance. One of the most important and extreme cause of alienation and identity crisis is that people try and live as the image and their true selves. The hint is clear. Someone in the novel is going through the identity crisis. The question is who? Perhaps the narrator, Urmi, as in the next line she says that she is trying to get over the image and be her own self. The middle of the novel basically portrays her attempt to cope with her turbulence. And by the end of the novel we see that she gets over her grief. She says, “Is this it, ‘the spring of life’ Mira was looking for?” The paragraph preceding this line tells us that she is actually talking about the aspects of life such as love, understanding and human relationship which make survival possible. We always look for some force, some hope to push us into living a life which is desirable, because no matter how meaningless and absurd the life is we all want to cling to it.

This is how one can make sense of the title of the novel—The Binding Vine. It is the vine of love, affection that binds all the fellow human beings together. Just like a vine, which may be delicate but has the tendency to spread its tendril and hold fast to its support, the nameless delicate and intimate moments of life and understanding binds us.
together. Though the sense of pain and loss are the integral part of life but still there is the ‘spring of life’ emerging at intervals to give us strength so that we can overcome our sense of loss and look at life with a new hope.

Q. 4. Analyse “The Quest of Men” in terms of its theme and prose style.

Ans. Though the style of the letter is simple and elegant, the subject matter is philosophical. Perhaps the writer chose a simple style in order to make his reader, who was his fourteen years old daughter, understand the complex subject. The way it has been written it appears that the letter is a story about human civilization.

In first three paragraphs the writer talks about the place where he has been imprisoned and the joy he felt on being near mountains and greenery. We cannot sense any bitterness in his voice on being confined to a solitary stay in a prison. The writer enjoys the nights’ cool air and when he looks at the tree and mountains at a far off distance, he becomes quite joyous.

In the fourth paragraph, the writer of the letter talks about the worth of his writing, about which he indeed is skeptical. But in spite of his skepticism he continued to write letters. In the next two paragraphs, i.e. paragraphs five and six we see an attempt from the writer’s side to recreate the history of human being from the primitive to the modern times. He starts with the discovery of fire and agriculture and then talks about different empires and civilizations. He wonders if he has missed the greatest human challenge to reveal and uncover the mysteries of universe. He says that he talked about different civilization that have come and gone but somewhere he missed to talk about the human quest to understand the world.

In the next paragraph, i.e. paragraph seven, the writer talks about man’s journey to know about the world he lives in. He says that man’s mind is the greatest asset which helps him in his journey. Once Nehru starts writing about the man’s quest to know the world his skepticism fades away and he feels that he sitting with his daughter and talking.

In the paragraph eight and ten, the writer explains the twin approach to know the world. The twin approach is through religion and through science. He says that while religion chooses the path of belief and faith and spirituality, science believes in reason and experiments. He feels that there could not possibly be one answer to man’s quest as the quest has taken two forms – one is to understand himself and the other is understand the nature. He says that while religion focuses on the inner nature of man, science focuses on the outer nature. According to him both are important. But still he says that he would like the approach of science as it is open minded and rational and not dogmatic like religion.

Prose Style

The first thing to note in this letter is its simple and elegant style which makes anyone who reads it as much an addressee as Indira, to whom the letter was intended. The letter seems to be written in such a way as if both the reader and the writer are conversing with each other. The letter uses a direct form of address in order to make it appear that writer is directly addressing the reader. We say that the prose style of this letter is conversational, personal, informal and subjective.

Q. 5. Anne Frank’s diary is a commentary on war and its terrible impact on human life. Discuss.

Ans. Perhaps the most famous personal account of the Holocaust, The Diary of Anne Frank was written in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, between 1942 and 1944. The Frank’s were a Jewish family originally from Germany, where Anne was born in 1929. Anne’s father, Otto, had come from a wealthy background, but his family’s fortune was lost after World War I. Anne’s diary begins on her thirteenth birthday, June 12, 1942, and ends shortly after her fifteenth. At the start of her diary, Anne describes fairly typical girlhood experiences, writing about her friendships with other girls, her crushes on boys, and her academic performance at school. Because anti-Semitic laws forced Jews into separate schools, Anne and her older sister, Margot, attended the Jewish Lyceum in Amsterdam.

Anne’s early recollections of Jewish persecution: Anne matures considerably throughout the course of her diary entries, moving from detailed accounts of basic activities to deeper, more profound thoughts about humanity and her own personal nature. She finds it difficult to understand why the Jews are being singled out and persecuted. Anne also confronts her own identity. Though she considers herself to be German, her German citizenship has been revoked, and though she calls Holland her home, many of the Dutch have turned against the Jews. Anne feels a tremendous solidarity with her aggrieved people, and yet at the same time she wants to be seen as an individual rather than a member of a persecuted group.
During the two years recorded in her diary, Anne deals with confinement and deprivation, as well as the complicated and difficult issues of growing up in the brutal circumstances of the Holocaust. Her diary describes a struggle to define herself within this climate of oppression. Anne’s diary ends without comment on August 1, 1944, the end of a seemingly normal day that leaves us with the expectation of seeing another entry on the next page. However, the Frank family is betrayed to the Nazis and arrested on August 4, 1944. Anne’s diary, the observations of an imaginative, friendly, sometimes petty, and rather normal teenage girl, comes to an abrupt and silent end.

**The family’s escape to the ‘Secret Annexe’**: The Franks had moved to the Netherlands in the years leading up to World War II to escape persecution in Germany. After the Germans invaded the Netherlands in 1940, the Franks were forced into hiding. With another family, the Van Duans, and an acquaintance, Mr. Dussel, they moved into a small secret annex above Otto Frank’s office where they had stockpiled food and supplies. The employees from Otto’s firm helped hide the Franks and kept them supplied with food, medicine, and information about the outside world.

The residents of the annex pay close attention to every development of the war by listening to the radio. Some bits of news catch Anne’s attention and make their way into her diary, providing a vivid historical context for her personal thoughts. The adults make optimistic bets about when the war will end, and their mood is severely affected by Allied setbacks or German advances. Amsterdam is devastated by the war during the two years the Franks are in hiding. All of the city’s residents suffer, since food becomes scarce and robberies more frequent.

Anne often writes about her feelings of isolation and loneliness. She has a tumultuous relationship with the adults in the annex, particularly her mother, whom she considers lacking in love and affection. She adores her father, but she is frequently scolded and criticized by Mr. and Mrs. Van Daan and Mr. Dussel. Anne thinks that her sister, Margot, is smart, pretty, and agreeable, but she does not feel close to her and does not write much about her. Anne eventually develops a close friendship with Peter van Daan, the teenage boy in the annex. Mr. Frank does not approve, however, and the intensity of Anne’s infatuation begins to lessen.

**Anne’s relationship with her parents**: Anne’s mother Edith Hollander was originally from Aachen, Germany, and she married Otto in 1925. Anne feels little closeness or sympathy with her mother, and the two have a very tumultuous relationship. Anne thinks her mother is too sentimental and critical. Edith dies of hunger and exhaustion in the concentration camp at Auschwitz in January 1945. Anne’s father Otto is practical and kind, and Anne feels a particular kinship to him. He was born on May 12, 1889, into a wealthy Frankfurt family, but the family’s international-banking business collapsed during the German economic depression that followed World War I. After the Nazis came to power in Germany, Otto moved to Amsterdam in 1933 to protect his family from persecution. There he made a living selling chemical products and provisions until the family was forced into hiding in 1942. Otto is the only member of the family to survive the war, and he lives until 1980. Anne thinks that Margot is pretty, smart, emotional, and everyone’s favorite. However, Anne and Margot do not form a close bond, and Margot mainly appears in the diary when she is the cause of jealousy or anger. She dies of typhus in the concentration camp a few days before Anne does.

**Anne’s relationship with others in the Secret Annexe**

The father of the family that hides in the annex along with the Franks and who had worked with Otto Frank as an herbal specialist in Amsterdam. Mr. Van Daan’s actual name is Hermann Van Pels, but Anne calls him Mr. Van Daan in the diary. According to Anne, he is intelligent, opinionated, pragmatic, and somewhat egotistical. Anne initially describes Mrs. Van Daan as a friendly, teasing woman, but later calls her an instigator. She is a fatalist and can be petty, egotistical, flirtatious, stingy, and disagreeable. Anne first sees Peter as obnoxious, lazy, and hypersensitive, but later they become close friends. Peter is quiet, timid, honest, and sweet to Anne, but he does not share her strong convictions. During their time in the annex, Anne and Peter develop a romantic attraction, which Mr. Frank discourages. Peter is Anne’s first kiss, and he is her one confidant and source of affection and attention in the annex.

**Q. 6. Discuss the main features of Margaret Laurence’s speech.**

**Ans.** The speech of Laurence is quite simple and straightforward and has no theatricality to pollute its appeal. The ideas she expresses are expressed in a systematic manner and are connected with each other in such a way that it leaves no place for any ambiguity. Let us take a look at the summary of essay.

**Summary**: Laurence starts with the acknowledge–ment of nervousness at appearing before graduating clergymen and presenting her personal belief. She says that she needs both physical and spiritual prop to sustain her.
In the following paragraph Laurence maintains that as people grow old they must not accept defeat rather they should struggle for what they passionately believe in. She says that she is happy as both old and young are concerned about the endangered world and inclined to save it. This allows Laurence to talk about some of the dangers that world faces which are injustice, suffering and fear. She says that in spite of all these dangers she has hope in mankind and believes in the gospel which says that one should love their neighbours.

Then Laurence goes on to talk about two world events which changed the face of history. The first is America dropping atom bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the second is Holocaust by German Nazis.

To affirm her point against nuclear bombs she quotes Dr. Helen Caldicott who said that America and Russia have enough atom bomb to kill every person on earth sixteen times. She says that she is astonished at so much money being spent in the production of nuclear arms. She says that this money is sufficient to supply water to every one on earth or eradicate malaria from the face of earth.

While ending her speech she makes two points—first that a person must affirm life and therefore must take part in saving the world and second that an artist must commit to the future generation thus writing truthfully.

**Features of Laurence’s Speech—Conversational Tone:** The most noticeable part of the speech is its conversational tone. By admitting her nervousness Laurence at once takes all her listeners into confidence while affirming that she is not going to talk down on them rather she will talk to them, one to one. This style is also present when she shares her personal experience in Africa with the audience.

**Clarity of Expression:** Another aspect of her speech is clarity of expression which show clarity of Laurence’s thought. It seems that she is quite clear about what she has to say and there is no place for ambiguity. She uses lucid and simple language. She picks one idea and then the idea itself leads her to different idea.

**Forceful Style:** Quite strikingly Laurence does not make any use of any rhetorical device but still manages to deliver a powerful speech. Power comes from her knowledge and belief. She uses facts and not her imagination to convince the audience.

**Use of Humour and Pathos:** Her speech makes use of both humour and pathos. She is humorous when she says her listeners that not worry when growing old. She pokes fun at parent-child relationship. While in the same essay she also succeeds in presenting a pathetic picture of post nuclear war of ruined cities, people suffering and crying for help, where there is no medical supplies, no electricity, and no water. These visualized description leaves impact on listeners.

**Q. 7. Critically analyse Gandhi’s art and craft of autobiography based on your study of the excerpts from My Experiments with Truth.**

**Ans.** Each chapter in the book is an important learning lesson to Gandhi. In this autobiography, Gandhi has recounted the period from his birth (1869) up to the year 1921.

The book assumes that the reader is aware of contemporary happenings. Also the book is full of people and detailed incidents e.g. Gandhi has not given any introduction about Indian National Congress and directly speaks about his involvement with the party. The sequence of the happenings in his life is really interesting and worthy of being written as a book. Gandhi is arrested in Champaran as his arrival in the village caused tension. He is fined by the court but he refuses to pay. Judges and police get frightened at the number of people collected outside the court in support of Gandhi and so they release him without any fine. Many such incidents seem like movie story.

He has given complete picture of his life highlighting all aspects. His experiments with dietics and naturopathy, his internal conflicts and compromises with his wife Kasturba and his friends attempt to convert him from Hindu to either Christianity or Islam was interesting.

The book gives us a glimpse of then South Africa and the seriousness of the problem of apartheid. Description of his country wide tour of India gives us a good picture of conditions existing then. His various meetings with famous people like Gokhale, Tilak, Vallabh Bhai Patel, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru etc shows us how India was full of stalwarts.

This book is more of a confession than an autobiography, true to the title indeed. Narration style is interesting enough to keep the reader involved with the book for e.g. the incident where Gandhi refuses to copy in a test despite his teacher asking him to do it. In an interesting way Gandhi has told us not to cheat with our conscience. The book
never seems boring and language used is simple. So there is no much use of a dictionary. The book is rather rigid and
text-book like. It has started with a beautiful introduction and ended by one page caption-farewell.

The style of writing here is different from that of Jawaharlal Nehru’s “Discovery of India”. While “My Experiments
with Truth” is simple and deals with the practical problems of daily existence, “Discovery of India” is scholarly and
poetic as the phrases like “waxing and waning of the moon”, and other idioms are used. This is quite in keeping with
the contrasting personalities of Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. While both were sincere to the cause of India’s freedom,
Gandhi was humble and practical while Nehru was a dreamer and impulsive.

Mahatma Gandhi is arguably one of the most influential and respected figures in modern history. Biographies,
documentaries and films have portrayed him. But this book is his own and offers an insight into his mind and soul. He
talks of the experiences that have shaped his thinking, where he has gone wrong and the lessons he has learnt. Finally
I would say that the book is a must read.

8. Analyse the three varieties of prose that you have read in your course. Substantiate your answer with
examples.

Ans. Prose is mainly of three kinds: (i) Descriptive Prose, (ii) Narrative Prose, (iii) Expository Prose.

(1) Descriptive Prose: Descriptive writing describes things as they are or as they appear to be. It can be the
description of a person or a landscape or an event. The descriptive writing shows us things as they are or were seen or
heard or imagined by the describer. It deals mainly with events. A good description presents the writer’s observation in
vivid details. It has an atmosphere of its own. Through the description, the author tries to narrate what s/he has seen
or imagined.

Here is a description of Mr. Squeers in Charles Dickens’ Nicholas Nickleby (1838-39).

Mr. Squeers’ appearance was not prepossessing. He had but one eye, and the popular prejudice runs in favour of
two. The eye he had was unquestionably, useful, but decidedly not ornamental: being of a greenish grey, and in shape
resembling the fan-light of a street door.

Glossary

Prepossessing: Inspiring
Puckered up: full of folds and wrinkles
Sinister: wicked, evil
Protruding: jutting out, projecting
Scholastic: formal/academic

(2) Narrative Prose: A narrative is a description of events. It may deal with external or internal events.

(i) Internal Events: Internal events mean the thoughts, feelings and emotions of individuals.

(ii) External Events: Narrative writing tries to recreate an actual experience or an imaginary one. It is in a way
that we are able to experience it mentally. Narratives can deal with the facts or fiction.

(a) Narrative Facts: Autobiographies, biographies, histories are narratives of fact.

(b) Narrative Fiction: The short story and novel come under the category of narrative fiction.

When we narrate a story we concentrate on the sequence of events. It is the action that grips the attention of the
reader. The Ramayana and Mahabharata are examples of narrative writing. In narration action, characters and setting
are woven into a pattern to make it interesting. Rudyard Kipling mentioned the ingredients of a narrative in the following
verse.

I keep six honest-serving men
They taught me all I know:
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who
Thus the ingredients of narrative are as under:

(i) What happens?
(ii) Why does it happen?
(iii) When does it happen?
(iv) How does it happen?
(v) Where does it happen?
(vi) To whom does it happen?

All these questions are answered satisfactorily in a narrative.

**Extract from Charles Dickens’ Novel Oliver Twist.** (1837). Here we shall read about the trial of the Artful Dodger when he is produced in court on charges of pick-pocketing.

“It was indeed Mr. Dawkins, who, shuffling into the office with the big coat-sleeves tucked up as usual, his left hand in his pocket and his hat in his right hand, preceded the jailer, with a rolling gait altogether indescribable, and taking his place in the dock, requested in an audible voice to know what he was placed in that’ ere disgraceful situation for.

‘Hold your tongue, will you?’ said the jailer.
‘I’m an Englishman, ain’t I?’ rejoined the Dodger; ‘where are my privileges?’
‘You’ll get your privileges soon enough,’ retorted the jailer, ‘and peper with’em?

(3) **Expository Prose**: Expository writing deals in definition, explanation or interpretation. It includes writing on science, law, philosophy, technology, political science, history and criticism.

Exposition is a form of logical presentation.
(i) Its primary object is to explain and clarify.
(ii) It presents details concretely and exactly.
(iii) Expository writing explains.

People take interest in expository writing that can be read as literature. The following is a piece of expository prose:

“In the leg there are two bones, the tibia and fibula. The tibia or shin-bone is long and strong and bears the weight of the body. The fibula or splint bone is an equally long but much slenderer bone, and is attached to the tibia as a pin is to a brooch. *(Leonard Hill, Manual of Human Physiology)*