

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FINAL EXAMINATION 2012

COURSE TITLE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

COURSE CODE: ENG 104

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Answer TWO questions.

2. Your answers should not exceed three pages.

3. Do not repeat material or write about the same text more than once.

4. Correct use of English and literary conventions will be rewarded and the reverse will be penalized.

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

The Canterbury Tales Chaucer

1. In what way is "The Nun's Priest's Tale" a fabliau? [30]

Selections from Amoretti Spenser and Astrophil and Stella Sidney

2. Read the following sonnet and answer the questions that follow.

Come sleep! O sleep the certain knot of peace,  
 The baiting place<sup>8</sup> of wit,<sup>9</sup> the balm of woe,  
 The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,  
 Th' indifferent<sup>9</sup> judge between the high and low;  
 5 With shield of proof<sup>9</sup> shield me from out the prease<sup>9</sup>.  
 Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:  
 O make in me those civil wars to cease;  
 I will good tribute pay if thou do'st so.  
 Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,  
 10 A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,  
 A rosy garland, and a weary head:<sup>1</sup>  
 And if these things, as being thine by right,  
 Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me  
 Livelier<sup>9</sup> than elsewhere Stella's image see.

mind  
impartial  
through

more lifelike

8. Resting place on a journey.  
9. Proven strength.

- (a) What is the subject of this sonnet? (2)
- (b) How is sleep characterized in the sonnet? (15)
- (c) Discuss the structure of the sonnet (8)
- (d) What is its rhyme scheme? (5)



Paradise Lost Milton

4. Read the extract below and comment on how the vividness of description is achieved through the language used. [30]

Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile  
 35 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived  
 The mother of mankind, what time<sup>o</sup> his pride  
 Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host  
 Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring  
 To set himself in glory above his peers,<sup>o</sup>  
 40 He trusted to have equaled the Most High,  
 If he opposed; and with ambitious aim  
 Against the throne and monarchy of God  
 Raised impious war in Heav'n and battle proud  
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
 45 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky  
 With hideous ruin and combustion down,  
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
 In adamantin<sup>1</sup> chains and penal fire,  
 Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.  
 50 Nine times the space<sup>2</sup> that measures day and night  
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew  
 Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf  
 Confounded though immortal: but his doom  
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 55 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful<sup>o</sup> eyes  
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay  
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:  
 At once as far as angels' ken<sup>o</sup> he views  
 60 The dismal situation waste and wild,  
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
 As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames  
 No light, but rather darkness visible  
 Served only to discover sights of woe,

when

equals

malignant

range of sight

Gullivers's Travels Swift

5. Using three examples from the text discuss how Swift uses size to denote power and powerlessness. [30]