

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERATURE
FINAL EXAMINATIONS PAPER, MAY 2006

- TITLE OF PAPER** : **A STUDY OF POETRY**
- COURSE CODE** : **ENG 206/IDE-ENG 206**
- TIME ALLOWED** : **TWO (2) HOURS**
- INSTRUCTIONS** :
1. **ANSWER QUESTION ONE (1), AND ONE OTHER QUESTION.**
 2. **CORRECT USE OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY CONVENTIONS WILL BE REWARDED; GRAMMATICAL ERRORS AND INCORRECT USE OF CONVENTIONS WILL BE PENALIZED.**
 3. **THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF 7 PAGES, COVER PAGE INCLUDED.**
 4. **EACH QUESTION CARRIES 30 MARKS.**

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE INVIGILATOR.

Question One (Compulsory)

Choose ONE poem below and analyse it following the steps outlined in the course:

- (i) "The Sun" Daniel P. Kunene (South Africa)

The sun
a crimson ball of flame
reddened the eastern sky
the first golden rays
shot out sharp as assegais
And I saw more clearly
a Golgotha
of dead and walking skeletons
of children
starved and wasted in a land of plenty
of women and men
chained in a land of freedom

What, O sun, will you tell your mother
when you get home tonight?

- (ii) "African Grass" Shimmer Chinodya (Zimbabwe)

Grass grows here, enough
To thatch a thousand roofs.
Tall khaki African grass
Two heads taller than I, laden
With beads of dew
In the early morning. Shove armfuls aside
To pass.

Grass caressing my bare thighs
Sweeping past me, rustling softly
like lovers.
Adam and Eve once walked here
Naked and innocent in this wild savannah;
When the world was young
And there was no one else to watch.

It's hard to think that this tall crop
Coarse in its maturity
Burst out of October's black burnt plains
Green and succulent, and savouring the mellow sun
Green to this height.

But it's harder yet to think
That this crop will crumple
To veld fire ashes;
Fruitless growth!

This whispering
Shall be
Gone.

(iii) "The Twin of Sleep" Robert Graves (England)

Death is the twin of Sleep, they say:
For I shall rise renewed,
Free from the cramps of yesterday,
Clear-eyed and supple-thewed.

But though this bland analogy
Helps other folk to face
Decrepitude, senility,
Madness, disease, disgrace,

I do not like Death's greedy looks:
Give me his twin instead –
Sleep never auctions off my books,
My boots, my shirts, my bed.

Question Two

Using the three sonnets below for illustration, point out the key features of the sonnet form:

"Since There's No Help" Michael Drayton

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part:
Nay, I have done; you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands forever; cancel all our vows;
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,

When faith is kneeling by his bed of death
And innocence is closing up his eyes;
Now, if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From Death to Life thou might'st him yet recover.

"Composed Upon Westminster Bridge" William Wordsworth

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

"The Rites for Cousin Vit" Gwendolyn Brooks

Carried her un-protesting out the door.
Kicked back the casket-stand. But it can't hold her,
That stuff and satin aiming to enfold her,
The lid's contrition nor the bolts before.
Oh oh. Too much. Too much. Even now, surmise,
She rises in the sunshine. There she goes,
Back to the bars she knew and the repose
In love-rooms and the things in people's eyes.
Too vital and too squeaking. Must emerge.
Even now she does the snake-hips with a hiss,
Slops the bad wine across her shantung, talks
Of pregnancy, guitars and bridgework, walks
In parks or alleys, comes haply on the verge
Of happiness, haply hysterics. Is.

Question Three

- a) Briefly state the situation depicted by the poem below. [10]
b) Respond fully to the poet's language use in this poem to give a vivid picture of the situation. [20]

"Karachi" Taufiq Rafat

The screaming wind transplants the soil
Particle by particle. The roar of the sun
Is silenced by distance, but its muscular rays
Crack the most stubborn rock like a nut.
And, yes, the sea: biting into the beach head
With an ancient rasping sound. All the forces
Of nature crowding man off his perch
So that the land can return to its ways.

In this city of scarce sweet water and little rain
Each man protects his rood of greenery
With panicked care. The municipality ploughs
The heart of the road for a strip of grass
And jealously counts its trees on week-days.
The bald sparrow scrounges in the dust-bin;
Only the spendthrift *gul-mohur* spills its gold
In the pitiful spring that time allows.
We wear our features to suit the landscape;
And malice moves like a rainless cloud
Over the brown cliffs of the teeth.
From opposite the terminus I stare
At the commuters storming the gates, and see
Where the roof bulges the effeminate rise
Of a dune, and where the lamp-post stands
The arms of the cactus lifted in prayer.

Question Four

Read the excerpts below and answer the questions that follow:

(i)

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,

And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

(ii)

In vain your bangles cast
Charmed circles at my feet;
I am Abiku, calling for the first
And the repeated time.

Must I weep for goats and cowries
For palm oil and the sprinkled ash?
Yams do not sprout in amulets
To earth Abiku's limbs.

(iii)

Listen more to things
Than to words that are said.
The water's voice sings
And the flame cries
And the wind that brings
The woods to sighs
Is the breathing of the dead.

Those who are dead have never gone away.
They are in the shadows darkening around,
They are in the shadows fading into day,
The dead are not under the ground.

(iv)

With blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all:
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange:
Unlifted was the clicking latch;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, 'My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;

She said, 'I am weary, weary,
I would that I were dead!'

- a) Classify the excerpts according to sub-genre. [10]
- b) Select two of them and discuss their respective characteristic features. [20]