

Study Guide for American Lit 1, Exam 1

Dr. O'Donnell, East TN State U. Last updated: February 26, 2019.

Exam date: Wednesday, March 6, 2019. You will have the entire hour-and-twenty-minute class period to complete the exam.

The exam has two parts: I. 17 Short Answer Questions; each answer worth one point. II. 1 Mini Essay, worth up to 8 points. The maximum total for the whole exam is thus 25 points, and this exam in turn is worth 25% of your final grade.

During the exam, you may refer to your class anthology, and to your notes. However, I require that you compose your answers on the spot, in class, during the exam, rather than composing them ahead of time and transcribing them in class.

I. SHORT ANSWER -- Write one or two sentences in response to each prompt. Be sure to write your responses in **complete sentences**. There will be 17 short answer prompts on the exam. All 17 of those will be drawn from this list of 23:

1. Describe the setting of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," by Hawthorne.
2. What is one major theme of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux"?
3. Describe the setting of "Rip Van Winkle," by Irving.
4. What is one major theme of "Rip Van Winkle," by Irving?
5. Why did F. Douglass not face consequences after his physical stand-off with Covey which he describes in Chapter X of his 1845 narrative? (The scene concludes on p1203 in vol B of the 9th edition of Norton anthology.)
6. According to Douglass, was a slave better off in the country or city? Why?
7. According to Douglass, why do slaves always say good things about their masters, when asked about how they (the slaves) are treated?
8. What is the topic of Thoreau's long first chapter, entitled, "Economy," in his book entitled *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*?
9. What is the principle of organization of *Walden*?
10. What is H. D. Thoreau's opinion of John Brown?
11. Who is the "man of humanity" referred to in the title of Chapter I of H. B. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?
12. How does Eliza escape Kentucky in Chapter VII of *UT's Cabin*?
13. Exactly what law does Senator Bird break in Chapter IX of *UT's Cabin*?
14. What does honest old John Van Trompe mean, when he remarks, in Chapter IX of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (on page 826 in volume B of the 9th edition of the Norton anthology), that "handsome uns has the greatest cause to run..."?
15. What exactly is the "select incident" referred to in the title of Chapter XII of *UT's Cabin*? (Consider the meaning of "incident", the noun, definition 1.a. in the Oxford English Dictionary.)

16. In Melville's poem "The Portent," from the collection entitled *Battle-Pieces*, what is "The meteor of the war"?

17. In Melville's "Misgivings," what are the storm clouds?

18. What is Melville's poem "The House-top" (p1571) about?

19. What was Lincoln's primary political objective, in his 2nd Inaugural Address?

20. According to Lincoln's 2nd Inaugural Address, what was the cause of the American Civil War?

21. In the Gettysburg Address, why does Lincoln say "Four score and seven years ago," rather than just saying "87 years ago"?

22. Historian Garry Wills argues that Abraham Lincoln, in his Gettysburg Address, "performed one of the most daring acts of open-air sleight of hand ever witnessed by the unsuspecting." Explain what Wills means by that.

23. Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address refers to "all the wealth piled by the bond-man's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil." What does that phrase mean?

II. MINI ESSAY -- Write one or two paragraphs in response to a prompt.

You will choose one mini essay prompt from a list of 3 that will appear on the exam. That list of three will in turn be drawn from the list of 5 included here:

1. What makes E.A. Poe's "Ligeia" a gothic tale? Why was Poe writing gothic tales in the late 1830s, according to Jill Lepore?

2. What is Frederick Douglass's view of Christianity, as expressed in his 1845 narrative?

3. Explain the title of Chapter IX of H. B. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

4. Thoreau's *Walden* is not a novel in the traditional sense. What kind of text is it? What genre? Discuss.

5. What is a koan? Describe what that has to do with a literary work that we read this semester.