

EASTERN UNIVERSITY, SRI LANKA

Third Year Second Semester Examination in Arts & Culture
2008/09 (March 12)

ENG 3201 – American Literature



Time: 2 Hours

Each question carries 15 marks.

Answer any four questions.

1. Discuss the following statements with respect to Emerson's *Self Reliance* "Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist," "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do" and "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles."
2. In what ways do the characters in "Home Burial" misunderstand each other? Discuss this with respect to the poem "Home Burial" by Robert Frost.
3. "Santiago is considered by many readers to be a tragic hero, in that his greatest strength—his pride—leads to his eventual downfall." Discuss the role of pride in Santiago's plight in the novel *The Old Man and the Sea*?
4. What is ironic about the speaker's statements concerning his neighbor's opinion of wall-building in "Mending Wall"?
5. How is death portrayed (personified) in "Because I could not stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson.
6. Construct an argument that a Christian would use that would counter that offered in the poem. You could begin by insisting that the imperishable bliss the woman is seeking could only come from a devotion to Christian dogma and ceremonies. Discuss it in the poem "Sunday Morning" by Wallace Stevens with suitable examples.