

AL 303 / IDE AL 303

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE**  
**FINAL EXAMINATION-MAY 2011**

**TITLE OF PAPER:      TRADITIONAL/ORAL LITERATURE 11**

**COURSE CODE    :      AL 303 / IDE-AL 303**

**TIME ALLOWED:      THREE (3) HOURS**

**INSTRUCTIONS:    1. ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS, CHOOSING  
AT LEAST ONE (1) FROM EACH SECTION**

**2. EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE COMMENCED ON A  
SEPARATE PAGE.**

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

**4. IN THE ASSESMENT 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.**

## TRADITIONAL/ ORAL LITERATURE 11

**INSTRUCTIONS: ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS, CHOOSING AT LEAST ONE (1) FROM EACH SECTION**

### **SECTION A: NATURE OF FOLKTALES AND THEORIES OF ORAL LITERATURE**

1. A). Comment on the different definitions of folktales. (10 marks)  
B). How can you differentiate folktales from other forms of oral narrative? (10 marks)
2. Oral narrative performance is a communication system in which a social discourse takes place principally between the narrator and an audience. Discuss. (20 marks)
3. Distinguish between the ethnological, taxonomist and cognitionist traditions of oral narratives. (20 marks)
4. Using the ecocritical approach, critically analyze the folktale below. (20 marks)

Once upon a time, all the animals in the world decided to build huge, permanent houses. Even the smallest of them all, the rat, agreed that a huge permanent house was what the family needed.

The animals then agreed to meet after everyone had completed building, they agreed to meet at the new house of the Lion, for since he was their king, his house should be large enough to accommodate them all. After some time, their tasks were complete and Lion with building the biggest permanent house. Finally, lion stood up to summarize what he heard from the different speakers.

What all the speakers pointed out was the increasing shortage of water. The birds had complained that not only were they experiencing difficulties with drinking water but they were also finding it increasingly difficult to find trees on which to place their huge, heavy, permanent houses. The crocodile's anger with the constantly receding water levels was pitiful. Lion himself pointed out his worry about the possible extinction of the  
"WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST THAT WE DO?"

Lion asked before sitting down. "BLOW DOWN THE HOUSES," replied hare. "AND THEN?"

Lion asked. Hare had no answer. No one had an answer for quite awhile; then the Tortoise raised his head and said, "I CARRY MY HOUSE WHEREVER I GO. EVEN THE ONE I BUILD RECENTLY IS USELESS TO ME. IF GOD WANTED YOU TO HAVE HOUSES, HE WOULD HAVE DONE FOR YOU WHAT HE DID FOR ME; HEN, YOU WOULDN'T CUT DOWN TREES THAT WE NEED SO MUCH JUST TO CONSTRUCT HOUSES WHICH CANNOT KEEP HUNGER AND DEATH OUTSIDE THEIR WALLS.WE SHOULD DEMOLISH THOSE HOUSES AND MAKE THE OPEN SKY THE COMMON HOUSE FOR US ALL". "WELL SPOKEN" Said hippotamus, as he made a dash for the nearest water body.

Crocodile also agreed with tortoise and went to the banks of the nearest water body. The rest of the animals agreed to not only demolish their huge, permanent houses, but to plant trees, wood and grass afresh. These mountains and hills (Narrator stretches his arms and Points to the direction of the hills outside) that we see today were the ruins of huge, permanent houses of big animals. The forests and woodlands we see around us (Narrator points to the bush around the compound) were planted by the animals after that important meeting.

That is the end of my story.

## **SECTION B: PROVERBS AND RIDDLES**

- 5 A). Why are proverbs considered as the verbal play of the elders? (5 marks).  
B). Discuss with particular examples, the importance of proverbs as carriers of Swazi people's wisdom and culture (15 marks).
6. With relevant examples drawn from the Swazi society, discuss the fact that "riddles are coined by elders but are aimed at a youthful audience" (20 marks).

7. With relevant examples drawn from the Swazi society, comment on the following categories of riddles:
- a). Socio-political riddles (5 marks)
  - b). Riddles that deal with nature (5 marks)
  - c). Riddles that deal with domestic activities (5marks)
  - d). Riddles that deal with science and logic (5 marks)