

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION 2008/09**

COURSE NAME: MODERN LITERATURE I

COURSE CODE: AL 202 / IDE AL 202

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. ANSWER THREE (3) QUESTIONS, ONE FROM EACH SECTION. EACH QUESTION CARRIES 20 MARKS.**

- 2. EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE COMMENCED ON A SEPARATE SHEET.**

- 3. DO NOT REPEAT MATERIAL OR WRITE ABOUT THE SAME TEXT AT LENGTH MORE THAN ONCE.**

- 4. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING ANY READING MATERIAL INTO THE EXAMINATION HALL.**

- 5. IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THIS PAPER, CORRECT USAGE OF ENGLISH, THE QUALITY OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESENTATION OF ANSWERS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.**

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

**SECTION – A
PROSE**

QUESTION 1

Ngugi wa Thiong'o: A Grain of Wheat

Discuss how individual tragedies are related to the tragedy of the society in Ngugi's novel.

QUESTION 2

Bessie Head: The Collector of Treasures

Describe Mma-Mabele's heroic struggle to overcome superstition and to live above village jealousy in Head's short story "Witchcraft."

Or

Discuss how the family becomes a paralyzing force and a limitation on women's self-realization in Head's short story "The Collector of Treasures"

QUESTION 3

Eskia Mphahlele's Down Second Avenue

Discuss the adversities that Mphahlele has to overcome in order to acquire education while living in the slums of Pretoria.

**SECTION – B
POETRY**

QUESTION 4

Read the poem and answer the question given below:

"Evening"
Stephen Lubega (Uganda)

Never has the death of a poet
Been tolled by all the world.
God's work on earth, though
Has its universal funeral in the west,

Recurrent grave of day's almighty soul.

Never was victory so trumpeted
 As that of the sun scorching his fiery way
 And then in gorgeous colours falling,
 Trailing stars.
 Life, death, water and aridity
 Bow to this morning ray.

With his passing, death stirs in the thicket.
 In church the bell is tolled,
 In barracks at the last bugle note
 Soldiers like ants file,
 The busy woman scolds her child,
 Drunkards like sick dogs retch homewards.
 The night voice is a harsh guitar

But on a hill among musizi trees
 Sweet nuns sing the litanies
 Of the virgins whose Son we know.
 Priests like lamp posts in a graveyard
 Stoop over the breviary.

There's a piping of crickets in the bush
 And a bellowing of frogs –
 All sing the ancient elegy
 For the sun that has died in the west.

Comment on the poet's use of imagery in the poem and show how relevant is his use of the imagery of death.

QUESTION 5

“Black Africa's rebirth was often seen by people like Diop and Senghor as taking place in the midst of the degeneration and collapse of white civilization.” How does David Diop convey this idea in his poem, “Africa”?

QUESTION 6

“White Child Meets Black Man”
 James Berry (Jamaica)

She caught me outside a London
 suburban shop, I like a giraffe
 and she a mouse. I tried to go

but felt she stood
lovely as light on my back.

I turned with hello
and waited. Her eyes got
wider but not her lips.
Hello I smiled again and watched.

She stepped around me
slowly, in a kind of dance,
her wide eyes searching
inch by inch up and down:
no fur no scales no feathers
no shell. Just a live silhouette,
wild and strange
and compulsive
till mother came horrified.

'Mummy is his tummy black?'
Mother grasped her and swung
toward the crowd. She tangled
mother's legs looking back at me.
As I watched them birds were singing.

Line 15: *silhouette*,: *an outline figure, black on white*

Differentiate between the racial attitudes shown by the three characters in the poem and also discuss if there is any justification for the mother's reaction.

SECTION – C DRAMA

QUESTION 7

Ama Ata Aidoo: Anowa

"Anowa exemplifies a transition in her society as she is caught between defying the conventions of traditional society and refusing to adopt the materialistic values of the rising bourgeoisie."
Discuss this statement with textual illustrations.

QUESTION 8

Athol Fugard: Sizwe Bansi is Dead

How does the play dramatize an attempt by a dispossessed black man to survive and subvert the restrictions of the Group Areas Act?

QUESTION 9

Wole Soyinka: The Lion and the Jewel

Explain the representations of tradition and modernity as portrayed in the characters of Lakunle and Baroka.