

SCOTTISH LITERATURE 1

SPECIMEN DEGREE EXAM

SAMPLE DEGREE EXAM 2010-2011

This sample exam contains the same number and type of questions as the spring exam.

Please make sure you are familiar with the chronology of the course, noting that:

- the texts from **week 1 to 6 of semester 2** are from the period up to and including Scott,
- and **week 6 to week 11** are from the period from Scott to the present.

The degree examination in April/May will be **three hours** in length.

Rubric:

IMPORTANT:

Answer **THREE** questions, **ONE** from section 1, **TWO** from section 2.

Please read carefully the rubrics for each section.

Do not discuss the same text twice in this paper.

Do not repeat material from term essays.

SECTION 1

Write a close critical analysis of **ONE** of the following passages. Your discussion should attend primarily to the particularities of its language, structure, genre, and theme; you may also choose to discuss its relation to other works by that author and/or to its historical moment.

**1. William Dunbar, *A Wooing in Dunfermline*
[*And that me thocht ane ferly cace*]**

This hindir nycht in Dumfermeling
To me was tawld ane windir thing:
That lait ane tod wes with ane lame
And with hir playit and maid gud game,
Syne till his breist did hir imbrace
And wald haif riddin hir lyk ane rame -

And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

He braisit hir bony body sweit
And halsit hir with fordir feit,
Syne schuk his taill with quhinge and yelp,
And todlit with hir lyk ane quhelp;
Syne lowrit on growfe and askit grace,
And ay the lame cryd, "Lady, help!" -
And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

The tod wes nowder lene nor skowry.
He wes ane lusty reid haird lowry,
Ane lang taid beist and grit with all.
The silly lame wes all to small
To sic ane tribbill to hald ane bace.
Scho fled him nocht, fair mot hir fall -
And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

The tod wes reid, the lame wes quhyte,
Scho wes ane morsall of delyte -
He lovit na yowis, auld, tuch, and sklender.
Beclus this lame wes yung and tender,
He ran upoun hir with a race,
And scho schup nevir for till defend hir -
And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

He grippit hir abowt the west
And handlit hir as he had hest.
This innocent that nevir trespass
Tuke hert that scho wes handlit fast,
And lute him kis hir lusty face.
His girnand gamis hir nocht agast -
And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

He held hir till him be the hals
And spak full fair, thocht he wes fals,
Syne said and swoir to hir be God
That he suld nocht tuich hir prenecod.
The silly thing trowd him, allace,
The lame gaif credence to the tod -
And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

I will no lesingis put in vers,
Lyk as thir jangleris dois rehers,
Bot be quhat maner thay war mard.
Quhen licht wes owt and durris wes bard
I wait nocht gif he gaif hir grace,
Bot all the hollis wes stoppit hard -
And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

Quhen men dois fleit in joy maist far,
 Sone cumis wo or thay be war.
 Quhen carband wer thir two most crows,
 The wolf he ombesett the hous
 Upoun the tod to mak ane chace.
 The lamb than cheipit lyk a mows -
 And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

Throw hiddowis yowling of the wowf
 This wylie tod plat doun on growf,
 And in the silly lambis skin
 He crap als far as he micht win
 And hid him thair ane weill lang space.
 The yowis besyd thay maid na din -
 And that me thocht ane ferly cace.

Quhen of the tod wes hard no peip,
 The wowf went all had bene on sleip;
 And quhill the bell had strikkin ten,
 The wowf hes drest him to his den,
 Protestand for the secound place.
 And this report I with my pen,
 How at Dumfermling fell the cace.

2. Robert Burns, 'To a Louse, On Seeing one on a Lady's Bonnet at Church' (1786)

Ha! whaur ye gaun, ye cowlan ferlie?		where; going; crawling; curiosity
Your impudence protects you sairly:		thoroughly
I canna say but ye strut rarely,		cannot; strut
Owre gauze and lace;		over
Tho' faith, I fear ye dine but sparely	5	
On sic a place.		such

Ye ugly, creepan, blastet wonner,		creeping; nasty creature
Detested, shunn'd, by saunt an' sinner,		saint
How daur ye set your fit upon her,		dare; foot
Sae fine a <i>Lady!</i>	10	so
Gae somewhere else and seek your dinner		go
On some poor body.		Person

Swith, in some beggar's haffet squattle;		away; temple-hair; nestle
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle,		scrabble
Wi' ither kindred, jumping cattle,	15	with other; beasts
In shoals and nations;		
Whaur <i>horn</i> nor <i>bane</i> ne'er daur unsettle ¹		dare

¹ Combs were made of horn or bone.

Your thick plantations.		i.e., colonies
Now haud you there, ye're out o' sight,		hold
Below the fatt'rels, snug and tight;	20	ribbon-ends
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right,		xxxx
Till ye've got on it,		
The verra tapmost, tow'rin height		very
O' Miss's bonnet.		
My sooth! right bauld ye set your nose out,	25	bold
As plump an' grey as onie groset:		any gooseberry
O for some rank, mercurial rozet,		resin
Or fell, red smeddum, ²		fierce
I'd gie you sic a hearty dose o't,		give; of it
Wad dress your droddum!	30	would thrash; backside
wad na been surpriz'd to spy		not
You on an auld wife's <i>flainen toy</i> ;		old; flannel cap
Or aiblins some bit dubbie boy,		perhaps; muddy
On 's <i>wylecoat</i> ;		
But Miss's fine <i>Lunardi</i> , fye! ³	35	
How daur ye do't?		
O Jenny dinna toss your head,		don't
An' set your beauties a' abroad!		abroad (i.e. display them)
Ye little ken what cursed speed		know
The blastie's makin!	40	shrivelled monster
Thae winks and finger-ends, I dread,		those
Are notice takin!		
O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us		
To see oursels as others see us!		
It wad frae mony a blunder free us	45	from many
An' foolish notion:		
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,		leave
And ev'n Devotion!		

3. Marion Angus, 'Alas! Poor Queen' (1922)

She was skilled in music and the dance
 And the old arts of love
 At the court of the poisoned rose
 And the perfumed glove,
 And gave her beautiful hand
 To the pale Dauphin
 A triple crown to win-

² 'Red Smeddum' was powdered mercury, used as insecticide.

³ A 'Lunardi' is a type of bonnet, named after an Italian pioneer of balloon flight.

And she loved little dogs
 And parrots
 And red-legged partridges
 And the golden fishes of the Duc de Guise
 And a pigeon with a blue ruff
 She had from Monsieur d'Elboe

Master John Knox was no friend to her;
 She spoke him soft and kind,
 Her honeyed words were Satan's lure
 The unwary soul to bind.
 'Good sir, doth a lissome shape
 And a comely face
 Offend your God His Grace
 Whose Wisdom maketh these
 Golden fishes of the Duc de Guise?'

She rode through Liddesdale with a song;
 'Ye streams sae wondrous strang,
 Oh, mak' me a wrack as I come back
 But spare me as I gang.'
 While a hill-bird cried and cried
 Like a spirit lost
 By the grey storm-wind tost.

Consider the way she had to go,
 Think of the hungry snare,
 The net she herself had woven,
 Aware or unaware,
 Of the dancing feet grown still,
 The blinded eyes -
 Queens should be cold and wise,
 And she loved little things,
 Parrots
 And red-legged partridges
 And the golden fishes of the Duc de Guise
 And the pigeon with the blue ruff
 She had from Monsieur d'Elboeuf.

4. Kathleen Jamie, 'The Way We Live' (1988)

Pass the tambourine, let me bash out praises
 to the Lord God of movement, to Absolute
 non-friction, flight, and the scarey side:
 death by avalanche, birth by failed contraception.
 Of chicken tandoori and reggae, loud, from tenements,
 commitment, driving fast and unswerving
 friendship. Of tee-shirts on pulleys, giros and Bombay,

barmen, dreaming waitresses with many fake-gold
bangles. Of airports, impulse, and waking to uncertainty,
to strip-lights, motorways, or that pantheon -
the mountains. To overdrafts and grafting

and the fit slow pulse of wipers as you're
creeping over Rannoch, while the God of moorland
walks abroad with his entourage of freezing fog,
his bodyguard of snow.

Of endless gloaming in the North, of Asiatic swelter,
to launderettes, anecdotes, passions and exhaustion,
Final Demands and dead men, the skeletal grip
of government. To misery and elation; mixed,
the sod and caprice of landlords.

To the way it fits, the way it is, the way it seems
to be: let me bash out praises - pass the tambourine.

SECTION 2

Answer **TWO** questions. You should discuss at least **TWO** writers in answer to each question

One answer should address texts from the second-semester course up to and including Walter Scott. The other should address texts from Scott to the present. If you choose to discuss Scott, you may include him in **EITHER** but **NOT BOTH** answers.

1. Consider the ways in which medieval Scottish literature engages with questions of government.

2. Quhat so it be, this buke I dedicait,
Writtin in the langage of Scottis natioun,
And thus I mak my protestatioun.
Gavin Douglas, Prologue 1, Eneados

Do medieval Scottish writers use 'langage' to create a distinctive aesthetic identity?

3. Write an essay on the development of vernacular literature in Scotland.

4. How do Scottish writers address the subject of historical change?

5. How is the relationship between 'realism' and 'romance' played out in Scottish texts?

6. Do Scottish writers address issues of gender that are specifically Scottish?

7. What is modern about Scottish modernism?
8. Discuss some of the ways you consider late-twentieth-century writing to have been affected by Scotland's political situation.
9. What literary use do Scottish writers make of the Scots language?

End of paper