

B.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2011
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
THIRD SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR – CORE
PAPER : AMERICAN LITERATURE
TIME : 3 HOURS
MAX. MARKS : 100

SECTION A

- I. Fix the context of any TWO of the following passages and answer the questions given below each passage, choosing at least ONE each from poetry and drama:
(2x10 = 20 marks)

1. “Home,” he mocked gently.

“Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he’s nothing to us, any more
Than was the hound that came a stranger to us
Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail.”

“Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in.”

- a. Why does the speaker “mock”?
b. What do you understand about Mary’s definition of ‘home’?

2. why talk of beauty what could be more beautiful than these heroic happy dead
who rushed like lions to the roaring slaughter
they did not stop to think they died instead
then shall the voice of liberty be mute?"

He spoke. And drank rapidly a glass of water

- a. Why did the heroic dead rush to die?
b. Comment on the last line.

3. **Biff**, with raising agitation: Hap, I’ve had twenty or thirty different kinds of jobs since I left home before the war, and it always turns out the same. I just realized it lately. In Nebraska when I herded cattle and the Dakotas, and Arizona, and now in Texas. It’s why I came home now, I guess, because I realized it. This farm I work on, it’s spring there now, see? And they’ve got about fifteen new colts. There’s nothing more inspiring or – beautiful than the sight of a mare and a new colt. And it is cool there now, see? Texas is cool now, and it’s spring.

And whenever spring comes to where I am, I suddenly get the feeling, my God, I'm not getting anywhere! What the hell am I doing, playing around with horses, twenty-eight dollars a week! I'm thirty-four years old, I oughta be making my future. That's when I come running home. And now, I get here, and I don't know what to do with myself.

- a. Why is Biff unable to make a future for himself?
 - b. What is the real reason for Biff's failure?
4. **Happy:** All right, boy. I'm gonna show you and everybody else that Willy Loman did not die in vain. He had a good dream. It's the only dream you can have – to come out number-one man. He fought it out here, and this is where I'm gonna win it for him.
- a. What was Willy Loman's dream?
 - b. How was Happy going to fulfill Willy Loman's dream?

SECTION B

II. Answer any FOUR of the following in about 250 words each. (4x 10=40 marks)

5. How does Emerson stress the importance of self in his essay?
6. What is the central theme of Joy Harjo's "Equinox"? Discuss.
7. Discuss the use of the journey metaphor in Langston Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of Rivers".
8. Comment on the poetic techniques and devices used by Robert Frost in "Death of a Hired man"?
9. Analyze Faulkner's "A Rose for Miss Emily" with reference to narrative technique and theme.
10. Discuss the ways in which the characters in Amy Tan's "Two Kinds" respond to the immigrant experience?

SECTION C

III. Answer any TWO of the following in 750 words each: (2x20=40 marks)

11. Analyze some of the common themes in American poetry giving suitable examples from the poems prescribed for study.
12. Attempt a critical analysis of Isaac Bashevis Singer's "Gimpel the Fool".
13. Discuss techniques of characterization in Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn.
14. Comment on the major motifs and symbols in Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea".
