

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION, JULY 2013**

**COURSE NAME:** A STUDY OF POETRY  
**COURSE CODE:** ENG206 / IDE-ENG206  
**DURATION:** TWO HOURS

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Answer **Question 1**, plus one other question (two questions in all).
2. Read the instructions carefully to avoid giving irrelevant answers.
3. Make sure you proofread your work to eliminate grammatical and conventional errors.
4. This paper is 6 pages long, cover page included.

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BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR**

**Question 1** (Compulsory –answer either **a** or **b**)

- a) Read the poem below and critically analyse it at the levels of *meaning* and *form*. [30]

**“Four-Word Lines”** Mary Swenson

Your eyes are just  
like bees, and I  
feel like a flower.  
Their broken power makes  
a breeze go over                   5  
my skin. When your  
lashes ride down and  
rise like brown bees’  
legs, your pronged gaze  
makes my eyes gauze.           10  
I wish we were  
in some shade and  
no swarm of other  
eyes to know that  
I’m a flower breathing           15  
bare, laid open to  
your bees’ warm stare.  
I’d let you wade  
in me and seize  
with your eager brown           20  
bees’ power a sweet  
glistening at my core.

**OR**

- b) Read the poems below and answer the questions that follow them. [30]

**“The Mesh”** Kwesi Brew

We have come to the cross-roads  
And I must either leave or come with you.  
I lingered over the choice  
But in the darkness of my doubts  
You lifted the lamp of love  
And I saw in your face  
The road that I should take.



And last, she sat down by my side  
 And called me. When no voice replied, 15  
     She put my arm about her waist,  
 And made her smooth white shoulder bare  
     And all her yellow hair displaced,  
 And stooping, made my cheek lie there,  
     And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair, 20  
 Murmuring how she loved – she  
     Too weak, for all her heart's endeavour,  
 To set its struggling passion free  
     From pride, and vainer ties dissever,  
 And give herself to me forever. 25  
     But sometimes passion would prevail,  
 Nor could tonight's gay feast restrain  
     A sudden thought of one so pale  
 For love of her, and all in vain:  
     So, she was come through wind and rain. 30  
 Be sure I looked up at her eyes  
     Happy and proud; at last I knew  
 Porphyria worshipped me; surprised  
     Made my heart swell, and still it grew  
 While I debated what to do. 35  
     That moment she was mine, mine, fair,  
 Perfectly pure and good: I found  
     A thing to do, and all her hair  
 In one long yellow string I wound  
     Three times her little throat around, 40  
 And strangled her. No pain felt she;  
     I am quite sure she felt no pain.  
 As a shut bud that holds a bee,  
     I warily oped her lids: again  
 Laughed the blue eyes without a stain. 45  
     And I untightened next the stress  
 About her neck; her cheeks once more  
     Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:  
 I propped her head up as before,  
     Only, this time my shoulder bore 50  
 Her head, which droops upon it still:  
     The smiling rosy little head,  
 So glad it has its utmost will,  
     That all it scorned at once is fled,  
 And I, Its love, am gained instead! 55  
     Porphyria love: she guessed not how  
 Her darling one wish would be heard.  
     And thus we sit together now,  
 And all night long we have not stirred,

“The speaker in this genre of poetry reveals his personality and state of mind to the readers without his realising exactly what he is giving away.” Use examples from the poem to identify its genre and refute or reinforce the statement. (30)

**Question 3**

Using ONE of the sonnets below for illustration, discuss how a sonnet’s meaning is conveyed through both its content and form. [30]

**“God’s Grandeur”** Gerald Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.  
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;  
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil  
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?  
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod; 5  
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;  
And wears man’s smudge and shares man’s smell: the soil  
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;  
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things; 10  
And though the last lights off the black West went  
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –  
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent  
World broods with warm breast and with ah! Bright wings.

**“A Sonnet”** John Milton

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,  
And that one Talent which is death to hide  
Lodged with me useless, though my Soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present 5  
My true account, lest he returning chide,  
Doth God exact day-labor, light deny’d  
I fondly ask. But Patience to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need  
Either man’s work or his own gifts, who best 10  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best, his state  
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed,  
And post o’er Land and Ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait.

#### Question 4

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow:

“Piano” D.H. Lawrence

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;  
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see  
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings  
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song  
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong  
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside  
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide. 5

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour  
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour  
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast  
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past. 10

- a) Describe the situation captured by the poem. [10]
- b) Discuss the conflicting emotions that assail the persona as he listens to the woman's song. [10]
- c) Which emotion triumphs in the end? Discuss briefly. [10]