

# 淡江大學 101 學年度博士班招生考試試題

18-1

系別：英文學系 A 組

科目：美國文學

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Answer any FOUR of the following questions. 25% each

1. "Place or setting is seldom insignificant or unrelated to a larger cultural context." In other words, this statement suggests that settings are important and related to larger cultural and historical contexts which are important in literary works. In light of this statement, compare and contrast the settings of the novels by Nathaniel Hawthorne with those of the novels by Herman Melville.
2. "Poe and Whitman represent two opposed but equally momentous developments in American literature. Both mark a significant departure from the sectionalism that gripped virtually all the writers .... Whitman was the first major literary voice to overpower sectionalism with the vision of a total America. Edgar Allan Poe was the first major voice to reject his America altogether." Do you agree with this comment on Poe and Whitman? Discuss. Develop your argument with sufficient supporting references from the works by both Poe and Whitman.
3. "[Emily] Dickson was a poet who had the courage to resist many authorities, even at the price of being misunderstood. Wresting language back to the service of her own experience, she gives us glimpses of a person too startling to be acceptable to her community, with a mind too exacting to use language as she had learned it, a heart of unacceptable desires and unanswerable demands, and a sensibility embodying in life and language an early and genuine example of sometimes illusory American trait of self-reliance. In light of this critic's statement, discuss Dickinson's nonconformist treatments of nature, God, and death in her poetry.
4. "Although Henry James satirizes the idea of a women's movement in *The Bostonians*, his constant exploration of the tension between individual self-realization and social restriction often focuses upon the way in which society particularly shapes the behavior of women." In light of this statement, discuss Henry James' treatment of women in his novels.
5. "Sober critics, intend upon the theater of ideas, sometimes elevate Arthur Miller above [Tennessee] Williams, claiming that the Gothic element in Williams too often descends to mere feverish contemplation of alcoholics and homosexuals." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Answer the question with sufficient supporting references from the works by both playwrights.
6. William Carlos Williams once said, "No verse can be free, it must be governed by some measure, but not by the old measure." With Williams' comment on free verse in mind, discuss at least two American poets' successful uses of free verse in their poetry.