

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
FINAL EXAMINATION 2016

COURSE TITLE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

COURSE CODE: ENG-IDE 104

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer **TWO** questions, one from each section.
2. Each question carries 30 marks.
3. Do not repeat or write about the same text at length more than once.
4. Correct use of English and literary conventions will be rewarded and the reverse will be penalised.

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

The Canterbury Tales - Chaucer

1. Using the animal characters, Chanticleer and the fox in 'The Nun's Priest's Tale' discuss how overweening pride and vanity are discouraged in Medieval society.
[30]
2. Read the sonnet below and discuss its structure, theme, rhyming scheme and type.
[30]

Astrophel and Stella – Sidney

Loving in truth, and fair my love in verse to show,
That the dear she might take some pleasure of my pain
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win and pity grace obtain,
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,
Studying inventions fine her wits to entertain,
Oft turning others' leaves to see if there would flow
Some fresh and fruitful shower upon my sun-burnt brain
But words came halting out, wanting invention's stay.
Inventions, Nature's child, fled stepdame's study's blows
And others' feet still seemed but strayers in my way.
Thus, great with child to speak and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself to spite,
'Fool," said my Muse to me, 'look in thy heart and write".

Hamlet – Shakespeare

3. Read the extract below, situate it within its correct context and discuss its content. [30]

Now might I do it pat, now he is praying.

And now I'll do't.

[DRAWS HIS SWORD]

And so he goes to heaven;

And so am I revenged. That would be scanned.

A villain kills my father; and for that

I, his sole son, do this same villain send

To heaven.

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

He took my father grossly, full of bread,

With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;

And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?

But in our circumstance and course of thought

'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged

To take him in the purging of his soul,

When he is fit and seasoned for his passage?

No.

Paradise Lost – Milton

4. Basing your answer on Book I discuss the conventions or formulae used in the writing of a literary epic. [30]