



## EXAMINATION PAPER

<b>Examination Session:</b>  May	<b>Year:</b>  2015	<b>Exam Code:</b>  ENGL3061WE01
--	--------------------------	---------------------------------------

<b>Title:</b> LITERATURE OF THE ROMANTIC PERIOD – LEVEL 3
---

Time Allowed:	3 Hours	
Additional Material Provided:	None	
Materials Permitted:	None - This is a closed book examination. You are not permitted to bring any texts into this examination	
Calculators Permitted:	No	Models Permitted: Not applicable
Visiting students may use dictionaries: Yes		

<b>Instructions to candidates:</b>	Answer THREE questions, ONE from Section A, ONE from Section B, and ONE from EITHER Section. Reference must be made to AT LEAST FOUR authors overall. DO NOT use substantially the same material in different answers, or in any other Final Honours papers or equivalents.	
	Revision:	

**SECTION A**

(Questions 1-12 are open questions to be answered with reference to any appropriate writers.)

- 1 'Romanticism is almost impossible to define.' Explore the validity of this statement with reference to AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period.
- 2 'Romantic writers are alert to the creative possibilities of literary form.' Discuss the use made of 'literary form' (which can include genres, if you wish) by AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period.
- 3 'All circumstances taken together, the French Revolution is the most astonishing thing that has hitherto happened in the world' (Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*). Consider the extent to which Burke's claim is borne out with reference to the work of AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period.
- 4 'I perceive, from the whole tenor of your Reflections, that you have a mortal antipathy to reason; but, if there is anything like argument or first principles, in your wild declamation, behold the result: – that we are to reverence the rust of antiquity, and term the unnatural customs, which ignorance and mistaken self-interest have consolidated, the sage fruit of experience: nay, that if we do discover some errors, our *feelings* should lead us to excuse, with blind love, or unprincipled filial affection, the venerable vestiges of ancient days. These are gothic notions of beauty – the ivy is beautiful, but, when it insidiously destroys the trunk from which it receives support, who would not grub it up?' (Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Man*).

Taking this quotation as a general starting point, explore ONE OR MORE of the following with reference to AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period: reason; antiquity; experience; progress; politics.

- 5 'I may not hope from outward forms to win / The passion and the life, whose fountains are within' (Coleridge, 'Dejection: An Ode'). In the light of this quotation, discuss the relationship between nature and the imagination in the work of AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period.
- 6 'The Romantics display a keen interest in particularity and the visual.' In the light of this comment, discuss the treatment of 'particularity' AND/OR 'the visual' in the work of AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period. You may, in addition, discuss non-verbal forms of visual culture in the period.
- 7 'And something evermore about to be' (Wordsworth, *The Prelude*). Take this line as a point of departure for an examination of the way in which AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period treat the unfinished AND/OR the fragmentary AND/OR aspiration.

**CONTINUED**

- 8 Examine narrative technique and effect in the work of AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period. You may focus on the 'narrative' poetry OR prose of the period, OR a combination of both.
- 9 'O Melancholy – such thy magic power, / That to the soul these dreams are often sweet, / And sooth the pensive visionary mind' (Charlotte Smith, 'Sonnet XXXII: To Melancholy'). Discuss the representation of 'Melancholy' AND/OR sadness AND/OR 'dreams' AND/OR the 'visionary mind' in the work of AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period.
- 10 'It is wrong to think of Romantic writers as solitary geniuses; frequently they engage in dialogue, at times qualifying, even hostile, with one another.' Discuss with reference to AT LEAST TWO writers of the Romantic period.
- 11 'Inevitably the offspring of romanticism, and by his nature the first counter-romantic in poetry' (T. S. Eliot, 'Baudelaire'). In the light of this comment, consider the similarities and differences between a writer of the Romantic period and ONE OR MORE writers from 1830 to the present day.
- 12 'It is impossible to approach the question of gender in this period without acknowledging its fluidity and instability' (Susan Chaplin). Discuss with reference to the work of AT LEAST TWO writers of the period.

**SECTION B****(Questions 13-23 are on individual writers.)**

13 EITHER

- a) Discuss Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* AND/OR other work by him in the light of what John Beer calls his 'fascination with the potentialities of compressed meaning'. You may refer to Blake's illustrations if you wish.

OR

- b) 'I answered, All that we saw was owing to your metaphysics' (Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*). Taking this quotation as a starting point, examine Blake's treatment of perception AND/OR clashing perspectives AND/OR 'metaphysics' in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* AND/OR other work by him. You may refer to Blake's illustrations if you wish.

**CONTINUED**

## 14 EITHER

- a) '*The Prelude*, beneath its mildly self-congratulatory surface, is most profitably read as a poetry of trauma.' Discuss. You may refer to *The Prelude* in its two-part 1799 form or in its longer 1805 or 1850 versions.

OR

- b) 'For the Reader cannot be too often reminded that Poetry is passion: ... now ... an attempt is rarely made to communicate impassioned feelings without something of an accompanying consciousness of the inadequateness of our own powers, or the deficiencies of language' (Wordsworth, Note to *The Thorn*). Discuss Wordsworth's depiction of 'impassioned feelings' in his 'narrative' poetry AND/OR his 'lyric' poetry in the light of this quotation. You may regard *The Prelude* as a 'narrative' poem.

## 15 EITHER

- a) 'Coleridge can articulate his own voice once he imagines it as beckoned by the conversational' (Peter Larkin). Consider this statement in relation to Coleridge's poetry.

OR

- b) Discuss the view that Coleridge's finest poetry achieves what in *Biographia Literaria* he calls 'a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order'.

## 16 EITHER

- a) Discuss the work of ONE OR MORE women poets of the Romantic period in the light of what Kate Singer and Nanora Sweet refer to as 'the dangers ... in a femininity bound to the frail sanctuary of "home"'.

OR

- b) 'I teach my lip its sweetest smile, / My tongue its softest tone' (Letitia Landon, 'Lines of Life'). Explore ONE OR MORE of the following in relation to the work of ONE OR MORE women poets of the Romantic period: instruction; song; social AND/OR gendered role-play.

CONTINUED

## 17 EITHER

- a) 'The Gothic's concern with the confinement of the self is usually a means of dramatizing an abuse of power.' To what extent is this statement true of Gothic fiction in the Romantic period?

OR

- b) 'There are certain prejudices attached to the human mind which it requires all our wisdom to keep from interfering with our happiness; certain set notions, acquired in infancy, and cherished involuntarily by age, which grow up and assume a gloss so plausible, that few minds, in what is called a civilized country, can afterwards overcome them. Truth is often perverted by education.' (Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*).

Taking this quotation as a general starting point, consider the treatment and significance of any ONE OR MORE of the following in the Gothic fiction of the Romantic period: the mind; truth; education; infancy and age.

## 18 EITHER

- a) To what extent does Austen organize her narratives to suggest that 'Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance' (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*)?

OR

- b) 'You could not shock her [Austen] more than she shocks me;  
Beside her Joyce seems innocent as grass.  
It makes me most uncomfortable to see  
An English spinster of the middle class  
Describe the amorous effects of "brass,"  
Reveal so frankly and with such sobriety  
The economic basis of society.'  
(W. H. Auden, 'Letter to Lord Byron')

In the light of this quotation, examine the connection between class and money AND/OR the use of irony in Austen's fiction.

CONTINUED

19 EITHER

- a) 'Whatever the subject, Byron is drawn to, even delights in, the staging of ambivalent attitudes.' Discuss. You may focus on *Manfred* OR *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* OR *Don Juan*, OR you may range more widely.

OR

- b) 'But the fact is that I have nothing plann'd, / Unless it were to be a moment merry, / A novel word in my vocabulary' (Byron, *Don Juan*). Explore the existence or otherwise of structure AND/OR the poetics of improvisation AND/OR the function of humour in Byron's poetry in the light of this quotation. You may focus on *Don Juan*, OR you may range more widely.

20 EITHER

- a) 'Shelley's mode and vision are those of a poet who looks beyond the actual towards the potential.' Consider Shelley's poetry in the light of this remark.

OR

- b) 'The breath whose might I have invoked in song' (Shelley, *Adonais*). Use this line as a point of departure for an essay on Shelley's delineation of inspiration AND/OR his poetic self-awareness.

21 EITHER

- a) 'Keats's poetry reveals – to its great imaginative benefit – a mind at odds with itself.' Do you agree?

OR

- b) 'Do you not see how necessary a World of Pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a soul?' (Keats in a letter). Discuss Keats's handling of 'Pains and troubles' in the light of this quotation.

22 EITHER

- a) 'Clare's poetic inventiveness is inextricable from what a hostile reader would regard as mere naivety.' Discuss.

OR

- b) 'I am the self-consumer of my woes' (John Clare, 'I Am'). Taking this line as a point of departure, consider the relationship between the self AND sorrow in the poetry of John Clare.

CONTINUED

23 EITHER

- a) The subtitle of Duncan Wu's biography of William Hazlitt is 'The First Modern Man'. How 'modern' or otherwise does Hazlitt seem to you?

OR

- b) 'As to my old opinions, I am heartily sick of them' (Hazlitt). Examine critically Hazlitt's 'opinions' on a subject of your choice.

**END**

**END**