

**THE ENGLISH AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY  
HYDERABAD 500 007**



**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION  
M.A. ENGLISH – PART II**

**COURSE III: AMERICAN POETRY AND DRAMA  
Assignments 2021**

**Assignment I  
(Based on Block I)**

- I. In Unit 1 of this Block, you were introduced to the history of America in terms of the ‘discovery’ of its land by many explorers, and its subsequent colonization and migrations. Now answer the following questions:
  - a. Briefly explain the reasons that drew different groups of people to America. (300 words)
  - b. Who were the original inhabitants of America? What was the effect of colonization and migrations on them? (300 words)
  - c. What is American English and how has it evolved? (500 words)
- II. Briefly outline the forms and themes in the literatures of a) the indigenous people of America, and b) colonial America. (700 words)

**Assignment II  
(Based on Block II)**

- I. Examine how Anne Bradstreet’s poems that you have studied in Unit 1 of this Block engage with the Puritan ideals of her time but also resonate with feminist concerns of the twentieth century. Support your answer with adequate textual illustrations. (around 1000 words)
- II. What aspects of Transcendentalist philosophy do you find in Emerson’s poem “Brahma”? Explain. (around 800 words)
- III. Walt Whitman’s poetry seeks to express the vibrant national character of America while also exploring the possibility of encompassing the whole of human experience through an expanded consciousness. Examine this statement in the light of the two poems by Whitman discussed in Unit 2 of this Block, “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” and “Passage to India”. (1000 words)

- IV. Write a descriptive note on the style of Emily Dickinson's poetry, supporting your answer with illustrations from her poems that you have studied. (around 750 words)

**Assignment III  
(Based on Block III)**

- I. What do you understand by the term 'Imagism' in poetry? Explain. Compare the poetry of Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams as leading Imagist poets, with suitable textual illustrations. (around 1000 words)
- II. Robert Frost's poetry constitutes a break from and a contrast to the complex styles and subjects of Modernist poets like Pound, Moore and Eliot. Discuss with reference to the poems of Frost that you have studied. (800-1000 words)
- III. Identify and explain the metaphors in the poem "Lady Lazarus" and comment on how they serve to universalize the individual experience presented in the poem. (around 700 words)
- IV. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

This is the place.  
And I am here, the mermaid whose dark hair  
streams black, the merman in his armored body.  
We circle silently  
about the wreck  
we dive into the hold.  
I am she: I am he

- a. Identify the text and the author.
- b. Explain the significance of the figures of the mermaid, merman, and wreck in the extract. (300 words)
- c. Who is the speaker in the extract? Comment on the significance of the line "I am she: I am he". (300 words)
- d. What is the theme of the text this extract belongs to? (500 words)
- V. Write short notes on the following: (around 500 words each)
- a. Richard Cory
  - b. Marianne Moore
  - c. Confessional Poetry

**Assignment 1V**  
**(Based on Block IV)**

- I. Write short notes on the following: (around 500 words each)
    - a. The Aristotelian focal points of drama
    - b. Bergson's theory of the comic
    - c. Absurd drama
  
  - II. What do you understand by the term 'Expressionism' with reference to drama. Examine Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones* as an Expressionist play. (1000 words)
  
  - III. The failure of and disillusionment with the American Dream is a common theme in 20<sup>th</sup> century American drama. Examine the portrayal of this theme in any 20<sup>th</sup> century American play that you have studied. (750 words)
  
  - IV. What are the characteristics of a quintessential American Comedy? Explain with reference to *You Can't Take It With You*. (800 – 1000 words)
  
  - V. Experimentation with lexis - language, conversation, dialogue - is one of the features of Absurd plays. Discuss with reference to the two plays in this tradition that you have studied in Unit 4 of this Block. (1000 words)
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