

Final Exam Study Sheet

The final exam will be given on Wednesday May 9 at 2 am in LC 102. You will have two hours for the exam, plus an additional half an hour to read and correct your work. You may not use outlines or notes or texts of any kind during the exam. Bring good pens or pencils to the exam and make an effort to write legibly. Expect to spend a little less than an hour in total on Sections 1 and 2, and a little more than an hour on Section 3. The exam will focus only on poetry treated in lecture. You will be asked questions about material from early as well as late in the semester. Review your lecture notes and handouts, as well as your discussion section conversations. Remember the poem you memorized.

Section 1

Short answer. This part of the exam will ask you to define briefly a few terms, phrases, ideas, or names mentioned in lecture. Review your lecture notes and lecture handouts (on Classes v2). You will also be asked to show your knowledge of some of the basic concepts and terms of versification. Be able to give specific examples from our reading of particular verse forms (e.g., Robert Frost's "Directive" is an example of blank verse) and be able to link concepts ("the logic of metaphor") to particular poems (Crane's "At Melville's Tomb," for example).

Section 2

IDs and short commentary. This section will ask you to identify and provide short commentary on a few quotations (you'll be able to choose among several) from poems read aloud and discussed in lecture. In each case you should identify title and poet and give some indication of when the poem was written (review the dates that appear after the poems in your anthology, which are dates of first publication, and on the timeline in your RIS packet). Specify in your commentary whenever a particular character is speaking. Commentary should take the form of a quick but detailed response to, rather than a developed argument or reading of, a given quotation. The best answers will include both specific observation (calling attention to verbal nuance and poetic form) and a general view of the poets in question (suggesting what your specific observations point to). So, to prepare, refine your sense of the styles of the poets we have read---that is, their characteristic choices of diction, image, verse form, syntax, and so on---as well as your sense of their typical concerns, attitudes, manners, ideas.

Section 3

Essays. This section will ask you to write two brief essays. The first topic concerns ideas of history and tradition. Review Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" and plan to use it as a point of departure for comment on three of the following: Yeats,

Pound, Eliot, Crane, Hughes. “Poetry is a means of redemption,” Stevens wrote in one of his “Adagia,” and the second topic will ask you to describe how this sentence might or might not apply in three of the following poets: Frost, Moore, Stevens, Auden, Bishop. Rather than memorize polished essays on these topics, plan to indicate major points of connection and contrast among poets, and prepare to use examples from their work to support your points. You may find the readings from the poets’ prose in your anthology helpful. Expect to spend 30-40 minutes on each of these essays.