Summer Examinations 2015

LIT203615N

Module Title: Eighteenth Century Literature
Level: Five
Time Allowed: Two hours

Instructions to students:

- Enter your student number not your name on all answer books.
- Answer two questions: the question in Section A is compulsory and you must answer one question from Section B.
- The same material should not constitute a substantial part of more than one answer.
- You should not make substantial reference to material used in other assignments.
- You should divide your time equally between Section A and Section B.
  Section A carries 50% of the overall marks (25% for each extract). Section B carries 50% of the overall marks.
- Begin each answer in a separate answer book; label each answer book clearly with the number of the question you are answering.
- Neither books nor notes may be taken into the examination.
- Students are not permitted to remove this examination paper from the examination room. For all purposes the examination paper remains the property of the University of Northampton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Pages</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questions</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 1 of 5
Section A

Compulsory Question (1 hour).

1. Write a commentary on two of the following three passages, commenting on and comparing:

- their language and form.
- their literary and historical contexts.
- their thematic and/or formal significance in the text from which they are taken.

N.B. Ensure that your analysis focuses closely upon the passage you have chosen; do not waste words in discussing the general background or the entire text without relating them to the extract.

Passage One

What dire offence from am'rous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing—This verse to Caryll, Muse! is due:
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplor'd,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?
In tasks so bold, can little men engage,
And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?

Sol thro' white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And op'd those eyes that must eclipse the day;
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake:
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.
Belinda still her downy pillow press'd,
Her guardian sylph prolong'd the balmy rest:
'Twas he had summon'd to her silent bed
The morning dream that hover'd o'er her head;
A youth more glitt'ring than a birthnight beau,
(That ev'n in slumber caus'd her cheek to glow)
Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say:

Alexander Pope, The Rape of the Lock, Canto I
Passage Two

Abodes of horror have frequently been described, and castles, filled with spectres and chimeras, conjured up by the magic spell of genius to harrow the soul, and absorb the wondering mind. But, formed of such stuff as dreams are made of, what were they to the mansion of despair, in one corner of which Maria sat, endeavouring to recall her scattered thoughts!

Surprise, astonishment, that bordered on distraction, seemed to have suspended her faculties, till, waking by degrees to a keen sense of anguish, a whirlwind of rage and indignation roused her torpid pulse. One recollection with frightful velocity following another, threatened to fire her brain, and make her a fit companion for the terrific inhabitants, whose groans and shrieks were no unsubstantial sounds of whistling winds, or startled birds, modulated by a romantic fancy, which amuse while they affright; but such tones of misery as carry a dreadful certainty directly to the heart. What effect must they then have produced on one, true to the touch of sympathy, and tortured by maternal apprehension!

Her infant's image was continually floating on Maria's sight, and the first smile of intelligence remembered, as none but a mother, an unhappy mother, can conceive. She heard her half speaking half cooing, and felt the little twinkling fingers on her burning bosom—a bosom bursting with the nutriment for which this cherished child might now be pining in vain. From a stranger she could indeed receive the maternal aliment, Maria was grieved at the thought—but who would watch her with a mother's tenderness, a mother's self-denial?

The retreating shadows of former sorrows rushed back in a gloomy train, and seemed to be pictured on the walls of her prison, magnified by the state of mind in which they were viewed—Still she mourned for her child, lamented she was a daughter, and anticipated the aggravated ills of life that her sex rendered almost inevitable, even while dreading she was no more. To think that she was blotted out of existence was agony, when the imagination had been long employed to expand her faculties; yet to suppose her turned adrift on an unknown sea, was scarcely less afflicting.

Mary Wollstonecraft, The Wrongs of Woman: Or, Maria. A Fragment In Two Volumes, Volume 1.
Passage Three

We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age. As every object was new to me everything I saw filled me with surprise. What struck me first was that the houses were built with stories, and in every other respect different from those in Africa: but I was still more astonished on seeing people on horseback. I did not know what this could mean; and indeed I thought these people were full of nothing but magical arts. While I was in this astonishment one of my fellow prisoners spoke to a countryman of his about the horses, who said they were the same kind they had in their country. I understood them, though they were from a distant part of Africa, and I thought it odd I had not seen any horses there; but afterwards, when I came to converse with different Africans, I found they had many horses amongst them, and much larger than those I then saw.

We were not many days in the merchant's custody before we were sold after their usual manner, which is this:—On a signal given, such as the beat of a drum, the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of that parcel they like best. The noise and clamour with which this is attended, and the eagerness visible in the countenances of the buyers, serve not a little to increase the apprehensions of the terrified Africans, who may well be supposed to consider them as the ministers of that destruction to which they think themselves devoted. In this manner, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again. I remember in the vessel in which I was brought over, in the men's apartment, there were several brothers, who, in the sale, were sold in different lots; and it was very moving on this occasion to see and hear the ir cries at parting. O, ye nominal Christians! might not an African ask you, “learned you this from your God, who says unto you, Do unto all men as you would men should do unto you? Is it not enough that we are torn from our country and friends to toil for your luxury and lust of gain? Must every tender feeling be likewise sacrificed to your avarice? Are the dearest friends and relations, now rendered more dear by their separation from their kindred, still to be parted from each other, and thus prevented from cheering the gloom of slavery with the small comfort of being together and mingling their sufferings and sorrows? Why are parents to lose their children, brothers their sisters, or husbands their wives? Surely this is a new refinement in cruelty, which, while it has no advantage to atone for it, thus aggravates distress, and adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery.”

Olaudah Equiano, The Life of Olaudah Equiano

End of Section A
Section B follows overleaf
Section B

Answer one question (1 hour). Refer closely in your answer to at least two texts.

2. ‘For eighteenth-century writers, luxury always had something irrational about it.’
   Analyse the concept of luxury as presented in literature of the long eighteenth century.

3. How are reason and/or madness represented in literature of the long eighteenth century?

4. Explore the conflict between female wit and male power in the literature of the long eighteenth century.

5. In what ways are the novel/extended prose fiction used in the literature of the long eighteenth century, and why?

6. Discuss representations of the enlightenment within the literature of the long eighteenth century.

7. Evaluate the treatment of gender issues by writers of the long eighteenth century.

8. What role does satire play in the literature of the long eighteenth century?

9. Analyse the representation of social anxieties in plays of the Restoration period.

10. Examine the ways in which writers of the long eighteenth century address social and/or political issues, and why.

---

End of Section B
End of Paper