

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION TOPICS

LINGUISTICS

1. Language and linguistics, language and human communication; branches of linguistics
2. General description of the English sound system
3. English vowels and consonants – description and phonological rules
4. The scope of applied linguistics
5. Languages in contact, bilingualism, diglossia, codeswitching
6. World Englishes
7. Regional and social varieties of English

English Linguistics (Detailed topics)

1. Language and linguistics, language and human communication; branches of linguistics (Language and speech; human communication; linguistic competence, descriptivism vs prescriptivism; innate language acquisition device; levels of linguistic analysis: phonetics/phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis)
2. General description of the English sound system (General description of the English sound system (classes of consonants - places and manners of articulation, voiced voiceless, nasal-oral -, classes of vowels - phonetic and phonological classification, short long, monophthong-diphthong, full-weak, tense-lax))
3. English vowels and consonants – description and phonological rules (Vowels: laxing rules, Pre-R phenomena, letter-to-sound rules; consonants: voicing, aspiration, letter-to sound rules)
4. The scope of applied linguistics (language and education; language, work and law; language, information and effect)
5. Languages in contact, bilingualism, diglossia, codeswitching (circumstances that promote the conditions in which bilingualism develops)
6. World Englishes: the spread of English (models and their critique; World Englishes today)
7. Regional and social varieties of English

LITERATURE

THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE (THE LONG 18TH CENTURY – THE 19TH CENTURY)

1. Chief codes, plotlines and mindset of the Restoration, Augustan Age and the Age of Sensibility in England

- key notions: chief cultural codes of the fable of early modern culture; Restoration, Augustan and sentimental literary forms; new tendencies in storytelling (birth of the novel)
- texts to use as illustration: Congreve's *The Way of the World*, Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, Arkenside's Hymn to Science, Gray's Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, relevant chapters from Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*

2. Chief forms of romantic literature and their thematic focus

- key notions: new forms in literature, novelty of the *Lyrical Ballads*, chief codes of the fable of Romanticism, cult of Nature, the “dark side”, figurative mindset (symbolic and synecdochic expression),
- texts to use as illustration: Wordsworth's The Daffodils, Coleridge's The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, Byron's She Walks in Beauty, Shelley's Ozymandias, Ode to the West Wind, Keats's Ode on a Grecian Urn; feeling and sentiments in storytelling: Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

3. Chief forms of Victorian literature and their thematic focus

- key notions: “the best of times, the worst of times”; major cultural codes and plotlines, aspects of the figurative mindset (transition from metonymy to synecdoche); aestheticism, decadence
- texts to use as illustration (choose 2-2 texts from the early and later Victorian era): Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Dickens' *Hard Times*, Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde*, Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*; Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Tennyson's Mariana, Rossetti's The Blessed Damozel, R. Browning's My Last Duchess

AMERICAN LITERATURE (17TH – 20TH C.)

4. Discovery and the Republic

- key notions: discovery and the invention of the New World, defining American literature, historical, cultural and ideological, philosophical background, “New World” narratives, Puritan genres, captivity narratives, Enlightenment in the colonies, the Founding Fathers; self-help guides

5. American renaissance

- key notions: Transcendentalism, national literature, American individualism
- texts to use as illustration: Emerson's, Thoreau's, Hawthorne's texts; Whitman's and Dickinson's poetry

6. From American realism to Modernism. The African-American experience

- key notions: realism and regionalism: cultural regions and their literatures, the South, slave narratives, Modernism, Harlem Renaissance
- texts to use as illustration: Clemens's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Douglass's and/or Jacobs's slave narrative(s), Langston Hughes's poetry, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*

HISTORY, CIVILIZATION

GREAT BRITAIN, BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

1. Physical geography, region and ethnic composition and their role in shaping the economic, cultural and political face of the British Isles
2. The British constitutional, parliamentary and political system: historical roots, principles and current structures
3. Modern Britain: governmental, political, social, economic and cultural reform and change in the 18th and 19th centuries

NORTH AMERICA; THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

4. American identity (or identities?) 1: Nation-building: the basics. The American Creed; the American Dream and civil religion.
5. Physical geography, climatic regions and their role in shaping the economic, cultural and political life in the United States
6. The American constitutional tradition and perceptions of democracy: historical roots, basic principles and current structures
7. From the foundation of the first English colonies to the end of the Civil War: an overview
8. Education in the U.S.: A short history (of permanent reforms)
9. American exceptionalism and American Studies scholarship: from the “national” through the “subnational” to the “transnational”--and beyond