

UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATION – DEC 2019

COURSE TITLE: A Study of Poetry
COURSE CODE: ENG 225/216/ IDE-ENG225/206
TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Answer **Question One**, plus any other question.
2. Read the instructions carefully before attempting each question.
3. Make sure you adhere to both poetic and literary conventions to avoid loss of marks.
4. Make sure you proofread your work for grammatical mistakes.
5. This paper is 8 pages long, cover page included.

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

QUESTION 1

Read the poem and answer the questions that follow:

“Night of the Scorpion” by Nissim Ezekiel

I remember the night my mother
was stung by a scorpion. Ten hours
of steady rain had driven him
to crawl beneath a sack of rice.

Parting with his poison - flash
of diabolic tail in the dark room -
he risked the rain again.

The peasants came like swarms of flies
and buzzed the name of God a hundred times
to paralyse the Evil One.

With candles and with lanterns
throwing giant scorpion shadows
on the mud-baked walls
they searched for him: he was not found.
They clicked their tongues.
With every movement that the scorpion made
his poison moved in Mother's blood, they said.

May he sit still, they said
May the sins of your previous birth
be burned away tonight, they said.
May your suffering decrease
the misfortunes of your next birth, they said.
May the sum of all evil
balanced in this unreal world

against the sum of good
become diminished by your pain.
May the poison purify your flesh

of desire, and your spirit of ambition,
they said, and they sat around
on the floor with my mother in the centre,

the peace of understanding on each face.
More candles, more lanterns, more neighbours,
more insects, and the endless rain.
My mother twisted through and through,
groaning on a mat.
My father, sceptic, rationalist,
trying every curse and blessing,
powder, mixture, herb and hybrid.
He even poured a little paraffin
upon the bitten toe and put a match to it.
I watched the flame feeding on my mother.
I watched the holy man perform his rites
to tame the poison with an incantation.
After twenty hours
it lost its sting.

My mother only said
Thank God the scorpion picked on me
And spared my children.

- a) In a paragraph, give a summary of the situation presented by the poem. (5)
- b) In not more three lines, identify the poem's theme. (3)
- c) Identify three uses of imagery in the poem, and name the sense to which they appeal as well as comment on how they enhance the poem's meaning. (9)
- d)
 - i. Is the poem free verse or conventional? (1)
 - ii. Give three examples from the poem to support your answer. (3)
- e) Briefly highlight and discuss the parts of the poem that prove that the society is religious and superstitious at the same time. (5)
- f)
 - i. Identify the poem's speaker. (1)
 - ii. State the tone he uses in the poem. (1)
 - iii. State the relationship between the persona's tone and his stand towards what is happening in the poem. (2)

QUESTION 2

Read the sonnets below and answer the questions that follow:

“Composed upon Westminster Bridge” by William Wordsworth

Earth has not any thing to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

“Sonnet 75” by William Shakespeare

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground;
And for the peace of you I hold such strife
As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found;
Now proud as an enjoyer and anon
Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure,
Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then better'd that the world may see my pleasure;
Sometime all full with feasting on your sight
And by and by clean starved for a look;
Possessing or pursuing no delight,
Save what is had or must from you be took.
Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

“Sonnet 1” by Edmund Spenser

Happy ye leaves* when as those lilly hands,
Which hold my life in their dead doing* might,
Shall handle you and hold in loves soft bands*,
Lyke captives trembling at the victors sight.

*pages of a book
killing
bonds*

And happy lines, on which with starry light, Those laming* eyes will deigne sometimes look And reade the sorrowes of my dying spright*, Written with teares in harts close* bleeding book.	<i>flashing</i> <i>spirit</i> <i>secret</i>
And happy rymes bath'd in the sacred brooke Of Helicon* whence she derived is, When ye behold that Angels blessed looke, My soules long lacked foode, my heavens blis. Leaves, lines, and rymes, seeke her to please alone, Whom if ye please, I care for other none.	<i>name of a river</i>

- In descending order, write the last word of each line per sonnet and underline the last syllable. Scan the sonnet's rhyme. 7×3 (21)
- Indicate each sonnet's rhyme scheme. (3)
- Indicate each type of sonnet. (3)
- State the internal division and sub-divisions of each sonnet. (3)

QUESTION 3

Select one (1) sonnet from Question 2, above, and answer the following questions:

- State the form and subtype of the sonnet, basing your answer on its line arrangement and rhyme scheme. (8)
- Identify the sonnet's main theme, and comment on the overall situation it presents. (10)
- Focusing on well-chosen examples, discuss how certain linguistic devices or techniques have enriched the sonnet's meaning. (12)

QUESTION 4

Basing your illustrations on the following poem, identify and discuss six characteristics of a ballad. (30)

"Sir Patrick Spens" - Anon

The king sits in Dumferling town
Drinking the bluid-red wine:
'O whar will I get a guid sailor
To sail this ship of mine?'
Up and spak an eldern knight,
Sat at the king's richt knee:

'Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That sails upon the sea.'
The king has written a braid letter
And signed it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the sand.
The first line that Sir Patrick read
A loud lauch lauched he;
The next line that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his ee.
'O wha is this has done this deed,
This ill deed done to me,
To send me out this time o'the year,
To sail upon the sea?
'Mak haste, mak haste, my mirry men all,
Our guid ship sails the morn.'
'O say na sae, my master dear,
For I fear a deadly storm.'
'Late, late yestre'en I saw the new moon
Wi'the old moon in his arm,
And I fear, I fear, my dear master,
That we will come to harm.'
O our Scots nobles were richt laith
To weet their cork-heeled shoon,
But lang or a' the play were played
Their hats they swam aboon.
O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
Wi'their fans into their hand,
Or ere they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the land.
O lang, lang may the ladies stand
Wi'their gold kems in their hair,
Waiting for their ain dear lords,
For they'll never see them mair.
Half o'er, half o'er to Aberdour
It's fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies guid Sir Patrick Spens
Wi'the Scots lords at his feet.

QUESTION 5

Discuss the poem, "You Were You Are Elegy" as a sustained and formal poem that sets forth the poet's meditation on death.

"You Were You Are Elegy"

Fragile like a child is fragile.
Destined not to be forever.
Destined to become other
To mother. Here I am
Sitting on a chair, thinking
About you. Thinking
About how it was
To talk to you.
How sometimes it was wonderful
And sometimes it was awful.
How drugs when drugs were
Undid the good almost entirely
But not entirely
Because good could always be seen
Glimmering like lame glimmers
In the window of a shop
Called Beautiful
Things Never Last Forever.
I loved you. I love you. You were.
And you are. Life is experience.
It's all so simple. Experience is
The chair we sit on.
The sitting. The thinking
Of you where you are a blank
To be filled
In by missing. I loved you.
I love you like I love
All beautiful things.
True beauty is truly seldom.
You were. You are
In May. May now is looking onto
The June that is coming up.
This is how I measure
The year. Everything Was My Fault
Has been the theme of the song
I've been singing,
Even when you've told me to quiet.
I haven't been quiet.
I've been crying. I think you

Have forgiven me. You keep
Putting your hand on my shoulder
When I'm crying.
Thank you for that. And
For the ineffable sense
Of continuance. You were. You are
The brightest thing in the shop window
And the most beautiful seldom I ever saw.
