

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION 2006

COURSE TITLE: COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

COURSE CODE: ENG405/IDE-E4P4

**TIME ALLOWED: ENG405: TWO HOURS
E4P4: THREE HOURS**

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. ENG405: Answer TWO questions, ONE from each section
E4P4: Answer THREE questions; at least ONE from each section.**

- 2. Do not repeat material or write about the same text at length more than once.**

- 3. Good expression and adherence to literary conventions will count.**

- 4. All questions carry equal marks.**

- 5. This paper consists of 6 pages, cover page included.**

**THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION
HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE INVIGILATOR
SECTION A: PROSE AND DRAMA**

Question 1

Comparatively discuss how the protagonists of the two texts, Down Second Avenue and Manchild in the Promised Land, respond to 'ghetto' life.

Question 2

Compare and contrast how the narrators in A Dry White Season and A Lesson Before Dying are related to the events they narrate and to the novels' protagonists.

Question 3

"Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Manchild in the Promised Land, and Down Second Avenue are all 'autobiographies' narrating black experience under white rule."

- a) Citing three recurrent themes, discuss how these themes have been portrayed in each text. [20]
- b) Explain how far the 'autobiographical' exploration of these themes has shaped your response to each text. [10]

Question 4

- a) Identify the respective central theme in A Raisin in the Sun and A Dry White Season. [10]
- b) Discuss with the aid of illustrations how the authors' use of symbolism, including the texts' 'borrowed' titles, has enhanced the themes. [20]

Question 5

Discuss how the quest for belonging has been projected in the portrayal of Vvry in Jubilee, Eseki in Down Second Avenue, and Mama Lena in A Raisin in the Sun.

SECTION B: POETRY (Answer at least one question from this section)

Question 6

Write a well illustrated essay citing, comparing and contrasting the recurrent themes as well as stylistic features of South African and African American poetry.

Question 7

Read the following poems and discuss the questions that follow:

Tshisa-Nyama Daizer Mqhaba

The very fact that it is isolated
From other shops proves the reality:
This is a Bantu Special Restaurant
Owned by all Italian team-mates.

The pap, you braai till it turns chocolate brown
The meat and the wors, you leave in the red oven
Till it resembles our customers' colour.
The binnegoetes, you leave half-raw, half-cooked.

The shop, you don't label the name.
The tables must be of hard steel, the chairs as well.
The plates must be of aluminium,
The spoons, big, round and rusty.

The advertisement must be fuming smoke
That is burning meat and pap.
Let a Bantu man call it Tshisa-nyama.
We don't mind the queries and all such.

The soup must be made from a cheap recipe,
The ingredients as costless as ever.
The sweets must be sticky, and also Dube-Dubes.
Cigarettes? Mainly B.B., Lexington and Mboza.

When he orders he must be as audible as a motor horn.
Should he warble like a swallowing Bull
Give him any item in front of you –
He'll not lodge even a single complaint.

Business manners – not applicable to him.
Just shout at him: 'Funani Bhizzah?'
He'll never wrinkle – 'Funa pap en Steik!'
And then draw shekels from a dirty horseshoe-pouch.

Same, must be wrapped in an inky newspaper
He must eat outside on the dirty stoep

Who does he think will clean for him
After finishing with all those remnants?

The suitable drinks served are usually:
Al Mageu, Hubby-bubbly and Pint –
If he wants something decent, try next door!
We sell only Bantu appetizing stuff here.

He must eat like a pig stuck in the mud,
His teeth must emphasize the echo of the
Battle with the whitish-pink coarse tongue.
He's mos never taught any table decency!

It is a restaurant solely for Bantus.
No other race has any business to interfere.
The food sold here is absolute fire-smelling:
Sies! I'll never eat that kind of junk! Ga!

Tshisa Thixo safa Yindelelo!

Merry-Go-Round Langston Hughes

Where is the Jim Crow section
On this merry-go-round,
Mister, cause I want to ride?
Down South where I come from
White and colored
Can't sit side by side.
Down South on the train
There's a Jim Crow car.
On the bus we're put in the back –
But there ain't no back
To a merry-go-round!
Where's the horse
For a kid that's black?

- a) What is the pervading tone and mood of the two poems? [5]
- b) Discuss the issues raised in each poem, and in your discussion comment on the contribution of the poems' tone and mood to the overall meaning. [25]

Question 8

- a) Comparatively discuss the aspects of black life (and the background to them) projected in the following poems.
b) Comment on any interesting aspects of the tone, mood and form of the two poems.
[10]

Elevator Boy Langston Hughes

I got a job now
Runnin' an elevator
In the Dennison Hotel in Jersey,
Job aint no good though.
No money around.
Jobs are just chances
Like everything else.
Maybe a little luck now,
Maybe not.
Maybe a good job sometimes:
Step out o' the barrel, boy.
Two new suits an'
A woman to sleep with.
Maybe no luck for a long time.

Only the elevators
Goin' up an' down,
Up an' down,
Or somebody else's shoes
To shine,
Or greasy pots in a dirty kitchen.
I been runnin' this
Elevator too long.
Guess I'll quit now.

The Efficacy of Prayer Casey Motsisi

They called him Dan the Drunk.
The old people refuse to say how old he was,
Nobody knows where he came from – but they all
Called him Dan the Drunk.
He was a drunk, but perhaps his name was not really Dan.
Who knows, he might have been Sam.
But why bother, he's dead, poor Dan.
Gave him a pauper's funeral, they did.
Just dumped him into a hole to rest in eternal drunkenness.
Somehow the old people are glad that Dan the Drunk is dead.

Ghastly!

They say he was a bad influence on the children.

But the kids are sad that Dan the Drunk is no more

No more will the kids frolic to the music that used to flow out of his battered
concertina. Or listen to the tales he used to tell.

All followed him into that pauper's hole.

How the kids used to worship Dan the Drunk!

He was just one of them grown older too soon.

'I'm going to be just like Dan the Drunk,' a little girl said to her parents
of a night cold while they crowded around a sleepy brazier.

The parents looked at each other while their eyes prayed,

'God Almighty, save our little Sally.'

God heard their prayer.

He saved their Sally.

Prayer it can work miracles.

Sally grew up to become a nanny...

(1960)