Module Title Nineteenth-Century Literature
Level Four
Time Allowed Two hours

Instructions to students:

- Enter your student number not your name on all answer books.
- Answer two questions: the Compulsory question in Section A and one question from Section B.
- You should divide your time equally between Section A and Section B. The questions are weighted as follows:
  - Section A carries 50% of the overall marks. (25% for each extract)
  - Section B carries 50% of the overall marks.
- Begin each question on a separate page; label each page clearly with the number of the question you are answering.
- 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.

Credit will be given to answers that:

- Refer closely to nineteenth-century texts.
- Refer to a range of texts from the period.
- Demonstrate an awareness of critical thinking.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the social and cultural contexts of nineteenth-century literature.
- Are well written and carefully organised.

Please note: You should not make substantial reference to material used in other assignments for LIT1029.

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Section A

1. Choose two of the following extracts and write a critical commentary on each. You should consider the following in your response:

   - The significance of where the extract occurs in the novel, poem or play, where relevant.
   - The primary themes and concerns of the extract and the relevance of these to the novel, poem or play as a whole.
   - The significance of the extract in terms of the wider social and cultural context of the nineteenth century.
   - Any stylistic features or narrative techniques used by the author and the effects they achieve.

Please note: You should divide your time equally between the two extracts.
D'Urberville thereupon turned back; but by this time the moon had quite gone down, and partly on account of the fog The Chase was wrapped in thick darkness, although morning was not far off. He was obliged to advance with outstretched hands to avoid contact with the boughs, and discovered that to hit the exact spot from which he had started was at first entirely beyond him. Roaming up and down, round and round, he at length heard a slight movement of the horse close at hand; and the sleeve of his overcoat unexpectedly caught his foot.

"Tess!" said d'Urberville.

There was no answer. The obscurity was now so great that he could see absolutely nothing but a pale nebulosity at his feet, which represented the white muslin figure he had left upon the dead leaves. Everything else was blackness alike. D'Urberville stooped; and heard a gentle regular breathing. He knelt and bent lower, till her breath warmed his face, and in a moment his cheek was in contact with hers. She was sleeping soundly, and upon her eyelashes there lingered tears.

Darkness and silence ruled everywhere around. Above them rose the primeval yews and oaks of The Chase, in which there poised gentle roosting birds in their last nap; and about them stole the hopping rabbits and hares. But, might some say, where was Tess's guardian angel? Where was the providence of her simple faith? Perhaps, like that other god of whom the ironical Tishbite spoke, he was talking, or he was pursuing, or he was in a journey, or he was sleeping and not to be awaked.

Why it was that upon this beautiful feminine tissue, sensitive as gossamer, and practically blank as snow as yet, there should have been traced such a coarse pattern as it was doomed to receive; why so often the coarse appropriates the finer thus, the wrong man the woman, the wrong woman the man, many thousand years of analytical philosophy have failed to explain to our sense of order. One may, indeed, admit the possibility of a retribution lurking in the present catastrophe. Doubtless some of Tess d'Urberville's mailed ancestors rollicking home from a fray had dealt the same measure even more ruthlessly towards peasant girls of their time. But though to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children may be a morality good enough for divinities, it is scorned by average human nature; and it therefore does not mend the matter.

As Tess's own people down in those retreats are never tired of saying among each other in their fatalistic way: "It was to be." There lay the pity of it. An immeasurable social chasm was to divide our heroine's personality thereafter from that previous self of hers who stepped from her mother's door to try her fortune at Trantridge poultry-farm.

**Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, Phase the First, Chapter XI.**
'Come buy, come buy,' was still their cry.
Laura stared but did not stir,
Longed but had no money:
The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
In tones as smooth as honey,
The cat-faced purr'd,
The rat-faced spoke a word
Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard;
One parrot-voiced and jolly
Cried 'Pretty Goblin' still for 'Pretty Polly;'—
One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste:
'Good folk, I have no coin;
To take were to purloin:
I have no copper in my purse,
I have no silver either,
And all my gold is on the furze
That shakes in windy weather
Above the rusty heather.'
'You have much gold upon your head,'
They answered all together:
'Buy from us with a golden curl.'
She clipped a precious golden lock,
She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red:
Sweeter than honey from the rock,
Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
Clearer than water flowed that juice;
She never tasted such before,
How should it cloy with length of use?
She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;
She sucked until her lips were sore;
Then flung the emptied rinds away
But gathered up one kernel stone,
And knew not was it night or day
As she turned home alone.

Extract 3

Jack. [Gravely.] In a hand-bag.

Lady Bracknell. A hand-bag?

Jack. [Very seriously.] Yes, Lady Bracknell. I was in a hand-bag—a somewhat large, black leather hand-bag, with handles to it—an ordinary hand-bag in fact.

Lady Bracknell. In what locality did this Mr. James, or Thomas, Cardew come across this ordinary hand-bag?

Jack. In the cloak-room at Victoria Station. It was given to him in mistake for his own.

Lady Bracknell. The cloak-room at Victoria Station?

Jack. Yes. The Brighton line.

Lady Bracknell. The line is immaterial. Mr. Worthing, I confess I feel somewhat bewildered by what you have just told me. To be born, or at any rate bred, in a hand-bag, whether it had handles or not, seems to me to display a contempt for the ordinary decencies of family life that reminds one of the worst excesses of the French Revolution. And I presume you know what that unfortunate movement led to? As for the particular locality in which the hand-bag was found, a cloak-room at a railway station might serve to conceal a social indiscretion—has probably, indeed, been used for that purpose before now—but it could hardly be regarded as an assured basis for a recognised position in good society.

Jack. May I ask you then what you would advise me to do? I need hardly say I would do anything in the world to ensure Gwendolen’s happiness.

Lady Bracknell. I would strongly advise you, Mr. Worthing, to try and acquire some relations as soon as possible, and to make a definite effort to produce at any rate one parent, of either sex, before the season is quite over.

Jack. Well, I don’t see how I could possibly manage to do that. I can produce the hand-bag at any moment. It is in my dressing-room at home. I really think that should satisfy you, Lady Bracknell.

Lady Bracknell. Me, sir! What has it to do with me? You can hardly imagine that I and Lord Bracknell would dream of allowing our only daughter—a girl brought up with the utmost care—to marry into a cloak-room, and form an alliance with a parcel? Good morning, Mr. Worthing!

Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest, Act I.

End of Section A
Section B follows overleaf
Section B

Answer one of the following questions:

2. Isobel Armstrong has observed how the speakers of Robert Browning’s dramatic monologues are characterized by ‘mania, delusion, paranoia and visions of total power’. Discuss the relevance of this claim with reference to at least two poems by Browning.

3. Is nineteenth-century literature predominantly a literature of religious faith or religious doubt? Discuss with reference to at least two texts studied on the module.

4. Peter Stillman argues that utopias are interested in ‘the possibility, effects and desirability of various changes’. How might we read William Morris’s News from Nowhere in the light of this claim and to what extent does it also apply to H.G. Wells’s dystopian narrative The Time Machine?

5. In George Bernard Shaw’s play Mrs Warren’s Profession, Mrs Warren complains that ‘it can’t be right [...] that there shouldn’t be better opportunities for women’. In what ways are women exploited and victimised in any two or more nineteenth-century texts studied on the module?

6. In Hard Times the narrator states that ‘the English people are as hard-worked as any people upon whom the sun shines’. To what extent is the contrast between hard work and leisure used to define different social classes in any two or more nineteenth-century texts studied on the module?

7. The term ‘Sensation Fiction’ was applied to literature in the mid-nineteenth century that was concerned simultaneously with sensational events and bodily sensations. In what ways is Wilkie Collins’s The Woman in White a prime example of such fiction?

8. In The Importance of Being Earnest, Jack tells Algernon ‘my name is Ernest in town and Jack in the country’. Consider how the idea of personal identity is made problematic in any two or more nineteenth-century texts studied on the module?

9. Compare the ways in which any two or more nineteenth-century writers studied on the module challenge conventional ideas regarding sex and sexuality.

End of Section B

End of Paper