

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION, JULY 2013

COURSE TITLE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO ENGLISH LITERATURE

COURSE CODE: ENG 104

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Answer TWO questions.

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 penalized.

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INVIGILATOR

Question 1

The knight is a very important figure of the medieval period. Discuss some of the positive attributes of the knights that feature in "The General Prologue" of The Canterbury Tales. [30]

Question 2

Read the sonnet the following sonnet and discuss its type, structure and theme. [30]

Sonnet 67

Lyke as a huntsman after weary chace,^t
Seeing the game from him escapt away,
Sits downe to rest him in some shady place,
With panting hounds beguilèd of their pray:
5 So after long pursuit and vaine assay,^o *attempt*
When I all weary had the chace forsooke,
The gentle deare returnd the selfe-same way,
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next^o brooke. *nearby*
There she beholding me with mylder looke,
10 Sought not to fly, but fearelesse still did bide:
Till I in hand her yet halfe trembling tooke,
And with her owne goodwill hir fymely tyde.
Strange thing me seemd to see a beast so wyld,^t
So goodly wonne with her owne will beguyld.^o *entangled*

Question 3

Read this extract from Hamlet and explain how it reflects some of the characteristics of the hero of a revenge tragedy. [30]

HAMLET

To be, or not to be—that is the question: ✱
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die, to sleep—
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished: to die, to sleep.
To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,

Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life. 70
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make

With a bare bodkin? Who would these fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn 80
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn away
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now,
The fair Ophelia.—Nymph, in thy orisons 90

Be all my sins remembered.

Question 4

Using five examples discuss how Milton makes references to both religious and non-religious cultures in Book one of *Paradise Lost*. [30]

Question 5

In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift is critical of human institutions and passions. Basing your answer on Gulliver's experiences in one of the places he travelled to, discuss this view. [30]