

九十三學年度 外國語文學 系(所) 甲 組碩士班入學考試

科目 美國文學史 科號 5002 共 3 頁第 1 頁 *請在試卷【答案卷】內作答

American Literature

PART ONE CLASSIC AMERICAN LITERATURE

Answer ONE of the following questions. 30 MINUTES/30 POINTS

- 1] Whitman's most important poem is called "Song of Myself". What is Whitman's idea of self-hood? How does he portray individual identity, either his own or that of people in general? For Whitman, what does it mean to be a self? What is the nature of the self? What is the role of the body, of the mind, of others, of nature, in making up the individual self? You do not have to touch upon all of these topics, and you may include others you think are important. Choose examples from at least two poems, OR from at least two sections of "Song of Myself", or one section of "Song of Myself" and one other poem.
- 2] The themes of God and Eternity are frequent in Emily Dickinson's poetry. How would you describe her religious ideas? What is her relationship to God, to whatever is "beyond" earthly existence, to her own "soul"? Is she an orthodox Christian? You do not have to touch on all of these themes, and you may include others you think are important. Use examples from at least 2 of her poems.
- 3] Hawthorne is sometimes praised for his insight into human psychology. Use examples from either one novel or two short stories to show how he portrays the inner life of his characters.
- 4] Describe Poe's use of the theme of irrational obsession. Choose two examples from two different stories and show how the author portrays the obsession of at least one of the characters. Why does Poe focus so often on this type of character? (You must deal with this last aspect of the question.)
- 5] Describe Thoreau's portrayal of the individual and his/her relation to society. What are one's responsibilities to society as opposed to one's responsibilities to oneself? Which is greater? How should one's responsibility to society be expressed? You do not have to consider all of these points and you may include others you think are important. Use examples from EITHER *Walden* or ONE of the following: "Walking," "Life Without Principle," "Civil Disobedience."
- 6] What is the fundamental issue that drives forward the vast narrative of *Moby Dick*?

7] What is Twain's view of human beings? Does he see them as essentially good or bad? Is he optimistic or pessimistic with regard to their ability to behave morally and to treat each other in a decent way? Is he optimistic or pessimistic with regard to what can be expected for human society? Can it ever be just? You do not have to deal with all of these points and you may bring in others you think are relevant. Use examples from two stories OR one novel OR one story and one novel.

PART TWO MODERN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Answer ONE of the following questions.

30 MINUTES/30 POINTS

1] Henry James is often praised for his subtle and insightful character portrayal. Use examples from ONE work of any length to show how he conveys to readers the inner life of his characters. You may focus your answer on one character or on more than one; the object is to show how the author portrays the complexity of his characters.

2] Faulkner is thought of as being an innovator in prose style, character portrayal, and narrative structure. Choose ONE or TWO works of any length that show his ability to use unusual means to tell his story and to portray character. If you choose ONE work, you must go into some detail; if you choose TWO works, you should compare them in some way.

3] Stephen Crane, Jack London, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser are known for their highly detailed and realistic descriptions of the physical and social circumstances in which their characters exist. Show how the social and/or physical environment is used to convey the meaning of the narrative in one or two works by these writers. You may choose either ONE work by one author, TWO works by two different authors, or TWO works by the same author. If you choose one work, you must go into some detail; if you choose two works (either by the same author or different authors), you should compare them in some way.

4] Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald are known for their portrayal of characters in the period of the 20's, the so-called Jazz Age. What do these authors achieve in their work that is distinctively modern? You may choose either ONE work by one author, TWO works by two different authors, or TWO works by the same author. If you choose one work, you must go into some detail; if you choose two works (either by the same author or different authors), you should compare them in some way.

5] What is specifically modern about the work of American poets in the 20th century? Choose TWO poets and describe the ways in which they attempted to make their work modern: Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, Hart Crane, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Carl Sandburg, Robinson Jeffers. Use at least one example from each poet.

6] It is often thought that much American drama centers on issues concerning the family. Use examples drawn from the work of Eugene O'Neil or Tennessee Williams to show how the author portrays human relationships. What are the forces that influence behavior?

Should we think of them as based in familial relationships or do they have other sources? You may choose either ONE work by one author, TWO works by two authors(one from each), or TWO works by the same author. If you choose one work, you must go into some detail; if you choose two works, you should compare them in some way.

PART THREE Answer ONE of the following questions. 40 MINUTES/40 POINTS

In the following questions, you may use examples from any literary genre – poetry, fiction, drama, non-fiction (essays, autobiography, travel writing etc). The object is to give an overview of how these broad themes have been dealt with in American literature. You may combine examples from different genres or stick to just one genre; you may choose works from any time period: 17th century, 18th century, 19th century, 20th century; you may compare across time periods or you may stick to all the same time period. Structure your answer so as to best show both your knowledge and your writing skill.

NOTE: You MAY deal with works you have already dealt with in a previous answer in sections one or two, but if you do, you should not simply repeat yourself.

1] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, describe some ways nature has been viewed in American literature.

2] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, show how the experience of women has been presented in American literature.

3] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, show how the experience of minorities has been presented in American literature.

4] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, show how the experience of the poor and/or the working class has been presented in American literature.

5] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, show how the theme of the city has been presented in American literature.

6] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, show how the theme of childhood and coming of age has been presented in American literature.

7] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, show how the theme of the influence of the past upon the present has been presented in American literature.

8] Using examples from THREE different writers of any period or periods, show how the theme of rural and/or small town life has been presented in American literature.