

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION 2009/10

COURSE NAME: MODERN LITERATURE I

COURSE CODE: AL 202 / IDE AL 202

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. ANSWER ANY 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

Elechi Amadi: The Concubine

Ihuoma's life can be summarized in her assertion that "...beauty does not always mean happiness. I have not been a very happy woman." Discuss the concepts of 'fate' and 'concubinage' as they apply to Ihuoma in Elechi Amadi's The Concubine. Remember to link these concepts to Ihuoma's portrayal as an archetype of the tragic heroine.

QUESTION 2

Bessie Head: The Collector of Treasures and other Botswana Village tales

- a. When constitutional means of obtaining justice fails, the oppressed take the law into their own hands. Discuss this as it applies to Dikeledi and Kebonye in "The Collector of Treasures."
- b. Which is the real prison for Dikeldi and Kebonye – the marriage institution or the long-term central state prison? Give concrete examples to illustrate your answers.

QUESTION 3

Ngugi wa Thiong'o: A Grain of Wheat

Discuss the concept of Fanonist Marxism as utilized by Ngugi wa Thiong'o in A Grain of Wheat.

SECTION – B
POETRY

QUESTION 4

What picture does O. M. Mtshali paint concerning the lives of black people in South Africa through the poems, “Nightfall in Soweto” and “Just a Passerby”?

QUESTION 5

Read the poem and answer the question given below:

“Harvest Moon”

Bai Tamiah Moore

Of all the moons the gods bestowed
Glato is the farmer’s dream.
She brings the golden paddy fields
And drives the hungry moons away.
All the fields, like a thousand incense burning
Fill the air with fragrance,
Of golden heads of rice
Of okra, corn and condiments
With which the farmer’s spouse
Can keep aglow her hearth.
Along the winding village trails
Melodious harvest songs in glee
From lips of carefree maidens,
Welcome love and merriment.
When the harvest sun is setting
Over the hills, the trees and fields,
The family moving to the town
Are silhouetted against the sky
With all their home utensils
Gently balanced on the head.
Glato is the planning moon
For feast to those who long have gone
To the fertile farming lands
Where all the tribes must some day meet;
It might have been the village doctor,
Gifted in the arts of cures,

Or the midwife of the village
Who rescued innocent maidens
Beset with fears of nature.
Or perhaps a lowly sire,
Who was sought in every council
And envied by some tyrant chief,
Or the jovial village smithy
Whose communal place of duty
Called the farmers from afar;
Or a village belle or lad
On whom the tribe bestowed
The secret of their mores.
For these perhaps there'll be no cow,
But the farmer's only goat or sheep
Will grace the plate of the friends
Who come to share in mirth
The memory of the ones departed
To the fertile farming lands.
In harvest moon when tom-toms and the singing
Of the young entune the jungle
With a gripping syncopation
And the moonbeams turn to silver
A hundred million silent leaves,
The surging urge of dancing feet
Along the winding village trails
Beat up a rhythmic tempo.

How does the poet convey to the reader the sense of ripeness and plenty of the harvest season? Discuss this question by pointing out the images of sight, colour, smell, mood, taste and sound.

QUESTION 6

David Diop's "Africa"

Diop's poems can be said to be thematically circumscribed within a framework of uncompromising and sometimes deliberately harsh denunciation of prejudice and exploitation, and an unconditional faith in the Black man's capacity to rise triumphantly into a new and scintillating dawn." Discuss this statement in relation to Diop's poem, "Africa".

SECTION – C
DRAMA

QUESTION 7

Ama Ata Aidoo: Anowa

“Anowa’s determination to be true to herself and her principles, her vision, results in her becoming an outcast, rejected by her own family and branded as a witch by her husband, before he too casts her out.” Discuss.

QUESTION 8

Wole Soyinka: The Lion and the Jewel

“Lakunle emerges as a comic character, but there is an underlying pathos that arises from the recognition that he has a split personality.” Discuss the character of Lakunle with relevant textual illustrations.

QUESTION 9

Athol Fugard, John Kani and Winston Ntshona: Sizwe Bansi is Dead

“Fugard’s play forcefully conveys the terrible effects of South African pass laws and the establishment of black so-called homelands.” Discuss this statement in relation to Sizwe Bansi’s predicament in the play.