



**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, THEOLOGY, HUMANITIES &  
EDUCATION**

**HEC 226/HEN 302: AFRICAN-AMERICAN-CARIBBEAN LITERATURE**

**END OF SECOND SEMESTER FINAL EXAMINATIONS**

**LECTURER: J. MUZAMHINDO**

**DURATION: 3 HOURS**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- Answer **THREE (3)** questions in all
- All questions carry equal marks (20).
- DO NOT repeat material.  
Write legibly.



### Question 1

The famous black writer James Weldon Johnson labelled 1919 as "The Red Summer – it was red from the racial tensions; it was red from bloodletting – Jim Crow touched every aspect of everyday life of the African-Americans". Using this statement as a basis, outline in detail how the Jim Crow Laws affected the lives of the African-Americans.

### Question 2

'Martin Luther King Jnr was considered a conservative civil rights militant'. How far do you agree with this assertion? Refer closely to his "*I have a dream....*" and "*I have been to the mountain top ...*" speeches

### Question 3

To what extent are the issues raised in the following extract a major-preoccupation in African-American Literature? Refer to at least two authors you have studied in this course.

"...The Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world - a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals, in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (W.B. Du Bois)

### Question 4

Examine the use of symbolism in *Native Son* and suggest what it achieves.

### Question 5

How does Richard Wright's *Native Son* attempt to resolve the problem of identity of the Black man in America? Refer closely to the text

### Question 6

What is the significance of Bigger's killing of Mary Dalton in *Native Son*?

### Question 7

Compare and contrast Celie in *Color Purple* and Bigger Thomas in *Native Son*, showing how these characters are symbolic of the black American dilemma



### Question 8

It has been argued that a slave narrative emphasizes racial oppression. Does Alice Walker in *The Color Purple* emphasize this? Or other reasons that Celie is oppressed

### Question 9

By her attention to man-in-society and to the inner, spiritual, dilemmas which affect us all, Maya Angelou has helped to expose the African -American condition in our period." Discuss two or three poems by Angelou which you think this comment applies.

### Question 10

Write a critical analysis of the following poem by Maya Angelou, discussing particularly the subject matter, mood, literary devices employed and the poet's attitude towards her subject matter.

#### **I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings**

The free bird leaps  
on the back of the win  
and floats downstream  
till the current ends  
and dips his wings  
in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with fearful trill  
of the things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill for the caged bird  
sings of freedom

The free bird thinks of another breeze



an the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn  
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams  
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing  
The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

### Question 11

Discuss how George Lamming *In the Castle of Skin* deals with the themes of history, change and the self.

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