

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FINAL EXAMINATION 2011

COURSE TITLE: ADVANCED STUDIES IN AFRICAN LITERATURE

COURSE TITLE: ENG 404/IDE-ENG 404

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Answer TWO questions, one from each section.
 2. Your answers should not exceed three pages.
 3. Do not repeat material or write about the same text more than once.
 4. Correct use of English and literary conventions will be rewarded and the reverse will be penalised.

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BY THE INVIGILATOR

Section A: Novel

So Long a Letter Ba

1. Among other things, Ba views marital infidelity, polygamy and their resultant abandonment of the first wife as a source of great distress, a form of nervous condition. How is this demonstrated in the novella? [30]

The Red Haired Khumalo Bregin

2. While the above novel reflects deep-seated racial attitudes and prejudice, it also paves a way for a new dispensation in the South African society. Use relevant instances in the novel to support this statement. [30]

The Bird of Heaven - Dunseith

3. Writers of the magical realist tradition immerse their fiction in local beliefs, symbols and philosophies. How is this reflected through the journey Mandla undertakes in order to retrieve his muti bag? [30]

the mending season – Malope

4. Discuss how Malope exposes the remnants of racial segregation and prejudice, and comment on how these racial encounters eventually close the gulf between black and white South Africans.

Section B: Drama and poetry

Song of a Goat - Clark

5. In their writing, contemporary African dramatists draw from oral narratives as well as cultural beliefs and practices such as rites and rituals, the gods and the ancestors. How is this reflected in the above play. [30]

Crossings - Heywood (selected poems)

6. Read the poems below and answer the questions that follow:

'The Dry Season' by Kwesi Brew

The year is weathering; the wind
Blows down the leaves;
Men stand under eaves
And overhear the secrets
5 Of the cold wind,
Of the half-bare trees.
The grasses are tall and tinted,
Straw-gold hues of dryness,
And the contradicting awryness,
10 'Of the dusty roads a-scatter
With pools of colourful leaves,
With ghosts of the dreaming year.

And soon, soon the fires,
The fires will begin to burn,
15 The hawk will flutter and turn
On its wings and swoop for the mouse,
The dogs will run for the hare,
The hare for its little life.

"Seasons" by Wole Soyinka

Rust is ripeness, rust,
And the wilted corn-plume;
Pollen is mating-time when swallows
Weave a dance
5 Of feathered arrows
Thread corn-stalks in winged
Streaks of light. And, we loved to hear
Spliced phrases of wind, to hear
Rasps in the field, where corn-leaves
10 Pierce like bamboo slivers.

Now garnerers we
Awaiting rust on tassels, draw
Long shadows from the dusk, wreath

Dry thatch in wood-smoke. Laden stalks
Ride the germ's decay-we await
The promise of the rust.

(a) Compare the themes of the two poems paying special attention to the use of imagery. [15]

(b) What is the tone of the poems? [8]

(c) What mood is conveyed in these poems? [7]

7. Using **Three** poems you have studied in the course discuss how African Religious beliefs, rites and rituals are reflected in these poems. [30]