

VOCABULARY

You will need to select twenty of your student’s vocabulary cards for him to define. His definitions should be complete and accurate, though they need not be word-perfect. Check his answers against the cards you used. (We recommend that you give 30 minutes for this section, and that each vocabulary term be worth 1 point.) If your student is not making vocabulary cards this year, we recommend that you divide the extra twenty points between the ten short answer questions (2 extra points per question).

SHORT ANSWER

30 minutes for these questions (3 points each)

1-2. Choose two of the following four authors and describe their life and works: Petrarch, Marlowe, Shakespeare, or Spenser. For each of your chosen authors, be sure to name his birth and death dates and give two or three significant facts about his life. Also name one or two of his most famous works and mention any important contributions that he made to European literature.

An answer that covers the substance of the information provided here for any two of these authors would be correct. Your student need not list all the life items, works, and contributions that we do, but he should list at least one of the those mentioned in each category:

Petrarch

- *Lifetime: 1304-1374. Spent part of his early life in exile, became a prominent scholar and served important church officials. Petrarch never married, but was in love with a woman named Laura, who died early. He later fathered two illegitimate children.*
- *Works: Petrarch is most famous for his book of lyric poems or “songs,” which is called Il Canzoniere or Rime Sparse (your student may also list Petrarch’s Africa).*
- *Contributions: He recovered and promoted many important classical works (for which he is considered the Father of the Italian Renaissance), and popularized the Italian sonnet.*

Marlowe

- *Lifetime: 1564-1593. Educated at Cambridge and may have been a spy for the English crown; stabbed to death (possibly assassinated) in a tavern brawl.*
- *Works: Doctor Faustus (your student may also list Tamburlaine the Great, The Jew of Malta, Edward II, or Hero and Leander)*
- *Contributions: Adapted the blank verse line to English drama for the first time.*

Shakespeare

- *Lifetime: 1564-1616. Educated only at grammar school, Shakespeare was a professional playwright and actor in London under the patronage of the Lord Chamberlain and eventually King James I. He married Anne Hathaway and had 3 children, two of whom survived to adulthood.*
- *Works: Your student might list Much Ado About Nothing, Henry V, King Lear, The Tempest, or any of Shakespeare’s other 34 plays.*
- *Contributions: Shakespeare’s plays and sonnets are considered to be some of the finest ever written in English. He is also the inventor of the Shakespearean sonnet.*

Spenser

- *Lifetime: c. 1552-1599. Educated at Cambridge, spent part of his adult life in Ireland, and married Elizabeth Boyle, to whom the Epithalamion is dedicated.*
- *Works: The Faerie Queene (your student may also list Amoretti, The Shepheardes Calendar, and the Epithalamion)*
- *Contributions: Adapted the Italian romance epic genre in his great contribution to English literature, The Faerie Queene, and developed the Spenserian stanza.*

3. What was the scholarly, academic drama of the Renaissance and how was its development related to the recovery of Greek and Roman works during that time?

Academic drama was drama written and performed by members of the university during the 1500’s. Its development was strongly affected by the recovery of Greek and Roman works during the Renaissance as authors wrote in Latin and tried to imitate the high oratory and technical poetic skill of the classical works.

4. Explain why Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard are significant in the history of English literature. When did these men live, who were they (what was their nationality and occupation or mode of living), and how did each of them contribute to English literature?

If your student gives the substance of the following six items, give him full credit.

Thomas Wyatt

- *Lifetime: 1503-1542*
- *Wyatt was an aristocratic courtier in the court of Henry VIII.*
- *Wyatt brought the sonnet to England from Italy. He translated Petrarch's sonnets and also wrote his own.*

Henry Howard

- *Lifetime: 1517-1547*
- *Howard was an aristocratic courtier (he was the Earl of Surrey) in the court of Henry VIII.*
- *Howard introduced the blank verse line (originally developed in Italy) to England in his blank verse translation of the Aeneid.*

5. Describe the forms of both the Petrarchan sonnet and the Shakespearean sonnet in terms of metrical pattern, stanza form, and rhyme scheme.

If your student gives the substance of the following six items, give him full credit. Each is worth half a point.

Petrarchan Sonnet

- *Metrical Pattern: iambic pentameter*
- *Stanza Form: fourteen lines in the pattern of an octave and a sestet*
- *Rhyme Scheme: abbaabba cdecde (the sestet may also rhyme cdcdcd)*

Shakespearean Sonnet

- *Metrical Pattern: iambic pentameter*
- *Stanza Form: fourteen lines in the pattern of three quatrains and a couplet*
- *Rhyme Scheme: abab cdcd efef gg*

6. Name two things that happened in the transition between liturgical drama and the development of popular medieval drama. What is one similarity between mystery, miracle, and morality plays? Name at least one difference between them.

Answers may vary. Any two of the points under "Development" and any one of the points under "Similarities" and "Differences" would be correct.

• **Development:**

- *Originally, liturgical drama consisted of simple actions, meant to illustrate parts of the liturgy, but as it developed, acting improved in order to present the more dramatic characters and details of the plot.*
- *Poetic lines were added to the liturgical text until the entire drama was mostly verse, with some prose.*
- *Plays were written mostly in the vernacular rather than in Latin.*
- *After the pope issued an edict forbidding members of the clergy to act on stage in public, drama began to be performed under the supervision of town guilds.*
- *Drama moved outside of the church to the town square; plays were often performed on pageant wagons.*
- *Scenes were added that were not from the Bible*

• **Similarities:**

- *All three are spiritual in content.*
- *All three grew out of liturgical drama.*
- *All three were performed for popular audiences in public places.*

• **Differences:**

- *Content: Mystery plays developed first and only represented biblical events. Miracle plays were about the lives of saints. Morality plays could have a wide variety of topics, but they all taught the difference between good and evil.*
- *Morality plays were allegorical, but the others were not.*
- *Mystery and miracle plays were performed by members of guilds; morality plays were generally performed by professional actors.*

7. When was drama “lost,” for about how long was it “lost,” and how was it revived in Roman Catholic Europe? When it was first revived, what was it called?

If your student gives the substance of the following three items, give him full credit. Each is worth 1 point.

- *When: The last known performance of classical drama was in A.D. 533 (in Rome). After that, drama was “lost” to Europe.*
- *How Long: Dramatic performances seem to have revived around A.D. 900. Thus drama was “lost” for about 400 years.*
- *Revival: Drama was revived in Roman Catholic churches as ritual skits used to illustrate parts of the church service (liturgy), especially on important holidays such as Easter or Christmas. It was at that point called liturgical drama.*

8. Define and describe the characteristics of content and form for the genre of tragedy (according to Leland Ryken’s explanation of tragedy in *Words of Delight*).

If your student gives the substance of the following definition and description, give him full credit. To achieve this he must give the essence of the definition and at least four characteristics (two of content, two of form).

Tragedy

- *Definition: A narrative form built around an exceptional calamity stemming from the protagonist’s wrong choice (Ryken, *Words of Delight* 517).*
- *Content (Ryken, *Words of Delight* 145-146)*
 - *The tragic hero begins in an exalted position and ends in disgrace (and usually death).*
 - *The key element in the downward plunge is the hero’s great mistake, which causes his downfall.*
 - *Tragedy always includes an element of choice.*
 - *Tragedy focuses on the destructive potential of evil in human experience.*
 - *Tragedy is not the spectacle of ordinary, but rather extraordinary, calamity.*
 - *Tragedy deals with caused suffering, not the supposedly arbitrary “buffetings of life.”*
- *Form (Ryken, *Words of Delight* 145-146)*
 - *The form of a tragedy usually follows a six-part progression (any two of these is acceptable as a complete answer):*
 - *Dilemma*
 - *Choice*
 - *Catastrophe*
 - *Suffering*
 - *Perception*
 - *Death*
 - *There is a downward movement of the plot from positive experience to catastrophe.*

9. Describe the kind of stages on which mystery, miracle, and morality plays were performed, and the kind of stages on which Shakespeare’s plays were performed. What were some differences between the two?

Answers may vary. Your student should include two points for each of the following categories:

- **Medieval Staging**
 - *They were generally performed outside.*
 - *Mystery and miracle plays, especially, were performed on pageant wagons—carts outfitted by town guilds and pulled through the town as part of a cycle of plays.*
 - *Audiences crowded around the cart or watched from windows in nearby buildings.*
 - *Sometimes they were also performed on temporary platforms set up in the middle of the town square.*
- **Elizabethan Staging**
 - *Shakespeare’s plays were performed on actual stages in wooden buildings, most of them “O”-shaped, at which playgoers had to pay for admittance.*
 - *Theaters like the Globe used natural light (the theater was roofless), but other Shakespearean theaters were completely indoors and used candlelight.*
 - *Members of the audience were divided by class; the poor stood around the stage while wealthier viewers paid to sit on raised benches along the walls.*

10. What are the differences between popular drama (mystery, morality, and miracle plays) and scholarly, academic drama? Who was one of the first to combine them?

Popular drama was characterized by energy, humor, pathos, and even slapstick elements. It grew out of medieval liturgical drama and had a strong religious emphasis. Academic drama, in contrast, was stately but rather static (actors did not move much). Its strengths were high oratory and technical poetic skill. Christopher Marlowe was one of the first to combine the strengths of what we call “popular drama” and “academic drama.”

20 minutes for this question (15 points)

- 11-15. The Italian Renaissance had an enormous effect on European literature. In England specifically, there were several important “literary imports” from Italy that affected English literature during the Northern Renaissance. Two of these were the blank verse meter and the Italian romance epic. Of these two, choose one and write about it. Define your chosen topic, explain its characteristics, and name three authors (both Italian and English, if possible) who used it, as well as the titles of the works in which they used it. If you choose to write about Italian romance epic, explain—for extra credit!—how at least one author modified it for his own purposes.

Blank Verse Meter

- Definition and Characteristics: *By definition, blank verse is unrhymed iambic pentameter. Its distinguishing characteristic is that it closely resembles human speech patterns, which tend to alternate between accented and unaccented syllables. Its ability to capture the feeling of speech in poetry makes it an exceptionally powerful vehicle for drama. Works written in blank verse frequently use enjambment.*
- Authors who used it, their works, and how they used it:
 - *Italian humanists such as Giovanni Rucellai developed a new line of poetry, between nine and eleven syllables long, which they called versi sciolti da rima, “verse free from rhyme.”*
 - *Henry Howard was the first to introduce blank verse into English in his translation of the Aeneid.*
 - *Christopher Marlowe was the first to employ blank verse in English drama (though in Italy, blank verse had already become the main kind of line used in plays). Works by Marlowe in blank verse include Tamburlaine the Great and Doctor Faustus. Along with Shakespeare, Marlowe helped to smooth and regularize blank verse, so that it had strictly ten syllables.*
 - *William Shakespeare was perhaps the first Englishman to master blank verse. In his hands, blank verse became an extremely powerful poetic tool. All of Shakespeare’s plays, including Much Ado About Nothing, Henry V, King Lear, and The Tempest, are written primarily in blank verse.*

Italian Romance Epic

- Definition and Characteristics: *The Italian romance epic revitalized the classical epic; it can be defined by combining the definitions of epic and romance: a work written in a “high” style that has a heroic element and uses epic literary techniques, includes magical or supernatural events, settings, and characters, and often involves love. The Italian romance epics were also characterized by being written in verse. Unlike their classical predecessors, many of them had an element of parody that sometimes mocked its own romantic elements.*
- Authors who used it, their works, and how they used it:
 - *Boiardo wrote Orlando Innamorata (Orlando in Love). His work was typical of the Italian epic, but not notable for any particular innovations.*
 - *Ariosto is generally recognized as the greatest author of the Italian romance epic. His Orlando Furioso (Orlando Enraged) is considered the highest expression of Italian epics because of his successful combination of the epic and romance genres. His ability to blend parody and true delight is, according to C.S. Lewis, the secret of the romance epic. His epic also had a great influence on Edmund Spenser and helped to shape the way people today picture the middle ages as a time of knightly adventure and romance.*
 - *Tasso’s Gerusalemme Liberata (Jerusalem Liberated) has a different tone and subject than Boiardo’s and Ariosto’s epics, but with them it is considered a great Italian romance epic.*

- *Edmund Spenser drew heavily on Italian romance epics when composing his great epic, The Faerie Queene. While he included much of the texture of the Italian epic, he also modified it. Spenser based his stanza on the eight-line stanza in Italian epics, though he added a line and changed the rhyme scheme. Additionally, Spenser’s work is like the Italian epics in its interlacing tales, literary techniques, and even some characters and episodes, although it is also distinct from the Italian works, most obviously because it is an allegory and is woven from English language and legends. Spenser’s work also has more gravity; it takes its romantic elements seriously.*

LONG ESSAY

40 minutes for this question (35 points)

Compare Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Tempest* in terms of characters, content, and diction.

NOTE: Students were given the following explanation of what they should include in their essay. Students’ essays may vary greatly, so we include the points given in the week plans for each category, rather than a sample essay.

- Characters:
 - Compare the personalities of Benedick and Ferdinand. How are they alike? How are they different?
 - Compare the personalities of Beatrice and Miranda. How are they alike? How are they different?
- Content: Compare the themes of these two plays.
- Diction: Compare the devices of diction used in each play. Note whether one makes more use of images, whether each use the same amount of poetry and prose, whether they have the same amount of puns and malapropisms, etc.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

Characters:

- Ferdinand
 - A Prince Charming who is immediately in love with Miranda
 - Reverent and a good son
 - Willing to work (pay the cost) in order to be with Miranda
- Benedick
 - A rough and tumble soldier who avoids love, but is also honorable and brave
 - Experiment in living: at first, laughing in disdain of marriage (because he does not want to become a “cuckold”). He exchanges the first experiment for a new one: loving and getting married.
 - His faults seem to include laziness and fear of others’ opinions.
 - Willing to fight Claudio at Beatrice’s request; counts the cost and is willing to love
- Comparison of Ferdinand and Benedick
 - Ferdinand is gentler and more noble than Benedick, as befits his more exalted parentage (though Benedick is also aristocratic, since he is a “gentleman”)
 - Whereas Benedick has a very real concern about the problems that marriage may bring and the possibility of adultery (“cuckoldry”), Ferdinand shows immediate commitment to marriage with Miranda. One may get the impression either that Benedick is more “street-wise” than Ferdinand, or that Ferdinand is less cynical about marriage than Benedick, or both!
 - Regardless of their feelings about marriage, both characters are brave, truthful, intelligent, and kind, and both wholeheartedly love the girls that they eventually marry.
- Miranda
 - Unsophisticated, sweet, compassionate, and lovely
 - Has an immediate, wholehearted, and open commitment to love and serve Ferdinand.
 - She is unwise in speaking to Ferdinand against her father’s express command (though Prospero actually knows).

Characters (continued):

- Beatrice
 - Her character is witty and sparkling. She is very sophisticated: beautiful but hard to catch.
 - Like Benedick, Beatrice fears the potential difficulties of marriage. In addition, she is proud.
 - Eventually, also like Benedick, Beatrice counts the cost of love and decides to accept it. She comes to love Benedick wholeheartedly.
- Comparison of Miranda and Beatrice
 - Both girls are beautiful and clever with their tongues, and both are loving at heart, though Beatrice shows it much less.
 - Miranda is artless, open, overflowing, and humble in matters of love, whereas Beatrice is full of wit, closed to romance, slow to disclose her feelings, and proud.
 - The difference between Ferdinand's immediate commitment and Benedick's reluctance in marriage is mirrored in the difference between Miranda and Beatrice. Miranda fears nothing from marriage and is ready to make a commitment at once, but Beatrice is wary.

Content:

- *Much Ado*
 - Abolishing Pride: Beatrice can remain proud and scorn Benedick's supposed love, or she can lay aside her "maiden pride" and submit herself to a piece of "valiant dust." As we secretly expect, because we know that she is generous and loving as well as proud and witty, she passes the test. Thus she becomes the proper meaning of her name: "the one who blesses."
 - Overcoming Fear: Benedick hears how his "scorn" is causing "so good a lady" to come almost to the point of "doing a desperate outrage to herself [i.e. suicide]." It is talk meant to galvanize him into action, and that is precisely what it does. He becomes "blessed" (the meaning of his name).
- *The Tempest*:
 - Betrayal: Betrayals are evil and unnatural, especially between those linked by kinship. Moreover, acts of betrayal will eventually be punished.
 - Revenge and Forgiveness (Redemption): Forgiveness is ultimately nobler than revenge; as Prospero says, it is "the rarer action."
 - Love and Marriage: Love between men and women of noble character involves mutual commitment and a mutual awareness (here mixed with wonder) that each has of the other's virtues. In order to be fruitful and prosperous, a marriage must not be tainted with fornication. The sexual act is reserved for the time when a marriage has been sanctioned both by law and by the church.
- Comparison
 - The two plays are very different in theme, though both include romance, marriage, and a brother's undeserved malice. In *Much Ado About Nothing* the focus is on the love story, dealing with questions of pride, fear, and other obstacles that stand between lovers. The malicious brother (Don John) does torment Claudio and Hero as a way of hurting his brother Don Pedro, but his relationship with Don Pedro is not center-stage.
 - The exact opposite is the case in *The Tempest*, where the real conflict lies between the brothers (or, more exactly, between Prospero's desire for revenge and his desire to forgive), and the lovers are happily united in heart, even if they have to wait for circumstances to work out in their favor.

Diction:

- Imagery: In *Much Ado*, Benedick’s speeches are characterized by imagery and metaphor, but imagery is not particularly important in the play as a whole. *The Tempest* relies heavily on imagery; it shows a mature and precise use of metaphor, simile, etc.
- Prose and poetry: In *Much Ado*, poetry and prose are freely mixed: any character may use either. In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare reserves poetry for the noble characters and prose for the “clowns”—except in the case of Caliban, who speaks poetry. Poetic songs are particularly important in *The Tempest*, to which they add an otherworldly feel.
- Quick back-and-forth wordplay and comic dialogue are important in *Much Ado*. Beatrice, especially, is an example of brilliant wit, taking others’ words and turning their meanings on their heads; Dogberry’s malapropisms (habit of confusing words in a ludicrous way) are also noteworthy. *The Tempest* relies much less on wordplay and comic elements, emphasizing poetry instead. Two unique elements are the epilogue, which is composed in iambic tetrameter, and the masque, which is a dance accompanied by music and verse in iambic pentameter.