

# I. B. A. HONOURS ENGLISH UNDER LOCF

## CORE COURSE

### PAPER 5

### AMERICAN LITERATURE

### Semester 3

#### Course Statement:

This course offers students an opportunity to study the American literary tradition as a tradition which is distinct from, and almost a foil to, the traditions which had developed in European countries, especially in England. A selection of texts for this course therefore highlights some of the key tropes of mainstream America's self-perception, such as Virgin Land, the New World, Democracy, Manifest Destiny, the Melting-Pot, and Multiculturalism. At the same time there are specifically identified texts that draw the attention of students to cultural motifs which have been erased, brutally suppressed or marginalized (the neglected and obscured themes from the self-expression of the subaltern groups within American society) in the mainstream's pursuit of the fabled American Dream. A careful selection of writings by Native Americans, African Americans, as well as texts by women and other sexual minorities of different social denominations seek to reveal the dark underside of America's progress to modernity and its gradual emergence as the most powerful nation of the world.

#### Course Objectives:

The course aims to acquaint students with the wide and varied literatures of America: literature written by writers of European, particularly English, descent reflecting the complex nature of the society that emerged after the whites settled in America in the 17th century; include Utopian narrative transcendentalism and the pre- and post- Civil War literature of the 19th century introduce students to the African American experience both ante-bellum and post-bellum reflected in the diversity of literary texts, from narratives of slavery, political speeches delivered by Martin Luther King Jr. and Frederick Douglass, as well as the works of contemporary black woman writers familiarize students with native American literature which voices the angst of a people who were almost entirely wiped out by forced European settlements; and include modern and contemporary American literature of the 20th century.

#### Facilitating the Achievement of Course Learning Outcomes

Unit No.	Course Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Activity	Assessment Tasks
1.	Understanding concepts	Interactive	Reading material together in

		discussions in small groups in Tutorial classes	small groups, initiating discussion topics, participation in discussions
2.	Expressing concepts through writing	How to think critically and write with clarity	Writing essay length assignments
3.	Demonstrating conceptual and textual understanding in tests and exams	Discussing exam questions and answering techniques	Class tests

## Course Content

### Unit 1

Tennessee Williams *The Glass Menagerie*

### Unit 2

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

### Unit 3

Poetry

Walt Whitman, 'O Captain! My Captain', in *Walt Whitman: Poetry and Prose*, ed. Shira Wolosky (The Toby Press, 2003) pp. 360-61).

Allen Ginsberg, 'A Supermarket in California', in *Selected Poems 1947-1995* (Penguin Books, 2001) p. 59.

Langston Hughes, (i) 'The Negro Speaks of Rivers'; (ii) 'The South'; (iii) 'Aunt Sue's Stories', in *The Weary Blues* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015) pp. 33; 36; 39.

Joy Harjo, (i) 'Perhaps the World Ends Here'; (ii) 'I Give You Back', in *The Woman That I Am: The Literature and Culture of Contemporary Women of Color*, ed. D. Soyini Madison (New York: St Martin's Press, 1994) pp. 37-40.

### Unit 4

Short Stories

Edgar Allen Poe 'The Purloined Letter'

William Faulkner 'Dry September'

Flannery O' Connor, 'Everything that Rises Must Converge', in *Everything that Rises Must Converge* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1965)

Leslie Marmon Silko, 'The Man to Send Rain Clouds', in *Nothing but the Truth: An Anthology of Native American Literature*, ed. John L. Purdy and James Ruppert (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001) pp. 358-61.

## Unit 5

### Readings:

- ‘Declaration of Independence’ July 4, 1776, in *For Liberty and Equality: The Life and Times of the Declaration* (OUP, 2012) pp. 312); and ‘Abraham Lincoln Gettysburg Speech’, in *Gettysburg Speech and Other Writings* (Barnes & Noble, 2013).
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, ‘Self Reliance’ in *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. ed. with a biographical introduction by Brooks Atkinson (New York: The Modern library, 1964)
- Martin Luther King Jr, ‘I have a dream’, in *African American Literature*, ed. Kieth Gilyard, Anissa Wardi (New York: Penguin, 2014) pp. 1007-11)
- Frederick Douglass, *A Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982) chaps. 1–7, pp. 47–87.
- Adrienne Rich, ‘When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision’, *College English*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Women, Writing and Teaching, pp. 18-30.

### Essential reading

**Note:** This is a literature-based course, and therefore, all these texts are to be considered essential reading.

## TEACHING PLAN

Paper 5: American Literature

Week 1 -- Introduction to Paper 1: American Literature

Week 2 – Unit 1 -- Drama: Tennessee Williams *The Glass Menagerie*

Week 3 – Unit 1 – Tennessee Williams (contd)

Week 4 – Unit 2 -- Novel: Morrison, *Beloved*

Week 5 – Unit 2 –Morrison (contd)

Week 6 – Unit 3 -- Poetry: (a) Whitman, ‘O Captain! My Captain’;

Week 7 – Unit 3 – (b) Ginsberg, ‘A Supermarket in California’

Week 8 – Unit 3 – (c) Langston Hughes, (i) ‘The Negro Speaks of Rivers’, (ii) ‘The South’, (iii) ‘Aunt Sue’s Stories; (d) Joy Harjo, (i) ‘Perhaps the World Ends Here’, (ii) ‘I Give You Back’

Week 9 – Unit 4 -- Short Stories:

(a); Edgar Allen Poe ‘ The Purloined Letter’

b) William Faulkner 'Dry September'

Week 10 --

(c) O' Connor, 'Everything that Rises Must Converge';

(d) Silko, 'The Man to Send Rain Clouds'

Week 11 – Unit 5 -- Prose Readings:

(a) Declaration of Independence' July 4, 1776, or 'Abraham Lincoln Gettysburg Speech'

(b) Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Self Reliance'

Week 12 – Prose Readings (contd):

(c) Martin Luther King Jr, 'I have a dream'

(d) Douglass, Frederick, Selection from *A Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass*

Week 13 – Prose Readings (contd):

(e) Adrienne Rich, 'When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision.'

Week 14 - Concluding lectures; exam issues, etc.