Essay Questions: 100%
Please answer any <u>five</u> out of the following <u>seven</u> questions.

1. *Beowulf,* a Germanic heroic poem, depicts a warrior society in which the relationship between the king and his thanes is based upon mutual trust and respect and a good king should generously reward his thanes for their valor. Explain the given depiction by summarizing some key episodes and naming some key figures in the text.

2. Chaucer's masterpiece *The Canterbury Tales* offers a panoramic view of medieval society. The pilgrim narrators represent a cross-section of social ranks and occupations. What are the ranks and occupations of three or four of the narrators? To which of the three main strata do they belong (the aristocracy, the clergy, or the laity)?

3. Give the titles of and discuss the main themes or arguments of three sonnets by William Shakespeare.

4. *King Lear,* generally regarded to be one of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies, portrays a world of "abject, misery, nausea, and pain." In reading the play, one is struck by how the play captures both the great anguish of psychological pain and the great suffering caused by physical violence. Please identify scenes and characters that capture both kinds of suffering.

5. John Donne, is a major poet of "Metaphysical poetry," which is characterized by, as a much later poet T. S. Eliot expresses, "a unity of thought and feeling." Give the titles of and discuss one or two poems by Donne that illustrate that unity.

6. Romantic poets, among them William Blake and Mary Shelley, admired the figure of Satan in John Milton's *Paradise Lost.* They saw Satan to be the "true hero of the poem" because of "his awesome energy and defiance." Do you agree? Use examples from *Paradise Lost* to support your argument.

7. The eighteenth century is commonly known as "the great age of satire" in English Literature. Please discuss one or two works from the given time period that reflect that characterization.