

UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

ENGLISH STUDIES

SEMESTER 1 EXAMINATIONS 2019/2020

PERSPECTIVES ON POETRY

MODULE NO: EST5003

Date: 16 January 2020

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

All candidates must answer TWO questions;
ONE from Section A and ONE from Section B.

You should not repeat substantially the same
material in answering separate questions. You
need only refer to authors studied on this
module.

The Section A answer carries 50% of the
available marks, and Section B 50%. You are
advised to apportion the time spent on each
answer accordingly.

University of Bolton
School of the Arts
English Studies
Semester 1 Examinations 2019/2020
Perspectives on Poetry
Module No. EST5003

SECTION A [50%]

Write a short essay that gives a close reading to one of the following four pre-1940s poems. Remember: a close reading means to analyze the poem in fine detail, to consider the ways in which form and content together are working towards meaning.

Adlestrop by Edward Thomas

Yes. I remember Adlestrop—
The name, because one afternoon
Of heat the express-train drew up there
Unwontedly. It was late June.

The steam hissed. Someone cleared his throat.
No one left and no one came
On the bare platform. What I saw
Was Adlestrop—only the name

And willows, willow-herb, and grass,
And meadowsweet, and haycocks dry,
No whit less still and lonely fair
Than the high cloudlets in the sky.

And for that minute a blackbird sang
Close by, and round him, mistier,
Farther and farther, all the birds
Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.

An Irish Airman Foresees His Death by W.B. Yeats

I know that I shall meet my fate
Somewhere among the clouds above;
Those that I fight I do not hate,
Those that I guard I do not love;
My country is Kiltartan Cross,
My countrymen Kiltartan's poor,
No likely end could bring them loss
Or leave them happier than before.
Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,
Nor public men, nor cheering crowds,
A lonely impulse of delight
Drove to this tumult in the clouds;
I balanced all, brought all to mind,
The years to come seemed waste of breath,
A waste of breath the years behind
In balance with this life, this death.

Please turn the page

University of Bolton
School of the Arts
English Studies
Semester 1 Examinations 2019/2020
Perspectives on Poetry
Module No. EST5003

Human Cylinders by Mina Loy

The human cylinders
Revolving in the enervating dusk
That wraps each closer in the mystery
Of singularity
Among the litter of a sunless afternoon
Having eaten without tasting
Talked without communion
And at least two of us
Loved a very little
Without seeking
To know if our two miseries
In the lucid rush-together of automatons
Could form one opulent wellbeing

Simplifications of men
In the enervating dusk
Your indistinctness
Serves me the core of the kernel of you
When in the frenzied reaching out of intellect to intellect
Leaning brow to brow communicative
Over the abyss of the potential
Concordance of respiration
Shames
Absence of corresponding between the verbal sensory
And reciprocity
Of conception
And expression
Where each extrudes beyond the tangible
One thin pale trail of speculation
From among us we have sent out
Into the enervating dusk
One little whining beast
Whose longing
Is to slink back to antediluvian burrow
And one elastic tentacle of intuition
To quiver among the stars

The impartiality of the absolute
Routs the polemic
Or which of us
Would not
Receiving the holy-ghost
Catch it and caging
 Lose it
Or in the problematic
Destroy the Universe
With a solution

Please turn the page

**University of Bolton
School of the Arts
English Studies
Semester 1 Examinations 2019/2020
Perspectives on Poetry
Module No. EST5003**

Lullaby by W.H. Auden

Lay your sleeping head, my love,
Human on my faithless arm;
Time and fevers burn away
Individual beauty from
Thoughtful children, and the grave
Proves the child ephemeral:
But in my arms till break of day
Let the living creature lie,
Mortal, guilty, but to me
The entirely beautiful.

Soul and body have no bounds:
To lovers as they lie upon
Her tolerant enchanted slope
In their ordinary swoon,
Grave the vision Venus sends
Of supernatural sympathy,
Universal love and hope;
While an abstract insight wakes
Among the glaciers and the rocks
The hermit's carnal ecstasy.

Certainty, fidelity
On the stroke of midnight pass
Like vibrations of a bell,
And fashionable madmen raise
Their pedantic boring cry:
Every farthing of the cost,
All the dreaded cards foretell,
Shall be paid, but from this night
Not a whisper, not a thought,
Not a kiss nor look be lost.

Beauty, midnight, vision dies:
Let the winds of dawn that blow
Softly round your dreaming head
Such a day of welcome show
Eye and knocking heart may bless,
Find the mortal world enough;
Noons of dryness find you fed
By the involuntary powers,
Nights of insult let you pass
Watched by every human love.

University of Bolton
School of the Arts
English Studies
Semester 1 Examinations 2019/2020
Perspectives on Poetry
Module No. EST5003

SECTION B [50%]

Write a short essay that gives a close reading to one of the following four Post-1940s poems. Remember: a close reading means to analyze the poem in fine detail, to consider the ways in which form and content together are working towards meaning.

Water by Robert Lowell

It was a Maine lobster town—
each morning boatloads of hands
pushed off for granite
quarries on the islands,

and left dozens of bleak
white frame houses stuck
like oyster shells
on a hill of rock,

and below us, the sea lapped
the raw little match-stick
mazes of a weir,
where the fish for bait were trapped.

Remember? We sat on a slab of rock.
From this distance in time
it seems the color
of iris, rotting and turning purpler,

but it was only
the usual gray rock
turning the usual green
when drenched by the sea.

The sea drenched the rock
at our feet all day,
and kept tearing away
flake after flake.

One night you dreamed
you were a mermaid clinging to a wharf-pile,
and trying to pull
off the barnacles with your hands.

We wished our two souls
might return like gulls
to the rock. In the end,
the water was too cold for us.

Please turn the page

University of Bolton
School of the Arts
English Studies
Semester 1 Examinations 2019/2020
Perspectives on Poetry
Module No. EST5003

The Explosion by Philip Larkin

On the day of the explosion
Shadows pointed towards the pithead.
In the sun the slagheap slept.

Down the lane came men in pitboots
Coughing oath-edged talk and pipe-smoke,
Shouldering off the freshened silence.

One chased after rabbits; lost them;
Came back with a nest of lark's eggs;
Showed them; lodged them in the grasses.

So they passed in beards and moleskins,
Fathers, brothers, nicknames, laughter,
Through the tall gates standing open.

At noon there came a tremor; cows
Stopped chewing for a second; sun,
Scarfed as in a heat-haze, dimmed.

The dead go on before us, they
Are sitting in God's house in comfort
We shall see them face to face—

Plain as lettering in the chapels
It was said, and for a second
Wives saw men of the explosion

Larger than in life they managed—
Gold as on a coin, or walking
Somehow from the sun towards them,

One showing the eggs unbroken.

Filling Station by Elizabeth Bishop

Oh, but it is dirty!
—this little filling station,
oil-soaked, oil-permeated
to a disturbing, over-all
black translucency.
Be careful with that match!

Father wears a dirty,
oil-soaked monkey suit

Please turn the page

**University of Bolton
School of the Arts
English Studies
Semester 1 Examinations 2019/2020
Perspectives on Poetry
Module No. EST5003**

that cuts him under the arms,
and several quick and saucy
and greasy sons assist him
(it's a family filling station),
all quite thoroughly dirty.

Do they live in the station?
It has a cement porch
behind the pumps, and on it
a set of crushed and grease-
impregnated wickerwork;
on the wicker sofa
a dirty dog, quite comfy.

Some comic books provide
the only note of color—
of certain color. They lie
upon a big dim doily
draping a taboret
(part of the set), beside
a big hirsute begonia.

Why the extraneous plant?
Why the taboret?
Why, oh why, the doily?
(Embroidered in daisy stitch
with marguerites, I think,
and heavy with gray crochet.)

Somebody embroidered the doily.
Somebody waters the plant,
or oils it, maybe. Somebody
arranges the rows of cans
so that they softly say:
ESSO—so—so—so
to high-strung automobiles.
Somebody loves us all.

The Colossus by Sylvia Plath

I shall never get you put together entirely,
Pieced, glued, and properly jointed.
Mule-bray, pig-grunt and bawdy cackles
Proceed from your great lips.
It's worse than a barnyard.

Perhaps you consider yourself an oracle,

Please turn the page

**University of Bolton
School of the Arts
English Studies
Semester 1 Examinations 2019/2020
Perspectives on Poetry
Module No. EST5003**

Mouthpiece of the dead, or of some god or other.
Thirty years now I have labored
To dredge the silt from your throat.
I am none the wiser.

Scaling little ladders with glue pots and pails of lysol
I crawl like an ant in mourning
Over the weedy acres of your brow
To mend the immense skull plates and clear
The bald, white tumuli of your eyes.

A blue sky out of the Oresteia
Arches above us. O father, all by yourself
You are pithy and historical as the Roman Forum.
I open my lunch on a hill of black cypress.
Your fluted bones and acanthine hair are littered

In their old anarchy to the horizon-line.
It would take more than a lightning-stroke
To create such a ruin.
Nights, I squat in the cornucopia
Of your left ear, out of the wind,

Counting the red stars and those of plum-color.
The sun rises under the pillar of your tongue.
My hours are married to shadow.
No longer do I listen for the scrape of a keel
On the blank stones of the landing.

END OF QUESTIONS