

ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS (100%)

1.

Devise Cassandra. Become her, in possession,
and the world becomes perfect. For even gods
crave perfection. Desire her like a man
and like a man be refused in all your desire.
Surrender: Beg a first and last kiss and play
she will acquiesce, her virtue stirred.
Then, breathe into her mouth the powered
prophecy and for all you are losing
—the deprivation she will give and give—
release her half-gifted as you are, half-mortal.

In the courtyard, animals are captured
by their hind legs, held up on haunches,
throats slashed. She walks on burning
stones. Swift, it is slaughtering season.

Demonstrate how the poem could be read by (a) the New Critical, (b) archetypal,
(c) psychoanalytic, (d) feminist, and (e) deconstructive theories. [35%]

2.

“Only Laocoön and Cassandra warned the Trojans that the horse was full of
soldiers. Cassandra was Priam’s daughter. She was gifted with prophetic
knowledge by Apollo whom she had rejected. His anger had turned his gift
into a curse; nobody ever believed Cassandra’s prophecies.” (From Heliéna M.
Krenn, *Classical Mythology*)

“When I first read the myth of Apollo and Cassandra, it stunned and hurt me.
The elusive nature of obsession, the god-given gift that is altered to
nightmare and turns in upon the bearer, the terrible vulnerabilities, the
ancient punishments. I could not find a way to inhabit the conundrums until
I came to the poem’s first two words.” (By Emily Fragos)

According to Jury M. Lotman, a literary text, unlike other impersonal, generalized
texts, sets up a dialogic relationship with the reader. In other words, different texts
create their own ideal readers. The reader of a poem shares a private memory with

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- the poet and thus frees himself or herself by recalling what the memory did not know. (a) Compare your *experience of reading* the poem quoted in Question 1 of this examination paper with reading the above two passages by Krenn and Fragos. [18%] (b) Suggest a title for the poem. [2%]
3. "The great English novelists are Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad—to stop for the moment at that comparatively safe point in history." F. R. Leavis goes on to write, in his opening proposition of *The Great Tradition*, that "except Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad, there are no novelists in English worth reading." You are asked to (a) discuss such a tradition in terms of the mimetic or representation theory of fiction, and (b) challenge Leavis's statement with the concept of canon. [25%]
4. Briefly identify the following terms: [20%] (2%@)
- (a) *The Madwoman in the Attic*
 - (b) *Understanding Poetry*
 - (c) Harold Bloom
 - (d) Horace
 - (e) Queer theory
 - (f) Rey Chow
 - (g) Stuart Hall
 - (h) *Diacritics*
 - (i) *The Satanic Verses*
 - (j) Loeb Classical Library

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Answer the following questions according to the instruction at the beginning of each section.

I. Pre-1800 English Literature

Choose ANY ONE of the following and elaborate your argument with concrete examples the best you can. 33%

1. Generally speaking, the 14th century is the High Middle Ages in England. Can you explain why this century occupies such an important role in the development of English literary history?
2. Aside from Shakespeare, there was a great number of contemporary playwrights. Explain why drama fashioned one of the major cultural activities in the 16th and 17th centuries England.
3. With the rise of the reading public in the 18th century, English taste for literary writings changed accordingly. Two prominent writers of the age, Pope and Swift, adopted special techniques to earn their literary fame. Explain how Pope and Swift successfully became major authors of the time.

II. English Literature after 1800

Choose ANY ONE of the following and elaborate your argument with concrete examples the best you can. 33%

1. Define the concepts of realism and naturalism and explain clearly what aspects of realism and naturalism come under attack in the twentieth century English literature. What are the major forms of the antinaturalist reaction? Choose at least two antinaturalist works and explain, with concrete examples, how they are different from the realistic or naturalistic works.
2. What are the main features of British modernist poetry? How is modernist poetry significantly different from Romantic poetry? Choose at least two representative poets from modernist poetry and explain how they modernize the materials and resources of artistic expression or what in their works marks them as modernists.

III American Literature

Answer BOTH of the following questions. 34%

1. Discuss as fully as possible how twentieth-century American writers dramatize the ideologically competing commitments to the machine and the garden as a form of dialogicality that transforms the terms of debate not only about progress and nostalgia but about the cultural politics and the poetics of the age as well. (17%)
2. In what sense is nineteenth-century American literature characterized by an imaginative involvement with the Marian cultus? Do you think that this involvement, ironically enough, accelerates the proliferation of parodic writings wherein hysteria and fantasy constitute a linguistic inversion countervailing the prevailing rationalism of the American mind in an age of entrepreneurial conquest? Give as many reasons and examples as you can to support your argument. (17%)

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