

B.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2010
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
THIRD SEMESTER

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

I. Analyse the following passage commenting on characterization, style, theme and imagery, connecting the excerpt with the text and the issues to African American Culture and Society. (2 x 10 = 20)

a) Lula: ...Did your people ever burn witches or start revolutions over the price of tea? Boy, those narrow-shoulder clothes come from a tradition you ought to feel oppressed by. A three button suit. What right do you have to be wearing a three button suit and striped tie? Your grandfather was a slave. He didn't go to Harvard.

Or

b) Clay: You don't know anything except what is there for you to see. An act. Lies. Device. Not the pure heart, the pumping black heart, you don't ever know that

c) Does it stink like rotten meat.
Or crust and sugar over –
like a syrupy sweet?

Or

d) No one can tell a mother to act:
there are no laws when laws are broken, no names
to call upon. Some say there is nourishment for pain
and call it philosophy.

II. Write short notes on any FOUR in about 250 words (4 x 10 = 40)

- Characteristics of a slave narrative
- Gender issues as presented by African American Writers (relate to any two writers in your syllabus)
- Thematic orientation in Langston Hughes' *Montage of a Dream Deferred*.
- Portrait of the mother in 'Persephone Abducted'.
- Douglas as a slave and a writer.
- Childhood life in a Southern village as presented in *GatherTogether in my Name*.

III. Answer in about 750 words

(2 x 20 = 40)

1. a) Discuss the use of epistolary form and Black English vernacular to depict the struggle for racial and sexual equality in Alice Walker's the *Color Purple*
Or
b) How does Walker present Black patriarchy in Afro-American culture in the *Color Purple*?
2. a) Analyse Pecola perception of the world as sketched by Toni Morrison.
Or
b) "Some mysterious all-knowing master had given each one a cloak of ugliness to wear, and they had each accepted it without question" – Discuss the concept of beauty and ugliness presented in the *Bluest Eye* in the light of the above statement from the novel.
