Examination Period 3: 2016/17

LIT102917N

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Pages</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

(25% per extract)

---

Extract 1 follows overleaf
Extract 1

The plan which had now occurred to me was to get out at my sitting-room window on to this roof, to creep along noiselessly till I reached that part of it which was immediately over the library window, and to crouch down between the flower-pots, with my ear against the outer railing. If Sir Percival and the Count sat and smoked to-night, as I had seen them sitting and smoking many nights before, with their chairs close at the open window, and their feet stretched on the zinc garden seats which were placed under the verandah, every word they said to each other above a whisper (and no long conversation, as we all know by experience, can be carried on in a whisper) must inevitably reach my ears. If, on the other hand, they chose to-night to sit far back inside the room, then the chances were that I should hear little or nothing—and in that case, I must run the far more serious risk of trying to outwit them downstairs.

Strongly as I was fortified in my resolution by the desperate nature of our situation, I hoped most fervently that I might escape this last emergency. My courage was only a woman's courage after all, and it was very near to failing me when I thought of trusting myself on the ground floor, at the dead of night, within reach of Sir Percival and the Count.

I went softly back to my bedroom to try the safer experiment of the verandah roof first.

A complete change in my dress was imperatively necessary for many reasons. I took off my silk gown to begin with, because the slightest noise from it on that still night might have betrayed me. I next removed the white and cumbersome parts of my underclothing, and replaced them by a petticoat of dark flannel. Over this I put my black travelling cloak, and pulled the hood on to my head. In my ordinary evening costume I took up the room of three men at least. In my present dress, when it was held close about me, no man could have passed through the narrowest spaces more easily than I. The little breadth left on the roof of the verandah, between the flower-pots on one side and the wall and the windows of the house on the other, made this a serious consideration. If I knocked anything down, if I made the least noise, who could say what the consequences might be?

I only waited to put the matches near the candle before I extinguished it, and groped my way back into the sitting-room, I locked that door, as I had locked my bedroom door—then quietly got out of the window, and cautiously set my feet on the leaden roof of the verandah.

My two rooms were at the inner extremity of the new wing of the house in which we all lived, and I had five windows to pass before I could reach the position it was necessary to take up immediately over the library. The first window belonged to a spare room which was empty. The second and third windows belonged to Laura's room. The fourth window belonged to Sir Percival's room. The fifth belonged to the Countess's room. The others, by which it was not necessary for me to pass, were the
windows of the Count's dressing-room, of the bathroom, and of the second empty spare room.

No sound reached my ears—the black blinding darkness of the night was all round me when I first stood on the verandah, except at that part of it which Madame Fosco's window overlooked. There, at the very place above the library to which my course was directed—there I saw a gleam of light! The Countess was not yet in bed.

It was too late to draw back—it was no time to wait. I determined to go on at all hazards, and trust for security to my own caution and to the darkness of the night. "For Laura's sake!" I thought to myself, as I took the first step forward on the roof, with one hand holding my cloak close round me, and the other groping against the wall of the house.

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from Fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life - that in me hast rest,
As I - Undying Life - have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts, unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy Spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates and rears

Though Earth and moon were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every Existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou - Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

Emily Brontë. 'No Coward Soul Is Mine'.
Extract 3

'Now, the smoke of the fire beat over towards me, and it must have made me heavy of a sudden. Moreover, the vapour of camphor was in the air. My fire would not need replenishing for an hour or so. I felt very weary after my exertion, and sat down. The wood, too, was full of a slumbrous murmur that I did not understand. I seemed just to nod and open my eyes. But all was dark, and the Morlocks had their hands upon me. Flinging off their clinging fingers I hastily felt in my pocket for the match-box, and—it had gone! Then they gripped and closed with me again. In a moment I knew what had happened. I had slept, and my fire had gone out, and the bitterness of death came over my soul. The forest seemed full of the smell of burning wood. I was caught by the neck, by the hair, by the arms, and pulled down. It was indescribably horrible in the darkness to feel all these soft creatures heaped upon me. I felt as if I was in a monstrous spider's web. I was overpowered, and went down. I felt little teeth nipping at my neck. I rolled over, and as I did so my hand came against my iron lever. It gave me strength. I struggled up, shaking the human rats from me, and, holding the bar short, I thrust where I judged their faces might be. I could feel the succulent giving of flesh and bone under my blows, and for a moment I was free.

'The strange exultation that so often seems to accompany hard fighting came upon me. I knew that both I and Weena were lost, but I determined to make the Morlocks pay for their meat. I stood with my back to a tree, swinging the iron bar before me. The whole wood was full of the stir and cries of them. A minute passed. Their voices seemed to rise to a higher pitch of excitement, and their movements grew faster. Yet none came within reach. I stood glaring at the blackness. Then suddenly came hope. What if the Morlocks were afraid? And close on the heels of that came a strange thing. The darkness seemed to grow luminous. Very dimly I began to see the Morlocks about me—three battered at my feet—and then I recognized, with incredulous surprise, that the others were running, in an incessant stream, as it seemed, from behind me, and away through the wood in front. And their backs seemed no longer white, but reddish. As I stood agape, I saw a little red spark go drifting across a gap of starlight between the branches, and vanish. And at that I understood the smell of burning wood, the slumbrous murmur that was growing now into a gusty roar, the red glow, and the Morlocks' flight.

'Stepping out from behind my tree and looking back, I saw, through the black pillars of the nearer trees, the flames of the burning forest. It was my first fire coming after me. With that I looked for Weena, but she was gone. The hissing and crackling behind me, the explosive thud as each fresh tree burst into flame, left little time for reflection. My iron bar still gripped, I followed in the Morlocks' path. It was a close race. Once the flames crept forward so swiftly on my right as I ran that I was outflanked and had to strike off to the left. But at last I emerged upon a small open space, and as I did so, a Morlock came blundering towards me, and past me, and went on straight into the fire!
'And now I was to see the most weird and horrible thing, I think, of all that I beheld in that future age. This whole space was as bright as day with the reflection of the fire. In the centre was a hillock or tumulus, surmounted by a scorched hawthorn. Beyond this was another arm of the burning forest, with yellow tongues already writhing from it, completely encircling the space with a fence of fire. Upon the hill-side were some thirty or forty Morlocks, dazzled by the light and heat, and blundering hither and thither against each other in their bewilderment. At first I did not realize their blindness, and struck furiously at them with my bar, in a frenzy of fear, as they approached me, killing one and crippling several more. But when I had watched the gestures of one of them groping under the hawthorn against the red sky, and heard their moans, I was assured of their absolute helplessness and misery in the glare, and I struck no more of them.'

H. G. Wells. *The Time Machine*. Section IX.

End of Section A  
Section B follows overleaf
Section B

Answer one of the following questions:

2. In what ways might it be argued that nineteenth-century literature is predominantly interested in representing the lives and concerns of the working classes? You should refer to at least two texts studied on the module in your response.

3. To what extent does nineteenth-century literature challenge or confirm conventional representations of femininity and/or masculinity? You should refer to at least two texts studied on the module in your response.

4. Sos Eltis argues that in The Importance of Being Earnest ‘Wilde had found a perfect dramatic form for his own uneasy relation to society’. Discuss how any two or more texts studied on the module explore the tension between private and public lives.

5. Compare how any two or more texts studied on the module expose the violence and exploitation that thrive beneath the surface of supposedly civilised Victorian life.

6. ‘And though the last lights off the black West went/Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs’ (Gerard Manley Hopkins, ‘God’s Grandeur’). With reference to any two or more texts studied on the module, consider whether religious faith is presented as a consoling or problematic aspect of life in the nineteenth century.

7. Wilkie Collins’s The Woman in White is often regarded as the defining example of the mid-Victorian Sensation Fiction genre. How effectively are the primary features of the genre established and developed in Collins’s novel?

8. Are representations of sex and sexuality constrained by or liberated from moral concerns in nineteenth-century literature? You should refer to at least two texts studied on the module in your response.

9. With reference to William Morris’s News from Nowhere and H. G. Wells’s The Time Machine, how far do you agree that utopian and dystopian literature is as effective as realist literature in addressing the social and political concerns of the nineteenth century?

(50%)

End of Section B
End of Paper