

M.A. 4th Semester Examination, 2022

ENGLISH

Course Code: ENG 407 ME(G)

Course ID: 40357

Course Title: *American Literature I*

Time: 2 hours

Full Marks: 40

The figures in the margin indicate full marks.

Answer all the questions.

UNIT I

1. Answer *any one* of the following questions: 1 x 12 = 12

- a. Comment on the development of the American Dream in the twentieth century and the subsequent efforts to abandon, critique, redefine and appropriate it.
- b. Discuss how F. Scott Fitzgerald's unique expression of the American dream lacks the optimism, the sense of fulfillment so evident in the expressions of his predecessors like Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.
- c. Discuss some of the significant milestones in the history of Black Women's fiction with reference to Alice Walker and Toni Morrison.
- d. Do you consider the Harlem Literary Renaissance of the 1920s to be a quest for an image? Attempt an estimate of Langston Hughes in this context.

UNIT II

2. Answer *any one* of the following questions: 1 x 12 = 12

- a. Compare and contrast the characters of the two waiters in Hemingway's 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place' and show how they contribute to the leitmotif of the story.
- b. Comment critically on the theme of "nothingness" in Hemingway's 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place'.

- c. "Poe's Prefect of Police is a panoptic detective, but he fails because he lacks Dupin's poetic understanding". – Analyse 'The Purloined Letter' as a detective short story in the light of the above observation.
- d. "'The Purloined Letter' is a source of some penetrating observations about a battle of intellects between a brilliant criminal and a brilliant detective". – Do you agree? Justify your answer.

UNIT III

3. Answer any four of the following short questions:

4 x 4 = 16

- a) Briefly discuss how the American Dream played out for the Generation X. How was it different from that of the Baby Boomers?
- b) Comment on the identification of the "dream house" with the American Dream, starting from the 1920s through to the 1960s.
- c) Comment on the use of the colour blue in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*.
- d) Comment on the use of the term "New Negro" during the Harlem Renaissance.
- e) "...it all was nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada". Locate and annotate.
- f) Comment briefly on the character of the old man in Hemingway's 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place'.
- g) 'The Purloined Letter' is a story of ratiocination. Discuss briefly.
- h) "So baneful a scheme, if not worthy of Atreus, is worthy of Thyestes". Locate and annotate.

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