UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION, MAY 2017

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO ORAL LITERATURE/ORATURE
COURSE CODE: AL113 (IDE)
TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. ANSWER TWO (2) QUESTIONS: QUESTION ONE (1) AND ANY OTHER QUESTION.

2. BEGIN EACH ANSWER ON A SEPARATE PAGE.

3. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING ANY READING MATERIAL INTO THE EXAMINATION HALL.

4. IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THIS PAPER, CORRECT USAGE OF ENGLISH, THE QUALITY OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESENTATION OF ANSWERS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

DO NOT OPEN THIS PAPER UNTIL THE INVIGILATOR GIVES YOU PERMISSION TO OPEN IT.
SECTION A: COMPULSORY

Answer question ONE in this section.

Question 1

Citing specific evidence from the narrative “The Cock and the Hare,” on the back page, discuss any four functions of Oral Literature. [20 Marks]

SECTION B

Answer ONE question from this section.

Question 2

Explain how Oral Performance and Oral Composition contribute to the fluidity of Oral Literature. [20 Marks]

Question 3

Swazis use proverbs to etch social values in the minds of young people. Critically analyse the Swazi proverbs below, and highlight the social values encouraged by each proverb. [20 Marks]

a) Imbila yeswela umsila ngekulayetela The rock rabbit lacks a tail because of lazyness
b) Linceba lendvodza alihlekwa You do not laugh at a man’s injury
c) Umfati Akashi A woman does not get burned
d) Salakutjelwa sibona ngemopho One who refuses to listen learns the hard way

Question 4

Citing specific examples from the poem below, discuss four factors that indicate the plight of Swazi wives. [20 Marks]

Thula Mfati Quiet Woman
Ngeke ngithule mine I will not keep quiet
Aw’suka, thula mfati Oh, quiet woman
Ngeke ngithule mine I will not keep quiet
Aw’suka, thula mfati Oh, quiet woman
Ngeke ngithule mine

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Ngithulel'umfati
Umfat'efika
Angemuk'indvodza
Indvodz'ingeyami
Ngeke ngithule mine
Aw'suka, thula mfati

For another woman
A woman who comes
Taking away the man
While the man is mine
I will not keep quiet
Oh, quiet woman
Lichudze naChakijane


On his arrival he found only his senior wife present, the others having gone to work in the nearby fields. “Senior wife, take a sharp knife and cut off my head, and place it on a pole in the middle of the compound. If I am on a trip, or fall asleep, I can watch all my wives at once, and be satisfied that they do not run off with a lover or with anyone for that matter.” The Hare was greatly impressed with the clever trick and decided to put it into practice himself. So he departed immediately for his compound.

On his arrival he found only his senior wife present, the others having gone to work in the nearby fields. “Senior wife, take a sharp knife and cut off my head, and place it on a pole in the middle of the compound.” The senior wife was reluctant to do so; so she delayed and tried to dissuade her man from this drastic and foolish act because she loved him. This only angered the Hare who beat her with a stick and shouted, “Obey at once, you faithless wretch. Cut off my head and place it as I have commanded you, so that I may keep a close watch on my wives.” So the wounded and frightened wife cut off the Hare’s head with one stroke and fastened it to a long pole in the middle of the compound. When the wives returned a great wail arose when they found the Hare lying stiff and lifeless on the ground for they did not know what would now happen to them without a man to protect them.

That evening the Cock paid a visit to the Hare’s compound and expressed great sorrow at the death of his neighbour. However, being a generous fellow he offered to take all of the Hare’s wives and children under his protection for he was accustomed to taking care of many women. To this they agreed for he was handsome and rich and judging by the great number of children in his compound he was at the peak of his manhood and, most of all, he seemed very sincere in his concern to help the bereaved family of the Hare. That night the Cock was very merry indeed and chuckled at his own cleverness and good fortune. He advised his oldest son, “Never ever lose your head over a woman; some are bound to lead you astray, but if you are clever, let others lose their heads and you will get richer as a result.”