A1036

Name.....

Register No.....

NAIPUNNYA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (AUTONOMOUS)

FIRST SEMESTER (FYUG) DEGREE EXAMINATION NOVEMBER 2025

ENGLISH

ENG1FA101(1B) - ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR HUMANITIES AND OTHER BA PROGRAMMES

Time: One Hour and a Half Maximum:50 marks

Section A

Answer the following

2 marks each, 10x2=20 with a ceiling of 16 marks

I. **Read the given passage and respond to the following questions.**

The history of human civilization can be told, in part, through the history of communication. At the heart of this story lies reading, an activity so deeply woven into the fabric of culture that its significance is often overlooked. Yet, reading has not always meant the same thing, nor has it always served the same purposes. To read in the ancient world was to engage in a communal, even sacred act. The oral recitation of Homeric epics in Greece, or the chanting of Vedic hymns in India, was not simply about transmitting information; it was about preserving collective memory and reinforcing cultural identity. In such contexts, the written word was often subordinate to the spoken one, serving as an aid to memory rather than as an independent source of meaning.

The Middle Ages, especially in Europe, introduced a new tension between oral and written traditions. Monks painstakingly copied manuscripts, illuminating them with intricate designs that signified not just the words' meaning but their sacred importance. Reading was frequently performed aloud, either within the monastery or in small scholarly communities, emphasizing its collective dimension. Yet, as literacy expanded beyond clerical circles, the seeds of private reading were sown. The act of silently engaging with a text was radical in its intimacy: it created a space where the reader could dialogue with the author without mediation.

The invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century dramatically altered this landscape. For the first time, texts could be reproduced quickly and in large numbers, breaking the monopoly of the Church and aristocracy over knowledge. The Reformation, Enlightenment, and scientific revolution all leaned heavily on this technological shift. Reading became democratized; it was no longer the privilege of a few but the potential right of many. The solitary reader—absorbed in reflection, analysis, and critique—emerged as a cultural archetype. Reading was reimagined not only as a tool for personal growth but also as a catalyst for social and political change.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the rise of digital technologies has once again transformed reading. The screen, unlike the page, offers a fragmented and fluid experience. Hyperlinks invite nonlinear exploration, while notifications compete for attention. Where the book encourages immersion, the screen fosters multitasking. Critics argue that this has eroded the capacity for sustained attention, resulting in a culture of skimming rather than deep reading. Neuroscientists have even begun to explore how the brain rewires itself in response to digital stimuli, raising questions about whether we are losing cognitive capacities once nurtured by the book.

Yet, such critiques risk overlooking the novel affordances of digital reading. Online platforms enable collaboration, commentary, and the rapid dissemination of ideas across vast distances. In some ways, this echoes the communal traditions of ancient reading, where meaning was co-constructed in shared spaces. A blog post or social media thread can spark discussions that transcend geography, allowing texts to live dynamically in collective consciousness. Moreover, digital reading has expanded access: marginalized voices, often excluded from print culture, can now publish and circulate ideas with unprecedented ease.

The deeper question, then, is not whether digital reading is better or worse than its predecessors, but how it reshapes the very nature of knowledge. Each era of reading has cultivated distinct modes of thinking: the mnemonic discipline of oral cultures, the reflective interiority of print, and now the interactive dynamism of digital media. If the humanities seek to understand human experience in i ts fullness, then examining how we read—how we make meaning through texts—remains central. The challenge for contemporary readers is to cultivate balance: to preserve the depth of attention nurtured by the book while embracing the connectivity enabled by the screen.

Comprehension Questions

1. How did oral traditions shape the role of reading in ancient societies?
2. Why might silent, private reading in the Middle Ages be considered “radical”?
3. In what ways did the printing press alter both access to knowledge and its social consequences?
4. How does the author contrast the immersive qualities of print with the fragmented nature of digital reading?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of digital reading as outlined in the passage?
6. How could modern students balance “depth” and “connectivity” in their reading practices?
7. How does the passage suggest that each historical era of reading shaped different modes of thought?
8 Why does the author describe the printing press as a catalyst for social and political change?
9. Do you agree that digital reading revives aspects of ancient communal reading? Why or why not?
10. If you were to research this topic further, what areas—such as neuroscience, education, or cultural studies—would you investigate, and why?

CO4

Section B

Answer the following
6 marks each, 5x6=30 with a ceiling of 24 marks

11. Why was "Anthem" considered a redemptive hymn? CO3

12. How does Mr. Keatings explain the difference between courses like medicine and engineering and studying poetry? CO5

13. Compare and contrast the princess in the classical fairy tale and the princess in Garner's retelling. CO4

14. Explain the symbolic significance of the falcon and the falconer in Yeats "The Second Coming". CO3

15. Compare "The World - Renowned Nose" to other works by Vaikam Muhammad Basheer. CO5

Section C

Answer the following
10 marks each

16. Identify the theme of family and relationship in “Death of a Salesman”? CO2

17. How is the caste system a harmful institution? Explain in the light of your reading of Ambedkar's speech. CO4

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