BEGC-101
Indian Classical Literature
Assignment July, 2025 & January 2026 Sessions
(Based on Blocks 1 - 4)

TMA 01/2025-26
Max. Marks: 100

Answer all questions.

Section A

Answer with reference to the context in about 100 words each: 4 × 5 = 20

1.

(i) "*That first creator of the Creator That Bearer of oblations offered with Holy Rites: That one who utters the Holy Chants: Those two that order Time: That which extends,"*

(ii) *"Now I see no other course open but the fourth—punishment. The kings are marching to Kurukshetra to their doom!"*

(iii) *"This music hall is empty! Where could the actors have gone? (reflecting) Ah! I got it!—The home of a sonless person is empty; he who doesn't have a real friend finds all the time empty; the quarters are empty to a fool; and everything is empty to a poor man."*

(iv) *"One saw the fine work of making*
Cloth from silk, fur and cotton
In the weavers quarters. Silk, coral,
Sandalwood, agar, flawless pearls,
Gems, gold, and an endless profusion
Of rare ornaments were piled high
In the commodious streets."

Section B

Answer the following in about 350 words each: 4 X 20 = 80

1. Examine the theme of concealment in *Abhijnana Shakuntalam/ The Loom of Time*.

2. Why does Duryodhana plot and plan to vanquish the Pandavas? Comment.

3. How are the views of the state integrated with the theme of *Mrichchhkatika*?

4. Write a detailed note on *akam* and *puram* thinais and their corresponding landscapes in *Cilappatikaran.*

1. (i) “That first creator of the Creator That Bearer of oblations offered with Holy Rites: That one who utters the Holy Chants: Those two that order Time: That which extends,”

Answer

These lines occur in the opening benediction, or Nandi, of Kalidasa's Abhijnana Shakuntalam. Before the dramatic action begins, the prayer invokes Shiva through the different forms in which divine power is present in the universe. The phrases in the passage point to water as a primal element, fire as the bearer of ritual offerings, the officiating priest who utters sacred chants, the sun and the moon that regulate time, and the vast element of space. The complete invocation presents the divine not as something separate from the world but as present in the basic forces of nature and ritual life.

The passage is important because it creates a sacred and harmonious atmosphere at the very beginning of the play. It joins nature, religion and human action in one order. This becomes meaningful in a drama where the forest hermitage is not merely a background but a living moral world. Shakuntala grows up among trees, animals and ascetics, while Duhsanta enters this world from the political world of the court. The prayer therefore quietly prepares us for the play's concern with the relation between nature and civilisation, desire and duty, and human choice and a larger cosmic order. It also gives the drama an auspicious beginning, as expected in classical Sanskrit theatre.

(ii) “Now I see no other course open but the fourth—punishment. The kings are marching to Kurukshetra to their doom!”

Answer

These words are spoken by Krishna after his efforts to secure peace with Duryodhana have failed. Krishna has gone as a statesman and mediator to prevent the conflict between the Kauravas and the Pandavas from becoming a disastrous war. He tries persuasion and settlement, and the elders also remind Duryodhana that the Pandavas have a legitimate claim. Duryodhana, however, remains obstinate and refuses to make a reasonable compromise. Krishna therefore concludes that the peaceful courses have been exhausted and only the fourth course, punishment or danda, remains.

The statement has both political and tragic significance. Krishna is not celebrating war; he is recognising that the refusal of justice has made war almost unavoidable. The words “marching to Kurukshetra to their doom” give the speech a prophetic force because the audience already knows that the battle will destroy a large part of the Kuru world. The line also shows the contrast between