

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION 2007

COURSE TITLE: A STUDY OF POETRY

COURSE CODE: ENG206

TIME ALLOWED: 2 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Answer Question One plus ONE other question.

2. Correct use of English and literary conventions will be rewarded; grammatical errors and incorrect use of conventions will be penalized.
3. This paper consists of 5 pages, cover page included.
4. Each question carries 30 marks.

**THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN
GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR**

Question One (Compulsory)

Using the poems below for illustration, identify and discuss THREE aspects which render one poem free verse and the other conventional:

“The Song of Sunrise” Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali

The sword of daybreak
snips the shroud
of the night from the sky,
and the morning
peeps through the blankets
like a baby rising
from its cot
to listen to the
peal of the bell.

Arise! Arise!
All Workers!
To work! To work!
You must go!

Buses rumble,
Trains rattle,
Taxis hoot.

I shuffle in the queue
with feet that patter
on the station platform,
and stumble into the coach
that squeezes me like a lemon
of all the juice of my life.

“The Twin of Sleep” Robert Graves

Death is the twin of Sleep, they say:
For I shall rise renewed,
Free from the cramps of yesterday,
Clear-eyed and supple-thewed.

But though this bland analogy
Helps other folk to face
Decrepitude, senility,
Madness, disease, disgrace,

I do not like Death's greedy looks:
Give me his twin instead –
Sleep never auctions off my books,
My boots, my shirts, my bed.

Question Two

Give a comprehensive account of poetic diction using the sonnet below for illustration:

“Sonnet 18” Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometimes declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st
Nor shall Death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st.
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Question Three

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow:

“The Wife of Usher's Well” Anonymous

There lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o'er the sea.

They had not been a week from her,
A week but barely one,
When word came to the carline wife [carline: peasant
That her three sons were gone.

They had not been a week from her,
A week but barely three,

When word came to the carline wife
That her sons she'd never see.

"I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes in the flood, [fashes: storms]
Till my three sons come home to me,
In earthly flesh and blood."

It fell about the Martin-mass, [Nov.11, celebrated as the feast of St Martin]
When nights are long and dark
The carline wife's three sons came home,
And their hats were of birch bark.

It neither grew in marsh nor trench
Nor yet in any ditch;
But at the gates of Paradise
That birch grew fair and rich.

"Blow up the fire, my maidens!
Bring water from the well!
For all my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well."

And she has made for them a bed,
She's made it large and wide,
And she's taken her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bed-side.

Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
"Tis time we were away."

The cock he had not crowed but once,
And clapped his wings at dawn,
When the youngest to the eldest said,
"Brother we must be gone."

"The cock doth crow, the day doth grow,
The channering worm doth chide; [channering: gnawing]
If we be missed out of our place,
A sair pain we must abide. [sair: sore]

"Fare ye well, my mother dear!
Farewell to barn and byre!
And fare ye well, the bonny lass

That kindles my mother's fire!"

- a) Identify the poem's sub-genre. [2]
- b) From the poem, cite and discuss FIVE characteristic features of this subgenre to support your selection above. [18]
- c) Briefly discuss the poem's meaning, form, tone and mood. [10]

Question 4

- a) With the aid of illustrations from the poems studied on this course, justify the broad classification of poems into: lyrical, dramatic and narrative. [20]
- b) How rigid is this classification? Discuss with examples. [10]