

UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI

INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION

JANUARY, 2020

COURSE CODE: IDE-ENG 405

COURSE TITLE: COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer **TWO** questions, ONE from each section.
2. Make sure you proof read your work to eliminate grammatical and other errors which may lead to loss of marks.
3. This paper is 5 pages long, cover page included.

**THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED
BY THE INVIGILATOR**

SECTION A: POETRY

Question 1

Read the poems below and answer the questions that follow them.

“A Day in our Life” Nkathazo Mnyaziwa

ask any black man
he'll tell you
without looking it up a dictionary
how's to be picked up
booted in the back
fly in – head first
knocking yourself against the spare-wheel
and to be driven around town
buckshee
ask any black man
he'll tell you
without looking it up in a dictionary
how's to be picked up
to talk about 'things'
to be a friend who always urges you
to give your opinions of the m.p.l.a
frelimo f.n.l. and umkhonto kashaka
who knows
he might be dangerous
have you ever seen
an s.b. wearing a uniform
ask any black man
he'll tell you
without looking up in a dictionary
how painful it is
sitting and writing in a cold candle-lit room
till the wee hours of the following day
then have your work banned
and ruin the future of your publisher
ask any black man he'll tell you
without looking it up a dictionary
how bad it is
to be promised a better wage in ten years' time
while inflation and c.o.l soars
ask any black man
he'll tell you
without looking up a dictionary
what pain is

go on-ask him

“Mother to Son” Langston Hughes

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on floor-

Bare
But all the time
I've been a-climbing' on,
And reachin' landing's,
And turning corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So, boy, don't you turn back
Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you finds its kinder hard.
Don't you fall now –
For I've still goin', honey,
I've still climbing',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

- a) Identify the respective settings of the two poems above and comparatively discuss the black experiences they project. [20]
- b) Discuss any predominant aspects of language use and form in each poem. [10]

Question 2

Comparatively respond to the content and form of the two poems below. [30]

“HILLBROW” Sphiwe ka Ngwenya

hillbrow
hill
brow
I jostle in your streets
& raise my eye
brow
eyes always glancing at your tricksters
& pimps at the corner

hillbrow
i walk between thighs & bums
of your heartless angels
parading on pavements & brothels
& feel syphilis inside my veins

hillbrow
you possess a spell that tempts
i have seen even the devils yielding
the mocking bird chirping to their morals
your sagging breasts heaving to bank notes

hillbrow
hill
brow
you lie awake day and night
even your captives worship you
for you hide the poor, the criminal & forsaken
it takes time to awaken
even the taxman grows fat
from your spoils
hillbrow
hill
brow.

“Harlem Shadows” Claude McKay

I hear the halting footsteps of a lass
In Negro Harlem when the night lets fall
Its veil. I see the shapes of girls who pass
To bend and barter at desire's call.
Ah, little dark girls who in slipped feet
Go prowling through the night from street to street!

Through the long night until the silver break
Of day the little gray feet know no rest;
Through the lone night until the last snow-flake
Has dropped from heaven upon the earth's white breast,
The dusky, half-clad girls of tired feet
Are trudging, thinly shod, from street to street.

Ah, stern harsh world, that in the wretched way
Of poverty, dishonor and disgrace,
Has pushed the timid little feet of clay,
The sacred brown feet of my fallen race!

Ah, heart of me, the weary, weary feet
In Harlem wandering from street to street.

SECTION B: PROSE AND DRAMA

Question 3

- a) Critically discuss how Niq Mhlongo in Dog Eat Dog and Lorraine Hansberry in A Raisin in the Sun advance the theme of Christianity. [20]
- b) How have the two authors used this theme to indict their respective societies? [10]

Question 4

With close reference to two characters in each text, comparatively analyse how the theme of racism is advanced in the two texts: Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun and Niq Mhlongo's Dog Eat Dog. Make sure you cite and discuss specific incidents and scenes. [30]
