

414/01

ENGLISH LITERATURE

ELit4: Poetry pre-1900

A.M. MONDAY, 12 June 2006

(1¼ Hours)

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to this examination paper, you will need:

- a copy of the text you have studied;
- an 8 page answer book.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Answer **one** question only.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

All questions carry equal marks.

In this unit you will be assessed on your ability to:

- communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent written expression;
- show detailed understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings;
- articulate independent opinions and judgements, informed by different interpretations of literary texts by other readers.

Remember that marking will take into account the quality of written communication used in your answer.

Answer **one** question only.

Chaucer: The Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale

Either,

1. "Even within the predictable fable structure, Chaucer is still able to entertain an audience and create comic tension." To what extent would you agree with this judgement in relation to *The Nun's Priest's Tale*? Your discussion should include close reference to Chaucer's narrative methods.

Or,

2. "While *The Nun's Priest's Tale* on the surface is concerned with the animal kingdom, Chaucer offers his readers both a comic vision of mankind and a serious moral purpose." By close reference to Chaucer's techniques, discuss how far you would agree with this view of *The Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale*.

Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson

Or,

3. "Dickinson's greatest strength as a poet lies in her ability to balance the intellect with the senses." Discuss how far you agree with this view, making close reference to Dickinson's techniques in at least **three** of the selected poems.

Or,

4. How far do you agree that Emily Dickinson's poems "explore moral truth rather than preach"? In your response to this view, you should give careful consideration to Dickinson's techniques in at least **three** of the selected poems.

Graham (ed): A Selection of Metaphysical Poets
(Donne, Herbert and Vaughan)

Or,

5. "Donne's poems are remarkable for presenting extraordinary thoughts in ordinary situations." Give your response to this view, making close reference to Donne's language and techniques in at least **three** of the selected poems.

Or,

6. "The excessive use of conceits undermines the seriousness of the poems' ideas." In the light of this view, discuss the work of **more than one** poet from the selection, making close reference to at least **three** poems.

Keats: Selected Poems

Or,

7. “In *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, Keats presents a complex female character who is echoed in his longer narrative poems.” In your response to this view, you should refer in detail to Keats’s language and techniques in this poem and in **at least one other** narrative poem.

Or,

8. “Keats’s poetry is most successful when it mixes pleasure with pain.” Discuss this view, giving careful consideration to Keats’s techniques in at least **two** poems.

Milton: Paradise Lost, Books 1 and 2

Or,

9. To what extent would you agree that “Milton successfully engages the reader’s interest in the fate of the fallen angels while at the same time presenting the omnipotence of God”? In your response, you should include detailed reference to Milton’s techniques.

Or,

10. Milton claims at the outset of *Book 1* that he wishes “To justify the ways of God to man” in *Paradise Lost*. By close examination of Milton’s methods, consider whether he succeeds in this aim in *Books 1 and 2*.

Christina Rossetti: Selected Poems

Or,

11. “Several of Rossetti’s poems present the same figure in various settings: a woman in love.” By close examination of at least **three** poems from the selection, consider whether this view is justified, and whether you regard this aspect of her poetry as a strength or a weakness.

Or,

12. “Her poems are both traditional and unconventional.” Discuss this view, giving careful consideration to the style of at least **three** of the selected poems **or** of *Goblin Market*.