

English 11
Review for final exam

This year, we have studied rhetoric through American literature. As you review for the final, consider the texts we have studied:

- “‘Indians’: Textualism, Morality, and the Problem of History” by Jane Tompkins
- The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- Excerpts from essays about American landscape and Transcendentalism: Columbus’s Journal, Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, “Self-Reliance” and “Nature” by Emerson, “Walden” by Thoreau
- Fascicle 13 by Emily Dickinson

***** Semester break*****

- Short stories by Herman Melville (“Bartleby”), Sherwood Anderson (“Hands,” “The Strength of God”) and Ernest Hemingway (“Soldier’s Home,” “Big Two-Hearted River,” parts 1 and 2)
- As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner
- Poetry and a few essays of the Harlem Renaissance
- Prologue, Chapter 1, and Chapter 10 of *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- Othello* attributed to William Shakespeare

The final exam will consist of two parts: short answer and essay. There will be no vocabulary section on the final exam.

I. Short answer (40 minutes). The short answer will should take 40 minutes and will count 50% of your exam grade. You must prepare for the short answer.

The short answer section will be based on quotation identification from texts we have studied in the second half of the year. In general, you are expected to be able to say titles, authors, and the names of major characters. Please review these fundamental facts. If I feel the passage is too obscure for you to be able to identify speaker or context, I will provide some information to get you started.

To prepare for short answer, make a study sheet for each major text. Include characters and examples of important quotations (both because you might hit a test quotation and in order to give you a sense of the character’s voice), notes about setting, important themes (and archetypes). For shorter texts, I would make a list of key ideas and terms (and character names, if appropriate), a sample passage to give myself a sense of what the text sounds like, and a statement of theme that covers the whole of the text.

Essay on back==>

II. Essay (40 minutes). The essay should take 40 minutes and will count 50% of your exam grade. To be successful, you must prepare for the essay.

The individual in a hostile world. Choose two different texts by two different authors and compare and contrast their views of the situation of the individual in a hostile world. What constitutes the hostility, what are the particular difficulties that arise, and what solutions do the texts offer to these difficulties or to the larger problem?

In some cases, the particular difficulties may be emblematic of a larger systemic problem—be sure you account for both the forest (the big problem/theme) and the trees (the particular details). The solutions, thus, can be both practical and philosophical/literary—and it may be that the practical solutions are symbols (or metaphors or metonymies or synecdoches) for the larger solutions.

It is easy to write a slapdash, unsupported essay on this perhaps general topic; don't do that. Rather, use the openness of the topic as an opportunity to show what you know and can say. Be sure to choose texts you can use for particular support, and organize your essay idea by idea, rather than text by text, so that you are forced to be more analytical in exploring correspondences and disjunctions.