



## **UAN/0Q1 State Exam MA**

**Important note:** You can bring any written materials to the exam, so you can use detailed notes to remind yourself of key point of information as you develop your argument. The purpose of the exam is not to test your memory but rather your familiarity with, and comprehension of, the themes you have been assigned.

### **English Literature**

#### **Development of English drama from the late Middle Ages until the Elizabethan Age**

What were the typical forms of late medieval drama? How did they develop? How did they influence the development of Renaissance English drama?

Describe the forms and main authors and works of the early Tudor drama? How do they relate to ancient (Latin and Greek) drama?

#### **Development of English drama from the Elizabethan period until the closing of the theatres in 1642**

Describe forms of Elizabethan playhouses. How did the layout of the buildings/halls influence the form of drama written for it?

Name the main Elizabethan dramatists. Assess their importance. Name the main early Stuart dramatists. Assess their importance.

#### **The work of William Shakespeare – poetry**

Discuss the genres and themes of Shakespearean poetry. What is the importance of Shakespeare's narrative poems? What is the importance of Shakespeare's Sonnets?

#### **The work of William Shakespeare – histories**

What is the political and historical significance of Shakespeare's histories? Explain the main features of a Shakespearean history. How does Shakespeare retell English history? Discuss one Shakespeare's history and its typical features.

#### **The work of William Shakespeare – drama/tragedies**

Discuss the development of Shakespearean tragedy? Is there a typical Shakespearean tragic pattern? How does Shakespeare develop the earlier form of English tragedy? How does a Shakespearean tragedy relate to ancient tragedies, both Greek and Latin?



### **The work of William Shakespeare – drama/comedies**

Discuss the development of Shakespearean comedy. What are typical features of a Shakespearean comedy? Why are certain comedies called “problem plays”? Discuss the problem plays.

### **The work of William Shakespeare – drama/romances**

Discuss the development of Shakespearean romances. What are typical features of a Shakespearean romance? Is Henry VIII a romance or a history? Discuss.

### **Development of English prose from the late Middle Ages until the Elizabethan Age**

What is Humanism? Who were the main European and English humanists? How did they want to reform medieval learning?

### **What is Arthurian tradition in English literature? How did it influence late medieval society and culture?**

What are the main works of Humanist English prose? Assess their importance for the development of English prose.

What is the importance of Sir Philip Sidney for the development of Renaissance English prose?

### **Development of English verse from the high Middle Ages until the early Tudor period**

What are chivalric romances? How did they influence English literature in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance?

What is “courtly literature”? How did it influence European and English poetry?

Who was Geoffrey Chaucer? What are his main works? Why is he called “father of English poetry”?

How did English verse develop formally in the Middle Ages and the early Tudor period?



## **Development of English poetry from the Henrician period until early Elizabethan Age**

Who was Sir Thomas Wyatt? How did he influence English poetry in the early Renaissance? Who was Henry Howard, earl of Surrey? Assess the importance of his work.

What are the main themes of early Renaissance verse?

Development of English poetry in the age of Elizabeth I and James I

Who were the main poets in the Elizabethan Age? Discuss their work and importance.

What were the main genres of Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry?

Who were the Metaphysicals? Discuss their main representatives and their work? How were they rediscovered in the 20th century?

## **The work of John Milton**

Who was John Milton? Discuss the political and social circumstances of his period. How did his work develop? Discuss his major early works.

What is the importance of Paradise Lost? Discuss the development of epic in the English Renaissance its typical features.

## **Restoration drama and its poetics**

How did English drama change its poetics in the Restoration period? Discuss the form and features of Restoration drama.

Who were the main Restoration dramatists? Discuss their major works.

## **The rise of the novel form in the late 17th and the beginning of the 18th century**

How did the novel form develop in the late 17th century? Name the main figures of English prose in the late 17th century and assess their importance. Discuss the major works and compare them.

What are the social and cultural conditions that helped develop the genre of the novel?

## **Neoclassicist poetics and the work of Alexander Pope**

What is the importance of Alexander Pope for the development of English (and American) literature in the 18th century?

What is mock-heroic? Discuss its typical features.



### **English satire in the late 17th and the beginning of the 18th century**

How can we explain the rise of the satire in the late 17th century? Who are the main authors of this genre? Assess the importance of their major works.

### **English drama in the 18th century**

Who are the main authors of 18th century English drama? Discuss their main works and their poetics. Discuss the typical genres and motifs.

### **Sentimentalism in 18th century literature**

What is "sentimentalism" in literature? What are typical features of sentimental poetry?

What are typical features of sentimental prose?

Who are the main representatives of English sentimental poetry? Discuss their work and their importance.

Who are the main representatives of English sentimental prose? Discuss their work and their importance.

### **Gothic novel**

What is a "gothic novel"? Discuss its typical features. Who are the main representatives of gothic novel in English literature? Discuss their work

### **Early Romanticism**

How did the Romantic movement begin in England? What drove the Romantic movement in the late 18th century? Discuss the social and political circumstances of the period.

Who are the Lake Poets? How did they understand poetry? Name the major representatives and discuss their poetics and their influence.

Discuss the development of Romantic fiction.

### **The work of Keats, Shelley and Byron**

What are the typical features of Keats's poetry? What are the typical features of Shelley's poetry? What are the typical features of Byron's poetry? Discuss their major works.

Discuss major English Romantic dramas? Can they be staged today? What is their appeal for contemporary readers and spectators?



### **Victorian novelists**

Discuss the formal and technical development of the Victorian novel. How does the Victorian novel develop? Name the main representatives and discuss their work. How are the social, political and cultural issues reflected in the Victorian novel? Take two novelists and discuss their main topics and their technique.

### **Victorian poetry**

Who are the main Victorian poets? What are the typical formal and thematic features of Victorian poetry?

Discuss the importance of Lord Tennyson and Gerard Manley Hopkins.

### **Late Victorian drama**

Who was G. B. Shaw? What are the main features of Shaw's dramas?

Discuss the importance of Oscar Wilde for the development of English drama.

### **The work of Thomas Hardy**

Discuss the development of Hardy's work. Assess the impact of Thomas Hardy on later English novelists. Discuss Hardy's poetics and compare it to his predecessors. Discuss Hardy's world outlook, namely his pessimism and fatalism.

### **Late Victorian and Edwardian novel**

Who were the main novelists in the last years of Queen Victoria's reign and during the Edwardian period? Discuss the main representatives and main features of the late Victorian and Edwardian novel.

### **Modernist poetry**

Who were the chief representatives of English modernist poetry? Outline the modernist poetics and identify its main features. Assess the impact of modernism on future development of literature.

### **Modernist novel**

Identify the main representatives of the modernist novel and specify the characteristics of the genre, namely key concepts and motifs. Set the modernist novel in the context of English literature.



### **Post-war poetry**

Identify the main trends in post-war poetry, the chief representatives and their key works. Assess their poetics and compare the main topics of their works.

### **Post-war English novel**

Talk about the post-war novel of the 1950s and 1960s. Name the principal representatives and give an account of their works.

### **Late 20th century novel**

Discuss the novel at the end of the 20th century, its main topics and features. Identify the main representatives.

### **Late 20th century drama**

Assess the development of drama in the late 20th century. Discuss the main representatives and their works.

### **Contemporary literature**

Literature, fiction and poetry, since 2000. Main trends, major writers, reflection of global changes.

## **American Literature**

### **19th versus the 20th century in fiction**

How did fiction develop in the 19th century as opposed to the 20th?

What social and creative forces drove the similarities and differences between the centuries?

### **Edgar Allan Poe**

His work and legacy. Dark romanticism and its relation to current intellectual preoccupations.

### **Nathaniel Hawthorne's influence on American fiction**

Who was Nathaniel Hawthorne? What are his major works?

What influence did Hawthorne's fiction have on writers that came after him?



### **Herman Melville and Moby Dick**

The writings of Herman Melville and his artistic outlook.

### **The poetry of Emily Dickinson**

Her work and life

### **The late 19th century American literature**

Edith Wharton, Mark Twain and others. Discuss changes in American society.

### **Modernist American fiction**

What is modernism? What is fiction?

What are the main works of American fiction in the modernist period (1914 to 1945)?

How were American modernist works similar or different from each other?

### **Millennial American fiction**

How did American fiction change from the late 20th century to the early 21st century?

What social forces influenced fiction around the turn of the 21st century in the U.S.

Is the turn of the 21st century during the “postmodern” period in American literature?

Why or why not?

### **Regionalism and local color in American fiction**

What is “local color” and/or “regionalism” in literature?

In what ways is regionalist and local-color writing specific in America?

### **Unreliable narrator in American fiction**

What is an “unreliable narrator”?

What is the function of the “unreliable narrator” in American fiction?

### **Development of short story**

How is a short story defined in comparison with other genres?

How has the modern short story developed since its beginning in the 19th century?



### **The road novel**

What is a “road novel”?

How can the “on-the-road” novel be seen as typically American?

### **Historical novel**

What is a “historical novel”?

Why is the genre of historical novel (historical romance) important in America?

### **Southern Gothic**

What is “Southern Gothic”?

Why did Southern Gothic come out of the American South? Was the use of the Gothic purposeful?

### **The American Novel**

How is a novel defined?

Does the novel develop in a particular way in the United States?

### **Nature in American novel**

How is “nature” defined when it is used in literature? How do you know when a writer refers to “nature”?

What role does nature play in American fiction?

### **Experiment in 20th century American fiction**

What does it mean to “experiment” in fiction? How can you tell a story is “experimental”? What experimental approaches can be found in 20th century American fiction?

### **19th versus the 20th century in poetry**

What are the main continuities in the development of American poetry? Who were the major lasting influences and why?

How has poetry changed in the course of the two centuries?





### **Romanticism in American poetry**

How did Romanticism develop in America? What is the relationship between American and European Romanticism? How has Romanticism influenced modern poetry in America?

### **Modernist poetry and after**

What are the main characteristics of modernist poetry? How does American modernist poetry relate to European modernism?

Who are the major American modernist poets and how did they influence later development of American poetry? What were the reactions to modernism in the following generations of poets?

### **The role of the poet in American poetry**

What aspects of the role of the poet can be examined in the study of poetry? How has the role of the poet changed in the history of American poetry?

### **Walt Whitman's influence on 20th century poetry**

Who was Walt Whitman? What are his major works?

In what ways has Walt Whitman influence 20th century poetry?

### **Free verse in American poetry.**

What is free verse, when and why did it develop? What role has free verse played in American poetry?

### **Experiment in 20th century American poetry**

What does it mean to “experiment” in poetry? How can you tell a poem is “experimental”? What experimental approaches can be found in 20th century American poetry?

### **Nature in American poetry**

How has American nature been seen by the poets? What role does nature play in American poetry?



### **Drama in America**

How did drama develop in the U.S?

How is the development of drama different in the U.S. as compared to Europe?

What are the main dramatic works to consider in the 20th century? When were most of them produced? Why were they produced at this time?

Not genre-specific

### **Puritan heritage**

What is the Puritan heritage in U.S. history and culture?

Is the Puritan heritage relevant in the 19th and 20th century literature in America?

### **American identity in literature**

What concerns about national identity have existed in America and why? How has American literature dealt with the concept of American identity?

### **Native American themes in American literature**

Who were and are “Native Americans” or “American Indians”?

How has the representation of Native American themes changed in the course of the history of American literature?

### **Women's literature**

Is there “women's literature”?

Why would it be important to study “women's literature” specifically in contrast to other literature?

### **Development of African-American literature**

What are the major issues in the development of African-American literature?

### **Individualism and self-reliance**

How has American literature treated the concepts of “individualism” and “self-reliance”?

Why are these concepts important specifically to American literature?



### **The idea of democracy in American literature**

How has the idea of democracy been reflected in American literature?

Why is democracy particularly important to the American experience and literature?

### **America as a utopia**

What is a “utopia”?

How have the utopian visions of America affected American writings? How is the utopian thinking present in modern literature?

### **Transcendentalism and its influence on modern literature**

What is transcendentalism?

Is transcendentalism a crucial influence on modern literature?

### **The concept of innocence in American literature**

What is the concept of innocence?

What role has the concept of innocence played in American literature?

### **Relationship between American and British literature**

What are the similarities and differences between “American” and “British” literature?

How has the relationship between American and British literature developed throughout centuries?

### **Immigrant literature**

What has the situation of immigrant literature in America been?

Why and how is the literature coming from the immigrant experience important in America?

### **The American Dream in 20th century literature**

What is the “American Dream”?

Is the American Dream still relevant to 20th century literature?



### **Secularism in American literature**

What does it mean for something to be “secular”?

In what ways is the “separation of church and state” reflected in American literature?

How do the competing notions of the importance of Puritan principles and the importance of a secular government play out in American literature?

### **The frontier in American literature**

What is “the frontier” in the American context?

In what ways is the frontier an important principle for American literature, now and in the past?

### **Revived writers**

What does it mean for a writer to be “revived”?

Which American writers are more famous after their death than before? Why do they get “revived”? What differences are there among revived writers?

### **Influence of postmodern theory**

What are the basic concepts related to postmodern literary theory?

How and why were postmodern American literature and literary theory linked?

### **Meritocracy in 20th century literature**

What is “meritocracy”?

How is the American ideal of meritocracy criticized in American literature of the 20th century? When during the century was this a more common concern and why?

### **American literature in the globalized world**

Do national boundaries on literatures become more or less relevant from the last 20th century?

What is particularly “American” about American literature in the late 20th century, when western cultures become more homogenized and perhaps the U.S. has an undue influence on other cultures?



## Theory and Criticism

The theory and criticism exam is based on the courses 0DKM1 and 0DKM2, 0LT1 and 0LT2, and 0ALT. In addition to the materials studied in class, we recommend to use the following books as sources for information on literary theories:

1. For understanding the basic concepts and methods of the theoretical schools from the 20th century onwards:  
Bertens, Hans. *Literary Theory: The Basics*, 3rd Edition. Routledge, 2014.
2. For more detailed overview of particular schools and prominent thinkers:  
Goulimari, Pelagia. *Literary Criticism and Theory: from Plato to postcolonialism*, Routledge, 2015.
3. You can find many of the theoretical texts in:  
Leitch, Vincent B., editor. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2001.

The state exam in theory examines the students familiarity with major schools of literary theory, both historical and contemporary. During the exam, the students will be asked to present a short overview of the school in question, covering the following:

- At what historical period did the theory appear and, if applicable, until what time. Be specific – 1960s is better than 'mid 20th century'.
- Who were the main thinkers or writers of the school and their most important work(s). If you are dealing with a long-standing theory like Marxism or Feminism you do not have to cover the whole history of this area. You should instead choose at least 4 representative figures with some connection between them. For example, the members of the Frankfurt school for Marxism; or Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan as examples of 1960s feminists versus Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick as 1980s-1990s feminists.
- What are the basic terms used by proponent of this theory and what do they mean.
- How the principles of this school can be used in a study of literature.
- A specific example of how this theory or approach can be used to interpret a particular work of literature.



## **Sources of Anglo-American Theory and Thought**

### **British Political Thought**

Freedom, the role of the state, and political institutions, utilitarianism

Main thinkers: Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, J.S. Mill, T.R. Malthus

### **British Empiricism**

Epistemology, experience and knowledge

Main thinkers: John Locke, George Berkeley, David Hume

### **Romanticism**

Romantic thought and the reception of German philosophy, American Transcendentalism

Main thinkers: S. T. Coleridge, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau

### **Victorian Criticism**

Pragmatism, aestheticism

Thomas Carlyle, Oscar Wilde

## **Literary Theories of the 20th and 21st centuries**

### **Philosophy of language**

The linguistic turn, pragmatism, analytical philosophy

Main thinkers: Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead, Wittgenstein, Donald Davidson,

Richard Rorty

### **Psychoanalysis**

Text as symptom, analytical reading

Main thinkers: Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan

### **Marxism**

Ideology, superstructure, The Frankfurt school

Main thinkers: Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, Raymond Williams

### **New Criticism**

Close reading, ambiguity

Main thinkers: I.A. Richards, William Empson, Kenneth Burke

### **Structuralism**

Language as a system of differences

Main thinkers: Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson

### **Poststructuralism**

Deconstruction, discourse and power



Main thinkers: Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Barbara Johnson

### **Feminism and Queer Theory**

Sex vs. gender, gender performance

Main thinkers: Simone de Beauvoir, Adrienne Rich, Judith Butler, Eve Kosovsky  
Sedgwick

### **Postcolonialism**

Eurocentrism, orientalism

Main thinkers: Edward Said, Chinua Achebe, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

### **Posthumanism**

The human vs. the posthuman, cyborgism, ecocriticism

Main thinkers: Donna Haraway, Lawrence Buell, Timothy Morton