

Name.....

From Rhetoric to Deconstruction

23 January 2020

I. The following passage is part of an essay included in your reading list. Using this passage as your point of departure, discuss the main ideas of the essay. The question is meant to test your familiarity with the work in question, so a mere paraphrase of the author's words will not do.

In precisely this way literature (it would be better from now on to say writing), by refusing to assign a 'secret,' an ultimate meaning, to the text (and to the world as text), liberates what may be called an anti-theological activity that is truly revolutionary since to refuse to fix meaning is, in the end, to refuse God and his hypostases—reason, science, law. (Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author")

Score: a maximum of 10 points; suggested time: 25 minutes.

II. Printed below is a poem by Dylan Thomas (1914-53). It is addressed to his father fighting a terminal illness. Read it carefully, then

- copy the first six lines of the poem onto your answer sheet and establish their metric pattern according to the rules of foot-scansion, by using **x** for unstressed and **/** for stressed syllables. Please separate each foot from the other by a vertical line (|);
- give the name of metre and line;
- make a list, employing the appropriate terms to define them, of the images of the whole poem.

Do not go Gentle into that Good Night

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

(1951)

The following glossary may help you in coming to terms with meaning and metre.

- rave** [reɪv] to talk in an excited and uncontrolled way
fork [fɔ:k] (here, poetic) to produce in the form of a fork (cf. the natural phenomenon of “forked lightning”)
wave by to move by like a wave
bay [beɪ] part of a coastline where the land curves inward
grieve [gri:v] to make sy sad

If you are at a loss as to the meaning of some other words in the poem, you can ask me during the examination. You are not allowed to use a dictionary.

Score: a maximum of 15 points; suggested time: 35 minutes.

III. Write a short essay on the topic below.

Hermeneutics and Phenomenology in the Study of Literature

Most of the questions relevant in this context were covered by my lecture on the topic. If you feel you have anything important to add to the lecture material from your own resources, do not hesitate to do so. You are not expected to write about schools of theory and criticism today.

Score: a maximum of 25 points; suggested time: 60 minutes.

Total score: 50 points; total time 120 minutes.

Conversion to marks: 50-45: **5**; 44-38: **4**; 37-31: **3**; 30-23: **2**; 22-00: **1**.

PLEASE HAND IN THIS SHEET WITH THE ANSWER SHEET