

Study Guide for American Lit to 1865, Exam 1

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The exam is open book and open notes. Though you are welcome to have your notes out during the exam, I require you to compose your responses in class, on the spot, during the exam -- rather than merely copying pre-composed responses from your notes.

You will write your exam responses on your own loose-leaf paper.

The exam has two parts: I. Fifteen short answer prompts, each worth one point. II. Two mini essays, worth up to five points each. The maximum total for the whole exam is thus 25 points, and this exam is worth 25% of your final grade.

I. SHORT ANSWER -- 15 points. Write one or two sentences in response to each prompt. Write your responses in **complete sentences**.

You will choose 10 prompts from a list of 15 prompts that will be included on the exam. All 15 of those will in turn be drawn from this list of 21:

1. Describe the setting of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," by Hawthorne.
2. What is a major theme of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux"?
3. Describe the setting of "Rip Van Winkle," by Irving.
4. In J. F. Cooper's novel, *The Pioneers*, why is Leather-stocking called that? What is his other name? What are his character traits?
5. What do the first-person narrators of Poe's "The Black Cat" and "Ligeia" have in common?
6. At the end of "The Black Cat," the police are departing, walking up the steps from the narrator's cellar. What causes them to turn around and come back down?
7. Why did F. Douglass not face consequences after his physical stand-off with Covey which he describes in Chapter X of his 1845 narrative?
8. According to Douglass, was a slave better off in the country or the city? Why?
9. According to Douglass, why do slaves always say good things about their masters, when asked about how they (the slaves) are treated?
10. What is the topic of Thoreau's long first chapter, entitled, "Economy," in his book entitled *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*?
11. What is the principle of organization of *Walden*?
12. What is H. D. Thoreau's opinion of John Brown?
13. Explain what R. W. Emerson meant by the following statement: "If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God". How did Emerson's audience react to that idea?
14. Who is the "man of humanity" referred to in the title of Chapter I of H. B. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?
15. How does Eliza escape the slave states in Chapter VII of *UT's Cabin*?

16. What law does Senator Bird break in Chapter IX of *UT's Cabin*?
17. What does honest old John Van Trompe mean, when he remarks, in Chapter IX of Uncle Tom's Cabin (on page 794 in volume B of the 10th edition of the Norton anthology), that "handsome uns has the greatest cause to run..."?
18. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in chapter XXXIV, "The Quadroon's Story," Cassy, the quadroon, tells her story to Uncle Tom. What does Cassy do to her youngest child, at the end of her story?
19. In Melville's poem "The Portent," from the collection entitled *Battle-Pieces*, what is "The meteor of the war"?
20. Who is John Ross?

21. What 2 languages are printed in the bilingual newspaper, *The Cherokee Phoenix*? Why those two?

II. MINI ESSAYS -- 10 points. Respond to two prompts. Each is worth up to 5 points. Write one or two paragraphs for each.

You will choose two mini-essay prompts from a list of four that will appear on the exam. That list of four will in turn be drawn from this list of seven prompts 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* -- "In Which It Appears That a Senator is But a Man."
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 any literary work(s) that we've read this semester.
6. Explain what events Elias Boudinot is referring to when he writes the following, in a message entitled "To the Public," in the first edition of the Cherokee Phoenix, the bilingual newspaper that Boudinot edited starting in 1828: "Sufficient and repeated evidence has been given, that Indians can be reclaimed from a savage state, and that with proper advantages, they are as capable of improvement in mind as any other people..." (on p291 of the 10th edition of the Norton Anthology of American Lit, volume B). What is the political context for the quote?
7. Compare and contrast H.B. Stowe's portrait of Uncle Tom, the fictional character in Stowe's novel, with F. Douglass's portrayal of himself in his 1845 nonfiction narrative.