

American Lit 1, Exam 2 Study Guide

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Last updated: Saturday, December 2, 2023

Exam date and time: Wednesday, December 13, 8-10am

I. Exam Format

From the list of 35 prompts included below, I will choose 28 for the exam. From those 28, you will respond to 25. Write one or two self-explanatory sentences in response to each of those 25 prompts. Each satisfactory response is worth one point.

This exam is worth up to 25 points, which translates to 25% of your final grade.

II. Material Covered by This Exam

This exam covers the following texts, which have been assigned in class since Monday October 9 when we started reading *The Scarlet Letter*.

A. In Volume A of the Norton Anthology --

- The following by Anne Bradstreet -- "To the Memory of My Dear and Ever Honored Father ..." p218; "To Her Father..." p220; "The Author to Her Book" and "Before the Birth..." p230; "To My Dear and Loving Husband" p237; also the 5 poems on p234-238, and the letter which appear on pages 241-249.
- The following poems by Phillis Wheatley -- "On Being Brought..." p715; "To the Right Honourable William..." p715; "To S.M., a Young African Painter..." p721; "To His Excellency General Washington" p722
- Excerpts from the Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson, volume A, p622-628 (wherein he discusses the drafting of the Declaration); and excerpts from "Notes on the State of Virginia," p629-639.
- Thomas Paine, "The Crisis, No. 1," p607-613; and Chapters I and II from "The Age of Reason," p613-616
- Ben Franklin, excerpts from Part Two of his autobiography -- including the prefatory short letters by James and Vaughan, respectively -- on pages 504-520; and "The Way to Wealth"

B. In Volume B of the Norton Anthology --

- *The Scarlet Letter*
- Lincoln's Gettysburg address and 2nd inaugural address
- "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" by Whitman
- Three poems that George Moses Horton published in 1865, on pages 1618-1621
- Five poems that H. Melville published in 1866, on pages 1422-1425
- 25 poems by Emily Dickinson that appear from page 1512 through the top of page 1525; plus two Dickinson poems that you selected from pages 1525 to 1544

C. Online --

- "President Tom's Cabin: Jefferson, Hemings, and a disclaimed lineage," by Jill Lepore, *The New Yorker*, September 22, 2008 (click here for [a cached version](#))

- "The Creed: What Poor Richard cost Benjamin Franklin," by Jill Lepore, *The New Yorker*, January 28, 2008 (click here for [a cached version](#)).
- "Our democracy's founding ideals were false when they were written. Black Americans have fought to make them true." By Nikole Hannah-Jones. The 1619 Project. *The New York Times*, August 14, 2019 ([click here for a cached version](#))

III. 35 Exam Prompts (I will choose 28 of these for the exam; you will respond to 25)

1. Explain the title of chapter 3 of *The Scarlet Letter*, which is, "The Recognition." Who recognizes whom, in that chapter?
2. What appears in the sky, in chapter 12 of *The Scarlet Letter*, on the night Gov. Winthrop dies?
3. Why does Hester go to visit Chillingworth, in Chapter 14, "Hester and the Physician"? What is the aim of her visit?
4. What is "the office of the scarlet letter"?
5. Why does Lincoln say "four score and seven years"? Why not just say "87 years"?
6. What does Lincoln mean when he says the following, in his second inaugural address, when speaking of both parties in the Civil War: "Neither anticipated that the *cause* of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease"?
7. What does Lincoln mean by the phrase "all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil"?
8. What does Lincoln mean by the phrase "with malice towards none"?
9. What is "free verse"?
10. What are the three main symbols in Whitman's poem, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"?
11. In "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," what is the thrush's song about?
12. What is Anne Bradstreet's advice to her children, regarding hers and their afflictions?
13. To whom does Bradstreet address her poem, "Before the Birth of One of Her Children"?
14. Name a poet whose work we read in the past few weeks, who is a master of the iambic pentameter couplet.
15. In what poem does "Columbia," the allegorical figure, first appear? What does Columbia stand for?
16. What did George Washington think of Phillis Wheatley, according to a letter that he wrote to her in February of 1776?
17. Who was the author of the first draft of the Declaration of Independence?
18. What did Thomas Jefferson think of Phillis Wheatley?
19. Name one example of an idea that T. Jefferson considers to be a "self-evident truth".
20. Did Thomas Jefferson sell his own children -- yes or no?
21. Who is Sally Hemings?
22. Why was Nikole Hannah-Jones surprised by her father's patriotism, when she was young?
23. What is "The 1619 Project"?
24. What is The Enlightenment -- which is also sometimes called "The Age of Reason"?
25. What literary work was originally drafted under the working title, "The Art of Virtue"? Why was it called that?

26. What did Benjamin Franklin usually do on Sundays? Why?
27. Who is the main character, quoted at length in the first person, in Ben Franklin's "The Way to Wealth"?
28. What U.S. President is depicted on the one hundred dollar bill?
29. Explain the origin of the name of the 4-lane road that runs east and west, 50 yards north of where you now sit.
30. What is Thomas Paine's view of "national institutions of churches"?
31. Upon what occasion did George Washington read aloud to his troops from Thomas Paine's "The Crisis, No. 1"?
32. What is "hymn meter," and what poet is associated with it?
33. What is synesthesia, and what poet is associated with it?
34. What is Emily Dickinson's favorite item of punctuation?
35. What is Emily Dickinson's poem "There's a certain Slant of light" about?