

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
SECOND SEMESTER FINAL EXAMINATION – MAY, 2015

COURSE CODE: ENG206 /IDE-ENG206
COURSE NAME: A STUDY OF POETRY
TIME ALLOWED: 2 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer Question 1, plus ONE other question.
2. Make sure you read each question carefully and follow its instructions.
3. Wherever possible, give the required response and avoid unnecessary narration.
4. Make sure you proofread your work to eliminate grammatical errors.
5. Make sure you adhere to both literary and poetic rules.
6. This paper is 6 pages long, cover page included.

THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION IS
GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR

Question 1

Answer either a or b:

a) "Question from a Worker who Reads" Bertolt Brecht

Who built Thebes of the seven gates?
In the books you will find the names of kings.
Did the kings haul up the lumps of rock?
And Babylon, many times demolished,
Who raised it up so many times? In what houses 5
Of gold-glittering Lima did the builders live?
Where, the evening that the Wall of China was finished,
Did the masons go? Great Rome
Is full of triumphal arches. Who erected them? Over whom
Did the Caesars triumph? Had Byzantium, much praised in song, 10
Only palaces for its inhabitants? Even in fabled Atlantis
The night the ocean engulfed it
The drowning still bawled for their slaves.

The young Alexander conquered India
Was he alone? 15
Caesar beat the Gauls.
Did he not have even a cook with him?

Philip of Spain wept when his armada
Went down. Was he the only one to weep?
Frederick the Second won the Seven Years' War. Who 20
Else won it?

Every page a victory
Who cooked the feast for the victors?

Every ten years a great man.
Who paid the bill? 25

So many reports.
So many questions.

- i) Identify the speaker of the poem. [2]
- ii) What in your view motivated Brecht to write the poem? Discuss in full with the aid of examples. [10]
- iii) Identify the poem's main theme. [5]

- iv) List the people mentioned in the poem and explain their significance in relation to the theme of the poem; also state what is common among them. [7]
- v) Discuss your response to the poem. [6]

[TOTAL: 30 MARKS]

b) "An African Thunderstorm" David Rubadiri

From the west
 Clouds come hurrying with the wind
 Turning
 Sharply
 Here and there 5
 Like a plague of locusts
 Whirling
 Tossing up things on its tail
 Like a madman chasing nothing.

Pregnant clouds 10
 Ride stately on its bank
 Gathering to perch on hills
 Like dark sinister wings;
 The wind whistles by
 And trees bend to let it pass. 15

In the village
 Screams of delighted children
 Toss and turn
 In the din of whirling wind,
 Women – 20
 Babies clinging on their backs –
 Dart about
 In and out
 Madly.
 The wind whistles by 25
 Whilst trees bend to let it pass.
 Clothes wave like tattered flags
 Flying off
 To expose dangling breasts
 As jagged blinding flashes 30
 Rumble, tremble, and crack
 Amidst the smell of fired smoke
 And the pelting march of the storm.

- i) In not more than a paragraph, describe the situation captured in the poem. [7]
- ii) Identify the figures of speech used in the poem and the senses to which they appeal. [10]
- iii) In a well-illustrated essay and focusing on not less than 5 examples, discuss how each figure of speech vivifies the poem's meaning. [10]
- iv) Briefly highlight the speaker's attitude towards the approaching storm. [3]

[TOTAL: 30 MARKS]

Question 2

Read the sonnet below and answer the questions that follow it:

Sonnet 30

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
 I summon up remembrance of things past,
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
 Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow, 5
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
 And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,
 And moan the expense of many a vanished sight:
 Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
 And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er 10
 The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
 Which I knew pay as if not paid before.
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
 All losses are restored and sorrows end.

- i) Rewrite the last word of each line of the sonnet, and determine the sonnet's rhyme. [7]
- ii) Indicate the sonnet's rhyme scheme. [2]
- iii) Identify the sonnet's sub-type and indicate its internal structure. [6]
- iv) Discuss how the sonnet's internal structure impacts on the development of its argument. [5]
- v) Using the above sonnet as a point of departure, cite and discuss the characteristics of the two other basic sonnet types. [6]
- vi) Cite one example of the use of each of the following: alliteration, assonance, consonance. [4]

[TOTAL: 30 MARKS]

Question 3

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow it:

“Ode to the West Wind” Shelley

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn’s being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O Thou, 5
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion over the dreaming earth, and fill 10
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver; hear, O hear!

- a) Cite and discuss **3** characteristics of an Ode found in the poem. [9]
- b) Quote **two** examples of partial rhyme and their function in the poem. [4]
- c) Quote **two** examples of sense (sentence) inversion and their use in the poem. [4]
- d) Discuss how the action of the West Wind deserves the poet’s adoration. [10]
- e) Discuss the meaning of the last line. [3]

[TOTAL: 30 MARKS]

Question 4

“Who They Are” Charlotte Harvey

Wife and husband,
brother and sister,
neighbour and neighbour,
they lie there on the road.
I do not know
who they are

except that they
are dead,
not a whisker twitching.
The cars whiz by not noticing them.
But I do.
Further on in the road lies
a bundle
and another bundle.
I do not know
who they are
except that they
are dead,
not a feather stirring.
They used to be able
to run
and fly
across green safe fields.
But now there is a road.
Man has built a motorway.

- a) Identify the poem's sub-genre and discuss the characteristics that led to your choice. [10]
- b) Is this a typical example of the subgenre? Discuss. [5]
- c) Discuss the poem's theme and your response to it. [10]
- d) Comment on the tone and mood of the poem. [5]

[TOTAL: 30 MARKS]

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