

Part I: English Literature (60%)

Below are four questions on the main course of development and the leading characteristics throughout the history of English literature. Please choose *THREE* of them and write cogent essays in response.

1. Write an essay on medieval humor with the focus on *The Miller's Tale* and *The Second Shepherds' Play*. Compare the two and explain in what way the humor of *The Second Shepherds' Play* may be said to differ in its function within the play as a whole from the humor of *The Miller's Tale*.
2. As the film *Shakespeare in Love* testifies, both Elizabethan subjects and their discourses are very much shaped by the Queen. Please select a work of the English Renaissance and examine the politics of Elizabethan representation or the problematic centrality of the female monarch as author, audience, and subject.
3. Please identify the source (author and work) and briefly indicate the significance of the following quotations:
  - a. This flea is you and I, and this / Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is.
  - b. A little learning is a dangerous thing.
  - c. One equal temper of heroic hearts, / Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will / To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.
  - d. They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow / Through Eden took their solitary way.
  - e. Indeed, if woman had no existence save in the fiction written by men, one would imagine her a person of the utmost importance; very various; heroic and mean; splendid and sordid; infinitely beautiful and hideous in the extreme; as great as a man, some think even greater. But this is woman in fiction.
4. Please discuss the sense of the self in Dorothy Wordsworth's *The Grasmere Journals* and Doris Lessing's *To Room Nineteen*. (Or, as an alternative pair, the conception of the self in William Wordsworth's *The Prelude* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.)

Part II: American Literature (40%)

1. *"In the history of American poetry to 1900, only four master poets share the distinction of being truly great—as innovators; as superiors among their contemporaries; as having high significance, both historically and critically. The four are Taylor, Emerson, Whitman, and Dickinson."*

Write an essay explaining why you agree or disagree to this quotation. (20%)

2. Define **THREE** items from the list below and then give literary examples, name practitioners, describe characteristics, assess significance, and analyze impact. (20%)

transcendentalism

local color

feminism

"objective correlative"

confessional poetry

naturalism