

ENGLISH 226
FINAL EXAMINATION



Consider the five following essay questions then choose ONE on which to write a thorough well-outlined answer.

1. In many ways and from diverse angles, didacticism in literature or art has been the object of concerted attack in our present century. Delineate four different approaches/schools/isms that undermine this long-time revered artistic function focusing on the manner in which the attacks are conducted.

2. In *The Postmodern Condition* (p. 39) Lyotard says speculating on what he calls the "crisis" of scientific knowledge":

The classical dividing lines between the various fields of science are ... called into question – disciplines disappear, overlappings occur at the borders between sciences, and from these new territories are born.

It is indeed possible to read recent developments in literary criticism itself in light of the above statement. Show how this is possible.

3. Frye in his "Polemical Introduction" to *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) notes the following:

Sciences normally begin in a state of naïve induction: they tend first of all to take the phenomena they are supposed to interpret as data. Thus physics began by taking the immediate sensations of experience, classified as hot, cold, moist, and dry, as fundamental principles. Eventually physics turned inside out, and discovered that its real function was to explain what heat and moisture were.... It occurs to me that literary criticism is now in a state of naïve induction as we find in a primitive science. Its materials, the masterpieces of literature, are not yet regarded as phenomena to be explained in terms of a conceptual framework which criticism alone possesses. (15-16)

Basing yourself on what you have read by Frye, assess the above view in light of what he and other relevant critics attempted to undertake.

4. Marxist thinking plays a significant role in shaping and informing, directly or indirectly, many schools in literary criticism. Discuss at least four central ones.
5. Probe Aristotle's *Poetics* as a text anchored in the proto-scientific method with its six phases. Provide ample textual examples.

