

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI
Dept. of Humanities & Social Sciences

PhD ENTRANCE EXAM – 17 MAY 2018
(Literature)

Answer any two questions. Each question carries 50 marks.

1. Discuss any Shakespeare play and its adaptation in the post-colonial context. Explain what you take to be the most significant differences between the stances and import of the two texts.
2. “Select four answers to the question what should a reader be in order to be a good reader:
 - The reader should belong to a book club.
 - The reader should identify himself or herself with the hero or heroine.
 - The reader should concentrate on the social-economic angle.
 - The reader should prefer a story with action and dialogue to one with none.
 - The reader should have seen the book in a movie.
 - The reader should be a budding author.
 - The reader should have imagination.
 - The reader should have memory.
 - The reader should have a dictionary.
 - The reader should have some artistic sense.” [Vladimir Nabokov]

How would you have answered Nabokov’s question? Discuss the concepts of reader in literary theory and/or philosophy and argue for the one/s you find most pertinent.

3. Is it possible to have a ‘national’ theatre in India? If yes, what would the main features of such a theatre be, according to you, and if not, why not?
4. It is generally agreed that young adult literature expresses the trials of adolescence, the processes of individual coming-of-age experiences set against a specific social and cultural background – these narratives also contain impulses of exploration, subversion and resistance. Critically examine any such text you may have read from this point of view.
5. Discuss the relationship between the 'urban' and the 'rural' in shaping the imaginary of the postcolonial Indian nation. You may pick a combination of literary texts and films to ground your answer.
6. Discuss at length one particularly significant instance of genre transfer, wherein a writer discovers another from a distant land and transforms literary practice in his or her own. (Example: Goethe's rediscovery of Shakespeare.)