

**DIPLOMA IN CREATIVE WRITING IN  
ENGLISH**

**Term-End Examination**

00444

**December, 2017**

**DCE-2 : FEATURE WRITING**

*Time : 3 hours*

*Maximum Marks : 100*

*(Weightage : 70%)*

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*Note : This paper has two sections, A and B. Attempt any five questions, choosing at least two from each section. All questions carry equal marks. Each answer should be in approximately 500 words, unless stated otherwise.*

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**SECTION A**

1. Write short notes on any *two* of the following

(250 words each) :

2×10=20

- (a) Basic questions an interviewer should ask.
- (b) Pitfalls of reviewing a book after having read it partially.

- (c) Prejudices that operate in writing about women.
- (d) Importance of photographs in a travel article.
2. A book reviewer's job is to examine subject, style and relevance. Explain how these three criteria are important for a good review. 20
3. An open mind and adequate preparation are necessary for a good travel writer. Make a detailed comment. 20
4. The art of interviewing consists of the preparation as well as the actual conducting of the interview. Explain. 20
5. While writing about women, one should avoid coming to hasty conclusions. Do you agree ? Give reasons for your answer. 20

## SECTION B

6. Write a review of a book that you have read recently. Remember to provide a sound evaluative judgement of the book than a summary. 20
7. Write a travel article promoting your favourite hill station, outlining all the attractions of the place. Mention any problems that your target readers may face. 20
8. Write a short feature for a national daily on the topic "How safe are women in large cities". 20
9. You have been sent to interview a man who shot dead his wife and two children and also attempted to kill himself. Draw up a list of ten questions along with their possible answers, so that the reasons for his behaviour emerge. 20
10. Comment on the tone and style of the following book review : 20

### **Half Girlfriend**

by *Chetan Bhagat*

Chetan Bhagat, the IIT-IIM graduate who is not famous for being an IIT-IIM graduate, has been writing for years, and his books have sold like hot cakes. We have been treated to *Five Point Someone*, *One Night at a Call Centre*, *The Three Mistakes of My Life*, *2 States* and *Revolution 2020*. The less known non-fiction book 'What Young India Wants' is also out in the market.

Now, we get *Half Girlfriend*. There has already been some feminist outrage over the crudeness of the title, but as we begin to read we find out that Bhagat simply repeats his standard settings — a college, a common activity (in this case, basketball) and a girl.

Like in all of Bhagat's other novels, the protagonist, a man, suffers from a lack of self-esteem. Like in most other novels, the girl he chases is beautiful, talented and we are given the impression that she is too good for him.

Additionally, Madhav is a country bumpkin in *Half Girlfriend*, which means his diffidence quotient is even higher, and the difficulty of his task greater. He hails from Bihar, the most reviled of Indian States, and stereotypically the most backward. He meets and falls in love with a beautiful Delhi girl. Delhi girls, by definition, are all beautiful, fair and wear short clothes. Bihari boys are closet chauvinists who freak out when denied sex, and hurl choice, crass abuse in Bhojpuri. Thus, Bhagat manages to reinforce another stereotype about India and Indians.

Bhagat also fails to tell us why a high-class metropolitan girl would fall for a rural boy with no talent except at basketball. While this is not impossible in real life, the reasons behind it remain unexplored until the very end. Chetan Bhagat's book can be accused of a lack of character development of the protagonists, which means we cannot feel their emotions.

Here's another blow: Most of Bhagat's other books held a lesson or moral for everyone to follow, however mediocre the expression was. *Half Girlfriend* is devoid of moral teachings. This is not to say that the book is an immoral piece of work — just that it's a rambling love story lacking in moral purpose.

One thing that can be said about *Half Girlfriend* is that it is less boring to read than *Revolution 2020*. This may be ascribed to the Delhi connect, which appeals to the Indian metropolitan crowd, and the stereotypes of Delhi women and Bihari men which everyone seems to love reading and assimilating into their minds. Of course, there's the fact that Bhagat again manages to satiate the Indian appetite for dreamy, mushy romance. And sex.

So, the million dollar (or Rs 176) question : Is it worth a read ? Only if you are a hardcore Chetan Bhagat fan, because it's pretty standard fare (again).

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