

Study Questions for the Final Examination

1. Discuss some specific ways in which “pagan” and Christian elements are interwoven in *Beowulf*.
2. Discuss the question of overall unity in *Beowulf*. Be sure to make specific references to the text.
3. Describe the functions of gift-giving in *Beowulf*. Be sure to make specific references to the text.
4. Explain the “dramatic principle” in *The Canterbury Tales* and apply it to specific instances in the *General Prologue* and at least one of the tales.
5. Describe Chaucer’s depiction of social tensions as a principle of (dis)order in the *General Prologue*. Be sure to be specific.
6. Discuss the Wife of Bath’s attitudes toward sex and marriage with reference to specific passages in her *Prologue* and *Tale*.
7. Analyze the details of plot construction in the *Miller’s Tale*.
8. Analyze specific points of tension between courtly and Christian codes in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.
9. Analyze at least one of Sidney’s sonnets to show how he uses the sonnet form to structure his argument.
10. Show how Spenser uses elements of Neo-Platonism in at least two of his poems.
11. Explain the functions of Petrarchan conceits in at least one sonnet by each of the following poets: Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare.
12. **THIS QUESTION WILL BE REQUIRED.** Analyze a production of *Hamlet* as an *interpretation* of the play, giving at least 3 references to both the film and the text. Then assume the role of director, choose a particular scene, explain how you would direct that scene, and give reasons for your directions according to your *interpretation* of its function in the play as a whole.
13. Describe Donne’s play with “metaphysical” conceits in at least two of his poems.
14. Show specific evidence for Satan’s heroism in *Paradise Lost* and then explain the problem this creates for Milton and how he seeks to resolve it.
15. Analyze specific ways in which Milton represents gender identities and relations in *Paradise Lost* and explain their function in the Fall and the prophesy of Redemption.

16. Explain how Bacon, Pope and Swift exemplify various aspects of the Enlightenment or Age of Reason. Be sure to make specific references to their works.
17. Define at least two of Bacon's "idols" and explain how, in his view, they inhibit enlightened reasoning and progress.
18. Describe some specific uses of the mock heroic form in both *Mac Flecknoe* and *The Rape of the Lock*.
19. Analyze Pope's rhetorical maneuvers for dealing with the Problem of Evil in at least two passages of his *Essay on Man*.
20. Analyze specific rhetorical strategies that Swift uses in *Gulliver's Travels*, Part 4, to "defamiliarize" values, ideas, institutions, and practices commonly accepted in his culture. Be sure to make specific references to the text.
21. Explain some specific rhetorical functions of the authorial persona in "A Modest Proposal."
22. Explain some specific ways that Gray and Goldsmith were creating new openings for English poetry in the latter part of the 18th century.